

RS Components showcased the new pi-top at the South African Electronics Industry Expo 2016

The pi-top kit is ideal for design engineers and educators as a platform for vibrant and dynamic innovation

Johannesburg, South Africa, 24 June, 2016 - [RS Components SA](#), the global distributor for engineers, is a member of the Association of Representatives for the Electronics Industry (arei) showcased the new [pi-top](#) supported by the [DesignSpark](#) suite of free software tools, at the South African Electronics Industry (SAEI) Expo at the Kyalami International Convention Centre, Midrand on 22 and 23 June 2016.

arei is a non-profit association, representing the interests of the electronics industry in South Africa. Today, arei has a membership of more than 30 companies, representing suppliers, distributors, electronic manufacturing services and original equipment manufacturers. arei hosts the SAEI Expo every year as a platform to contribute to the dynamic innovation and growth of the electronic industry within South Africa.

The new [pi-top](#) kit from RS is a [Raspberry Pi](#) powered laptop that is ideal for students and novices to learn about programming, computing and hardware creation including electronics fabrication. It also teaches transferable skills that will help users to create their own hacker and maker hardware projects. With no need for a soldering iron, the pi-top concept allows users to quickly start to experiment with electronics, create PCBs and produce 3D printing projects such as a pi-top case. This is facilitated through step-by-step online tutorials and lesson plans, and provides for collaborative learning and sharing with others in a cloud-based learning model.

The kit allows the building of a customised laptop with the addition of a Raspberry Pi board to provide the computing power. It comprises of: a 13.3-inch HD LCD screen with eDP interface and 1366 x 768 resolution; a smart battery with more than 10 hours run time; a two-Wire SMBus V2.0 interface; a trackpad and fully programmable keyboard; an 8GB SD card with pre-installed pi-topOS; power supply; acrylic slice; and an image-based build manual.

The pi-top laptop design was initially developed using the [DesignSpark PCB](#) and [DesignSpark Mechanical](#) design tools from RS. In particular,

the use of DesignSpark PCB helped pi-top overcome the challenge of enabling the Raspberry Pi to use a 13.3in high-definition laptop screen.

DesignSpark.com offers free software tools in the form of DesignSpark Mechanical, DesignSpark PCB and the recently added [DesignSpark Electrical](#) which brings the benefits of design software to all those not already using CAD tools. DesignSpark Electrical is supported by Schneider Electric, the global specialist in energy management and automation. The software has an integrated library of components that comprises more than 250,000 components and parts, including 80,000 from Schneider Electric and 10,000 from RS, which can easily be added to customer designs.

Visit the RS Components stand at the expo, to experience the new innovative pi-top. DesignSpark Mechanical, DesignSpark PCB and DesignSpark Electrical is free to download at www.designspark.com.