

Apple to unveil tablet computer: reports

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What's next from Apple? According to various reports, the California-based company plans to come out later this year with a portable tablet-sized computer that can surf the Web and may also serve as an electronic book reader.

London's Financial Times was the latest publication on Monday to report on the long-rumored device from the company behind the iconic Macintosh computer, the iPod and the iPhone.

The FT story follows reports in Silicon Valley technology blogs that Apple was developing a new [touch-screen](#) computer described by some as a large-screen iPod Touch.

Apple was hoping to offer the [tablet computer](#) in time for the Christmas shopping season, according to the newspaper, which said the device would have a screen that may measure up to 10 inches (25 centimeters) diagonally.

It would be able to connect to the Internet like the [iPod Touch](#), allowing access to Apple's online stores, but probably would not have phone capability.

"It's going to be fabulous for watching movies," an unidentified entertainment executive told the FT.

The newspaper said book publishers have also been in talks with Apple about offering books on the new device, which could emerge as a

potential rival to Amazon's popular Kindle [electronic reader](#).

Apple, the FT said, is simultaneously working with the four largest record labels -- EMI, Sony Music, Warner Music and Universal Music Group -- on a project codenamed "Cocktail" aimed at stimulating digital sales of albums.

Album sales have fallen sharply as consumers opt for purchases of individual songs from online stores like Apple's iTunes.

"Cocktail" would offer interactive features, such as lyric sheets, photos and videos with music album downloads.

"It's all about re-creating the heyday of the album when you would sit around with your friends looking at the artwork, while you listened to the music," an unidentified executive told the newspaper.

The FT did not reveal any details about the price of the planned tablet computer.

[Apple](#) is traditionally highly secretive about projects under development, revealing them only at launch and guarding zealously against leaks.

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