

# Android Market checks out, Google Play moves in

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This screen shot provided by Google Inc., shows the Google Play website. Google is scrapping the Android Market name and rebranding it as the “Google Play Store.” The company is unifying its content into a more “seamless” experience. (AP Photo/Google Inc.)

Google's digital marketplace for mobile applications, music, movies and books is unifying under a new name in an effort to spruce up the shopping experience.

Beginning Tuesday, the Android Market will be known as the [Google Play Store](#). Google's eBookstore and recently launched [music service](#)

will also be part of the Google Play Store. The same selection of books, music and movies had already been available on Android Market.

The [rebranding](#) will be ushered in with a series of tweaks designed to make it easier for customers to manage their content and navigate from one section of the store to another. None of the changes will affect the digital content that existing customers have already purchased and stored on Google computers in password-protected accounts.

Google is trying to establish a one-stop shop that can satisfy everyone's digital desires, whether they are on a mobile device or a desktop computer's Web browser. The effort is part of the Internet search leader's broader ambition to diversify beyond online advertising, which still accounts for 96 percent of its revenue.

With Google Play, the company hopes more people, who occasionally went to the old Android Market to buy mobile apps, will start noticing other types of content and consider buying an [electronic book](#) or album, too. If that happens, Google Inc. believes more digital content providers will want to peddle their wares in its store.

One obvious hole that still needs to be filled exists in the music department. Since Google began selling songs four months ago, only three of the four major [recording labels](#) - Vivendi SA's Universal Music, [EMI Group](#) Ltd. and [Sony Music Entertainment](#) - have agreed to offer their material in the Android Market. [Warner Music Group](#) remains a notable holdout as the market switches to its Google Play store identity.

Since it opened in October 2008, the Android Market has steadily grown along with the usage of [mobile devices](#) running on Google's Android software. More than 300 million Android devices are currently in use worldwide. Another 6 million are activated each week. The huge audience is the main reason the Android Market has amassed more than

450,000 [mobile apps](#). Google also has more than 4 million books, including free titles, and more than 13 million songs and movies.

Despite its size, the Android Market has remained a rung below the digital bazaar that Apple Inc. started with the opening of its iTunes store in 2003. Since then, Apple has expanded beyond music into selling movies, books, newspapers, magazines and textbooks.

Apple also offers more than 550,000 applications for its popular iPhone, iPad and iPod Touches. More than 25 billion apps have been downloaded from Apple's app store since it opened in July 2008. That nearly doubles the more than 13 billion apps that Google says have been downloaded from the Android Market.

Google is catering to people who don't want their digital content tethered to one of Apple's mobile devices or a computer that requires iTunes software to play something bought from an Apple store.

Amazon.com Inc., the Internet's top retailer, also has been selling more digital content since it began selling the Kindle Fire for \$200 in in November. Amazon priced its mini-computer tablet \$300 below the least expensive iPad largely because it views the device primarily as a digital sales tool.

The mobile updates for the new Google Play store will be sent out automatically to Android device owners. The revamped store can be found on the Web at <http://play.google.com> .

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