

Gadgets: Printing without ink? Yes

January 29 2010, By Gregg Ellman



PlanOn Printstik PS905ME

If you absolutely and positively must print something right now and have no power around, the PlanOn Printstik PS905ME is your answer.

The mobile printer measures about 2-by-2-by-11 inches and weighs just 1.5 lbs. With portability like this, users can print from selected Bluetooth enabled Blackberry and WinMobile [smart phones](#) or a computer.

What helps makes it truly portable is the built-in rechargeable li-Polymer battery with the storage for 20 sheets (roll) of standard letter-sized paper.

Refilling ink will not be an issue because it doesn't use any. Prints are

made with the incorporated thermal technology, which produces monochrome prints on paper rated for seven years.

The bottom line: How did it work? If you're expecting laser-quality [printing](#) or speed is an issue, then this is not for you. But if you want documents or even boarding passes printed on the go, it does a decent job.

There isn't much to control on the printer itself. Buttons on the side are for power on/off and paper feed. Lights indicate if the unit is on, data rate and the battery level.

Users must install the Printstick drivers, which are included on a CD. One cartridge, nylon zipper case, wall charger, USB cable and manuals are also included.

Details: planon.com, \$299 (model PS905ME)

The BlackBerry HS-500 wireless [Bluetooth headset](#) has a unique feature that automatically controls the volume.

Depending on how much [background noise](#) is around, it automatically adjusts itself and does a really good job at it.

Going from inside my car to outside a mall parking lot, adjustments successfully blocked out a lot of the background noise. This enabled me to continue on my conversation without the interruptions you would get with many others of these headsets.

Included with the unit to get the proper fit are four ear gels, two ear hooks and a BlackBerry Micro USB-vehicle charger. For charging at home I just used my charger, which came with the BlackBerry itself.

Pairing the phone and the headset was simple and painless. Working the controls took seconds to figure out since there are only two buttons.

One powers on the device and is on the bottom side. The other is the main control button, which is on the side. Users can control answering and ending calls along with muting the volume and voice dialing with this one.

Pressing the button a specific number of times in quick succession controls each function.

The HS-500 also works with some third-party GPS mapping applications to listen to turn-by-turn directions.

I'm always suspect of the amount of hours of talk time that these units are advertised to produce (5.5 hours in this case), but I did get several hours of talk time until I had to charge it. It also lasted over three days on standby mode before a charge was necessary.

The exact amount of time will vary depending on usage, how often you charge it and how old the device is.

Check the BlackBerry web site for a list of compatible phones.

Details: BlackBerry.com, \$79.99

The Macally BTkey wireless Bluetooth keyboard is a standard full-sized keyboard designed for Mac users.

It has a layout exactly like Apple's full sized version (with a number pad) except it has standard-sized keys. I'm not a fan of Apple's new flat styled keys on the newer keyboards so this one is a perfect replacement.

A Bluetooth connection took just seconds to make after installing the two AAA batteries (included). The batteries should last a few months, but this can vary depending on usage.

Often when you buy an off-brand accessory you get lesser quality. I can say first hand that this is not the case -- I'm a big user of Macally accessories for my Mac computers.

The BTkey keyboard is up to the standards you would expect from an Apple product. It is also made with an ice white finish to match many of Apple's products but won't cost nearly as much as the name brand.

Details: macally.com, \$46

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