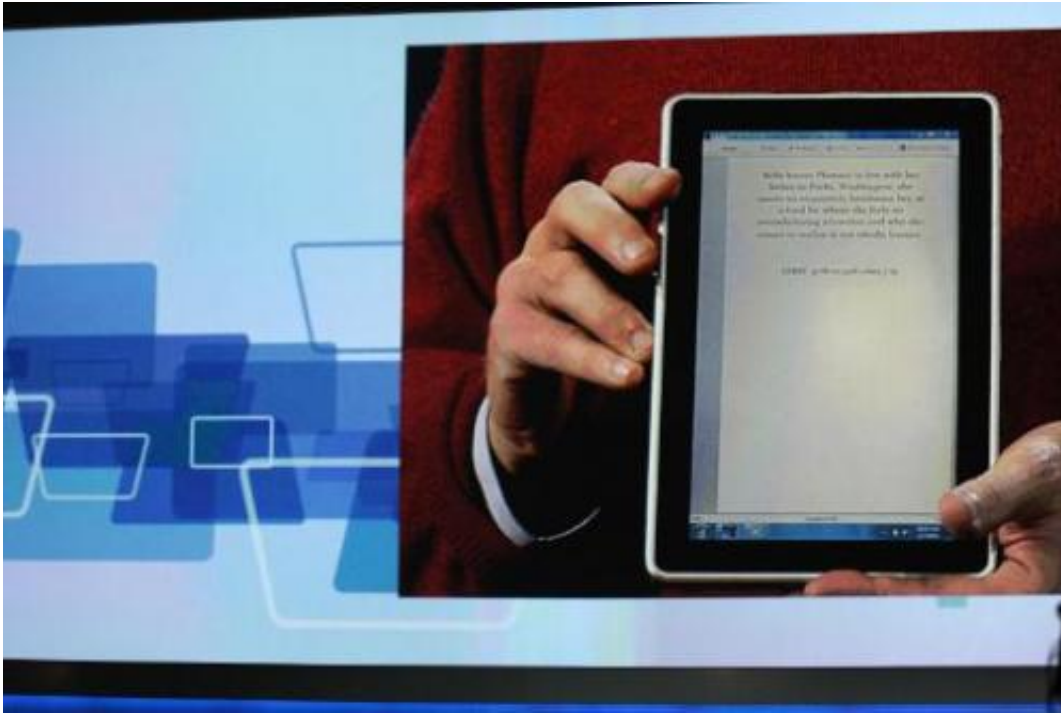


HP to launch 'voice tablets' in India

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The HP Slate computer and e-reader is displayed at the International Consumer Electronics Show on January 7, 2010 in Las Vegas, Nevada

Hewlett-Packard announced Wednesday it was launching a line of "voice tablets," or outsized smartphones, for consumers in India.

The devices will be the first smartphones from the US computer giant since it stopped production of Palm devices in 2011.

The California firm said in a statement it would market a six-inch and

seven-inch screen HP Slate VoiceTab, which use the Android operating system, "designed to help the next generation of mobile customers multitask on the go."

The move brings HP, which sells Slate tablets in the United States and elsewhere, into the growing market for "phablets," which are devices which offer some features of both a [smartphone](#) and tablet.

Samsung, LG, Huawei and others are competing in phablets, which are generally considered smartphones with screens bigger than five inches, measured diagonally.

"Consumers are looking to consolidate their phones and [tablets](#), which is propelling the voice tablet market," said Ron Coughlin, [senior vice president](#) at HP.

"This is an exciting new category that represents a meaningful growth opportunity for HP. Our HP Slate VoiceTab provides consumers with a high-quality product at a great value."

The HP devices will have dual SIM card slots to allow their use as phones, and will have front and rear cameras.

HP has been in a major restructuring under chief executive Meg Whitman, amid a severe slump in PC sales globally, as it has been losing ground amid a shift to mobile devices.

HP bought Palm in 2010 and was selling devices using the Palm webOS operating system, but ended production a year later. It sold the webOS system to LG in 2013.

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