

Amazon expected to lift wraps on large-screen Kindle

May 4 2009, By Dan Gallagher



Amazon.com is widely expected to lift the wraps on a new large-screen Kindle device this week, which could be the first in a line of electronic reading devices geared toward newspapers and textbooks.

The online retail giant has scheduled a news conference for Wednesday -- 10:30 a.m. Eastern -- at Pace University in New York City.

Amazon did not disclose details about the event, but the New York Times reported over the weekend that the company is expected to unveil the latest version of its [Kindle e-book reader](#). This device would reportedly have a larger screen optimized for newspapers, magazines and

textbooks.

The Times also said that the newspaper's parent company is expected to be one of Amazon's partners in providing content for the device, citing unnamed sources.

Shares of Amazon closed at \$79.77 on Monday, an increase of just over 1 percent. The stock is up around 60 percent since the first of the year.

A new Kindle designed for newspapers could be the first of many such devices. Two [newspaper](#) publishing companies -- News Corp. and privately held Hearst Corp. -- have disclosed plans to develop similar e-reader devices. A [Silicon Valley startup](#) called Plastic Logic is also developing a large-screen e-reader device geared toward newspapers.

News Corp. is the owner of MarketWatch, publisher of this report.

This week's event would be just three months after Amazon updated the first version of the Kindle, which was originally launched in November of 2007. The Kindle 2 sells for \$359 over Amazon's Web site and can be used to download and read books in an electronic format.

Amazon has never disclosed sales figures for the device, though some analysts believe the company has already sold more than half a million units. In its most recent earnings report, the company said sales of the device "have exceeded our most optimistic expectations." Amazon surprised Wall Street with stronger-than-expected earnings growth for the period.

For newspapers, some publishers are hoping that e-reader devices might help reverse the fortunes of an industry that has been in a severe decline of light. Newspaper circulation continues to fall -- down 7 percent in the past six months, according to the latest ABC data -- as more readers

flock to the Internet for news.

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