

Cisco unveils tablet computer for business users

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US networking giant Cisco has unveiled a tablet computer for business professionals as technology rivals line up to compete with Apple's iPad.

The Cisco Cius, pronounced "see us," is powered by Google's open-source Android operating system and boasts eight hours of [battery life](#).

Cisco said customer trials of the Cius would begin later this year and the device would be available in the first quarter of next year.

It weighs 1.15 pounds (0.52 kilograms), less than the iPad's 1.5 pounds (0.68 kgs), and has a seven-inch (17.8-centimeter) screen, smaller than the 9.7-inch (24.6-cm) screen on the Apple device.

Unlike the [iPad](#), which does not have a camera, the Cius features two -- a front-mounted high-definition camera which allows for HD video streaming and real-time video, and a five-megapixel rear-facing camera.

The Cius also offers email, instant messaging, Web browsing through Wi-Fi and eventually 4G connectivity, and the ability to produce, edit and share content stored locally or on the Internet, Cisco said in a statement.

Cisco said the device was designed to provide workers with "the ability to access and share the content they need from any place on the network."

"This platform can transform how healthcare professionals advance patient care, how retailers deliver service experiences to consumers, or how universities deliver world-class education to their students," said Tony Bates, a Cisco senior vice president.

US computer giant Dell last month unveiled a [tablet computer](#) called the "Streak" which is also powered by Google's Android.

Apple said last week that it has sold more than three million iPads since the device went on sale on April 3.

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