

Samsung to release Note 4 'phablet' on October 17

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Executive Vice President of electronics giant Samsung D J Lee presents a new version of the company's giant-sized smartphone, the Galaxy Note 4, on September 3, 2014 in Berlin

Samsung announced Thursday that its eagerly-anticipated Note 4 "phablet" will be released on October 17.

The South Korean consumer electronics titan credited with being the first major manufacturer to blend tablet and smartphone features said it

will begin taking orders for the coming model on Friday, the same day rival Apple launches its new-generation iPhone 6.

"Samsung created the large screen smartphone category with the Galaxy Note and we are on our fourth generation, a category others are just entering," Gregory Lee, Samsung's Telecommunications America president, said in a statement.

"The Galaxy Note 4 delivers a refined Note experience, and the latest technology that consumers want in their smartphone."

In what was seen by some as a direct shot at Apple, Samsung promised that anyone ordering a Note 4 by October 16 would be entitled to a trade-in value of \$200 for any working smartphone.

The Note 4 boasts a 5.7-inch high definition screen, improved front and rear cameras, speedy charging, and an "S Pen" to write, draw or edit on the touch screen more naturally.

Samsung has been poking Apple in ads portraying the California company's latest iPhones—the iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus unveiled last week—as inspired by the Note's size.

The new iPhone 6 models also boost screen sizes in what some see as the tech giant catching up to the "phablet" trend.

The iPhone 6 will have a screen of 4.7 inches and the 6 Plus will have one of 5.5 inches, allowing Apple to adapt to consumers' apparent preference for bigger displays.

Apple said Monday it had received record pre-orders for the new models, and that some customers will have to wait for the larger-screen versions of the smartphones.

The announcement means Apple may see shortages and long lines at its retail stores when sales begin on Friday.

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