



ATOMIC OBJECT

TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

7 Things about HP Sprout

1 - What is it?

The Hewlett-Packard Sprout is a revolutionary new spin on user interface, combining a touch screen with an integrated projected touch pad. The user can move projects seamlessly from screen to screen, and use the bottom screen to easily scan things in, from documents to 3D models.

2 - How does it work?

Sprout uses what HP calls an Illuminator, the projector/camera combo jutting out of the top of the computer. Directed at a wide enough angle to allow the user to work freely on the touchpad without blocking what they're working on, this allows for some innovative programs in music, photo editing, and even model design.

3 - Who's doing it?

Hewlett-Packard is the company that pioneered the Sprout, attempting to make the next big leap for desktop computers. It's intended for those who do design work, and to free people on

the UI side so they can really unleash their creative side. It's also an attempt to redesign the typical desktop user experience, so HP ideally would have everyone adopting the design in the future.

4 - Why is it significant?

The Sprout is significant largely because it's the first big attempt at redesigning desktop computers. It could represent the first of a long line of touch-based user interfaces not confined only to mobile technology, but to the home and business industries as well. Also, the freedom it allows with design could very well impact the field of engineering.

5 - What are the downsides?

The Sprout is just barely out of the prototype stages. This is not acutely an issue with HP, but more an observation on the whole industry. Companies haven't been focused on making drastic changes to user interfaces, choosing to focus instead on upping storage capacity, battery life, and processing power. So, the technology is still fairly clunky, the projection technology lags, the 3D scanning requires another piece. Basically, it still needs time to really get off the ground, and at \$1500 a unit, it's a niche target market indeed.

6 - Where is it going?

This technology is going to either continue to be developed and potentially grow to be the norm for HP desktops, or the company will decide it's not worth the cost and cut funding. It's hard to tell now how successful designs like the Sprout will be, but the first iteration was not well received. If the hardware bugs are flattened out, this could be a very cool new interface for engineering and design.

7 - What are the implications for higher education?

As stated above, the implications of this technology's potential on engineering and design is large. It has a small learning curve, and makes scans a quick and painless process (be it

documents or objects). The 3D printer option is not necessary when we have three printers in the Showcase, and the cost has been eaten, so students can freely come in and get comfortable with this innovative technology.

