Expert: Tim Hillebrand

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Post details: Can Raketu Replace a SIM Card?

02/05/08

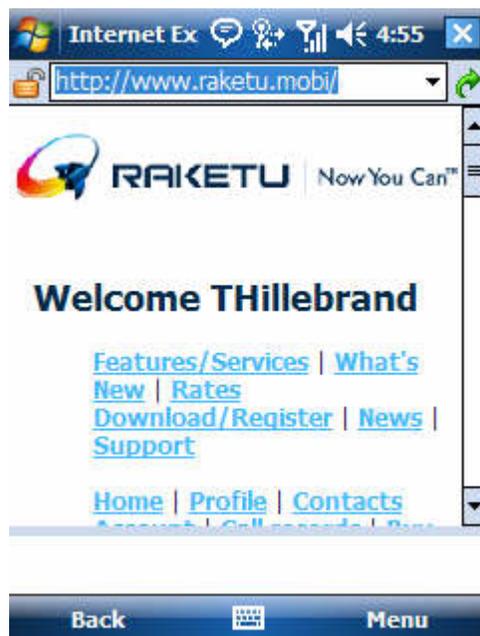📄 05:45:20 pm Author: **Tim Hillebrand** , Categories: **Pocket PC**, 908 words 🇺🇸

Can Raketu Replace a SIM Card?

I recently received a lovely new WMG Windows Mobile 6 Professional device that came unlocked without a SIM card, which limited some of its powerful capability. Without a SIM card, I could not use it to make phone calls, send text messages, or MMS messages. However, when I discovered the wireless communication possibilities of the newly released Raketu for Windows Mobile devices, I was eager to give it a try.

Expert: Tim Hillebrand

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Raketu is a VoIP-based service that has been available for desktops, but is now offered for Windows Mobile devices as well. It is supposed to enable you to use your handset to make calls anywhere in the world free.

You can send email, as well as SMS, and MMS messages.

With Raketu, you can also create your own radio show and even watch TV. However, it's not like SlingPlayer that allows you to watch anything you can watch at home, for there will be only a few specified channels available. However, these features are not yet enabled.

[More:]

The "free phone calls" comes with a qualification. For a limited time, there is a promotional offer that gives you 1200 minutes of free phone calls. So, grab it while it lasts. Normally, the pricing structure varies according to the country called. You can make computer-to-computer calls for free. It appears that a call in the United States costs one cent per minute. It seems to me that the rates are about half what Skype charges. The same is true for SMS. You can make calls to 43 countries around the world.

It's a Web-based service. All you need to do is set up an account and then login with your user ID and password. The first time around it's free. But then you will have to fund it in advance to make calls.

You can sign up for it at www.raketu.com.

However, if you log in at this URL a screen appears with lots of information. You have to scroll and scroll and scroll way, way down to get to the input panels, which is annoying. There should simply be a link to them instead of having to scroll forever. I almost gave up the first time. Then I discovered that there is a mobile site optimized for small screens at www.raketu.mobi. Use this instead for your handheld.
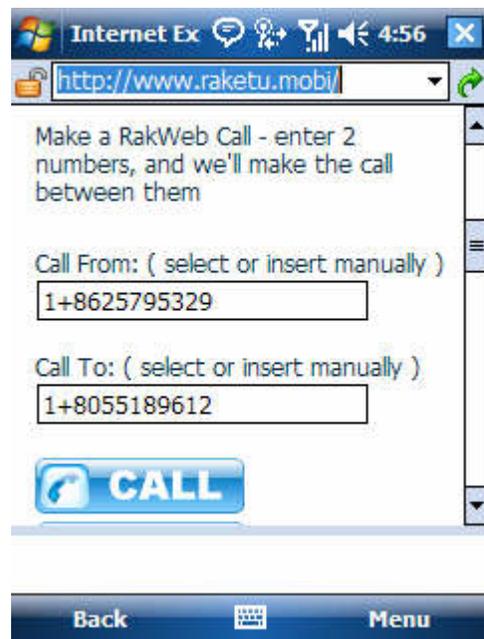
There is an email input panel a panel for SMS, and one for making phone calls all together on one page. Again, this involves lots of scrolling, and it is easy to bypass the one you want. I think it would be an improvement to have a menu selection for these items so they would appear separately. There is no MMS panel yet, but that feature should be forthcoming soon.

