



Amkette Flash TV [Review]

Now watch your movies on a bigger screen

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http://www.techtree.com/India/Reviews/Amkette_Flash_TV_Media_Player_Review/551-107507-621-1.html

Expert Rating:



✓ Ultra small design, SD card slot, support for NTFS formatted drives, video upscaling, decent performance, excellent pricing

✗ Slightly cramped remote buttons, cannot downmix multichannel audio to stereo, no optical audio out, no HDMI

Intro, Bundle

We saw the WD TV Mini recently, which is a miniature version of the WD TV -- a smaller size and format support and lesser connectivity options. The Amkette Flat TV is very similar to the WD TV Mini, as its small and has the same format support like the WD. But the biggest advantage is that the Amkette costs about half of what the WD Mini does.



Bundle

- Amkette Flash TV
- Composite AV Cable
- Component Video Cable
- Power Adaptor
- User Manual



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Design and Construction

The design of the Amkette Flash TV is similar to the WD TV Mini. Both have the same small, matchbox like shape. However, the Amkette goes one step further and is even smaller than the WD. It is also lighter and almost weightless. However, this means that it gets moved around a lot by the cables, which are heavier and can easily pull the player with them.

On the front side of the player are the blue LED power indicator and the receiver for the wireless infrared remote controller. On the right side are the USB port and the SD card slot. The Amkette goes one up on the WD TV Mini and includes the SD card slot, which means you can just pluck out the memory card out of your camera and put it in the Flash TV and see the images on your TV. The USB slot on the Flash TV also supports NTFS drives.



On the backside are the ports for connecting the device to your TV. There is a component video output, a composite audio/video output, a coaxial audio output and power input. Unfortunately, there is no optical audio like the one on WD TV Mini.

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The build quality of the device is pretty average and it isn't as solid as the WD TV Mini. But again it also costs much less than the WD.



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The device also comes with a wireless infrared remote controller. The device is small and light and looks quite decent. However, I found the button arrangement to be less than ideal and the most used keys weren't in the most easy to use locations. Also, the buttons were located too close to each other and weren't very easy to press. The remote had convenient shortcut buttons for jumping to the respective Movie, Photo and Music sections.

Interface & Features

The Amkette Flash TV has a very easy to use and basic interface design. We tried the unit on our test TV, which had a FullHD (1920 x 1080) display and hence we set the player resolution accordingly. The interface design looks quite good at HD resolution and is better looking than what we have seen on some of the Iomega or Imation players with cleaner fonts and icons. It is also dead easy to use with the remote controller, which gives the navigation keys for the interface more priority over the playback controllers.



For video playback purpose, you get basic features like zoom, video angle, subtitles, etc. There was a Go to function that let you jump to a particular section of a video file by entering the time. For photo playback you got the option to rotate the image along with zooming into it. Unfortunately, the zooming in didn't work well. The device doesn't actually zoom into the image but just interpolates it, which is easier for it to display and pan but looks terribly pixellated on the screen.

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The device also has its own volume level. So if at times you feel the volume is too high and cannot find the TV or audio system remote to reduce the volume then you can use the Flash TV remote to reduce it.



As far as format support is concerned, the Amkette Flash TV supports the following formats:

