



# Amiko WLK-100 Two-in-One Wireless Keyboard



- Converts receiver into a fully-functional Multimedia Center
- Integration of the receiver into the local network
  - Energy efficient power source
- Mobile use, such as for camping, due to integration of 3G

# AMIKO



# A wireless keyboard with track pad for control of the Amiko Alien and a large software update

Thomas Haring

We here at TELE-satellite really love it when a manufacturer, after introducing one of their products, continues to listen to the customers wishes and suggestions and then actually implements them.

An example of one of these manufacturers is Karmacom from Hungary whose top receiver model Alien SHD-8900 we first introduced to you in the 05-06/2011 issue of TELE-satellite. It's a receiver with the world's first dual boot system. We were quite impressed already with the Alien back then and as the sales figures showed it received high marks not only with TELE-satellite but with end users as well.

But Karmacom wasn't satisfied and continued to work on improving their Amiko Alien receiver. All of this work has resulted in not one but two distinct improvements: first is the WLK-100

TEST REPORT | HDTV Receiver with Two Operating Systems |

## Amiko SHD-8900 Alien

Linux receiver with dual boot, more than one simultaneous recording and lots more...

Linux receivers are the way to go these days, and if you look at all the features and options they offer it's not hard to see why. This development pleases us no end at TELE-satellite, as we see huge potential with Linux that is only waiting to be exploited by innovative companies. Karmacom from Hungary is one such company and with its own brand Amiko they are well on the way to waking up the sleeping giant that is Linux. The company's latest flagship receiver SHD-8900 has a very special treat in store: two operating systems in a single box!

But let's not get carried away with Linux at this stage and look at the receiver itself first. Right out of the package we notice how small the box actually is. Measuring merely 22x16x4 cm, it will find its place in even the smallest (or most crowded, for that matter) lounge room cabinet or TV rack.

And it creates a rather stylish impression with its buttonless front and the 4-digit segment display that lights up in a fiery hue of red. Two LEDs indicate the current operating mode. Of course, there's more than first meets the eye, and a small flap hides a total of seven buttons to control the receiver whenever the remote control is out of reach, as well as a Coaxial card reader. While our test receiver had outcasts in place for CI slots it only came with the built-in card reader.

The back panel of the SHD-8900 comes equipped with all connection options you're likely to ever require. Apart from the DVB-S/S2 antenna input plus loop-through output there is HDMI for digital signal output, a coax digital audio output, three RCA jacks for stereo audio and composite video, a scart connector, a USB 2.0 interface for external storage media, an Ethernet socket as well as a mechanical power switch and an RS-232 connection.

We've tested our share of remote controls, and the Amiko type is right up there with the best. For one thing, this is thanks to its ergonomic shape and logical layout. Added to that are the hugely practical function keys that can be used to access the numerous multimedia features of the receiver such as YouTube, Showcast Internet radio or Picasa, to name just a few.

The build quality of the SHD-8900 will meet even the most exacting demands and the manual (currently available in Hungarian and English) that is shipped with the receiver is of equally high quality.

Considering the fact that the Amiko SHD-8900 Alien comes with two entirely different operating systems we decided to split this test report into two distinct sections as well. We'll start out with an in-depth look at the default software by the name of Spark, before turning to all the features of Engage 2 in connection with the latest Amiko offering in section two.

Spark

In case the name Spark rings a bell with some of our readers there's a reason for that: Amiko deliberately chose Linux and Intel technology and software, which



two-in-one keyboard with track pad and the second is a large software update (version number 1.2.07) with which Karmacom has added a large assortment of new features.

But first things first; let's start with the wireless two-in-one keyboard that turns the Alien into an exceptional multimedia center.

The actual keyboard itself takes up about two thirds

of the space on the WLK-100. Despite the relatively small size of the buttons, the keyboard is quite easy to use. It's laid out in the US American standard and can therefore be used internationally.

