

Taiwan's Acer, Asus unveil tablets with Windows 8 (Update)

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A model displays the latest Acer's Ionia W700 tablet computer in Taipei on June 4. Taiwan PC makers Acer and Asus took another shot at gaining a foothold in the tablet market, unveiling several new products running on Microsoft's much-anticipated Windows 8 operating system.

Taiwan PC makers Acer and Asus on Monday took another shot at gaining a foothold in the tablet market, unveiling several new products running on Microsoft's much-anticipated Windows 8 operating system.

The companies showed off the tablets on the eve of Computex, Asia's largest IT fair, which is held in Taipei this week for the 32nd time with Windows 8 expected to be a key focus.

Acer, which cut several hundred jobs in Europe last year as it struggles to branch into the tablet computer sector, unveiled the W510 and W700.

"Windows 8 is a historic moment for the worldwide Windows ecosystem," said J. T. Wang, Acer's chairman, at a briefing in Taipei where the company also unveiled its new Aspire S7, a small laptop that runs on Windows 8.

"In our view, the touchscreen experience enabled by Windows 8 is a massive step forward -- simply because it makes computing more intuitive," said Jim Wong, corporate president of Acer.

Rival Asus unveiled five new products that run on Windows 8.

They included two tablets, the Tablet 810 and Tablet 600, and three hybrid models that can be used as both tablets and notebooks, the Taichi, the Transformer AiO, and the Transformer Book.

While Apple itself is not present at Computex, the fair will nevertheless highlight the company's importance, since much of what happens there will be in response to market trends set by the American brand.

Windows 8 is touted as Microsoft's long-awaited riposte to the rise of Apple and mobile devices powered by Google's Android operating system. There is no official release date but reports have predicted an October launch.

Computex features more than 1,800 exhibitors registering 5,400 booths, up two percent from a year ago.

The organisers estimate that the IT fair will draw 36,000 foreign buyers who may place bulk orders worth up to \$28 billion.

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