

Apple unveils new iPad with sharper screen (Update 2)

March 7 2012, By PETER SVENSSON , AP Technology Writer



Apple CEO Tim Cook speaks during an event in San Francisco, Wednesday, March 7, 2012. Apple has begun an event where it's expected to reveal a new iPad model. (AP Photo/Paul Sakuma)

Apple gave the new iPad a bunch of new features but no new name.

When it goes on sale next week in the U.S. and several other countries, it will be "the iPad" or perhaps "the new iPad" - not "iPad 3" or "iPad HD," as some had speculated.

The lack of a new name could cause confusion for buyers, particularly since the older model, the "iPad 2," will still be sold.

The new iPad unveiled Wednesday has, as expected, a sharper screen (2048x1536), driven by a faster processing chip that acts as the "brains" of the device. What was more surprising was that the new features mean the tablet computer will be slightly thicker and heavier than the iPad 2, because it needs a larger battery to power the high-resolution screen.

Prices aren't changing from the previous models. They will start at \$499. Versions capable of accessing cellular networks will cost \$629 to \$829.

Apple is keeping the basic model of the iPad 2 in production and dropping the price to \$399. That could help Apple regain some market share from cheaper tablets like Amazon.com Inc.'s \$199 Kindle Fire. Samsung Electronics and other makers of full-size tablets have cut their prices to below \$500.



Apple CEO Tim Cook speaks during an product launch event at in San Francisco, California. Apple has unveiled a new iPad with a higher resolution display and an updated version of the Apple TV box used to stream movies, TV shows and other content from the Internet to TV sets.

The battery life of the new model remains the same: about 10 hours of use. Apple says the battery capacity is 70 percent higher than for the old model, which suggests that it could have kept the old screen and extended the battery life to 17 hours instead of upgrading the screen resolution.

Apple said the new display will be sharper than the average high-definition television set. In a hands-on demonstration for an Associated Press reporter, text shown on the screen was noticeably crisper. The higher resolution won't make a difference, however, for most Web images, which are of low resolution. The new screen should be able to show all the detail in high-definition movies, which the iPad 2 does not.

The new screen can also show deeper and more vibrant colors than previous models, Apple said.



A new Apple iPad on display during an Apple event in San Francisco, Wednesday, March 7, 2012. The new iPad model features a sharper screen and a faster processor. Apple says the new display will be even sharper than the high-definition television set in the living room. (AP Photo/Paul Sakuma)

"We are taking it to a whole new level and are redefining the category that Apple created with the original iPad," said Apple Inc. CEO Tim Cook at the launch event in San Francisco.

Cook spoke of a "post-PC" era dominated by the iPad and other Apple products.

The new iPad will go on sale March 16 in the U.S., Canada and 10 other countries. A week later, it will go on sale in 25 more countries.

The latest iPad's lack of a new name is consistent with Apple's practices for the iPod. New models have been simply called "iPod." Consumers are left to figure out which generation of the product they are looking for.

Compared with the iPad 2, the new model features a higher-resolution camera on the back, similar to the one in the iPhone 4S.

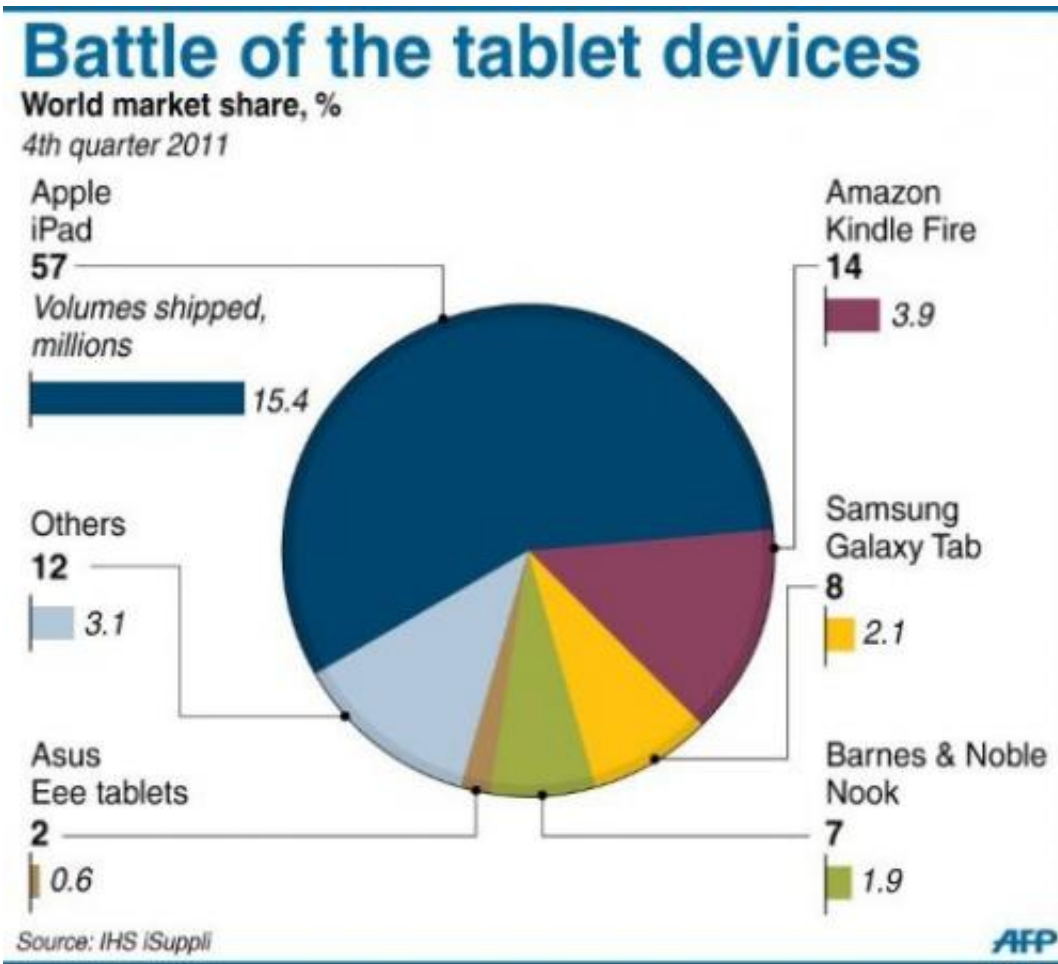


Chart showing the market share of major tablet devices, headed by Apple's iPad with 57 percent in the fourth quarter of 2011.

The new iPad will be 9.4 millimeters thick, or 0.37 inches. That compares with 8.8 millimeters, or 0.34 inches, for the iPad 2. The weight is going up from 1.33 pounds to 1.44 pounds for the Wi-Fi-only model. The original iPad weighed 1.5 pounds.

Apple also confirmed that the new model will come in a version that can use Verizon Wireless' and AT&T Inc.'s "LTE" wireless broadband networks. They offer speeds that are faster than the "3G" networks used by previous iPads, and current iPhones.

Apple is updating some of the software on the tablet to take advantage of the new features. For example, it's introducing a version of the Mac's iPhoto photo organization and manipulation program for the iPad.

The company also said it would start letting users store movies in its iCloud remote storage service, so they can be accessed through the Internet by PCs and Apple devices. It already lets users store photos, music and documents in the service.

Apple is also upgrading its Apple TV set-top box so it can play movies in 1080p, the highest-resolution commonly used video standard.

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