

Apple to unveil next products at Sept. 9 event (Update)

August 28 2014, by Michael Liedtke



In a Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2011, file photo, a person stands near the Apple logo at the company's store in Grand Central Terminal, in New York. Apple will show off its newest products Sept. 9, 2014. The iPhone and iPad maker set the date in invitations mailed Thursday, Aug. 28, 2014, to reporters and others who typically come to see the unveiling of Apple's latest twists on technology. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan, File)

Apple's latest product launch will be in a setting that holds a special place in its history, signaling how big this event is for the company.

The Sept. 9 launch, which is expected to feature a larger iPhone and possibly a computerized watch, will be in the same Silicon Valley venue where Apple's late co-founder, Steve Jobs, took the wraps off the original Mac computer 30 years ago. That machine was hailed as a major breakthrough that helped bring personal computing to the masses.

These events have become an annual rite since the 2007 release of the iPhone, but this year's may be the most highly anticipated since the iPad came out in 2010.

A "smartwatch" or other wearable technology would mark the company's first foray into a new product category since the iPad came out.

True to its secretive nature, Apple Inc. isn't giving any clues about what's on the Sept. 9 agenda. "Wish we could say more," Apple said in a succinct white invitation mailed Thursday to reporters and others.

The company scheduled the event at an auditorium about 3 miles from its Cupertino, California, headquarters. It seats about 2,300 people, a far larger capacity than the places that Apple usually uses to show off its new products.

Apple watchers expect an iPhone with a larger screen than the 4-inch display on the previous two generations of the device. The iPhone 6 is expected to feature a 4.7-inch screen to make it more competitive with larger smartphones made by Samsung Electronics and other rivals relying on Google Inc.'s free Android software. There also has been speculation that Apple may release another iPhone model with a 5.5-inch screen.

A bigger-screen iPhone could unleash a surge of sales among Apple fans who own iPhones with smaller displays. Some analysts think Apple could sell at least 70 million units of the iPhone 6 within the first few

months after the device hits the market.

Although the iPhone is Apple's biggest moneymaker, much of the intrigue around this year's event surrounds the possibility that the company may release a long-awaited smartwatch that could help monitor people's health and serve as control center for Internet-connected appliances and electronics in the home.

Apple CEO Tim Cook has indicated that he is intrigued with wearable technology devices, but hasn't provided any concrete clues about what the company is working on. Cook has only said he is excited about what Apple's latest inventions, a sentiment echoed by one of his top lieutenants, Eddy Cue, who earlier this year hailed the company's product pipeline as its best in 25 years.

Apple has just been redesigning and adding features to its iPhones, iPads, iPods and Mac since the release of the iPad, raising concerns among investors that the company had run out of new ideas after the October 2011 death of Jobs, who served as its chief visionary.

Those worries have subsided during the past four months as the excitement has built for Apple's new products. Apple's stock hit a new high of \$102.78 in Thursday morning's trading before falling back to close at \$102.25, up 12 cents for the session. The shares have risen 25 percent in 2014.

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