

By Bogdan Bozatu, Hardware Editor

[OLPC to Work on a Dual-Boot Version of XO](#)

Why bother building a cheap notebook, then add \$100 to its final cost?

One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) has started its collaboration with Microsoft in order to develop a dual-boot mechanism that will allow its XO sub-notebooks to run both Linux and Windows operating systems. Nicholas Negroponte agreed upon implementing Microsoft's software onto the OLPC notebooks as the software giant reconsidered its attitude towards the open-source software. "We are working with them very closely to make a dual-boot system so that, like on an Apple, you can boot either one up. The version that's up and running of Windows on the XO is very fast, it's very, very successful. We're working very hard to do both," said Nicholas Negroponte, chairman of OLPC. According to Nicholas Negroponte, Microsoft has been concerned with the open-source community over the past few years. "And that really helps, because it's become a little bit less religious than it was a few years ago and that's really good. In the end, I think, the more people that have software and hardware out there, the better." At the moment, the rugged XO ultra-mobile PCs are powered by a Fedora-based Linux operating system. Microsoft has been working since last year to achieve a stripped-down version of Windows XP to run on the laptop. OLPC has started a partnership with Microsoft and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in order to deliver the XO notebooks with some of the educational software Microsoft is selling in the third-world countries. "There is talk in that direction and it's directly with Bill and [Microsoft chief research and strategy officer] Craig Mundie, especially this morning, so this is really cooking at the moment," Negroponte said. The OLPC project is a charity initiative that aimed at building under \$100 notebooks to be donated to the children in the developing countries. The XO notebook, however, ended up with a price tag nearly as double as intended, and it seems that its price will keep on growing with the advent of the "better" proprietary operating system from Microsoft.