The right side of the WLK-100 consists of the track pad, two mouse buttons as well as cross-shaped buttons. We especially liked the fact that the keyboard did not run off of standard batteries; instead it is powered by an internal 3.3V power supply. It is integrat-







customers to pay for a feature that they might not have wanted in the first place. Karmacom came up with a far more intelligent solution and included the receiver with the keyboard. But Karmacom wouldn't be Karmacom if they simply placed the 2.4 GHz receiver alongside the keyboard in the shipping box!

When we saw the WLK-

100 and is charged through a micro USB port. You can connect it to any available USB port or you can simply use an inexpensive USB charger that you can find in any electronics store.

The WLK-100 is backlit so that it can easily be used in a dark room. And even if the backlight is used regularly, the WLK-100 does



not put a great load on the power supply; in fact, the wireless keyboard can be used all day without having to worry about recharging it. The integrated Standby function is in large part the reason for this. It automatically puts the two-in-one keyboard into an energy

saving mode after a certain amount of inactivity.

The signal transmission to the receiver takes place in the 2.4 GHz range and should therefore not cause any interference with other devices such as wireless headphones and other similar equipment.

At this point you might be asking yourself how the Alien receives the signals from the wireless keyboard - did Karmacom already include a 2.4 GHz receiver in the Alien from the factory? No, they didn't, and it wouldn't have made sense either; it would have forced

100 for the first time here in our test center, we looked all over for the signal receiver but had no luck in finding it; we thought at first that Karmacom might have forgotten to put it in the box.

But that was far from the truth: The USB receiver is extremely small and is really only just a little bit larger than a standard USB plug. It is stored in a small opening in the side of the keyboard and therefore can't be lost. When the WLK-100 is to be used, the USB receiver is simply taken out of its 'garage' and inserted into the USB port of the Alien receiver.

Since the Amiko Alien only operates with a free USB port, effective immediately the software now supports the connection of a USB hub or Y cable so that multiple USB devices can be used at the same time.

To top it all off, the WLK-100 also comes with an integrated laser pointer that can be used, for example, during the course of a presentation. And let's not forget the fact that the WLK-100 can also be used with a Windows XP, Vista or Windows 7 PC or laptop. All you need to do is to connect the signal receiver to a free USB port on the PC or laptop and you're ready to go.

But in order to take advantage of all the new capabilities of the WLK-100, a software update for the receiver was necessary and Karmacom included in this update an assortment of new features.

When we first tested the Amiko Alien (see TELE-satellite issue 05-06/2011), we were already quite impressed with the stability and functionality of the existing software in the receiver. But for Karmacom it

wasn't enough; while working on adapting the Alien to the new WLK-100 two-in-one wireless keyboard, they also decided to include a wide range of new features at the same time.

But in order to enjoy all of these new features, the receiver first has to be updated to the latest software. This can be done either through a direct Internet connection or, as was the case with us, with a USB stick on which the latest version of the software was copied from the Internet. As soon as the USB stick is plugged in and the Update process is accessed from the menu, the receiver recognizes that new software is available and asks the user to confirm the update.

Once the update process is started, the user just needs to sit back and relax since the receiver takes care of this process fully

automatically. After just a few minutes and a restart, the Amiko Alien is once again ready to be used.

The first and most important new feature in the update is the integration of the WLK-100 wireless two-in-one keyboard. The keyboard itself has a specified range of about 10 meters; in our tests it was actually quite a bit more. It really doesn't make any sense to use the keyboard to control the various receiver functions; for this purpose it's better to use the Alien's exceptional remote control. But later on, when you access Karmacom's integrated Opera web browser, that's when the WLK-100 keyboard first comes into play.

We appreciated the fact that Karmacom kept in mind those users that don't have a WLK-100 keyboard and must continue to rely







## More on This Manufacturer

Read TELE-satellite's Company Report:

### AMIKO

Receiver Manufacturer, Hungary

[www.amikostb.com](http://www.amikostb.com)



on the remote control. The keyboard is not a requirement for the Alien but rather an option. In those cases where the WLK-100 is not used, the Alien includes an OSD virtual keyboard. But in our case, we couldn't wait to start playing with the WLK-100!

