

A REVIEW OF THE LIQUIVISION X1 COMPUTER AND V-PLANNER LIVE

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Technology is something wonderful. A few years back, Trimix computers were as common as a friendly Taxi driver in a traffic jam. And CCR computers were almost non-existent. The few models available on the market were the size of a toaster and had the same memory.

Nowadays, the Tek Diving market is expanding and computer-controlled diving is becoming the norm. People enjoy the flexibility of a computer when it comes to multi-gas, multi-depth and multi-day diving. The now famous VR3 and Nitek are quite popular, with HS Explorer and Cochran following close behind.

But not all multi-gas computers are born equal. A new computer has been launched on the market that could definitely change the way Technical divers select their so precious instrument. After the F1, a digital depth gauge, Liquivision made the X1, a surprising computer with a lot of interesting features.

The first thing you have to admit when you see an X1 for the very first time is that the X1 doesn't look like any other dive computer:

- It's **incredibly small** (half the size of a VR3) but with an extremely bright display. This organic LED display makes all the information easy to read in any position and any environment. The screen is strongly built and scratch resistant, and you can adjust the brightness or even the size of the digits.
- There is **no button** that can break. You access all the functions by tapping the computer on its different faces. You can adjust the strength you'd like to tap the X1, depending if you are the size of a Chihuahua dog or if you have a rather sadist mentality and like hitting hard.
- The **battery is rechargeable** and there is no access to it. The result is the lack of potential failure due to a flooded battery compartment. But because the computer is a little bit greedy, you need to re-charge the Lithium Polymer battery quite often, even if its lifetime is about 10 years.
- You can **choose** which **decompression model** you want to use. Thanks to different developers, you



X1 with GAP

can actually upload various algorithms from V-Planner Live (a specific version of V-Planner) to GAP X1 (with Buehlmann model). Depending of the 3rd party software you choose, you get access to very different functions (Nitrox, Trimix, CCR, digital compass, etc).

Liquivision is a Canadian company managed by Eric Fattah and Margaret Malewski. Their original product and expertise were for the free divers: goggles then digital depth gauges (F1 not produced anymore).

Then came the X1, thanks to an increased demand from technical divers to have a computer than can go deeper than 150m/500ft without displaying hieroglyphs or becoming an expensive shelter for tiny fishes. The X1 is actually guaranteed up to 330m/1080ft, a depth you don't explore on your daily reef dive.

The X1 comes as depth gauge/bottom timer but for something around USD100, you can upload V-Planner Live, a specifically designed version of the now popular V-Planner Decompression Software. Ross Hemingway, its designer, put a lot of efforts to have exactly the same decompression model in V-Planner Live and the original V-Planner Software. Divers who are used to the desktop software will get the same dive plans for the X1. They can also cut custom tables using the software, then use their X1 to calculate their dive plan based on their actual dive profile and keep the tables as back-up in case of emergency.



X1 with V-Planner Live during deco

V-Planner Live includes Nitrox and Trimix decompression, and of course constant pO₂ CCR diving. But V-Planner Live has also some interesting additional features, one of them being a digital compass.

All divers will appreciate the extremely intuitive User Graphic Interface similar to the one found on mobile phones, that allows to quickly understand how to change the different settings both at the surface and underwater without carrying an extensive User Manual.

Rebreather divers will also love the flexibility and accessibility to all the parameters, allowing the user to change to any kind of setpoint or mix at any moment. A nice feature would be to have a way to quickly switch back and forth between two pre-selected setpoints.

You can also easily switch from CCR to Open Circuit mode, and you can choose between two different sets of bailout mixes. However one can regret that switching back from OC to CCR is not possible.

The X1 gives you some very accurate data, not only about temperature or any kind of depth you might explore, but also your ascent rate AND your descent rate. Both rates appear as clear number in the system you want (m/min, ft/min, %), something very useful to fine-tune your dive planning and your decompression.

Decompression stops can also be displayed as accurate stop depth (conventional stops every 3m/10ft) or as a depth zone and a ceiling, thanks to a cute yellow smiley telling you where and when to stop for the most efficient decompression.

And of course, as the X1 comes with a charger, a bunch of socket adapters and an USB cable with its adapter, it's very easy to upload different software, upgrade the existing one or simply download the dives done.

After the few problems experienced at the beginning (charge, battery life, gel, etc.), it really looks like the X1 computer has now the maturity of a proper, performant and extremely convenient dive computer for recreational and technical divers alike.

Quick Summary

Liquivision X1 computer	
Plus ↕	Minus ↕
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small and compact • Extreme depth rating • Very bright display • Low risk of flooding • USB cable included • Several softwares • Accurate descent/ascent rates • Competitive price 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One more charger to carry • Limited battery life
V-Planner Live	
Plus ↕	Minus ↕
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital compass • Exact copy of V-Planner • CCR and Trimix modes included • Intuitive and easy to understand graphic interface • Nice PC interface and data logging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs time to set up new mixes with high He or O2 content