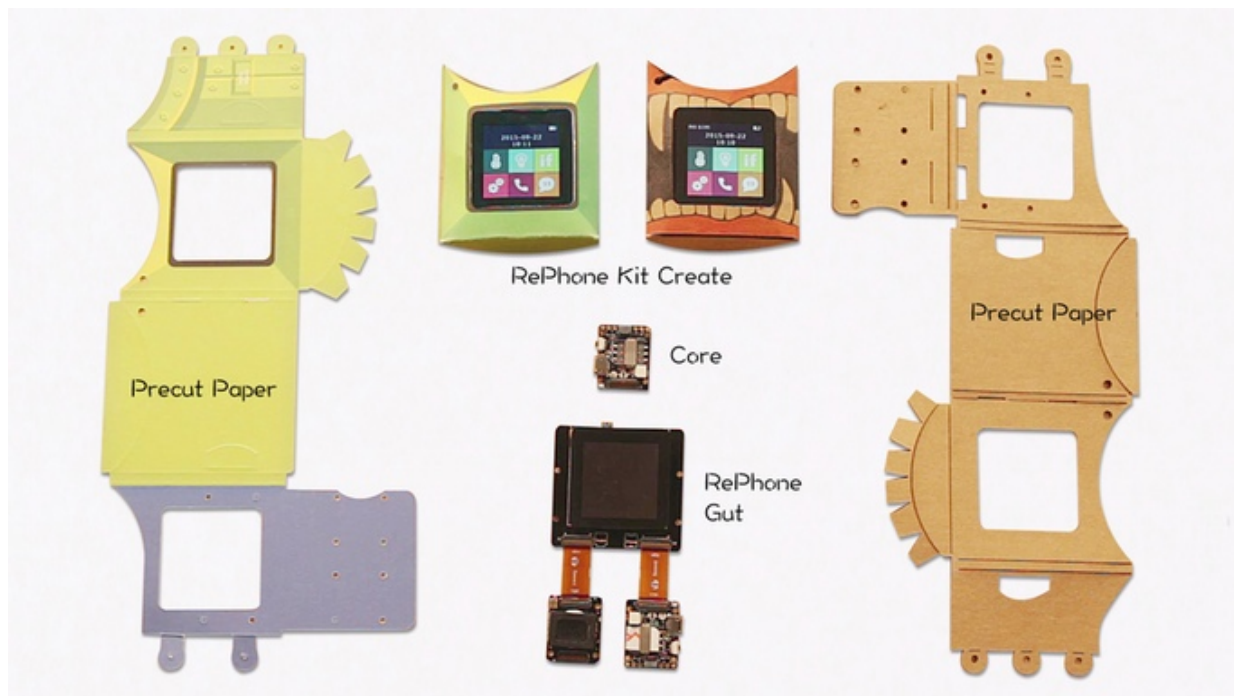


RePhone kit offer calls up maker dreams of DIY modules

September 25 2015, by Nancy Owano



Introducing an open source and modular phone—these words, as we know from the anticipation engulfing Project Ara—are music to the ears of hobbyists and hackers who are always interested in taking fuller control of how their mobile companion should look and function.

Seed is the group offering RePhone as a Kickstarter campaign and

response is heating up, to the point where, out of a \$50,000 goal and with 35 days still to go they have gathered \$76,885 in pledges, at the time of this writing.

RePhone's creators ask us to remember when mobile phones used to be very different, constantly evolving. "What we need," they said, "is another Renaissance." RePhone as a concept paves the way.

You can create your own phone and hack away. The team has spent several years in Shenzhen working this out.

RePhone offers eight add-on modules. A GSM module is at the heart of this phone, featuring a very small computer on a chip. You give the phone life by adding GPS, audio, touchscreen, motion sensors, camera, and other modules. You plug the modules together using flexible NFC strips.

(*Softpedia's* Alexandra Arici said these modules can be connected together "using all sorts of solutions ranging from FPC ribbon cable to soldered wires and conductive thread, or just be breadboarded.")

Once connected you can send text and make calls and program your own logic. The word "phone" seems limiting to what the team is up to. This is fundamentally a communication device that can do phone things. Use the device, they said, to call your dog back home, to control robots remotely, or talk to doors.

They list some of the things one can do with the RePhone on the Kickstarter page: "Talk to your grandpa by assembling a walking cane phone. Talk to your dog with a RePhone, GPS, record module and dog collar. Talk to the sky with a RePhone, gyros and a kite. Talk to your body with a RePhone shirt. Talk to your light with a RePhone lamp. Talk

to your dress with the RePhone and Xadow Duino module with WS2812b."



You would not be the only to think about Project Ara. *Softpedia*'s Arici said, "while we are still waiting on Google to release its modular smartphone platform to the masses, we might take a moment to consider the RePhone by [Speeded](#)."

John Biggs in *TechCrunch* checked out RePhone and said "it seemed to work fairly well. It includes programming libraries in Arduino IDE, Lua and Javascript that allow you to connect the phone to the web and even IFTTT."

Biggs wrote, "It's a fun little project and it works pretty well. While you won't gain the [experience](#) of mining your own gold for wire traces and learning chip fabrication, this will let you make a [phone](#) quickly and easily which is great for all of us hobbyists without ready access to mineral rights."

RePhone Kit prices range widely, anywhere from \$12 to over \$400. Details about what is offered at which price and on which delivery date are on the campaign [page](#).

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