

Bigger, pricier iPhone expected at Apple event Wednesday

September 11 2018, by Michael Liedtke



In this Nov. 3, 2017, file photo, customers buy the iPhone X at the Apple Store on New York's Fifth Avenue. Apple is expected to unveil its biggest and most expensive iPhone on Wednesday, Sept. 12, 2018, as part of a lineup of three new models aimed at widening the product's appeal amid slowing sales growth. (AP Photo/Richard Drew, File)

Apple is expected to showcase three new iPhones on Wednesday, including its biggest and most expensive model yet, as the company

seeks to widen the product's appeal amid slowing sales.

Most of the buzz is swirling around a rumored iPhone with a screen that's bigger than the one on last year's dramatically designed model , the iPhone X.

As with the iPhone X, this larger phone would have a screen that runs from edge to edge, in an effort to maximize the display without making the phone too awkward to hold. The screen would need no backlight, so black would appear as truly black rather than simply dark.

If the speculation pans out, the even-bigger iPhone would represent Apple's attempt to feed consumers' appetite for increasingly bigger screens as they rely on smartphones to watch and record video, as well as take photos wherever they are.

The iPhone X also got rid of the home button to make room for more screen and introduced facial-recognition technology to unlock the device.

It was the first mass-market smartphone to demand a \$1,000 starting price. Although the iPhone X didn't fulfill analysts' lofty sales expectations, it fared well enough for Apple to up the ante with the bigger model, whose price Apple is expected to unveil Wednesday.



In this May 31, 2018, file photo customers enter the Apple store in New York. Apple is expected to unveil its biggest and most expensive iPhone yet on Wednesday, Sept. 12, along with two smaller, cheaper versions in an attempt to widen the product's appeal amid slowing sales growth. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan, File)

Apple also is expected to release an iPhone with minor updates to last year's \$1,000 model and another version made of cheaper materials, including one with a traditional, backlit screen. Even so, the cheaper iPhone is still expected to sell for \$650 to \$750. The cheaper phone also is expected to lose the home button. Price cuts for older models, with the home button, are also likely.

Names for the new devices aren't known. The company may also announce a new smartwatch. Apple didn't comment ahead of Wednesday's event, which is being held at its Cupertino, California, headquarters.

By making more expensive iPhones, Apple has been able to boost its profits despite waning demand as people upgrade phones less frequently. iPhones fetched an average price of \$724 during the April-June period, a nearly 20 percent increase from a year earlier.

Worldwide smartphone sales grew just 2 percent during that period, according to the research firm Gartner Inc. During the second quarter, which is typically slow for Apple, China's Huawei Technologies surpassed Apple as the second-largest seller of smartphones, based on Gartner's calculations. Samsung remained in the lead.

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