

Branson launches glossy iPad magazine, 'Project'

November 30 2010, by Charlotte Raab



British tycoon Richard Branson holds a press conference to unveil a digital magazine called "Project" tailored for viewing on Apple's popular iPad tablet computers in New York. Branson launched a glossy magazine for the iPad on Tuesday, getting the jump on News Corp.'s Rupert Murdoch in the race to develop publications for the hot Apple device.

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"Project," a monthly style and culture [magazine](#) developed by Branson's Virgin Group and the British publisher Seven Squared, will cost 2.99 dollars (1.79 pounds) an issue and be sold through Apple's online App Store.

"The entrepreneurial spirit is still alive and kicking at Virgin," Branson told reporters at a Manhattan hotel launch event for Project, whose first cover features actor Jeff Bridges, star of the upcoming movie "Tron: Legacy."

"It's a truly interactive digital magazine," Branson said, adding that "it's going to make advertising a hundred times more efficient."

"You can even play with the adverts," he said.

Branson's unveiling of Project comes ahead of the expected launch in the next few weeks of [News Corp.](#)'s new digital newspaper for the iPad called "The Daily."

Branson dismissed suggestions he was engaged in a war with Murdoch.

"It's not a battle," he said. "It's about giving the millions of iPad users around the world something truly innovative."

At the same time, the British entrepreneur added, "it's all about choice, and a fair bit of competition doesn't hurt."

"I have the feeling that on quality, we'll be willing to be judged," said Branson, who launched a magazine called "Student" when he was a teenager and has since built an empire ranging from music to airlines to rocket ships.

Project editor-in-chief Anthony Noguera, a former editor of Arena, described the new digital publication as "an agenda-setting magazine."

"It's about big ideas, about ideas that are shaping the world today," Noguera told AFP.

The first edition features articles about celebrated Danish chef Rene Redzepi and another on Kazunori Yamauchi, creator of the videogame Gran Turismo.

"Many of the people (featured in the magazine) are not household names but they should be," Noguera said.

He said Project will take advantage of the full capabilities of the iPad's multi-media format. "On every page there will be links to expand the story," he said.

The article about Jeff Bridges, for example, includes pictures from "Tron: Legacy" and clicking on each photo provides a commentary by the actor about the scene in question.

Project's staff is made of up 20 full-time employees based in London. The first edition features advertisements from automobile manufacturers, a brewery, a credit card company and a consumer electronics firm.

Noguera said that although so much news is available on the Internet for free consumers will pay for quality.

"It's a quality piece of editorial, so you have to pay for it," he said of Project. "This is an expensive product to make."

Project is only available for the [iPad](#) for the moment but it will come to the iPhone in the next few months and eventually to other tablet computers.

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