

FINANCIAL TIMES

Date: May 15, 2014

Subject: Optical extras for taking pictures with an iPhone

Circ: 12,194,000

Optical extras for taking pictures with an iPhone

Devices to make the most of your camera phone



The success of smartphones, and Apple's iPhones in particular, has spawned a vibrant accessories market. This week I look at two new devices designed to exploit the iPhone's digital camera capabilities.

Motrr Galileo robotic motion control 4/5

Motrr's *Galileo* (above) looks like an oversized ice hockey puck that can hold and rotate your iPhone smoothly through 360 degrees.

Powered by two built-in motors, it moves in many ways: it can automatically pan and tilt your iPhone to follow faces, movements and colours; capture panoramic images; shoot time-lapse videos; and perform other smartphone photographic magic.

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To get started, you pair your iPhone with Galileo and slot it into the dock.

Not only does the free app included with it help users to find and download compatible third-party apps that are available for Galileo, but it also spins the two mini motors that control its smooth but somewhat noisy motion. The motors are powered by a rechargeable battery.

Galileo comes in two versions: a Bluetooth wireless version that works with an iPhone 4S or later models and costs \$150. A \$99 version that uses a physical dock connector and works with most older iPhones is also available. In my tests, I used the Bluetooth version with my iPhone 5.

California-based Motrr's website features more than a dozen free or low-cost apps produced by either the company or third-party developers. These include apps for spherical (panoramic) shots that capture images above, below and all around the device, 360-degree panoramas, or for turning an iPhone or iPod Touch into a real-time HD video and audio monitoring system.

One allows for remote surveillance over WiFi and cellular data connections so users can monitor their home, garage or office, for instance; another captures time-lapse sequences; while another automatically tracks movement, allowing users to follow remotely a teacher in a classroom or their child's birthday party action.

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I found that some apps worked more reliably than others, but they are all fun to use.

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While Galileo is designed to sit and work on a flat surface, it also comes with a standard tripod mount in the base, so it can be set up almost anywhere.

Overall, it is an impressive piece of hardware that I am sure will only get better as more apps are developed to take advantage of its capabilities.

iLuv Selfy 3/5



The craze for taking “selfies” – digital self-portraits – has swept the globe. Selfie was even made international word of the year in 2013 by [Oxford Dictionaries](#), to the consternation of Miley Cyrus fans who lobbied for “twerk”.

New York-based [iLuv](#) has come up with protective cases, called Selfys, for the iPhone 5 or 5S and Samsung Galaxy S5 that incorporate a removable wireless shutter remote.

The slim remote control slides out of the back of the case and uses Bluetooth technology to connect to the iPhone. So you can stand it on a surface and take perfectly posed selfies or videos of yourself or a group – or “grouffies” – without physical contortion, and further away than at arm’s length without downloading a countdown timer app.



Me, myselfie, I

To use the Selfy you pair it with your smartphone, using the phone’s Bluetooth settings, fire up the camera app, slide out the remote from the rear and step back up to several metres, before pressing a button on the remote. I found an obvious disadvantage was that I could not use my iPhone screen to frame the image before pressing the shutter.

The design of the case makes it reasonably easy to stand a smartphone up on a flat surface ready to take a picture, but I like to use a tripod mount for formal

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pictures such as wedding groups or for shake-free videos. However, there are accessories costing between \$20 and \$25 that can attach to the case once the remote is removed, including a mini tripod with flexible legs, a handlebar mount for bicycle videos, a helmet mount for filming outdoor activities, and a car mount with a windscreen suction cup.

The Selfy case offers good protection for the phone without being too heavy or bulky, comes in black or pink, and costs \$50 (it is not yet available in the UK). iLuv plans to offer versions for the iPad Air and iPad mini tablets, but has given no dates.

Planet of the Apps

What it is: YPlan, free for iOS and Android-based devices.

Why you should try it: If you live in, or are visiting London, New York or San Francisco, and find yourself at a loose end, YPlan will provide you with a selection of handpicked local events including concerts, comedy shows, tastings and pop-up parties to keep you busy and amused. Users can also book tickets (often discounted) or reserve places through the free app.