

First Look: OLPC's XO Laptop

By *srlinuxx*

Created 06/01/2008 - 4:46pm

Submitted by srlinuxx on Sunday 6th of January 2008 04:46:56 PM Filed under [OLPC](#) [1]

To say the \$188 XO laptop produced by the One Laptop Per Child organization is not your typical laptop is an understatement. For one, the XO is a tech triumph for its low price and rugged design, and will amaze any child in a developing nation (the laptop's intended recipient) lucky enough to get one. On the other hand, anyone familiar with a Windows-based notebook and who expects a similar experience with the XO will be sorely disappointed.

The production notebook supplied by the OLPC group is chock full of impressive technological firsts. It has a power-saving display that can be viewed in direct sunlight, a laptop chassis that can withstand a monsoon or sandstorm, and innards with no moving parts (fans or disk drives) which in turn reduces potential parts failure.

Tradeoffs

Technological innovations aside, I found some harsh tradeoffs with the XO compared to today's Windows-based notebooks. First, don't expect to touch-type on the XO -- the rubberized keyboard is too small for most adults and geared toward child-sized hands. My fat fingers couldn't cope and I had to resort to hunt-and-peck typing. But anyone comparing the XO to a Windows laptop is missing the point. It's the tradeoffs that help keep the XO inexpensive, durable, and kid-friendly.

[Windows it Ain't](#) [2]

[OLPC](#)

Source URL: <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/23136>

Links:

[1] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/128>

[2] <http://www.pcworld.com/article/id,140931-c,notebooks/article.html>