

Google-powered laptops to go on sale June 15 (Update)

May 11 2011



Sundar Pichai, VP of Product Management for Google, displays Acer and Samsung notebooks running on the Chrome operating System at the Google IO Developers Conference in San Francisco, Wednesday, May 11, 2011. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

The first laptops running on a Google-designed software system will go on sale in the U.S. and six other countries next month.

The June 15 release date announced Wednesday means the lightweight

laptops will hit the market nearly two years after Google Inc. began working on an operating system based on its Chrome Web browser.

Since then, Apple Inc.'s iPad and other tablet computers have become hot sellers. The growing popularity of tablets has raised questions about how interested consumers will be interested in buying Google-powered laptops specifically tailored for Web surfing.

Samsung Electronics Co. and Acer Inc. are making the first Chromebooks. They will sell for \$349 to \$499 at Best Buy and Amazon.com Inc. in the U.S. The cheapest iPad sells for \$499.

Acer's Chromebook, at \$349, will have an 11.6-inch screen display and up to six hours of battery life. Samsung's version, selling for \$429 to \$499, will have a 12.1-inch screen and up to 8.5 hours of battery life. Both models will have keyboards, but no hard drives for storage. The machines will be like computer terminals dependent on a connection to the Internet. The laptops come with slots to plug in a storage device you buy separately.

The Chromebooks also will be sold in Britain, France, Germany, Netherlands, Italy and Spain.

In an effort to get people to use Chromebooks, Google is offering three-year subscription plans to businesses and schools similar to how the mobile phone industry subsidizes devices up front and make the money back over the life of a service contract. For a monthly cost of \$28 per user in businesses and government agencies and \$20 per user in schools, Google provides the laptop, tech support and a warranty for the duration. Google will replace the Chromebooks at the end of the three years.

Chromebook's long-awaited debut will intensify Google's competition with Microsoft Corp., whose Windows operating system remains the

foundation of most personal computers.

Google co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin have long felt that Windows computers took too long to power up and were too clunky to operate. They believed that Windows' drawbacks were discouraging people from spending even more time online, where they could click on ads sold by Google.

To address the perceived problem, Google announced its plans in July 2009 for a Chrome-based operating system that would enable computers to turn on in a matter of seconds and encourage more Web surfing.

"The complexity of managing computers is really frustrating for users out there," Brin told reporters Wednesday at Google's conference for software developers. "It's a flawed model."

Brin, who began focusing on special projects earlier this year, said he didn't have enough information to comment on a Justice Department investigation into the online ad system that generates most of Google's revenue. The company disclosed Tuesday that it has set aside \$500 million to settle the probe. It provided few details.

Besides attacking Microsoft's Windows franchise, Google's Chromebook also will represent another challenge to Apple, which makes Mac computers as well as iPads. Google and Apple have been engaged in a fierce competition in the smartphone market for the past two years.

Google itself has joined the tablet computer craze by creating a special version of its Android software for mobile devices. Apple sold nearly 20 million iPads during the tablet's first year on the market, and analysts expect people to buy tens of millions more tablets from Apple and other manufacturers during the next few years.

More information: Review: Chrome OS gives a peek at computing future: [www.physorg.com/news/2010-12-c ... -os-peek-future.html](http://www.physorg.com/news/2010-12-c...-os-peek-future.html)

©2011 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Citation: Google-powered laptops to go on sale June 15 (Update) (2011, May 11) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-05-google-powered-laptops-sale-june.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.