The link to the receiver takes place automatically; several blinks of the background illumination confirmed this to us in just a few seconds. The F1 button on the WLK-100 can be used to switch back and forth between the wireless keyboard and the on-screen virtual keyboard. For new-

bies the manufacturer highlights this fact once again with a message on the start page of the web browser.

We actually had quite a bit of fun using the WLK-100 to surf the internet directly on our TV. We even checked a few e-mails and also provided some status updates on Facebook and Twitter.

Although our first look at the WLK-100 suggested to us that the keys were rather small and placed too close to each other, we found that after playing with it for a while that this worry was unfounded. We

were able to press every desired letter confidently and without any problems. Even the sensitivity of the trackball was just right and above all there were no delays. Together with the WLK-100, the Amiko Alien's web browser is comparable to that of a PC or laptop. We were a little disappointed that there were consistent problems with displaying web sites that contained Flash animation but it's not as bad as it sounds. Flash is really a technology that is on its way out and will soon be replaced by HTML5.

The start page of the Opera web browser definitely needs to be mentioned as well. In addition to the Google search field, you'll also find direct links to Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Yahoo and Amazon. Security is also a very big subject; the integrated browser in the receiver immediately identifies any web site that has an expired certificate and thereby prevents future Phishing attacks.

For users the Internet is more and more becoming the first source for movies and videos and all of this is completely legal. The

