

Samsung, Toshiba take on Apple with 'iPad killers'

September 3 2010, by Simon Sturdee



Samsung's new tablet device, the "Galaxy Tab", on display at their booth at the 50th edition of "IFA" in Berlin. Samsung on Thursday unveiled what the South Korean electronics giant hopes will be a major rival to Apple's highly successful iPad tablet PC.

Competition to Apple's highly successful iPad hotted up on Thursday as Samsung and Toshiba unveiled rival tablet PCs that they hope will steal some of the Californian giant's thunder.

[Samsung's Galaxy Tab](#), presented at the IFA electronics trade fair in Berlin, Germany, has a seven-inch (17.8-centimetre) touchscreen, slightly smaller than the iPad's 9.7 inches, and uses Google's Android 2.2

operating system.

"Samsung recognizes the tremendous growth potential in this newly created market and we believe that the Samsung Galaxy Tab brings a unique and open proposition to market," said mobile communications unit head JK Shin.

The Galaxy Tab, weighing 0.8 pounds (380 grammes) -- almost half the iPad's 1.5 pounds -- launches in Europe in mid-September, and in other markets including the United States, [South Korea](#) and elsewhere in Asia in the coming months.

But the South Korean firm gave no indication however of whether the Galaxy Tab will undercut the iPad on price, which retails from 499 dollars in the United States -- or 499 euros in Europe -- for the basic model.

Reports in the trade press said that the Galaxy Tab will be more expensive, at 799 euros (1,025 dollars) in Germany and 699 euros in France.

Toshiba meanwhile lifted the lid in Berlin on its Folio 100, which boasts a slightly bigger screen than the iPad -- 10.1 inches -- and which will reportedly sell for a competitive 399 euros.

The Japanese firm aims to have the Folio 100 hit the shops in Europe in the fourth quarter. And in another blow to Microsoft, the gadget runs off Android.



Toshiba Folio 100

Apple sold more than three million iPads in the 80 days after they went on sale in the United States in April, with demand so strong that some US customers had to wait several weeks to get their hands on one.

Since then, the device, which uses Apple's own MAC iOS operating system, has gone on sale in more than a dozen other countries and is poised to hit the shelves in China, the world's largest Internet market, later this month.

The success caught California-based Apple's competitors on the hop and they have been rushing to respond with their own tablet PCs, or "iPad killers" as they are collectively known.

Samsung's South Korean rival, LG Electronics, has promised to release a [tablet PC](#) using [Android](#) before December. Microsoft is also said to be about to unveil the Courier while Hewlett-Packard is pinning its hopes on its Slate.

Another rival is Dell's Stealth -- with a five-inch screen more smartphone than tablet, however -- while Lenovo of China, Motorola of the US, Archus of France, Germany's E-noa and Taiwan's Asus are others to watch out for.

Tablets are smaller both in size and in memory than a desktop, notebook or netbook computer, but are bigger than smartphones, offering users video, music, games, Internet and electronic books -- all with touchscreen.

Apple has a year's head start, according to Joerg Wirtgen from German tech magazine c't.

"The biggest market (for tablets) is for leisure. The iPad is becoming the main computer, the first to be switched on in the morning and the last one at night," Wirtgen told AFP.

"But you can't do everything, only the pleasurable stuff. For lots of tasks you still need a PC or a notebook."

He also said they were more versatile than electronic book readers like Amazon's Kindle, which are however considerably cheaper. Amazon unveiled two new versions in late July, including one that sells for just 139 dollars.

Gadget website T3 said the Galaxy Tab is "coming for the [iPad](#) and it means business," saying it was on "everyone's 'must see' list" for this year's IFA, which opens to the public on Friday.

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