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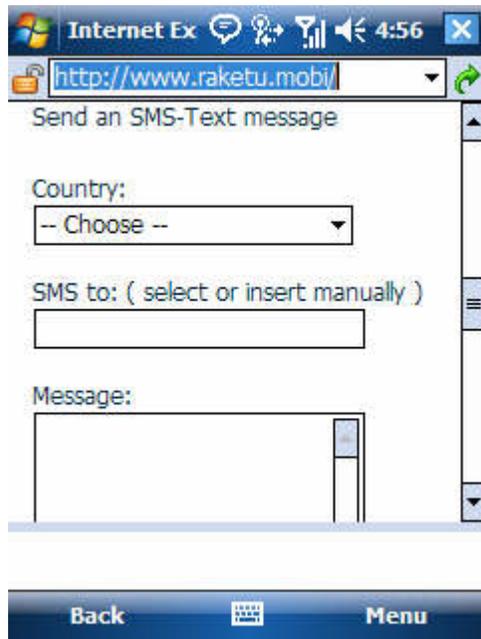
I understand that this application is used on a worldwide basis, but I found it annoying to have to specify your language and country every time you log in. Why could this information not be stored as a cookie or with your password?

Another annoyance is that you cannot connect to your Outlook contacts. You can eventually build up a contact list, but this is a bother. Future editions should address this problem and include it as a service and convenience.

Raketu is also a networking community that allows you to share your profile and search for others in the system who are online or who have similar interests, and then communicate with them. So, if you're looking for a new way to make contacts, you may like Raketu for that purpose.

The bottom line is that it is a wee bit clumsy to use. However, it's certainly worth a try, if you have the patience because it is an intended solution to save you money using a VoIP connection on your WM device while giving your PDA greater communication functionality even without a SIM card and dependency on an expensive phone network.

Soon Reketu expects to be able to issue incoming phone numbers to customers so that you can receive calls just as you can with Skype-in. This will also enable return texting, which will be another plus. As it is now, the only way people can respond to your SMS is to your cell phone, which defeats the whole point of an alternative Internet system and the use of a Pocket PC without a phone connection.

Skype has more or less ruled the VoIP world for handhelds, and now Raketu is here to offer some competition—as soon as it irons out the kinks, which I hope will be soon. The end user should benefit accordingly. It will be interesting to keep an eye on developments.
My fantasy is that one day Wi-Fi and/or Wi-Max signals will be as ubiquitous as AM, FM, and satellite radio signals so that you can be continually connected and use Wi-Fi as your total means of wireless communication as well as for radio and television. This will obviate mobile

phone networks and their notorious, rapacious two-year contracts.

In conclusion, I see Ratketu as a work in progress with a great mission in store but with a bit more work to do before it is ready on a commercial basis. I encourage you to try it and to make helpful suggestions, for it is a worthwhile project. However, I'm not ready to burn my SIM card just yet. Perhaps the time will come.

Give Raketu a try.

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**Comment from: Tariq Bamadhaj [Member] ·
http://www.etenblog.com**

I too am looking forward to the day when I can get rid of my SIM card and use the internet for everything. But like you mentioned, this will not be possible unless WiFi access points are spread out and available to use and/or we are equipped with WiMax.

Currently, there are other solutions to Raketu out there. For exmaple, Windows Mobile 6 supports VoIP and you can install certain applications to configure it. The great thing is that, with an Eten Glofiish X500 (or any Eten Glofiish device for that matter), I can direct audio to the phone speaker so I could make VoIP calls just like making normal calls.

For SMS, I use another application and it works great too.

And with these 2 solutions that I am using now, I can use my Outlook contacts so I don't really have to bother importing them like you mentioned.

Raketu really has its work cut out for it. To be honest, I don't see any unique selling points. Solutions now available are on par in terms of price and some even cheaper. I guess it all comes down to quality and ease of use.

02/05/08 @ 18:05

Comment from: Jozin [Visitor]

I like your review. Thanks for the recommendation!
I will give Raketu a try.

02/06/08 @ 07:47

Leave a comment: