

Re: Crossovers

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- *From:* Jack Erbes <jackerbes@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
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Malcolm Hoar wrote:

I am looking for a GPS that can be used in the car (actually two cars) and for occasional hikes.

I like what I've read about the Garmin GPSMAP 60CSX but I fear the lack of voice prompts combined with the small display will make it less than wonderful for driving. If only it had voice prompts... <sigh>.

Voice prompts are for wimps! Real navigators do not need them (although they will usually enjoy them if they are there).

Do not underestimate the power of the 60/76 "x" series Turn Preview page when you have a Follow Road route activated. That is strong magic!

It gives you a two line, three data box, large font display. The upper data box describes the upcoming maneuver and that line can expand itself to a second line temporarily if needed to impart more information. Below that are two data boxes counting down the distance (miles, then yards, then feet) and the time remaining in minutes and seconds. So on the top of the screen you see:

Turn onto US 1 West
3.6mi 08:34

Below that is a large (2/3rd's of the screen height?) image that depicts the maneuver. In this case I see large white arrow showing a 75 degree or so left turn, that is overlaid on a wide magenta line that represents the intended route, there is a narrow red line depicting the road I am on and will be leaving.

I have the Tones setup menu set to sound two distinctly different alarm sounds for initial and final turning warnings. The critical signals are received with my head up and eyes out where they should be.

The maneuver info is all acquired in brief glance (or in two glances if needed), the distance and time remaining values are constantly updated, and when I hear the initial and final tones I usually have myself in the correct lane, my turn spotted, and pretty much have to be an idiot to not make the right maneuver.

As received, the Turn Preview page will be turned off, the Follow Roads routing will not be offered (you'll get a Off road route). To get the most out of a 60/76 "x" series handheld you have to apply yourself a little and learn how to use it.

Re: Crossovers

How well does it work? Do you know Boston's Logan International Airport? That is a swarming madhouse of roads built in and around a series of tunnels and overpasses (including the infamous "Big Dig").

Twice in the last two weeks I have gotten in a car at rental car agencies near Logan and activated a Follow Road route. One was to Falmouth, MA and the second time to Newport, RI. I was clueless as to exactly where I was and how to get to the roads I wanted to use. I know little more than that I wanted to get on I-93 South.

Within 15 seconds of power up the 76Cx gave me clear and explicit directions and got me out of there without a hitch both times. And that included a brief "loss of GPS signal" in one of the tunnels both times. The receiver (laying on the passenger seat) quickly regained a fix and resumed navigating as soon as it got some sky view.

If you know the Cape Cod area and Massachusetts in general, you'll know about the infamous "roundabouts". The Garmin 76Cx with City Navigator North America deals with those very well. Even that notorious one right by the Hyannis Airport.

Those are simply the most versatile GPS receivers in the world when set up right and when you are using it right. I have "discussed" this point with "experts" here and in the real world and they were running with their decks awash with inexperience and ignorance. They simply have not figured it out yet.

I don't argue that a dash mounted unit intended for use with a car, with a larger display and voice prompts is not a better way to do it in a car. But it is not essential to have all that and give up nearly all the flexibility you have in a handheld.

I can't be alone here. But the only product I have found that seems to be designed for this kind of usage appears to be the Magellan CrossoverGPS. Again, based on the reviews I've read, the implementation was *almost* successful but not quite.

Magellan scares me. I shifted from Magellan Meridians to a Garmin 76Cx a little over a year ago. Magellan simply had nothing that compared on hardware (display, SiRF III receivers, antenna sensitivity, battery life, etc.). Since then the Magellan line has been divested/acquired and the new owners moved their support operations to India. They are not getting good reports or reviews for their software updates and map data updates. If you read the alt.science.gps.magellan newsgroup the postings are way down from previous years and not all that positive. I think Magellan might be in its death throes or headed that direction.

I don't consider Magellan to be a good choice or smart buy in comparison to Garmin right now. I'm not a brand loyalist, I buy what works best for me. I don't change brands quickly or on a whim. I think I'll be with Garmin for at least a few more years just on the receivers and map data I have now.

Is anyone aware of another device I should be considering? Or should I just wait and see if Magellan produce a second generation crossover that is hopefully a little closer to perfect?

A Lowrance was mentioned in passing here a while back, a model similar to the Garmin "x" series, and it did not sound bad. I made a mental note to take a close look at the Lowrance line before I buy again.

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Some of my more important requirements:

- * Automotive/pocket/hand held
- * Waterproof and drop-proof
- * SIRF-III and WAAS
- * Provision for external antenna
- * Street Maps (USA)
- * Voice prompts
- * Routing and re-routing
- * Logging waypoints/routes
- * Decent battery life
- * USB

All of the Garmin "x" series handhelds will meet all of those the requirements. You can do a feature comparison here:

<https://buy.garmin.com/shop/shop.do?CID=145>

The models that do not have an "x" in the model name do not use external memory for storing mapping. I consider that an essential feature as I normally travel with and use street maps, marine charts, and topo maps. You can only use one mapping type at a time be you can switch them quickly on the fly.

I just want a GPS; I don't need a poor cellphone, radio, MP3 player, camera, teevee, entertainment center, or coffee maker ;-)

I think the 60CSx or 76CSx will satisfy all your needs. They have identical displays, the same software features, and perform the same. The difference is in the look, feel, and button locations primarily. I like the shape and button configuration on the 76 better than the 60, others prefer the 60.

And when you look for a dash mounted model for the car, consider the refurbished StreetPilot 2610. Those are less than \$300 now and are amazing good. They include voice prompts for turning directions but do not pronounce street names.

Can you imagine that a piece of software being able to pronounce the name of nearly every street and road in America and not create and generate as much confusion as it would good guidance? I'll believe it when I see it. Will those models have a "Huh?" button?

Jack

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