eMate300

- [The Ultimate eMate Site](#)
  Cool site with eMate resources
- [eMate300 Power User](#)
  Great show off site for eMate
- [Apple's eMate Site](#)
  Apple's own eMate site, featuring facts sheet, FAQ and solutions
- [eMate Trial Run - K-12](#)
  School test on eMate
- [Mobilis](#)
  A month in the life of eMate300
- [eMate300 Review](#)
  The ReviewZone's review
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  A review from a newspaper in Hawaii
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  Canada Computer Paper Inc's review
- [eMate Spec](#)
  eMate specifications and features
- [eMate/Total Memory](#)
  eMate RAM module and how it's configured
- [O'grady's eMate300 PowerPage](#)
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Dr. Gil Amelio and Frank Cassanova at MacWorld Expo Boston

eMate300 review by Bun Ng (May 1997)

On the first encounter with the eMate, I have to conclude that the MessagePad users have been treated unfairly in the past.

First of all, the eMate, being designed for school, comes with a fair bit more convenience that was strategically unavailable on the MPs.

There is, by default, a keyboard, which, for MP users, is a bitter-sweet option. You can imagine the frustration of an experienced MP user, showing off the connectivity on the MP, but finding it painful to compose a long email. And to think a keyboard, which is really a must for anyone who is serious, is an option!

There is also, by default, a flashy design, which makes the eMate totally hip, and more "Apple", if you may. To be honest, the MP does look not too different from a Sharp, or even a HP HPC. The eMate, on the other hand, makes the user stand out. Apple could have from the start made the MPs with more design in mind, but to have to launch the properly bold design on a device not widely available, and with a weaker processor, that could easily be considered a marketing bug. And, if you really want to argue that the eMate now look too flashy and not quite "executive", well, don't you think with just a little design twist, and a little bit of leather, it'd look just as executive?

Secondly, the eMate leads most users to concentrate on the keyboard. I'm inclined to believe that most tester will immediately test his own tolerance towards the keyboard. Although speed is the essence, many will very simply turn our beloved Newton OS and its impeccable hand-writing recognition into nothing more than a glorified word-processor, or yet more dull - an instant-on notebook computer. While it is Newton, Inc.'s desire to see people wanting to replace every notebook with a Newton OS machine, it is a sad thing for long time Newton devotees to see that the next wave of Newton users forgetting about the pen. One Newton user group even put "keyboards are for amateurs". So, the focus on the keyboard, coupled with what I earlier described as the unfair exclusion toward long-time Newton users, could easily lead some to have a sour feeling towards the eMate even just for its keyboard.

The way Apple fill the eMate with classroom software, too, could be a source of discussions. Think about the MPs' strongest commercial application: data collection. It's sufficiently strange that a simple data collection aid, something more in line with database system than list management, is not a basic feature. Apple could claim that they like to leave that to third party, or vertical market dealers. But, think, if one of the bundles is data-collection out-of-box, how that would drive the sales and POS market. Even the current business bundle continue to focus on only the executives, and still NewtWork out-of-box does not work without a keyboard. Now doesn't that sound almost incomplete.

I'm tempted to say that Apple makes the eMate specifically to look childish so critics like myself would overlook the overall usefulness, or even dismiss it as a "something else". But look at how slow Apple gets when coming to release new products, I'd be very worried when the ultimate business tool - not ultimate computer, because that's obviously what Windows CE aspires to be - will surface. And this even lead me to think that Apple has done too much of a good job making the eMate. I started using MP from the MP120, and it becomes a companion. The form factor (size and hardware interface) pleases me to no end. The resourcefulness pleases me. But the eMate is another eye-opener. I would only hope that the success of the eMate is a message to Apple to further the human interface endeavor. Please take us further, with a fair treatment.

I write this article on the road, to experience the usability of the eMate. And I'm further convinced making the keyboard an integral part is going to open the market to non-executives who tend to write extensively. Forget chicklet keys. The Ultimate eMate homepage should say: "Chicklet keys are for amateurs".

Instant-on is going to stay. It is more compatible with how humans work. I think, like what I

said earlier on about Windows CE, people forget we want something like how we work. Apple's design of the Newton OS, in abandoning the Mac OS look-and-feel, gives us realism. I always like the fact that the Newton OS opens with a paper pad, and not something that reminds me of the operating system. Microsoft, in its desire to dominate all the computer desktops, leads too many people to only desire a better computer. I want a better tool.

I just hope those who are working on wearables will look at the Newton OS.

Bun Ng
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