

Microsoft sidelines 'Courier' tablet project

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"At any given time, across any of our business groups, there are new ideas being investigated, tested, and incubated," Microsoft spokesman Frank Shaw said in a message posted Thursday on the US software giant's blog.

"[The 'Courier' project](#) is an example of this type of effort and its technologies will be evaluated for use in future Microsoft offerings."

Microsoft has kept details of the project secret, declining to confirm or deny what it is about. Leaked reports of the table described it as opening

like a book to reveal two screens operated by touch.

Shaw said he posted his brief comments in response to "a ton of speculation" about Courier.

A Microsoft [tablet computer](#) was expected to debut in January at the [Consumer Electronics Show](#), which features the debuts of many of the tech-world's latest devices.

Microsoft chief executive [Steve Ballmer](#) wound up touting a Hewlett-Packard tablet computer during an on-stage presentation at the show.

Industry insiders were expecting Courier to take on Apple's freshly launched [iPad](#) tablet computer.



The Wi-Fi-only model of the latest device from the maker of the

Macintosh computer, the iPod and the [iPhone](#) went on sale in the United States on April 3. The company sold over 500,000 iPads the first week.

Apple promised that its iPad models featuring 3G cellular connectivity will hit US stores on Friday.

Apple has said that heavy US demand has forced it to delay the international release of the iPad by a month, until late May.

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