

Asus touts 'world's first' three-in-one tablet computer

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An Asus employee displays the "Transformer Book Trio" during a press conference in Taipei, on June 3, 2013. The Taiwanese computer manufacturer has unveiled a mobile device that it described as the world's first three-in-one tablet, laptop and desktop computer.

Taiwan's computer manufacturer Asus unveiled a mobile device Wednesday that it described as the world's first three-in-one tablet, laptop and desktop computer.

The Transformer Book Trio, shown off at the [Computex Taipei](#) IT trade show, is powered by Intel's new fourth-generation processors and runs both Windows and [Android](#) operating systems.

It features an 11.6-inch 1080p screen and a detachable keyboard, allowing the user to operate the device as a tablet or a [laptop computer](#). It can also be plugged into an external monitor and function as a desktop PC, the company said.

When the screen and keyboard are connected the system operates as a [Windows PC](#), while separating the screen allows it to be used as an Android tablet.

The hybrid is likely to be launched by the end of this year, the company said.

Asus did not disclose the price of its latest Transformer model, but analysts expect it to be relatively expensive and fear its complicated design may be a challenge to some users.

"I'm afraid the new gadget may not help drive up Asus's growth too much. It is definitely a good design but it has complicated functions which are not easy to use to many users," said Mars Hsu, an analyst at Grand Cathay Securities.

"Another barrier would be its price. We expect it to sell for at least Tw\$40,000 (\$1,345) which is relatively high compared with the current mainstream notebooks."

Asus also unveiled a low-cost seven-inch tablet called Asus MeMO Pad HD7, priced at \$129 for an 8GB model and \$149 for a 16GB version.

The low-cost tablet was unveiled after Acer launched the industry's first

8.1-inch tablet to run Microsoft's Windows 8 software.

Shipments of Asus notebooks and hybrid computers in the three months to March totalled 4.7 million units, and it expects the number to rise to 4.8 million units in the second quarter.

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