

Microsoft tablet to have little impact in 2012: analyst

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Microsoft's Executive Officer Steve Ballmer introduces Microsoft's new tablet 'Surface' during the press conference in Milky Studios on June 18, in Hollywood, California. Even with its highly publicized launch of a new tablet computer, Microsoft is expected to have little impact this year on the fast-growing market, a research firm said Wednesday.

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ABI Research expects Windows 7, Windows 8 and Windows RT-based tablets to account for only 1.3 percent of 2012 global shipments.

This is because there is a dearth of products using the existing Windows 7 operating system and the new Windows RT and Windows 8 operating systems are likely to hit the market in October.

Microsoft, which has been largely absent from the [tablet market](#) dominated by Apple's [iPad](#), said this week it would launch its own branded tablet this year called Surface. But many details and pricing were not revealed.

"The obvious 'low hanging' market opportunity for Microsoft's Surface tablets is with business buyers

that have an installed base of Windows PCs," ABI said.

"Microsoft may face an uphill battle by throwing its hat into the mobile computing tablet ring."

Microsoft chief executive [Steve Ballmer](#) described the iPad challenger -- complete with a built-in stand and ultra thin covers-cum-keyboards in a range of colors -- as a tablet that "works and plays."

The Surface features a flip-out rear "kickstand" to prop it up like a picture frame and can be combined with a 3mm-thick Touch Cover that, when opened, acts as a keypad so tablets could be switched into "desktop" mode.

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