Video: DivX, AVI, MPG, MP4, XviD, RM/RMVB

Audio: MP3, WMA

Audio: JPEG, GIF, BMP, TIFF, PNG

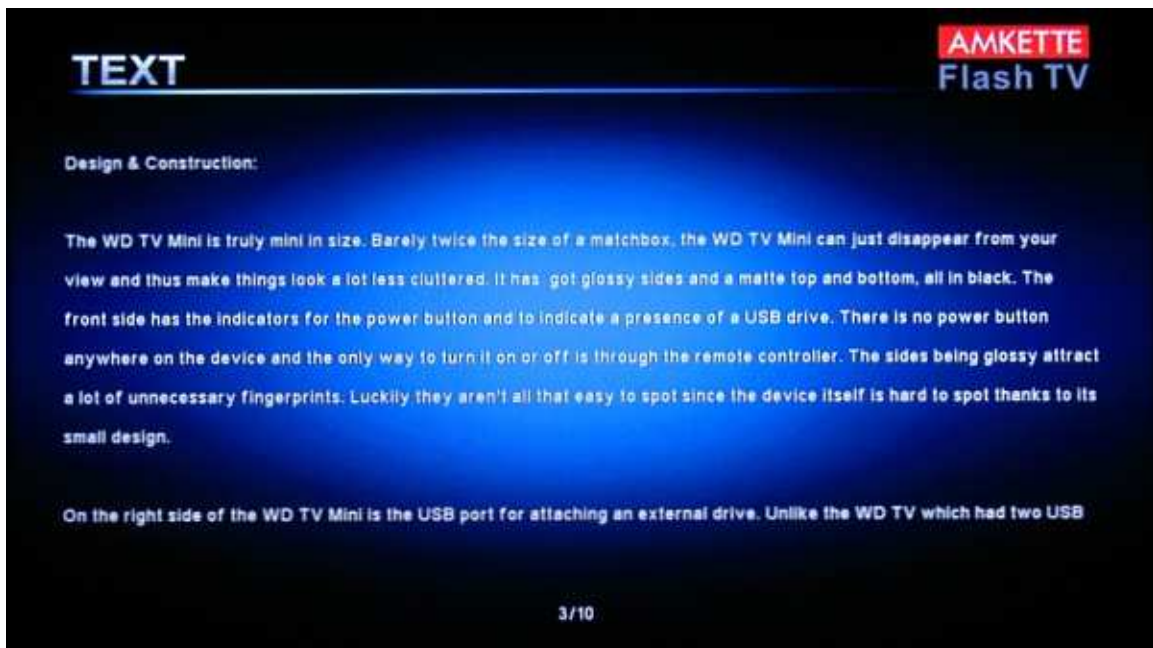
Other: TXT, DAT

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Performance

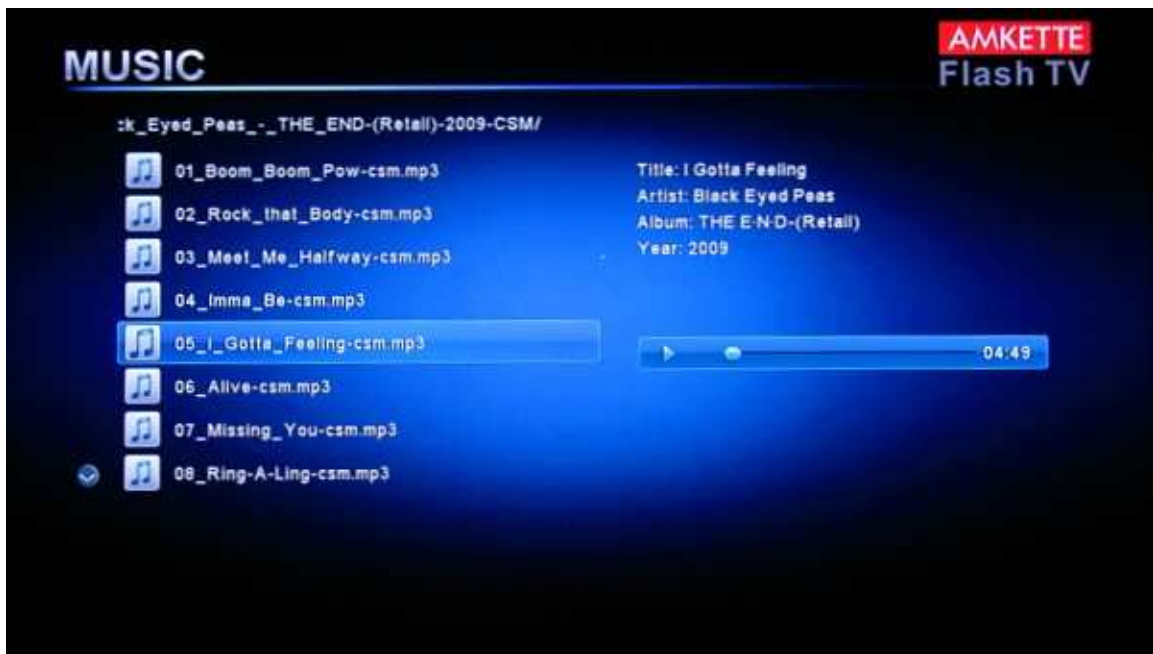
We used the component video out for outputting the video to our TV and the analogue audio out. We transferred our test videos, music and image files to a drive that was once formatted in FAT32 system and NTFS system later. The same files were later transferred to an SD card and used in the appropriate slot on the player.



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We tried all the files that the player claimed to support. Thankfully the player played them all without a hiccup. The video quality was decent; the VOB files that we used looked, especially good even on a FullHD TV thanks to the upscaling. However, we could not test the audio quality properly, as we did not have a coaxial audio out cable at the time of the test. One annoyance was that the multichannel audio of the VOB files was not being downmixed into stereo and fed through the analogue audio out cables. So if you have to hear the audio you must have the coaxial audio cable connected. Files with stereo audio were played back without any audio problems.



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Verdict



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The Amkette Flash TV is priced at Rs. 2,990, which is an excellent price for the device. The Flash TV beats the WD TV Mini in some areas by having an SD card slot, a slightly smaller size and more importantly a much cheaper price. The performance isn't as good but is more than acceptable nonetheless, especially considering the price.

You do have to factor in the cost of an external drive however, if you haven't got one already, but considering the falling prices of flash memory you can easily get an 8 GB flash drive for less than 1/3rd the price of the Flash TV. Overall, a great product at a wonderful price for all you movie buffs who'd like to take your movies away from the small screen of your PC to the TV in the living room.

Test unit sourced from EXL PR