



25 June 2012 | [MP3](#) at voaspecialenglish.com

Microsoft Competes Against Apple with New Tablet Computer

This is the VOA Special English Technology Report.

Microsoft has announced its first tablet computer. It is called the Surface, and it is designed to compete directly with the popular Apple iPad.

The computer software maker announced its new tablet last Monday at a media event in Los Angeles. Microsoft will offer two versions of the Surface. Each has a different processor. The Surface for Windows RT runs on an ARM processor. It is less powerful than the Surface for Windows 8 Pro, which uses an Intel processor.

The RT is also thinner and weighs less than the Pro. Either tablet weighs no more than nine hundred three grams. Both have screens that are about twenty-seven centimeters in size. That is a little bigger than the iPad's screen.

Microsoft has not said exactly when the new Surface will appear in stores. But, it is expected to be sometime in September or October. This is about the same time that the company plans to release its new Windows 8 computer operating system.

Brenda Estrella owns a laptop computer. She has been considering switching to a tablet.

BRENDA ESTRELLA: "iPad for me is more of an entertainment device, like I see a lot of people carrying it around or taking pictures on it. For me, it's not that practical, so if Microsoft is coming out with a tablet that actually you can like type, and actually do different things other than just swipe, then that would be better for me."

Fox Van Allen is a technology expert. He agrees the Surface seems to have more to offer than the iPad.

FOX VAN ALLEN: "It's a very interesting new device. I think the key point here is that it's not just another iPad. It's a device that almost serves as a replacement for a PC."

Many technology lovers, including Catherine Clinch, are excited about the new

tablet.

CATHERINE CLINCH: "The applause moments were on things that I think were predictable -- wow it stands by itself, you don't have buy a stand. It's all together, the keyboard folds over, it's a cover -- all those wonderful things. But when I look at this what I think of is the potential to get rid of the netbook, to get rid of the laptop, to maybe even down the line get rid of the full computer."

The Surface is meant to compete with the iPad. But not everyone is sure it is a better product. This includes iPad user John Ayala.

JOHN AYALA: "Would I buy one over an iPad? No. I like Apple products right now. I am glad there is a competitor and I am glad there is an alternative, but I am sticking with Apple."

For years, Microsoft made software, not computers. A few earlier attempts by the company to make and sell hardware products failed. That included the Zune music player. It could not compete against Apple's iPod.

Estimates place the value of the tablet computer market at about seventy-nine billion dollars this year. Microsoft hopes to capture a share of that market with its latest device.

And that's the VOA Special English Technology Report, written by June Simms. Transcripts, MP3s and podcasts of our reports are at voaspecialenglish.com. I'm Steve Ember.