Asus 1015CX review

By Jamie Balfour

My second netbook that I will review is the Asus 1015CX, which is a dual-core, Hyper Threaded Intel Atom based computer. This netbook is slightly larger than the previous one I review, being 10 inches in size as opposed to my previous one's 8.9 inch display. The Acer Aspire A150X, i.e. my previous netbook, was considered one of the first and one of the smallest netbooks. Nowadays, most netbooks are about 10 inches, and although it sounds like it should be a lot bigger, it does feel like a netbook size rather than a laptop.
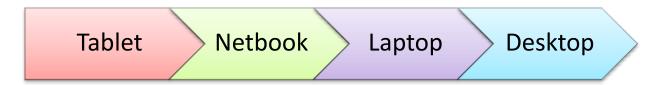

Figure 1 - performance compared with mobility

This diagram here is for those of you who do not quite know where netbooks exist in the computing infrastructure. The diagram goes from left to right with the left being the most mobile devices, but generally being considered a device and not incredibly powerful or capable whilst on the right the devices are less mobile but considerably more powerful.

Who said the netbook was dead?

Officially, I suppose I'd agree the netbook is now dead in the water, and therefore it has become much harder to find a decent netbook these days. To me this seems like a shame, and perhaps one of the most short-lived products of the computer industry. Tablet PCs may have attempted to destroy the desktop operating system based computers altogether, but it has not fully achieved it. Laptops still grow strong and tablets still, in most cases, complement PCs and nothing more, although Windows 8 seeks to change this.

The Asus 1015CX is one of the last netbooks by Asus (maybe even the last and was released in March 2012). Although they have been out of date for a while, I still opted to get one for university. They are so compact yet they have something tablets do not; a keyboard and Windows. Yes I have a convertible tablet, a Fujitsu Lifebook T4410 which is quite light and quite portable whilst running on Windows. But the convertible is just not light enough and compact enough, whilst being cheap enough to take around with me. The netbook is.

Asus 1015CX aesthetics and specifications

This netbook is a 10.1 inch netbook, ideally designed for someone who needs portability whilst does not need an Ultrabook (especially based on their pricing). This netbook features a 4 threaded CPU utilising dual core technology and Hyper Threading technology, 1GB or 2GB of RAM and a 320GB hard disk drive. The graphics are integrated into the board and the netbook features an Intel GMA 3600 graphics processor. The chipset is an Intel NM10 with 3 USB 2.0 ports, an RJ-45 port, an HDMI port, a VGA port, a headphone-microphone combo port and an SD/MMC card reader. The display is

LED backlit, and it has an island style keyboard and small trackpad (unlike the previous netbook I had it has a single button below the pad rather than to the sides) and some front status LEDs. The design of the netbook is piano black, so dust may be a problem, and the palm rest is slate black. The netbook is incredibly light, weighing about one kilogram and the battery life is close to 5-6 hours, making it very portable. The netbook features an Intel Atom Cedarview N2600, which is a considerable improvement on my previous N270. The N2600 is clocked at 1.6GHz and it runs on Windows 7 Starter by default, but Ubuntu is fully supportive of the system.
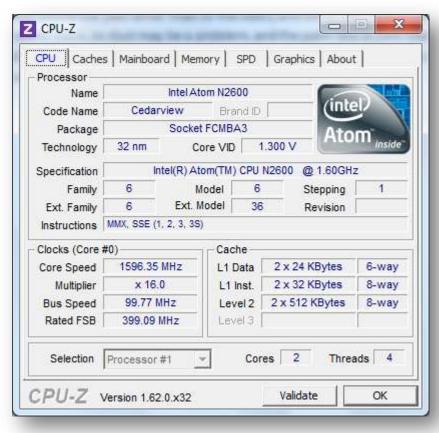
Figure 2 - CPU-Z for Asus 1015CX

An overall assessment

To conclude, I am happy with the netbook but Windows 7 is not running as it should due to the low specification hardware. I have decided to install Ubuntu or maybe openSUSE on it as well and having Windows 7 as a backup operating system for Windows only applications. The RAM cannot be upgraded as it is soldered onto the board, but you can replace the second DIMM with a 2GB module and bring the total up to 3GB with a useable 2GB. This does not matter if you have 2GB already though! The netbook is getting 7/10 from me, as it lacks on the performance side of things. However, it is fit for purpose as a netbook is only designed for small tasks and if it were to run on Windows XP or a Linux distribution, it might run smoothly.