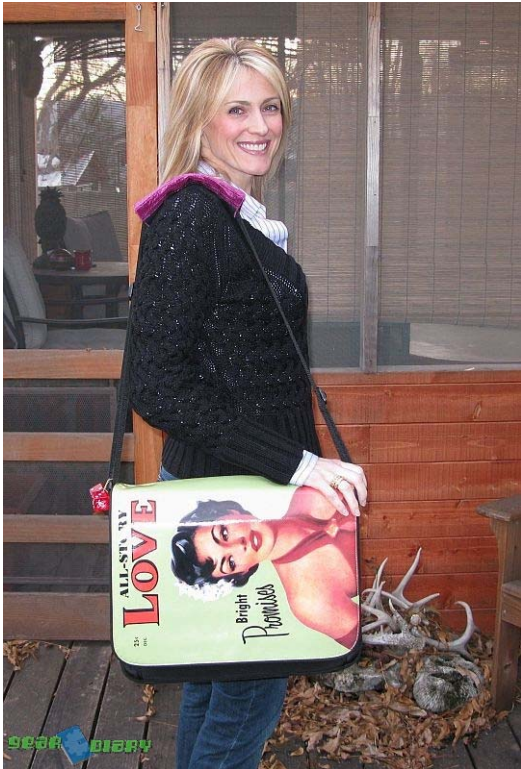


# gear DIARY

I was eager to review the **Mobile Edge** Cutebug Laptop Messenger Bag, because it is one of the most original designs I've ever seen. Combining the extremely well executed features we have come to expect from Mobile Edge with the sassy iconic images Maddie Powers' designs borrow from 1940s and 50s pulp fiction magazines, the Cutebug Laptop Messenger Bag is one **hot tamale**.



In person, the bag is far lovelier than the Mobile Edge site pictures convey; the colors are deeper and the materials more luxurious. There are three major textures and materials at play: the green printed vinyl on the front of the bag, the smooth black nylon composing the sides and bottom of the bag and the exquisitely lush purple velvet on the back. The beauty of the vinyl and the nylon are that they are dirt and stain resistant, the only downside to the velvet is that it is nappy - making it a natural magnet for cat hair and lint, and meaning that it might drag against your clothing more than a smooth-sided bag would, depending upon what you are wearing.

The bag measures approximately 17" wide x 13" tall x 5.5" deep. It is made to hold up to a 15.4" screen laptop, measuring no more than 15.5" wide x 12" tall x 3.8" thick. And you know it **kills me** that my X205 is just too darn big to fit inside! 😞

As you might have guessed by the picture above, there is a 15" wide slash pocket on the back of the bag. This is a perfect place to store magazines, newspapers, plane tickets, or any other slim items that need immediate and easy access.

When the pocket is not in use, there is a 2" long Velcro patch in its middle to keep things secure; I am not a huge fan of Velcro, but I totally approve of this placement.

Here's where the Velcro gets a little bit out of hand: on the front flap of the bag there are two 8" long x 2" wide strips which will catch on their partnering patch which measures 10" long x 1.5" wide. The design **is clever** because it allows the flap to properly close, even when the bag has been completely over-stuffed. But the downside is that no matter how quiet you try to be, there will be a noticeable *rrrrrrrrrrrip* when the bag is opened; it's a trade-off, to be sure.

Attached to the left side of the bag's 1.5" wide adjustable woven nylon shoulder strap is a pair of large red Cutebug branded "Lucky Seven" dice. I really liked these and for whatever reason, they seemed to get as much attention as the beauty queen on the front when I showed the bag to friends. The removable shoulder pad is approximately 8.5" long x 2.5" wide. It is basically a padded purple velvet wrap which is held in place with a strip of Velcro.

The side that sits on the wearer's shoulder is a grippy, almost rubberized patch of black material which keeps the pad from slipping.

Once the front flap has been opened, three compartments are revealed. In the very front, there is a padded open section measuring approximately 13.75" wide x 11" tall. On the back side of this pocket, there is an organizational wall with a gusseted mobile phone slot measuring approximately 4.5" tall x 3" wide x 0.75"

deep. Next to it is an open slash pocket measuring 5.5" wide x 4.5" tall. To the right of that are two slim pen pockets; by "slim" I mean they will fit the average rollerball, but not your fattest Meisterstück. On the opposing wall is a flat zippered pocket measuring 12" wide x 9.2" tall.



Immediately behind this front section is the main compartment of the bag which is divided into two areas; the first is an open pocket measuring approximately 16" wide x 12.5" tall x 2" deep - wide enough and deep enough to hold most popular hardback books or a batch of files. On the forward facing wall there is a flat zippered pocket measuring 11.5" wide x 9.75" tall.

The last section is the fully padded laptop sleeve, which is completely lined in 0.75" bubble squares. This compartment is so padded that I am confident it would protect an encapsulated laptop from just about any bump, ding, or other jarring effect. I wouldn't suggest dropping the laptop on the ground while it is in the bag (unless from a distance of a few inches), but I am sure that this padded chamber will offer adequate protection for those who are careless about roughly slinging their laptop bags around.



Did I mention how cute the dice were? They bring to mind the over the top Dior Gambler bags of a few years back, without the busy animal prints and chains; just look at all of the textures represented here!

I believe that when you get to the end of this review and see the bag's price, you will be pleasantly surprised.

All that's left is to show the bag on a human, and so here I am; for reference I am 5'10". The bag's strap is long enough that it allows the bag to be worn on the shoulder or bandoleer style across the chest.

The Mobile Edge / Maddie Powers Cutebug Laptop Messenger Bag has got more personality than any I can remember reviewing. The good news is that if the bag is too large for you, there is also a version for laptops with up to a 14.1" screen; the bad news is that there isn't a version for 17" laptops. Ah well...it's all about mobility, right? 😊

The Mobile Edge / Maddie Powers Cutebug Laptop Messenger Bag is available from Mobile Edge and other retailers.

**MSRP:** \$89.99

**What I Like:** This bag is fashionable, well-made, and cute as anything; laptop compartment is nicely padded; lots of pockets and opportunities for organization; extremely well priced

**What Needs Improvement:** Although this bag is a near perfect blend of form, function and value, I would have liked a different front fastening method than Velcro...but that's just me.