

<http://www.i-symbian.com/forum/articles.php?action=viewarticle&artid=69>

Qix for Series 60 - The Intelligent Assistant

By Asri al-Baker

Qix (pronounced Quiks) is a system developed by ZiCorp to enhance user's experience in using and navigating around smartphones. It offers quick access to operations that normally take multiple keypresses. As a matter of fact, Qix sits on the front end of the system and blends naturally with the system, providing users with richer and more useful user experience.

For Symbian, Qix for Series 60 should be released anytime from now and I had the opportunity to test-drive this amazing piece of technology on a Nokia 6630 and this short observation should provide you with a quick information of how Qix works.

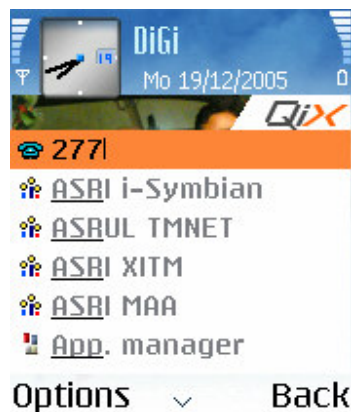
Usage

After installation process, you have to enable Qix by launching the Qix launcher and set it to "On - Qix by Zi".



Now, here's the most interesting part. Qix does not open itself like other application but it sits quietly in the background, ready to work anytime from the standby screen.

To use Qix, simply type anything on the standby screen. That is pressing any key. For example, pressing key 2 followed by key 7 will produce the following combination :



Whatever appear on the screen is accessible and, highlight and press Options to produce a context menu where user can select what to do with the selected data. For example, if the data is a Name found from the contact database, you can choose to :

Call

Send SMS

View Contact Info

Edit Contact Info

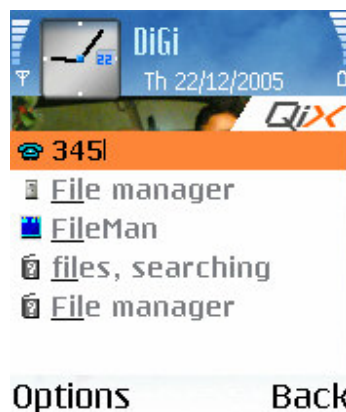


Select

Back

This "intelligent assistant" applies to all data stored in the memory. Not only for contact database. For example, if you want to find information on the help file, just type your inquiry on the standby screen and Qix will find it for you. Clever aint it!

Another very useful feature is the quick application launcher where bypressing the first few letters of an application on the standby scree, you can launch the application without going to the launcher. Here, I typed 3,4,5 (F, I, L) to launch Symbianware's FileManager and Qix prompted me a few options. Just click on the FileMan and it is launched. Cool!

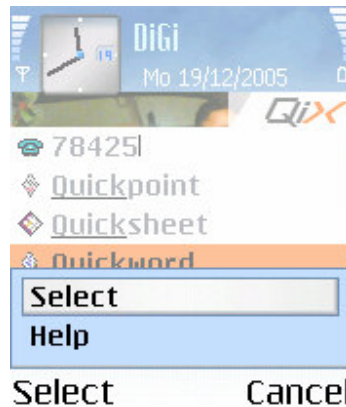


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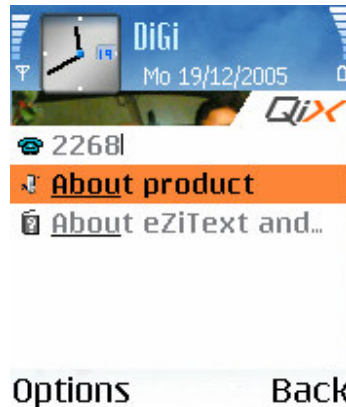
Usability

I'm not going to explain in detail about what Qix can and cant do because it is still in development and I'm sure there will be other functions and features to be implemented in the finished products. However, I will talk about one thing, **USABILITY**. Which is why Qix is designed for.

As phones are going smarter, there's one thing going the other direction. It's the **EASE OF USE**. For example, finding information stored in the phone could sometime takes several seconds and performing operations could take another few seconds. Scrolling down menus and options on modern smartphones could be a nightmare for beginners. This is where Qix came to the rescue.



Series 60 from the very beginning lacks a very important function, a **GLOBAL SEARCH**. I'm sure a Palm user understands what I'm talking about. On Palm OS devices, there's a function where you can search anything in anywhere. And there is no application like it on Series 60. Only recently, Odendahl Solutions released Mobile Search but that works and functions differently from Qix.



By sitting on the front end of the system, Qix give users a very "intelligent assistant" to do whatever operations related to daily operation. There's no more scrolling ups and downs in contacts database to call someone. Infact, once you are familiar with Qix, it's hard to imagine to live without it. Qix provides fast access to your data with minimal efforts.

I'm not sure how ZiCorp will market Qix but IMHO, it is best if Qix is shipped with all Series 60 smartphones and becomes the default front end information management. With Qix, the learning process in navigating and using Series 60 is minimal. From what I've heard, ZiCorp has signed a deal with Nokia to include Qix and it's intelligent text solution (eZiText & eZiTap) on future Series 60.

Conclusion

As for me, I'm very happy with Qix and cant imagine having to delve deep in the menu (and lost!). I will keep it on my 6630 and if I see someone else is scratching his head and cursing his Series 60, I know he is not using Qix! Heheh...

