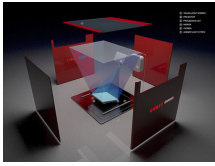


6 May 2008

By: Bogdan Botezatu, Hardware Editor



The Cubit surface
unfolded
Cubit

[Build Yourself a Surface Computer for Only \\$500](#)

The Cubit kit works on Windows, Linux and OS X

Microsoft's revolutionary Surface computers [have already hit the shelves](#) of a few selected companies such as AT&T and it seems that this kind of approach will revolutionize the way we interact with our computers. The extremely intuitive software teams up with a natural user interface (the hand) to put all the necessary data at your fingertips. Following Microsoft's success with Surface, a group of developers started an open-source project, also known as the Cubit, in order to deliver surface computing to the masses. While a genuine Surface computer is expected to sell later this year for about \$10,000, the Eyebeam group developed a DIY multitouch kit that is available for a price between \$500 and \$1,000. The kit is comprised of the table, frosted surface and most of the electronics, and the DIY enthusiasts would only have to come up with their own computer, a simple projector and a webcam. "CUBIT is an interactive surface for multitouch interactions. It was designed with the intention to redefine visual computing and depart from the mouse pointer paradigm. Fingers are seen as points of location, areas of contact, and vectors. Based on these sensory inputs the interface tries to generate graphical widgets which behave along preconceived human notions of physical objects." reads the project's webpage. When all the parts are correctly assembled, the interface will be able to distinguish between multiple points of contact, just like Microsoft's genuine Surface computer. The Cubit computer works in a similar manner to the Surface: an infrared ray of light is projected under the table, then reflected by the fingertip. All the infrared light changes are then processed by the webcam and sent to the software. The really interesting part is that you won't have to replace your operating system of choice in order to enjoy surface computing. The Cubit kit works on all the major operating systems, including Windows, Linux and OS X.