

Transtec Senyo 610

Mind-boggling performance in a tiny package that's crammed full of intelligent, sensible design

The last few months have seen a slew of tiny PCs arrive in the PC Pro Labs, and they never fail to attract attention. Of these, however, only the VeryPC Treeton (web ID: 145179) has really impressed us. The Asus Nova (web ID: 156426) mixed mediocre performance with a high price, and the MSI Titan (web ID: 199356) limped through our 2D benchmarks. Transtec's tiny Senyo 610 now takes up the challenge, and its powerful specification, attractive looks and slimline profile make a better first impression.

The Senyo is smaller than almost all of its rivals, with the Titan, Treeton and Nova boasting bulkier dimensions. Only the Mac mini (web ID: 86246) can claim a smaller desktop footprint. It looks good too, finished in two-tone plastic, with a band of wine-coloured plastic sandwiched between a silver top and bottom.

The front of the machine is pleasingly minimalist, with a touch of luxury. A slot-loading DVD writer sits above the power button, a single USB port and a 3-in-1 card reader. The rear panel is well stocked: three USB ports line up next to DVI-I and S-Video outputs, a Gigabit Ethernet port, a pair of audio jacks and a single mini-FireWire socket. An impressive selection.

Inside the case, tightly packed components abound, with hardly any space wasted in between. Two-thirds of the chassis is occupied by the optical drive and hard disk, with the former sitting atop the latter. The final third of the chassis is dominated by a small CPU fan and heatsink that channels any heat out through the side of the case. This keeps the Senyo surprisingly cool, even under intense load, and noise levels are also impressively low.

The tightly packed arrangement of components is made possible by

a selection of small PCB risers, installed both horizontally and vertically, which allow for various parts to be connected within the tightest of tolerances.

The components adhere to the same space- and power-saving ethos of the chassis. The processor is a laptop part – a 2.4GHz Intel Core 2 Duo T8300. This is based on Intel's 45nm Penryn core and boasts a TDP of 35W – lower than all of the T8300's Core 2 Duo desktop counterparts.

Other components also have mobile origins: two sticks of 512MB SO-DIMM memory provide 1GB of RAM, and the hard disk and optical drive are both laptop models, slim enough to stack together inside the case. The Intel 4965AGN Wi-Fi adapter is, again, normally found in notebooks – and endows the Senyo with fast, draft-n wireless capabilities that outstrip those of rival machines. The Asus Nova and Mac mini only offer up to 802.11g.

The thoughtful specification results in impressively frugal power requirements. This tiny PC drew 31W when idle and only 36W when we ran our intensive multiple application benchmarks. The VeryPC Treeton drew



Outstanding interior design helps keep the Senyo cool and quiet.



PC PRO
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PC PRO
A LIST

↑ An attractive chassis barely bigger than a hardback book.

MINI PC

PRICE
£543
(£638 inc VAT)

DELIVERY
£5 (£6 inc VAT)

SUPPLIER
Transtec: 01295
756100

INTERNET
www.transtec.co.uk

POWER RATING
Idle: 31W
Peak: 36W

PART CODE
SY610T465-A

SPECIFICATIONS

2.4GHz Intel Core 2 Duo T8300 processor
• 1GB 667MHz DDR2 RAM
• Intel GM X3100 graphics
• Panasonic DVD writer
• 160GB Seagate hard disk
• 4x USB • 3-in-1 card reader
• DVI-I • S-Video
• Gigabit Ethernet
• mini FireWire
• 802.11abg • draft-n WLAN
• Windows XP Professional • 2yr RTB warranty
• 171 x 225 x 42mm (WxH) • 1.3kg

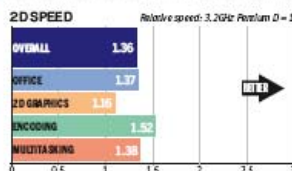
only 28W when idle, but this more than doubled to 60W at peak performance. The MSI Titan required 20W at rest, but it's a far less powerful machine.

Thankfully, the proliferation of mobile components, installed to save power and space, hasn't had a huge impact on performance. A 2D benchmark result of 1.36 is streets ahead of every other small form factor PC we've reviewed – the Nova and Treeton scored 0.74 and 0.80 respectively, while the cheaper MSI Titan crawled through our benchmarks at 0.36. It's worth noting, though, that integrated Intel X3100 graphics won't have you playing modern games at any kind of acceptable speed.

One area where the tiny, space-saving design of the Senyo falls behind is in upgrade potential. Other small PCs, such as the Treeton, and Shuttle XPC P2 3500G (web ID: 191256), offer free PCI slots and 5.25in hard disk bays, but there's no room for any practical addition inside the Senyo, and the 160GB hard disk could fill up quickly.

But there are few areas of concern elsewhere. Unlike the Asus Nova or Treeton, there's no stand included that enables the Senyo to be positioned horizontally or vertically. It's also slightly pricier when compared with the competition: the Senyo costs £543, which is pricier than the £486 Treeton, £500 Nova and £200 Titan.

That sort of money could also buy you a fully fledged PC system if space-saving isn't your main concern. However, where size matters nothing can touch the tiny Senyo. The impressive specification provides more in the way of performance than any of its rivals while keeping power requirements to a minimum. Factor in cool, almost-silent running and intelligent design and it's obvious that the stylish Senyo 610 deserves a place on the A List. It's undeniably worth paying the slightly higher price to acquire such an impressive, and tiny, PC. MIKE JENNINGS



PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES & DESIGN ★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★
OVERALL ★★★★★

ⓘ An explanation of our benchmarks can be found on the cover disc