

InterNatrix TW-1000 Alarm



reviewed by Fred Harmon

THE INTERNATRIX TW-1000 alarm is a remarkably low cost (\$149) alarm that incorporates advanced features like a microwave perimeter sensor, pager function as well as a shock sensor as standard. As many insurance companies now offer discounts of around 10% if you have an alarm installed, the cost is even more reasonable and it will save more money when you renew your insurance each year.

Design & Installation

The system consists of five basic components—the remote controller, siren, main alarm box, microwave motion sensor, a blue flashing LED warning light—and the associated wiring harnesses. The pager function is built into the LCD Transceiver Remote, which means you won't have to carry a separate pager, and the transmitter for the pager is built into the main alarm unit. There is also a small antenna that can be mounted in a variety of locations.

Connecting the unit to the bike is straightforward. Wires need to be connected to the bike's battery, ground, a switched ignition power source, and both turn signal indicators. To connect the optional starter lockout feature, you will also need to break the line for the starter relay and connect it through the alarm. The alarm's siren and perimeter sensor simply plug into the main unit via the supplied connectors. The main control unit, antenna, and siren all mount with double-sided tape, and a small strip of adhesive backed hook and loop fastener is provided for the motion sensor. Tie straps and high quality (Posi-Tap™) electrical connectors are also supplied in the kit to aid in making the electrical connections.

Once everything is installed, you adjust the sensitivity. The shock sensor has five settings, which can be changed via the remote without ever touching the bike. The perimeter sensor uses a rheostat control and is fairly effective if mounted under the seat, allowing the microwave signal to envelope the bike properly.

After five seconds of continuous motion near the bike, the siren will sound for a few seconds as a warning, but after 15 seconds of motion it goes into full alert mode. This allows someone to walk past the bike without tripping the motion sensor. The alarm also monitors the electrical system, and it will go into the alert mode if voltage is sensed on the switched power input line when it is armed. There is even an anti-

hijack feature that will prevent the bike from being restarted once it is shut off. (Although I can't ever recall a motorcycle being hijacked, anything is possible.) The remote also has a "locator" feature so you can find your bike in a crowded parking lot if you forget where you parked it.

A concern with any alarm system is battery drain. Motorcycle batteries have it rough enough, so I try not to make matters worse by adding a current drain when the bike is shut off. Using an amp meter, I measured a 4 milliamp drain on the battery when the system is deactivated, and 17ma when armed. This does not represent a significant load on the battery, though I probably would not leave it armed for weeks on end without also connecting a smart charger.

All of the functions of the alarm can be controlled from the Remote Transceiver, which doubles as the pager. Its LCD screen shows you the time, the alarm status, signal strength, and various alert mode indicators, and contains a built-in vibrator for the pager function. It uses a normal AAA battery, making replacement easy.

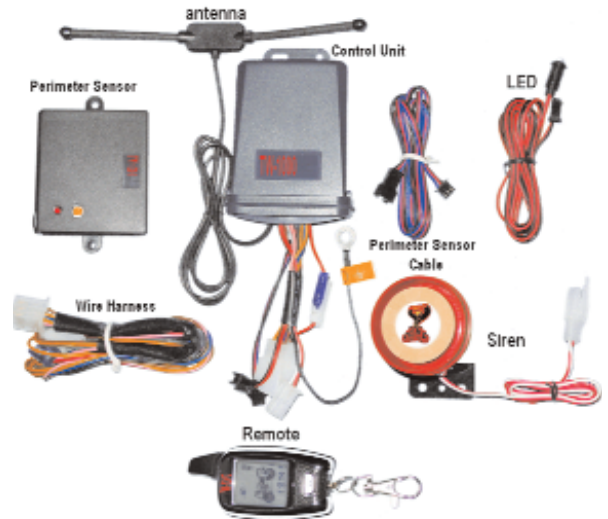
The range of the remote is impressive, at least two city blocks by my testing. And any system alerts it receives will flash with either a green, yellow, or red backlight as well as icons for shock or perimeter alarms.

The alarm can also be armed in "silent mode" from the remote (by pushing the arm button twice) and the proximity sensor can also be shut off using the remote (by entering the programming mode and changing a setting). This makes the system more flexible when you don't want the siren waking everyone in a motel at 2am just because a cat jumped up on your seat. When in the silent mode, the signal lights will still flash and the pager will still go off.

Issues

Because the arm button is on the front of the remote, and the disarm and call functions are on the side, it is extremely easy to accidentally activate the buttons when the remote is in your pocket, and this a drawback.

My basic reason for wanting an alarm on the bike is so I can stop at a gas station and go inside without having to worry



about someone trying to steal my GPS or tank bag. This means the proximity sensor has to be set sensitive enough so it will warn me when someone gets too close to it. However, I don't want it to go off anytime someone simply walks by the bike, or pulls up and parks next to it. The five-second delay reduces false alarms, but it also gives the thief a full five seconds of time to snatch an item and run, so it's a bit of a compromise. If it had the option to set it for three seconds, I would.

Lastly, when you disarm the system, if you do not turn the ignition on within 30 seconds, the system will automatically rearm itself. There is no way to disable this function, and it can be annoying when you disarm the system only to have it rearm while you are trying to zip up your jacket and put your helmet on. The system also gives out three short chirps anytime you turn the ignition from on to off and the pager will also vibrate and chirp to remind you that you forgot to arm the system. Personally, I could do without both the nag and auto-rearm functions. If I could change anything about this system, it would be to allow me to permanently disable these two functions.

Bottom Line

All things considered, this is a very cost-effective full-featured alarm that can provide additional peace of mind when you leave your bike unattended. You would be hard-pressed to find an alarm system as easy to install with as many features in this price range. Add in the reduction in insurance premiums, and it's hard to think of a reason not to have one.

InterNatrix, LLC.—5341 Old Highway 5, Suite 206 #125; Woodstock, GA 30188; 770-310-3895; www.internatrix.com