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IDTech VersaKey Review

Product: VersaKey Keyboard

Manufacturer: IDTech

Type: Non-Programmable QWERTY Keyboard

Support: 3 Year warranty through IDTech; Lifetime support from POSGuys.com



The [IDTech VersaKey](#) non-programmable keyboard features a 2 or 3-track magnetic stripe reader (MSR) and full-sized keyboard layout.

Typical uses and environments:

The design of the VersaKey and lack of programmable keys makes it an ideal choice for retail or restaurant locations where keyboard input is limited to data entry. The built-on MSR saves space and makes the VersaKey a good choice not only for locations that take credit cards, but for stations utilizing magnetic cards for security purposes.

Unique Features & Advantages:

The VersaKey stands out from the competition by being one of the few full-sized keyboards with integrated MSR. The QWERTY layout and 10-key make it easy for employees to enter data, while the integrated MSR minimizes purchases and allows for easy credit card processing.



Standard Features:

The IDTech VersaKey ships with keyboard only, no configuration CD comes in the box. If OPOS or JPOS drivers are needed, or configuration software to program the MSR, they can be downloaded from IDTech's site. However, the keyboard does not require drivers to act as a standard keyboard, making it plug-and-play for most users. Available in black or beige, the keyboard features 4 green LED indicators to let you know if the unit is receiving power, or if the scroll, number, or caps lock keys are

activated. After a successful magnetic card swipe, the keyboard beeps to let you know data is being sent to the PC.

Two USB ports are located on the back, allowing for powered devices to be plugged in, such as printers or mobile computers.

Each key is rated to withstand 20 million keystrokes, putting it on the low end of its class. However, the durability still allows it to perform properly for quite some time. For a 70 words per minute typist, assuming a space between each word, the VersaKey will last for nearly 200 days of constant typing before a key would give out. If we limit that to 40 hours a week of typing, that pads the lifespan out to around 120 weeks, well over two years of use.

Drawbacks:

The main problem we found with the IDTech VersaKey deals with the backspace key and backslash key. At only a single key width, the backspace key is smaller than the competition and can be easily missed by touch typists.

Performance Testing:

We ran the IDTech VersaKey through a series of tests designed to show the keyboard's ease of use and programmability. Our tests showed the VersaKey to be standard for its class.

Key response was pretty standard with a solid click feel when typing. The MSR proved to be 100% accurate after 50 swipes of various speeds, ensuring easy use by employees with various experience running credit cards. Configuring the MSR is accomplished through IDTech's MSR configuration software, and is incredibly straightforward.

Though the keyboard is rated at a 20 million keystrokes per key, it does feel lighter and somewhat less durable than other keyboards in its class. The lettering is also printed onto the keys, meaning keys could become blank in extended use environments.

Conclusion:

The IDTech VersaKey keyboard provides an excellent solution for retail locations looking to incorporate an MSR into a smaller space profile, or offices looking to add card-based security methods. While the lack of programmable keys diminishes its usefulness in some locations, the full sized keyboard and 10-key numerical pad more than make up for the limitations.



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