

Android On Freerunner review

Comment

From an end user perspective, Android Image On Freerunner really looks good, but the development is still ongoing. When you turn on the phone you can see it looks the same as Android, just not ready to be a daily phone yet. Also those interesting applications are waiting to be fix to work on Freerunner, like bluetooth and wifi etc. I will have a look at GPS, browser, etc next time when wifi is working.

Most bothering defects should be the keypad and GSM signal issue. The keypad's icon is too small, and did not supporting every application. I will appreciate if I can normally send SMS and make/receive phone calls.

Get the Image

* Download the image from http://people.openmoko.org/sean_mcneil/

* Change the u-boot as 1.3.2-rc2-dirty-moko12

* kernel and rootfs is easy to get, but how-to is not very clear. Like how to change u-boot and format the SD card.

Boot time

* Around 1min 20secs.

Battery Life

* Can't suspend. Will have WSOD problem, I think it's due to the kernel version.

* It's not really charging, even you plug in AC charger or USB cable, the power still reducing.

Calling

* GSM signal strength seems a bit unstable, sometimes just can't get any signal then I have to boot again.

* Call quality is good.

* Due to Freerunner doesn't have hardware button, some phoning function doesn't work very well, as below:

- When you wanna pick up or hang off call, you have to press power bottom to get the keypad at first, this seems a bit strange for me.
- Can't end up incoming call, hang off icon(red phone icon in keypad) doesn't work
- Press menu key go previous page, but can't go back to phoning screen
- There's no identical end call icon on outgoing and incoming call, that seems a bit confuse.
- Because Call/End bottom in keypad doesn't work, so the Voice Dial function doesn't work well.

Messaging

- * Messaging doesn't have clear notice how to use it. When I first time open the application, I can't really know how to start to use that, because it's a bit different then usual phone.
- * After try to send SMS, phone will lost GSM signal, so you can't send or receive SMS.

Contacts

- * Can save contacts with detail informations, Like MSN/Skype/etc.. account, email, postal address in the contact information.
- * Can't read contacts saved in SIM.
- * Did not try sync contact yet.

System

- * Scrolling is poor
- * White Screen Of Death after suspend
- * System response time is a bit slow, like you click the application or scrolling the list.
- * Can't power off.
- * It's not really charging!!!
- * Keypad bottoms are too small
- * Keypad does not support every application
- * Bluetooth and WiFi can turn on, but can't use the keypad to change the setting.
- * Some keypad function doesn't work, like "up" key function in Game
- * Icons are small
- * Can't set ringtone after X hour usage
- * Can't set alarm

Other applications

- * The earth in Global time looks cool, but no further function to play with it and the earth does not move smoothly.
- * Unlock patten function works well, just the sensibility is not really good. So when do that fast you'll miss the point.

Functions did not test

- * IM
- * Pictures
- * Videos
- * Email
- * Browser
- * Camera
- * Dev Tools