

Why I Chose The Icom 7610 Over The Flex 6400M

When the price of the [Icom 7610](#) was announced in the US, many reservation holders started looking at the Flex 6400M as an alternative. The Icom 7610 is priced at \$3,899.95. The Flex 6400M is \$2,999.00 (add \$300 for the auto tuner). That's a pretty big difference and they are comparable SDR transceivers. The Flex 6400M has knobs too!

Why did I choose the Icom 7610 over the Flex 6400M? When I saw the price and researched the Flex 6400M, I almost persuaded myself to go with the [Flex](#).



Features I Like About The Flex 6400M

- The [Flex 6400M](#) has a few knobs and I love the touchscreen. It is hands-down the best touchscreen on any HF rig. It's an 8" IPS touchscreen with a resolution of 1920 x 1200 and there is a HDMI output on the rear. The IPS touchscreen alone almost got me. See the Icom 7610 info below.

- I wouldn't have bought the auto tuner, so it would have been about \$900 less than the Icom 7610 (not really a feature).
- Two VFO knobs on the front. The Icom has just one, but you can add the [RC-28 remote control USB encoder](#).
- Flex 6400M remote operation with Smartlink looks like it's a breeze. Use an iPad or PC without any hassles!
- Full Duplex (with stipulations) The Icom doesn't have it.
- 7 MHz panadapter bandwidth. I would love to see that much of the bands on a 30" monitor. It may be too much for me to handle ☐ The Icom 7610 has 1 MHz.



Features I Like About The Icom 7610

- Dual RF Direct Sampling Receivers. Independent receivers, separate antennas. The Flex 6400M shares the same antenna with the receivers.
- I/Q signal output from the USB connector (provided in future firmware). Both radios have I/Q output.
- RTTY (FSK). The Icom 7300 spoiled me and I enjoy FSK. The filtering is superb. The Flex 6400M doesn't offer FSK.
- The [Icom 7610](#) has a RS-BA1 server onboard. No PC required at the rig for remote access. Similar in both radios.
- (2) USB ports on the front for either a USB stick, keyboard or mouse. There is an SD card slot on the front too. (2) USB ports on the rear, one is USB 3.0. The Flex 6400M has (2) USB 2.0 ports on the rear.
- A and B external speaker jacks on the rear. Flex has one.
- Microphone, phones and key jack on the front. The Flex has 3.5mm jacks on the rear.
- Dual clock displays on the front. Convenient!

- The Icom 7610 has a 7" touchscreen that is 800 x 480 resolution. It's much better than the IC-7300 and better than the IC-7600. I like the layout and Multi Function Meter display better than the Flex 6400M. There's also a DVI-D video output on the rear of the IC-7610.



Just one of many display options.

Icom IC-7610 vs Flex 6400M

There is a lot more, and I mean A LOT MORE, to these radios than the few things I threw out there. As far as specs and features go, they look pretty equal.

After considering everything, this is what decided it for me:

1. I enjoy using FSK with N1MM and MMTTY in RTTY contests. The twin peak filter is very effective in RTTY mode.
2. My familiarity with Icom and the Icom 7300 is a big advantage. There's not much of a learning curve for me.
3. The IC-7300 really delivered and I'm confident the IC-7610 will too.
4. My LDG AT-600ProII external auto tuner connects to this rig just like it does on the IC-7300.
5. NR and NB are proven to be effective. I need this.
6. The Icom 7610 front is not as software (menu) driven as the Flex Radio. Operating without a PC will be better with the IC-7610.
7. The Icom IC-7610 just flat out looks better than the Flex, IMO.



That is what tipped the scales in favor of the Icom 7610. It was close between the two and I am sure I'll have a Flex someday. They make great SDR transceivers in my opinion.

Surprisingly, I got a free Heil mic from [HRO](#) with the purchase of the IC-7610. It should be in my shack early December.

I'm keeping the Icom 7300. There is still more to do with it.

What do you think about these SDR transceivers? Did you decide on the Flex 6400M? Getting the Icom 7610?

Please comment below.

73's Rich, K0PIR

Sources:

[Icom America – Icom 7610](#)

[Flex Radio – Flex 6400M](#)

[IC-7610 Yahoo Group](#)

[Icom IC-7610 Facebook Group](#)

[Flex Radio Yahoo Group](#)