

Robert Follis Associates

WI-FI RADIO

# is your oyster now

**LOUNGE LIZARD** ★★★★★



**Roberts WM201** — typically £200, from [www.hifibitz.co.uk](http://www.hifibitz.co.uk)

**Luxury tabletop unit with an air of quality**

With its piano-black finish and demure styling, this hefty, 12in-wide Roberts exudes class. The WM201 has no physical controls save for a single pushable rotary control; nevertheless, with its three-line backlit display and well-designed menus, it proved the easiest to operate. A couple of twists and pushes accessed any feature, from the 12 station presets to the sleep timer. The Roberts's stereo speakers also delivered the best audio, sounding expansive and detailed. In fact, on high-bit-rate (256kbps) stations, it was far better than any DAB-based radio. The Roberts's lack of preset buttons means you have to use the remote control to flit between stations; and it is not cheap. Still, it's the best wi-fi radio in town.

**STYLE MONKEY** ★★★★★



**Tangent Quattro** — typically £190, or £180 from [www.digitaldirect.co.uk](http://www.digitaldirect.co.uk)

**Swish looks and warm sound**

A slice of Scandinavian technology is often pricier than a weekend in Oslo, but this suave Tangent is not exorbitant. Though this is a wi-fi model, it employs the same calibre of design and intuitive controls as the company's impressive DAB radios. The trim, 8in-wide case has separate volume and tuning knobs at either end, plus 10 further buttons and a clear two-line display. With so many stations to choose from, the five preset buttons, which double up as media-player controls, proved invaluable. There is only a single, top-mounted speaker, and it was hard to notice the difference between stereo and mono on such a small product. That said, the Tangent produced a deeper and warmer sound than even the Roberts.

**THE ORIGINATOR** ★

**Acoustic Energy** — typically £200, or £169 from [www.johnlewis.com](http://www.johnlewis.com)

**Well designed with crisp sound, but plasticky**

This was the first proper wi-fi radio sold in the UK, and it remains an eminently sound choice. It's a compact design, at 5in x 7in, but it still felt reassuringly solid. The combination of a decent LCD display, a large, rubberised control knob and buttons (five for presets, the rest for tuning) made the radio among the easiest to operate. As you would expect of a speaker-maker such as Acoustic Energy, the sound was top class. There's only a front-mounted speaker, but it proved quality — smooth yet crisp, and punchy too. The Acoustic Energy sounded like the Tangent, albeit a touch behind it overall. Only its cheap, plasticky finish detracts from a fine package.

**CHEAP AS CHIPS** ★★★★★



**Freecom Music Pal** — typically £90, or £80 from [www.play.com](http://www.play.com)

**Good, quirky design yet flimsy sound**

**SOUND VALUE** ★★★★★



**Intempo GX-01** — typically £120, or £100 from [www.tesco.com](http://www.tesco.com)

**Big on value but poorly finished**

**GOING MOBILE** ★

**Revo Pico Wi-Fi** — typically £150, from [www.aqwirelessaudio.com](http://www.aqwirelessaudio.com)

**Do-it-all portable hamstrung by weak sound**

The Revo packs plenty of technology into a 6.5in x 4in box. It's the only model with a built-in rechargeable battery and analogue FM when you are out of range of a wire