

Microsoft Unveils Office for iPad

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Microsoft on Thursday unveiled Office for the iPad, a software suite that includes programs such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint, and works on rival Apple Inc.'s hugely popular tablet computer.

The app was to be made available for download on Thursday in the App Store at 11 a.m. Pacific time.

Office for the iPad corrects layout problems that users experienced when accessing files they had saved on Microsoft's cloud storage service, OneDrive.

The app has touch-enabled features that allow users to drag photos around Word documents and grab elements like pie charts in Excel.

The app will allow reading and presenting of documents for free, but will require a subscription to Office365 to enable writing and editing. A subscription for up to five computers and five smartphones costs \$100 a year, but a personal version for one computer and one tablet costs \$70 a year. The subscription includes 20 gigabytes of storage space on OneDrive.

The Redmond, Wash.-based software giant unveiled the app at an event in San Francisco where Satya Nadella addressed reporters on his 52nd day as Microsoft Corp.'s chief executive.

"This, in a sense, is a cloud for every person and every mobile device," Nadella said.

He built on comments he has made previously that Microsoft will develop key software for mobile devices regardless of whether they run on Apple's iOS, Google's Android or Microsoft's Windows operating system. Thursday's announcement follows Microsoft's move earlier this month to release a version of its OneNote note-taking software for Macs.

"There's no tradeoff," Nadella said. "What motivates us is the realities of our customers."

Daniel Ives, an analyst with FBR Capital Markets, said the move to develop key software products for Apple devices is a "great first step."

Microsoft had previously resisted introducing Office for the iPad, preferring to leverage the software suite as a key selling point of Windows 8 tablets and its own line of Surface tablet computers. But those tablets have struggled in the marketplace.

"They finally looked in the mirror and realized they needed to go with the crowd in

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terms of iPads," Ives said. "I think it signals there is change in Redmond, even if they picked an insider."

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