Mobile Control II

Since smart phones with touch screens have almost completely replaced the conventional mobile phone, model train enthusiasts and manufacturers face the question how to employ more powerful devices for controlling model trains. As a result of this, many apps have been developed lately, which can be uploaded onto your mobile phone and used for running your trains.

This concept, however, has one disadvantage, namely that smart phones have not been primarily designed for running model trains. Due to the lack of suitable input elements the operator is forced to spend most of the time looking at the display. The limits become quickly obvious, once the battery of the phone has been discharged and nobody can reach you by phone anymore.

We at ESU had a look at the question on how to utilize the advantages of the smart phone technology and combine it with the needs of model train enthusiasts.

It is with great joy that we now present the results of our considerations. With the new Mobile Control II you have wireless control of your locomotives, accessories and routes simply by radio control!

Open Platform

The completely new development of the Mobile Control II is based on Android. We have created a powerful basis for this open, globally used operating system: The ARM® Cortex® A8 micro processor clocked with 1.3 GHz can access 1 GB RAM and controls a high resolution 3.2 inch TFT colour display. There are 4 GB flash memory for storing apps and data. A capacitive touch screen assures touch-free data entry. For communicating with the "outside world" there is an USB port and a WLAN interface. Thanks to the standardized radio control interface, trouble free operation of your layout can be assured at any time. The range can be extended with WLAN repeaters, if necessary.

The permanently installed, powerful Lithium polymer rechargeable battery will serve you right through the most extensive operating sessions. Recharge the batteries of your Mobile Control II simply by using the USB battery charger of your mobile phone or any other USB port.

Due to the open platform design you may add further apps for the Google Play Store at any time.

Ergonomics & functionality combined

When you hold your Mobile Control II in your hands for the first time you will immediately notice its excellent ergonomics: all data entry elements can easily be reached with one hand, the most important functions you can even reach "without looking": you may still look at your layout and your trains.

This is due to the central, motorised throttle knob with end stop. With this knob you can delicately control the speed of your trains and change direction.

For activating functions simply touch the pictograms on the display. The display also serves for changing functions – exactly the same way as you know it from your telephone. Finally two buttons each on either side serve for changing direction or triggering the most important functions.

Teamwork

The Mobile Control II is perfectly tuned for the interaction with the ECoS command stations: the ECoS synchronises all data with the radio controlled throttle. Therefore you do not have to enter any data locally. Of course, the correct names and symbols will also be displayed for accessories and routes.

Running locomotives

The Mobile Control II can control all locomotives registered in the ECoS and supports 14, 28 or 128 speed steps. All important locomotive properties such as name, symbol, function mapping as well as symbols for function buttons will be taken from the ECoS and will be displayed correctly.

You may switch up to 28 functions for each locomotive, which, of course, can either be momentary or continuous functions.

Controlling accessories

All accessories and routes displayed on the control panel of the ECoS can be switched. Of course the differentiation between double, treble and quadruple aspects will remain fully intact and displayed with the correct symbol on the display.

More fun with the game

The high resolution (480 x 800 pixels, 280 dpi), backlit TFT display of the Mobile Control II always keeps you up to date on the most important operating parameters. Furthermore you can see if another player controls a certain locomotive or if an emergency stop has been triggered.

Clever connections

The Mobile Control II applies the WLAN standard for communicating with the ECoS. Therefore you must connect the command station to a WLAN network. Should you already have a WLAN router (e.g. AVM® FritzBox®) you may simply connect the ECoS to one of these routers. The ECoS and the Mobile Control II will find each other automatically.

It is no problem if you do not wish to connect your model train layout with your home network respectively if you wish to remain flexible for exhibitions: We supply a mini access point for the Mobile Control II on request that can easily be set up in a few steps with the ECoS.

When your layout keeps growing you may operate up to 16 Mobile Control II throttles with your ECoS. Thus, for instance, every member of your club can control exactly those locomotives that have been assigned to her or him.

Questions about Mobile Control II

- ⊖What happens if the battery is no longer working? Do I need to discard the device?

  24.02.2014

  Of course not. In contrast to most modern mobile phones, it is possible to exchange the battery. After removing the rear plastic cover by simply unscrewing it, you may disconnect the battery and replace it with a new one. ESU will supply spare parts.

- ⊖Can I use the Mobile Control II in parallel with my ECoSControl Radio?

  24.02.2014

  Yes. You can operate both systems at the same time on one ECoS Command station.

- ⊖Can I use the Mobile Control II also with other types of command stations?

  24.02.2014

  In principle the Mobile Control II is as an open platform basically open for operation with other digital command stations. One requirement is, of course, that these command station have a WLAN interface. Furthermore additional software (apps) by others has to be installed on the Mobile Control II. ESU invites all software developers to adapt their apps for the Mobile Control II. The apps provided by ESU currently only support the ESU command stations.

- ⊖I would like to adapt my app to the Mobile Control II. Is that possible?

  24.02.2014

  Of course. ESU will publish the programming interface (API) for additional data entry elements so that your app can control the throttle knob as well as the four buttons on the sides.

- ⊖Do you supply a battery charger with the Mobile Control II?

  24.02.2014

  The Mobile Control II Set 50113 will be supplied with a mains plug power unit for the mini access point. The latter may also be used for recharging the batteries of the device. The single handheld throttle 50114 will be supplied with an USB charger cable that may be connected to any commercially available USB charger (e.g. for mobile phones).

- ⚫Why has the Mobile Control II a plug for a headset?

24.02.2014

You can use a headset (earphones plus microphone) for listening to music while running your trains or, for instance, to communicate via Skype® with others taking part in the operating session. Keep in mind: your Mobile Control II is a fully fledged Android device!

- ⚫How big is the handheld throttle?

24.02.2014

The dimensions are ca. 16.5cm x 5.5cm x 1.5cm and thus the throttle can be handled comfortably with one hand.

- ⚫Will you continue to manufacture the ECoSControl Radio?

24.02.2014

Will you continue to manufacture the ECoSControl Radio?

No. Mobile Control II will completely replace all previously supplied radio control devices.