

Press Release

Source: OLPC

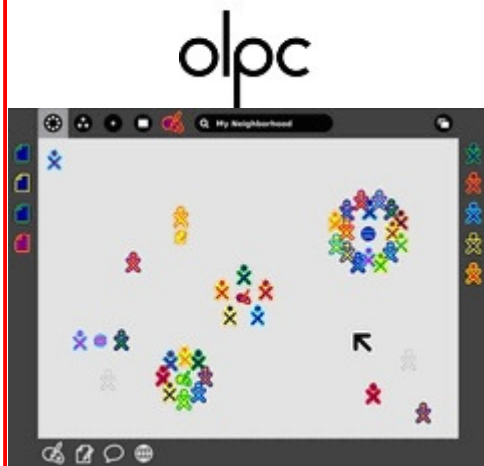
OLPC Announces First-of-Its-Kind User Interface for XO Laptop Computer

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Sugar Interface is Designed to Foster Collaborative Learning among Children in Developing Countries

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--One Laptop per Child (OLPC), a non-profit organization with the goal of providing laptop computers to all children in developing nations, today announced a breakthrough user interface (UI), called Sugar, for OLPC's innovative XO laptop computer. The Sugar UI, jointly developed with Red Hat and Pentagram, is the first to have been purpose-built as an educational environment for children using laptops. It is designed to support the learning experiences of elementary- and secondary-school children in poor, often rural communities by providing them with opportunities to freely explore, experiment and express themselves.

Source: OLPC



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The Sugar UI promotes collaborative learning through child-to-child and child-to-teacher sharing. The realities that OLPC's XO laptops will be used by children of varying ages, nationalities, and who have little or no prior computer experience, were critical considerations when designing the UI. As a result, OLPC created Sugar to be simple and intuitive without limiting the complexity of ideas that children may explore or express.

"The desktop metaphor familiar to most laptop users today may make sense in business settings, but it's not geared for children collaborating with each other and their teachers," said Walter Bender, OLPC's president of software and content. "With Sugar, we've created something wholly new and suited to the way children understand and describe their world and relationships. Most importantly, Sugar is

easy for children to learn to use, yet it's also rich and capable of fostering unbounded discovery, learning, and exploration."

Sugar is modeled after a typical, modern-day operating environment, but with key modifications:

Typical	Sugar
Desktop	Neighborhood
Menu bar	Frame
Hierarchical file system	Journal
Applications	Activities
Files	Objects

In Sugar, the interface hosts four discrete views: home, friends, neighborhood and

activity. Each of the views relates to a particular goal of the OLPC project and enhances learning by fostering communities and social networking, and by enabling access to large repositories of knowledge such as Web sites, and school or community servers.

Surrounding any view is the "Frame", which is comparable to a menu bar on a traditional interface. The frame serves as a connecting point between activities, people, objects and applications. The left, top, and right side of the frame represent people, places and things, while the bottom part signifies anything that needs action, such as an invitation or notification. A search bar is located on the top of the frame to search for people, activities, keywords, and tags. Results can be used to send invitations to people to join an activity, group, etc. Once an invitation has been accepted, the child's XO is displayed on the frame.

Home - The "home" view is closely equivalent to a modern-day computer desktop. It serves as the starting point to explore the "mesh network" - comprising a student and all those around him or her - and personal activities. From here, children can easily manage activities and jump to other views.

Friends - In the "friends" view, children can see which of their friends are on the network and in what activities they are participating. Children can also join any of the non-private activities and send invitations to start an activity of their own.

Neighborhood - The "neighborhood" view displays everyone in the mesh network, as well as all current activities taking place. It is one of the fundamental areas for exploration and collaboration, as it enables children to freely search the network, interact with each other and engage in varying activities.

Activity - This view displays the activities in which all of the actual exploration, collaboration and creation take place. In the "activity" view, applications run full-screen to help the children focus on one specific activity at a time.

For more information about the Sugar user interface and OLPC's XO laptop computer, visit <http://wiki.laptop.org> or email info@laptop.org.

About One Laptop per Child

One Laptop per Child (OLPC) is a non-profit organization created by Nicholas Negroponte and other faculty members from the MIT Media Lab to design, manufacture and distribute laptop computers that are sufficiently inexpensive to provide every child in the world access to acknowledge and modern forms of education. The laptops will be sold to governments and issued to children by schools on a basis of one laptop per child. These machines will be rugged, open source, and so energy efficient that they can be powered by a child manually. Mesh networking will give many machines Internet access from one connection. The pricing goal will start near \$100 and then steadily decrease.

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Contact:

For OLPC

Jodi Petri, 781-487-4692

press@racepointgroup.com

or

George Snell, 781-487-4608

press@racepointgroup.com

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