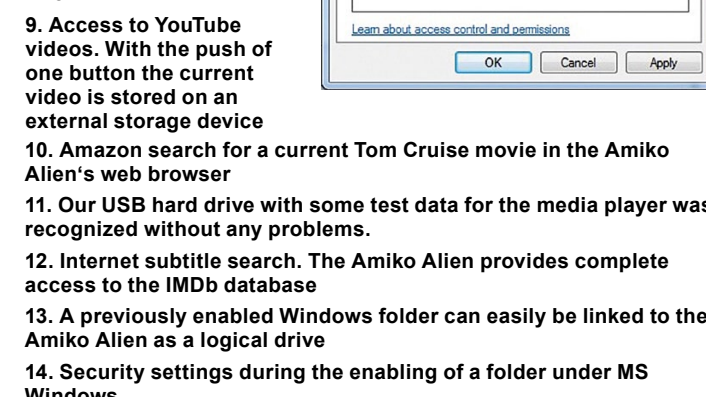
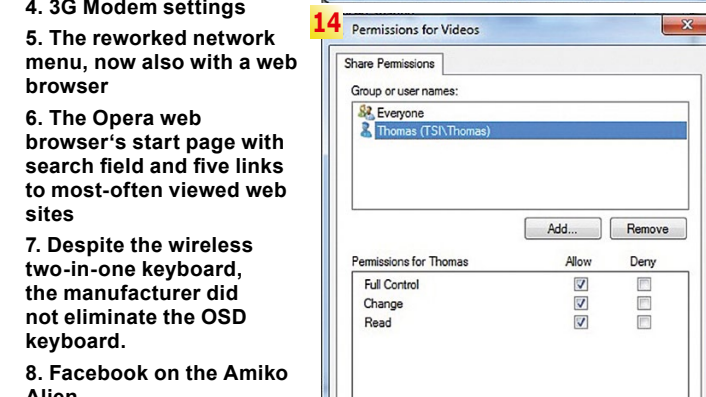
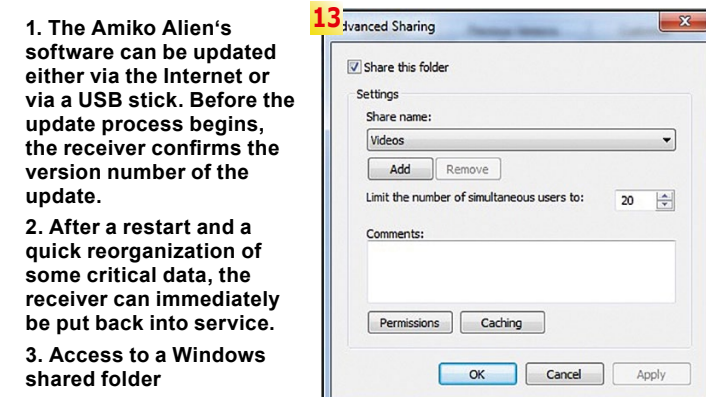
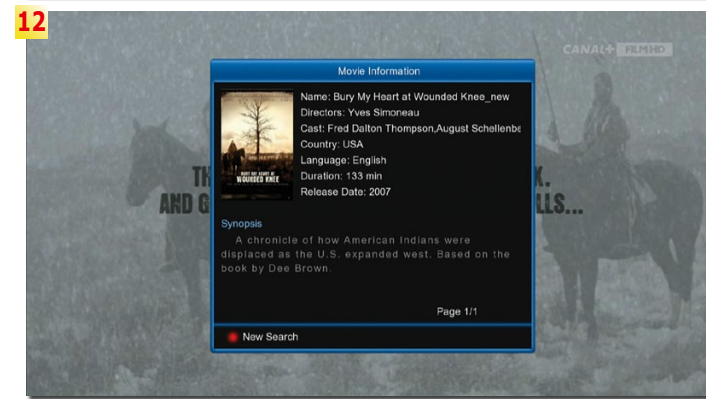
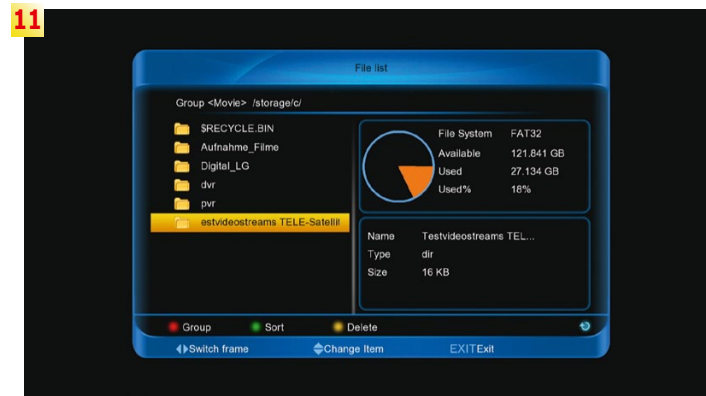
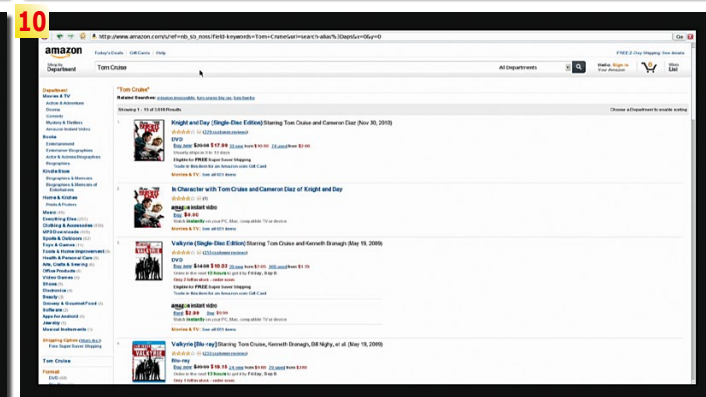
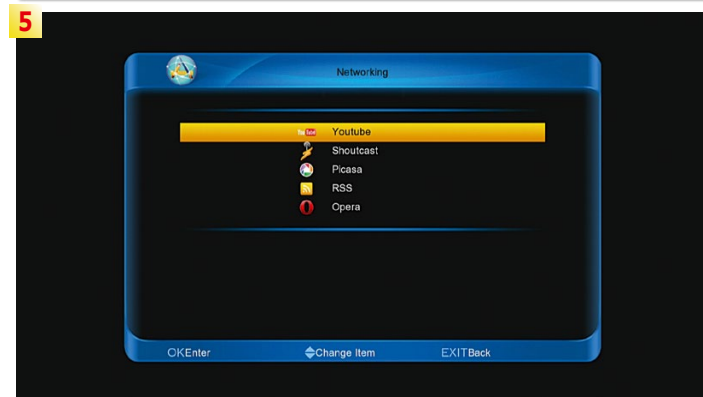
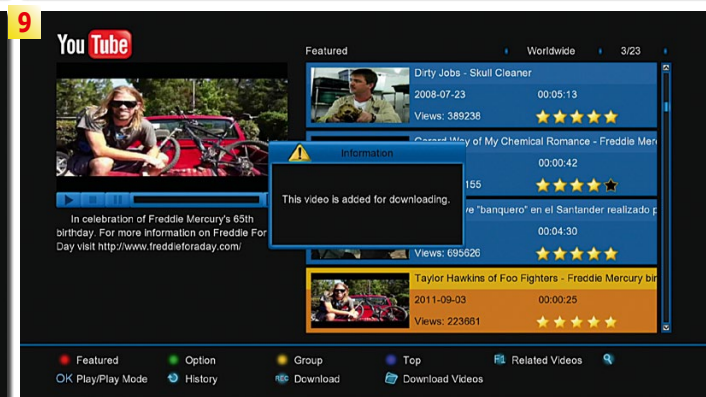
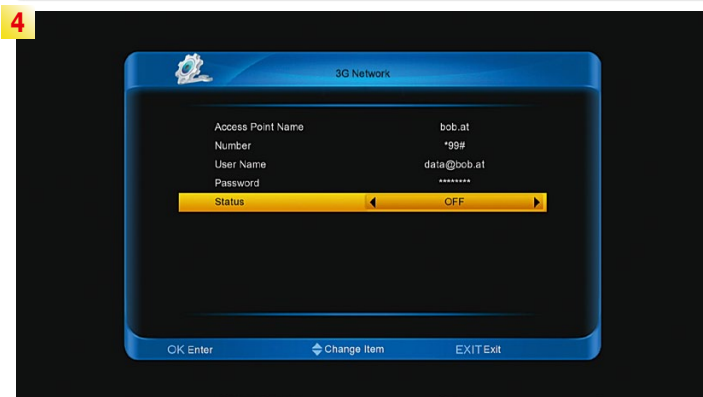
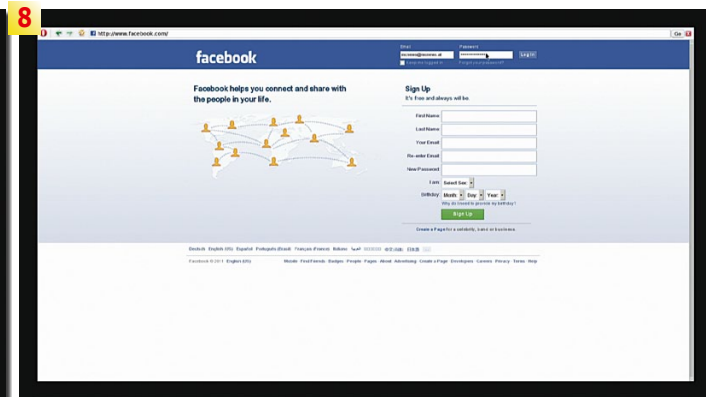
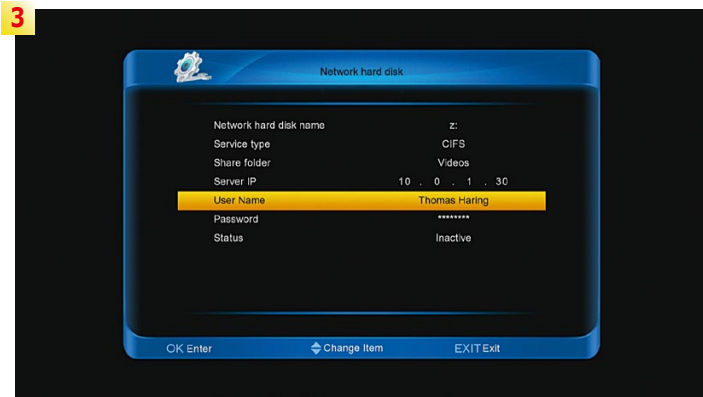
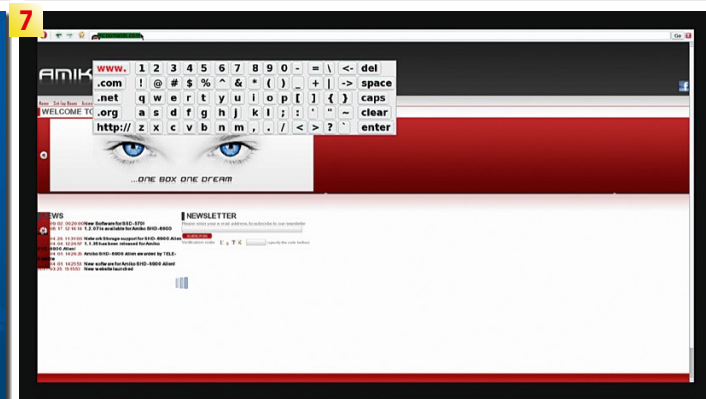
