

# Is The OLPC Project Doomed?

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What began as an ambitious, but admirably noble dream of providing the world's underprivileged children an opportunity for the future is rapidly looking less like a charity and more like a sting operation as the project threatens to move from its present state of farce to a mechanism for exporting western corporate hegemony to the developing world.

Thankfully there are still some bright spots, Quanta Computer has promised to manufacture the OLPC notebook computers for just US\$3 profit per device. However, considering the enormous amount of publicity Taiwanese manufacturing giant is getting out of its association with such a grand philanthropic endeavour, it may have been more appropriate for it to offer the manufacturing at least at cost if not contributing a little from the company's own marketing budget.

Quanta Computer last week announced First Quarter 2007 results that showed its after-tax profit had increased 24 per cent over a year ago to US\$102 million for the first three months of this year.

The US\$100 laptop has now been priced at US\$175. The project leaders have always said it needs orders for at least US\$3 million to get the manufacturing underway. That will only buy about 17,000 units.

That's hardly enough to reverse decades of third world poverty and debt, but at US\$3 a pop its hardly making much impact to Quanta's business

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[OLPC](#)

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