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# Kevin Fenzi: pinephone: initial thoughts

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I ordered one of the ubports editions of the pine64 pinephone and after a small amount of playing around with it, I'd like to share my thoughts.

First a little background. I'm very big on open source for many many reasons. I use Fedora rawhide for my laptop day to day and in general try and use free software wherever else I can. My phone has been a annoyance to me for many years now. Being completely closed source, apple/i-phones are right out for me, which basically just leaves android. Now you might think ?Thats great, android is open source?, but it?s really not. While the source is indeed available, development is done by google in secret and dumped into the open after release. This means you don?t get a lot of the

advantages of open source for android. Other forks/projects do take that android source and clean it up and make it nice, but they too are at the mercy of upstream that may change things in a new release drastically, leaving them to try and catch up for months after a new release. I've been using /e/ on my trusty one plus 3t for the last 3-4 years. They are based off lineageos and 'de-google' things from there. I've never found myself very excited by it, they too are trapped by the android development all taking place elsewhere. I've looked at other possible software, but they all have their issues.

3 or so years ago, Librem announced they were going to make a phone that was as open as they could make it, with high end specs. As far as I know some few batches have been made/distributed, but it's still not a realized product. As part of this push however, software was created that could run on most normal linux distributions that could handle phone specific workflows. See <https://source.puri.sm/Librem5> for a long list.

Fast forward to late last year: The pine64 folks, who have made a number of aarch64 based products successfully announced the pine phone. They produced a prototype like developer version and then, early this year announced the ubports version (some \$'s of each phone would go to the ubports folks), cost: \$150. The ubports version sold out and they have now announced a postmarketos version, also with a usb-c 'dock', more memory and a circuit board fix to allow usb-c to work right. cost: \$200 with dock, or \$150 without.

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