CLIENT: *One Laptop Per Child* **PROJECT:** *One Laptop Per Child*

Inventing an Acceptable Alternative

STRATEGY:

Created an inexpensive, universal laptop computer as an educational tool for school-aged children in developing countries that capture the unique purpose of the OLPC mission in an optimistic spirit. For the $100 laptop, low cost means the most advanced technologies and high design.

BRAND:

Develop a high-touch expression of the brand through the use of color, expressive gestures, discoverable details and textures, and a logo system for the XO produced in 400 colors combinations allowing personalization of each laptop for each child.

PRODUCT:

The OLPC is a unique low cost and high design product with particular attention to user needs and a challenging use environment. Every feature serves a dual purpose as well as is drop proof, splash proof and kid friendly.

PACKAGING/COLLATERAL:

Created the OLPC XO icon that permeates throughout the laptop, from the texture on the handle, to the interface and all other brand elements of the OLPC.

RECOGNITION:

- IDSA, Gold Awards (Product) (Strategy), 2008
- Red Dot Design Award, 2008
- London Design Museum's Design of the Year, 2008
- INDEX "Community" Award, 2007
- ID Magazine "Concept Design", 2007
- Spark Award – Product Award, 2007
- IF Product Design Award, 2006
- Chicago Athenaeum – Good Design Award, 2006

"This is a rare creative project, as designers are mostly concerned with, and their work experienced by, 1 billion people in the world (the so called West), while the OLPC could touch the other 6 billion people that make up our planet."

› *Yves Behar*

THE BACKGROUND

The Power of Access

In today's world, information is power. But for a majority of the people on our planet, gaining access to information remains difficult. That is particularly true for children in the developing world. The nonprofit One Laptop Per Child (OLPC), formed at MIT by Nicholas Negroponte, conceived of a low-cost laptop that would lower the barriers that impede access to education, information, and communication for the world's most needy children. The idea of a $100 laptop was born.

Understanding that the core challenge of the project would involve the laptop's design, Negroponte chose fuseproject as OLPC's design partner. During the three year project, we participated in all phases of development, from strategy and product design to production. The end result is a laptop that represents a true synthesis of form and function.

THE STRATEGY

Low Cost Is Not Synonymous with Cheap

Making a cheap laptop is pretty easy, but making one with advanced, well-integrated technologies that can function under extreme conditions is another story. To build a machine with those criteria and to build it without compromise, necessitates innovative thinking and strategic design. OLPC entrusted fuseproject to do just that: develop a low cost, child-centric laptop that would be anything but cheap.

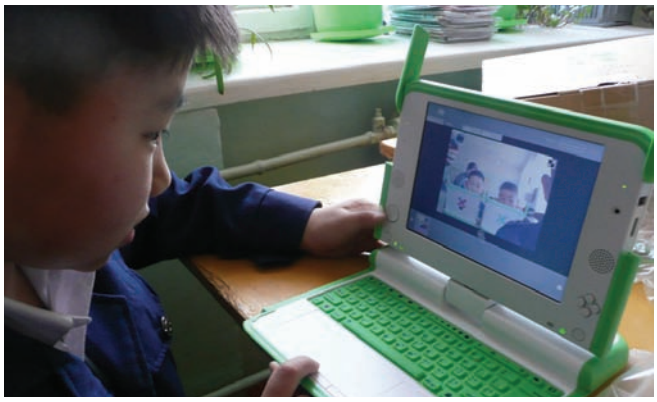
THE DESIGN SOLUTION

High Design Meets Dual Functionality

fuseproject delivered the OLPC XO in 2007. Designed specifically with the child-user in mind, the XO is approximately the size of a textbook and lighter than a lunchbox. The body is made of injection-molded plastic which is drop proof, splash proof, and dust proof. Built with a minimum of toxic materials, the XO is entirely recyclable, and uses a fraction of the power required by ordinary laptops. We also designed the XO icon that gives the laptop its singular character and which became integral to the product, its interface, and the OLPC brand.

Thanks to its flexible design and "transformer" hinge, the XO laptop easily assumes any of several configurations: standard laptop, e-book reading, and gaming modes.

Everything on the laptop serves at least two purposes. The antennas double as covers for the laptop's USB ports and as dual latches to close the clamshell. The handle is also an attachment for a shoulder strap. The surrounding colored bumper provides a protective seal to protect from dust as well as a tactile ergonomic palm surface. The screen is both a full color image screen and a high-contrast black and white screen so that it can be read under any light condition – from the pitch black of night to the bright light of day.



With the powerful, built-in Wi-Fi antennas, children are able to connect with each other, their schools and the web. The XO takes advantage of mesh network technology whereby the laptops themselves build a network organically. To do that effectively, the rabbit ear Wi-Fi antennas achieve a radius 3X that of a standard laptop.

The antennas presented a special problem during the design process. While integral to the laptop's connectivity, they were simultaneously cumbersome and fragile. fuseproject developed their dual use as USB covers and the final rabbit ear design gave the laptop a whimsical character that appeals directly to its end-users, children.

THE BUSINESS IMPACT

A Generation Transformed

With over 700,000 laptops distributed and many more orders under way, school systems across the developing world are reaching an unprecedented number of children, both urban and rural. OLPC is connecting children to education in a completely new fashion: children are given access to software and the internet while practicing their intuitive abilities to learn on a self-tutoring machine. By bringing the laptops home after school, the children continue to learn and have the opportunity to share knowledge with their communities. By owning a practical, beautiful and tactile object, the children acquire the pride and dignity inherent in having a tool they can call their own.

The OLPC XO laptops' success has spawned the next generation, the OLPC XOXO, which will be available in 2010. Using direct feedback from the children-users, the next-generation XO is being designed in direct response to their passion for learning, for sharing with each other, and for self-expression.

The OLPC program is currently in Argentina, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Ethiopia, Libya, Mexico, Mongolia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Romania, Rwanda, Thailand and Uruguay and it continues to grow.