

Apple Rolls Out New iPad Air, iPad Mini

Ben Munson

Apple ran through numerous hardware and software updates Tuesday before it finally introduced its new iPads, the iPad Air and iPad mini 2.

Tim Cook opened the event with an App Store update, saying the storefront has now hit 60 billion downloads and that iOS developers have earned more than \$13 billion.

After announcing that October had seen Apple selling its 170 millionth iPad and claiming 81 percent tablet usage share for iPad, Phil Schiller showed off the new hardware.

The iPad Air wears a 9.7-inch Retina display with a 43-percent smaller bezel than the previous iPad. At 7.5 millimeters thin, it's 20 percent slimmer than the previous iPad and the weight of the Air is down to one pound from the 1.4 pounds of the iPad 4.

Inside the Air, the 64-bit A7 chip is running things and MIMO antenna tech should speed up the Wi-Fi. The Air begins shipping Nov. 1 and starts at \$499.

A Retina display, A7 chip and MIMO antenna also found their way onto the new 7.9-inch iPad mini, which is priced at \$399 and due out in late November.

Both the iPad Air and iPad mini with Retina display will be available through AT&T, Verizon, Sprint and T-Mobile as well as Apple's online and retail outlets.

Apple's iPad refresh arrives just as Gartner is predicting explosive growth for the tablet market with 53.4 percent growth for 2013. But as the tablet market grows, Apple's once-dominant share is dissipating. IDC estimated that Apple's global tablet share had dipped to 32 percent in the second quarter, down from 60 percent in the second quarter of 2012.

In addition to going over updates to the MacBook Pro and Mac Pro, Apple also announced the availability today of OS X Mavericks for free and backward compatible all the way to 2007 iMacs.

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