

LOGITECH MOMO RACING WHEEL

>P4,600 COULD THIS BE THE ULTIMATE RACING WHEEL FOR DESKTOP SCHUMACHERS?

>www.logitech.com

Prior to the Momo Racing wheel controller, Logitech earned its rep among desktop-bound racers from their Formula line of steering wheels, which featured leather-stitched grips, metal parts and F1-style ergonomics. Perhaps acknowledging a real world master of steering wheels, the peripheral maker has turned to Momo, an Italian company known for aftermarket automotive parts, in creating its latest PC racing wheel.

As a flagship model with a very attractive price point, the predominantly black force feedback wheel lacks the flashy visible metal parts of the Formula One steering wheels. The most noticeable addition is a sequential stickshift knob which can be ingeniously moved to the either side of the wheel. For hardcore driving sim enthusiasts, this could be a welcome feature since it turns the car into a right-hand drive. After all, who's ever heard of an import Nissan Skyline GT-R with a stick shift on the right side?

The three-spoke flat-bottomed wheel is based on one of Momo's real world designs and features a comfortable all-rubber grip which unfortunately can get a bit sticky after prolonged driving sessions. There are a total of six programmable buttons on the wheel which you can assign to various functions such as change point of view, rear view, and our Need for Speed Underground favorite, the NOS button. Underneath the wheel are F1-style paddle shifters should you wish to

KEY FEATURES

- > Momo designed wheel
- > 240 degrees wheel rotation
- > 10-way programmable buttons
- > F1-style paddle shifters
- > Ambidextrous shift knob
- > Floor mounted gas/brake pedals with
- > Carpet grip system
- > USB interface
- > Logitech Profiler software

drive ala Schumacher.

If you're familiar with the previous Logitech wheels, you'll notice that the gas and brake pedals are now all plastic. They don't look as sturdy as metal pedals but after subjecting them to a fair amount of racetrack abuse, we can vouch that the pedals can withstand all but the harshest foot mashing. The pedals also have a longer throw and spot-on resistance.

The wheel bolts on securely to desktops using a three clamp system. A small niggle though is the fact that two of the locking bolts are hidden underneath a detachable panel on top of the wheel column. We were quite pleased that no amount of (virtual) dashboard violence could pry the wheels off the table top.

Like saving a shot of NOS for the final lap, we've saved the best part of the Logitech Momo Racing Wheel for the last. The wheel's force feedback effects are awesome. In force feedback enabled games such as Need for Speed Underground, TOCA Race Driver 2 and Colin McRae 04, the wheel dynamically offers increased resistance as you go faster on the turns. You can also 'feel' rough roads, scrapes, and crashes as the wheel vibrates and reacts to the roadside environment. The wheel also actively centers itself after a turn. With the included software utility, you can adjust the force effects to your liking. **Ed Geronia Jr.**

T3 VERDICT

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
VALUE ★★★★★★
OVERALL ★★★★★★

The Logitech Momo Racing Wheel takes PC driving to another level of realism with powerful force feedback effects.



AXIO URBAN HARDCASE BACKPACK BY HARODESIGN

>\$149.95 (US RETAIL), \$242.80 FROM (WWW.E-2-DOOR.COM)

AXIO HARDCASES OFFER RUGGEDLY STYLISH MOBILE GEAR FOR THE TECHNOSEXUAL'S ARSENAL.

>www.axio-usa.com

KEY FEATURES

- > Hard shell provides superior protection
- > Quick-release shoulder straps
- > Removable mobile phone holder
- > Separate laptop compartment
- > Headphone port
- > Button and velcro side panels
- > Snap-on Tek-Pak accessory

Backpacks designed for laptops tend to look... well, like backpacks designed for laptops. They're like your run-of-the-mill knapsack stuffed with an oversized pillow. Not exactly a fashion accessory.

The AXIO Hardpack range offers four different models: Swift, Urban, Tekno and Fuse – in a variety of colors, all of which are pretty hip. You'd be hard to miss in a crowd with a pack like this. All but the Fuse model come in metallic, eye-catching colors, just like the titanium silver Urban Hardpack that visited our office.

The sleek, hardshell exterior provides complete defense for whatever gizmos that make up your digerati lifestyle – from shielding your precious gadgets against daily knocks and bumps, to your occasional trips through airport X-ray machines. You'd look totally cool with this bag on a Ducati too.

OUTSIDE

One glance at the AXIO's enormous, rugged zippers spell protection with a capital "P." The zippers go all the way to the bottom, and the ingeniously engineered button and velcro side panels can be undone, allowing the backpack to open wide to a complete 180 degrees.

The shoulder straps are fully adjustable, with quick-release fasteners for no-fuss slinging and unslinging. No dislocated shoulders here. A convenient, removable mobile phone case that clips on either shoulder strap is also included. A waist strap

might be useful though, for those grueling treks between the office and the car park.

For those times when you have to actually take the pack off your back on your commute, a soft, rubber handle on top is comfortable and cushy. And beyond just looking cool, the curved ergonomic back panel made of airmesh material helps you stay cool too.

INSIDE

The Urban version shares similar interiors to the Swift and Tekno models – all three models provide an assortment of compartments for most, if not all, your gadgetry. A hanging, zippered compartment is big enough to hold a portable CD player, and right above it is a rubber porthole to stick your headphone jack into, pretty clever.

Adjustable straps for the padded laptop compartment are provided, with generous room even for 17-inch laptops. Another compartment on the opposite side is designed for legal pads, business folders and magazines – but with the right sleeve, you could fit another 17-inch laptop in here. Why not? **Donvy Vytiaco**

T3 VERDICT

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★★
VALUE ★★★★★★
OVERALL ★★★★★★

If you've got one of those 17-inch behemoth laptops, this is your backpack. Bob Haro's AXIO series offers stylish, rugged, practical and roomy protection for all your gear.