

HTC Jetstream and Flyer take tablets to new heights

October 20 2011, By Stanley A. Miller II



The HTC Jetstream tablet

Despite the iPad's superstar popularity, a truckload of tablets demand your attention.

They're lean and powerful, with lovely bright screens and all the programs you'll need to keep entertained, informed and in touch.

It's uncanny how quickly a tablet wriggles its way into the daily routine after you have one, and I had the chance to spend some quality time with a couple of darlings: the HTC Jetstream from AT&T and the HTC Flyer from U.S. Cellular.

Both tablets run Android, Google's mobile operating system, and both offer mobile wireless connectivity, which means no Wi-Fi network is needed to get online.

But that's pretty much where the similarities end. Still, both tablets performed remarkably well, with features casting them as compelling alternatives to other tablets shouting out for potential owners.

But first, a few specs.

The Jetstream is a larger, more iPadesque tablet, with a 10.1-inch high-definition screen, 1.5?GHZ dual-core processor; front-and rear-facing cameras; and weighing in at 25 ounces. It also has about 12?GB of internal storage.

The Flyer is a smaller, more Kindle-sized tablet, shining out of a 7-inch screen. The tablet is powered with a 1.5?GHZ processor; includes front and rear cameras for snapping photos and video chats; and it keeps data on 32?GB of storage. The Flyer weighs nearly 15 ounces.

Both tablets have SD card slots for extra storage, Wi-Fi for surfing on nearby networks and Bluetooth for connecting peripherals.

And both tablets were fast and easy on the eyes, perfect for Web browsing, emailing, and streaming video from Netflix and music from Pandora and Spotify.

The Jetstream, with its bigger screen, was more satisfying for watching video. And as you might expect, the generous screen really shows off websites, making surfing simple and beautiful. The Jetstream also is a 4G tablet, by AT&T's definition. So when the carrier eventually launches 4G service here, the Jetstream will fly.

The Jetstream also has a nice brushed-metal back that feels satisfyingly sturdy. The only drawback I found in the design is that its oversize volume button was easily accidentally pressed while holding the tablet in landscape. Seriously: why is that volume button so big?



The HTC Flyer tablet

The Flyer suffered no such flaw. In fact, it is marvelously portable, fitting conveniently into my girlfriend's purse so it could tag along anywhere. Interestingly enough, I liked reading e-books better on the Flyer.

Google's Books app and Amazon's Kindle app looked great on both tablets, but the Flyer was easier to hold and read - more like relaxing with a paperback than cradling a full-sized textbook.

Apple claimed at its iPhone 4S unveiling earlier this month that three of four tablets sold in the U.S. are iPads. And comScore, a digital analytics firm, found that in August the [iPad](#) accounted for 97.2 percent of all Web traffic through tablets. The firm's analysis found that the iPad

generates more Web surfing than the iPhone.

But ambassadors like the Jetstream and Flyer are helping Android [tablets](#) take off.

What: HTC Jetstream from AT&T

Cost: \$699.99 with a two-year contract; \$35 a month contract for 3GB of data.

Online: att.com

What: [HTC](#) Flyer from U.S. Cellular

Cost: \$599.99 with a two-year contract (after a \$100 mail-in rebate); \$34.99 a month for 200MB of data. Or \$499.99 with a two-year contract (after a \$100 mail-in rebate); \$74.99 a month for 5GB of data

Online: uscellular.com

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