

ARMbook *

Ever since Acorn launched the A4 back in the early 1990s, RISC OS users have patiently dreamed of another native-ARM, portable system. We were teased with projects like Stork and the RiscStation laptop, but it never came to be.

There have, of course, been stop-gap projects such as the popular RISCBook virtual systems from RCI, and more recently “Pi-in-a-box” DIY options. But what we all hoped for was a sleek, svelt, ARM-based “proper” laptop.

And now here it is. Not only possible, but with the backing of the Far-Eastern manufacturers no less! The recent move to Open Source has renewed interest in our beloved OS, and for the first time in, well, a very long time, the CEO of a company is asking to play with RISC OS on his hardware, and supporting its development. Who’d have thought?



The hardware is rather tasty too. It’s ~1.2Ghz CPU coupled with 2GB RAM can outpace an ARMX6 (depending on the test) so it’s no slouch. Depending on production runs, it is available with (colour!) ~12” and ~14” screen sizes. Storage varies, up to 200GB+, and there are USB ports for connectivity, plus the usual extras.

One aspect of the ARMbook that we think is quite intriguing is that we can dual boot either RISC OS or Linux. Bearing in mind that we always felt a strong selling point of our RISCBooks was the convenience of Windows + RISC OS, having Linux (with FireFox and LibreOffice) easily available adds a lot of flexibility.

The tear-off form below allows you to register your interest in the system. You’ll be able to test-drive it at the show, so that you can see we’re not hiding anything, but there’s still more work to go. You’ll see that we’re contemplating two price points. Whilst we know you would like it to be as cheap as possible, we’d like to use a portion of the price to fund essential RISC OS work (WiFi would be extremely helpful for this project). A higher price would make this more practical and the project more sustainable.

Also, filling out the form will help us plan orders with the Far East. Shipping and duty are an issue, so it is imperative we plan this out carefully. Having some idea of numbers simplifies this and also allows us to budget properly. Of course, if you are keen, a deposit is always helpful, especially in a situation like this. However, we’re aware that people have been burned before, so only choose this option if you’re comfortable with RCI and the way we operate.

* Working title - may not be final

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Name	<input type="radio"/> I would be willing to pay circa £399 for an ARM-based laptop, but much more would be too much.
Address	<input type="radio"/> Around £499 would be OK, especially if it helped fund development of the OS for the laptop.
.....	<input type="radio"/> I enclose a £150 cheque / debit card details (on reverse, please) as a deposit.
.....	
Phone	Email

Please return to: R-Comp Interactive, 22 Robert Moffat, High Legh, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 6PS,
or see us at any of the RISC OS computer exhibitions