

# IPad 2 sales start with pre-dawn online orders

March 11 2011

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In this March 9, 2011 file photo, an Associated Press reporter demonstrates the Garage Band application on the Apple iPad 2 in San Francisco. Apple Inc.'s updated version of its iPad tablet computer will be available in stores Friday afternoon but those who can't wait to say they own the gadget can beat the crowds by ordering one online before the sun rises.(AP Photo/Jeff Chiu, file)

(AP) -- Apple Inc.'s updated version of its iPad tablet computer will be available in stores Friday afternoon. But those who can't wait to say they own the gadget were able to beat the crowds by ordering one online before the sun rises.

The Cupertino company opened online sales of the iPad 2 at 1 a.m. PST, hours before they will be available in stores nationwide at 5 p.m. local time.

When the original version of the iPad went on sale in April, Apple said it sold more than 300,000 in the first day. It ended up selling more than 15 million in its first nine months on sale, including 7.3 million to holiday shoppers during the October-December quarter.

The new iPad model comes with several improvements over the original version but the same price tag - \$499 to \$829, depending on storage space and whether they can connect to the Internet over a cellular network - hobbling efforts by rivals at breaking Apple's hold on the emerging market for tablet computers.

The iPad 2 looks much like the first iPad, only with a sleeker, lighter body with a curved back. Among changes is the inclusion of cameras, one on the front and one on the back.



Apple CEO Steve Jobs appears at Apple's special media event to introduce the second generation iPad at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, on March 2, in California. The new iPad goes on sale at Apple stores across the United States on Friday as the gadget-maker seeks to stay a step ahead of its rivals in the booming market for sleek touchscreen tablet computers.

With the original iPad, Apple proved there is a large market for a tablet

that's less than a laptop and more than a smart phone, yet performs many of the same tasks. Competitors including Dell Inc. and Samsung Electronics Co. have been trying to lure consumers with smaller tablets, without much success. In February, Motorola Mobility Inc.'s Xoom went on sale with a new version of Google Inc.'s Android software that was designed for tablets, not smart phones.

To underscore the importance of the iPad to Apple, company CEO Steve Jobs emerged from a medical leave earlier this month to unveil the new version to bloggers and Apple enthusiasts. Jobs, 56, announced in January that he would take a third leave of absence to focus on his health. In the last decade, he has survived a rare but curable form of pancreatic cancer and undergone a liver transplant.

After its U.S. launch Friday, the iPad 2 goes on sale March 25 in 26 other markets, including Mexico, New Zealand, Spain and other European countries.

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Citation: iPad 2 sales start with pre-dawn online orders (2011, March 11) retrieved 20 September 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-03-ipad-sales-pre-dawn-online.html>

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