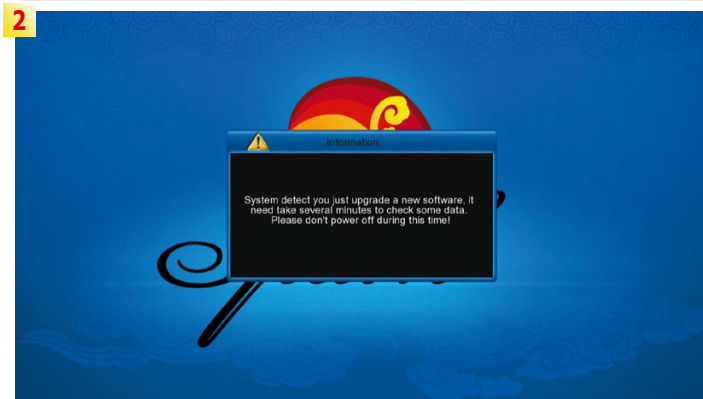
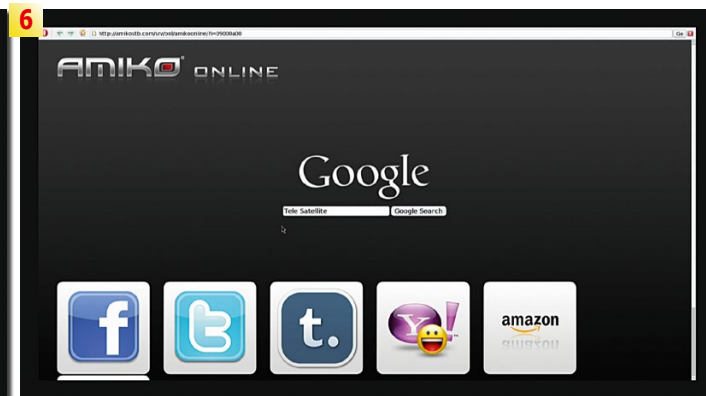
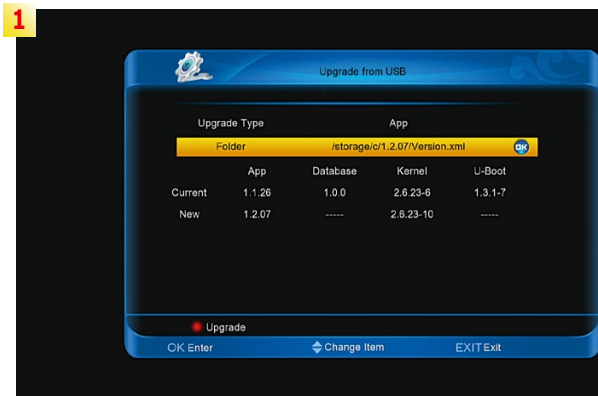
amount of freely available and unrestricted content is continuously on the rise. How nice would it be to be able to watch those downloaded videos directly on your TV instead of on your PC? Who wants to sit in front of a monitor for hours at a time? Karmacom has heard this wish from all of these users and has integrated this capability into the Amiko Alien by providing access to all of the MS Windows network drives. All you need to do is enable access to the desired hard drive or folder, provide the receiver with the name and IP address of the Windows PC as well as enter in the previously set up user name and password. If all the entries are correct, then after only a few seconds the Amiko Alien has incorporated the hard drive or folder into its operating system. A total of six network folders or hard drives can be accessed; the receiver assigns them drive letters from U to Z.

