

Microsoft revamps logo ahead of major launches

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Microsoft on Thursday unveiled a new corporate logo for the first time in 25 years as the US tech giant geared up for a series of big product launches.

The new logo features a square made up of four separate colored squares. The old logo had a similar look but the squares appeared deformed as if part of a flag waving in the wind.

The move comes with Microsoft ramping up the buzz for its Windows 8 operating platform and its first tablet computer, called Surface. The

company is also making an aggressive effort to gain ground in the smartphone market.

"It's been 25 years since we've updated the Microsoft logo and now is the perfect time for a change," said Microsoft brand strategy manager Jeff Hansen.

"This is an incredibly exciting year for Microsoft as we prepare to release new versions of nearly all of our products. From Windows 8 to Windows Phone 8 to Xbox services to the next version of Office, you will see a common look and feel across these products providing a familiar and seamless experience on PCs, phones, tablets and TVs.

"This wave of new releases is not only a reimagining of our most popular products, but also represents a new era for Microsoft, so our logo should evolve to visually accentuate this new beginning."

The logo also includes the name Microsoft in the Segoe font that is used in products and marketing communications, along with the new squares.

"The symbol is important in a world of digital motion," Hansen said. "The symbol's squares of color are intended to express the company's diverse portfolio of products."

The new logo is being used starting Thursday on the Microsoft.com website and in three Microsoft retail stores today.

"It will sign off all of our television ads globally," Hansen said.

"And it will support our products across various forms of marketing.... We're excited about the new logo, but more importantly about this new era in which we're reimagining how our products can help people and businesses throughout the world realize their full potential."

Microsoft is set to release its Windows 8 next-generation operating system tailored for a world shifting from personal computers to smartphones and tablets on October 26.

Finnish telecom giant Nokia and Microsoft are expected to unveil a smartphone equipped with the Windows Phone 8 operating system on September 5.

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