After some brief difficulties (the integrated Windows Firewall had to be convinced that the Amiko Alien was not something dangerous), the connection took place right away. In our tests we were unable to disturb the link even with high-resolution videos with their corresponding high data rate. We really didn't expect anything else from Amiko.

Naturally, the linked hard drives can be used not only for playback but also for recording so that even if there is no available external hard drive, the Amiko's Record function can still be completely used. In this way recordings can be placed directly on a PC so that they can be cropped, edited and burned to a DVD at a later time.

An especially interesting and practical feature is Karmacom's support of





3G modems. At the moment this support is limited to models from the company Huawei, but these are so widely distributed that most users should have no trouble getting their hands on one. According to Karmacom, this function is still in the Beta stage and when we connected our Huawei E5830 we found out why. The receiver correctly recognized the modem although a link to the UMTS network could not be established. Since this is a beta version, we understood that there might still be some glitches; we look forward to the day when our E5830 will also work nicely together with the Amiko Alien. This feature will let you access the Internet for example, on a camping trip, without having to drag along your laptop or tablet PC.

Even the Amiko Alien's YouTube function has been given a facelift and can now store clips on external storage media. You can then quickly transfer them to a PC or other device and archive them or pass them on to others via e-mail or social networking. We found this to be an excellent function that worked perfectly during our tests.

Especially noteworthy are the two additional functions that were added to the media player with this software update. First there's the online subtitle search that can be accessed with the yellow function button during the play back of a movie.

With the data name and the selection of the desired language, the Alien automatically searches the Internet and blends in the subtitle it has found. This feature is not just interesting for the hearing impaired; it can also be used alongside foreign language movies to make it easier for

viewers to follow what is going on.

The second new feature is the fully automatic search of the IMDb movie database allowing the display of a wide variety of additional information on the movie that is currently playing. This includes not only the names of the actors and a brief description of the movie itself, but also where the movie was made, when it was made, the length of the movie plus much more.

For our test we selected a somewhat older movie from 2007 (Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee). The IMDb information was immediately accessed by the Amiko Alien. This is an outstanding feature that we hope other manufacturers will integrate into their receivers. Karmacom, with their Amiko receiver series, is quite a few steps ahead of all the others and there's no doubt that customers are quite satisfied with the products from the Hungarian company.

With the WLK-100 two-in-one keyboard, Karmacom offers a very practical improvement to the Amiko Alien receiver. Thanks to the perfect integration into the software, the keyboard's setup is actually fun and greatly simplifies the use of the receiver's Internet features. The keyboard itself is highlighted by its exceptional workmanship, the comfortable operation of its buttons and the sensitivity of the track pad.

All in all, it's an exceptional expansion of the Amiko Alien that is topped off by a wide-reaching software update that includes access to network drives, 3G modem support, the recording of YouTube videos as well as the additional features in the media player.