

The New iPad



Figure E.1
The New iPad

Just as I was about to wrap this LTR up, Apple decided it was time to release the latest version of its iPad (figure E.1), rendering a lot of what I had written somewhat dated. So here's an attempt to at least point out the differences between the iPad 2 and the new iPad and suggest why you'd prefer one over the other. The new iPad is available for pre-order as I write this, and will be available in the United States on March 16, 2012.

The key difference between the previous generations of the iPad and the new iPad is the new display.¹

The new iPad uses what Apple calls a Retina display, which is defined as a display that, at a typical viewing distance, has pixels packed tightly enough that they are indistinguishable from each other. First used on the iPhone 4, the Retina display provides a picture that is smooth and even, with no visual artifacts of pixelization at all. Having a screen resolution of 2048×1536 pixels means that the pixels-per-inch measurement is 264 ppi, higher density than much printed material. The screen is the highest density LCD on any consumer device and looks incredible, truly something

unlike anything else on the market.

The other major change between the iPad 2 and the next generation iPad is that the new iPad includes the option of an LTE radio in addition to the previously available 3G cellular connectivity.² LTE is short for Long Term Evolution³ and is the fourth generation (4G) cellular network technology being used in the United States. It is an incredibly fast connection, upwards of 80 Mbps at its best, and will approach standard Wi-Fi speeds. If you live in an area that is lucky enough to be covered by LTE signal, this will be a huge change in the speeds you can expect while out and about in the world.

There are other changes (faster, more RAM, slightly heavier and thicker), but these are the two that will make the most significant difference to users. If you are planning a personal purchase or a purchase for your library, the new iPad screen alone is a reason to choose it. However, Apple did leave the previous generation iPad on sale with the traditional screen, for \$100 less than the lowest priced new iPad, lowering the entry-level for iPad ownership down to \$399.

As with every iPad introduction, there will be lots of reviews and recommendations online, and I'm certain that there will be massive outcries that the new iPad isn't revolutionary enough and that it's sure to disappoint. And like every other iPad introduction, Apple is almost certainly going to sell millions and millions of them, orders of magnitude more than any other tablet on the market. My prediction is that the new iPad will, over the course of 2012, continue Apple's dominance of the tablet market.

Apple Configurator

For the purpose of libraries, a completely different announcement made the same day will likely make a huge difference in how we deal with Apple devices. The Apple Configurator for OS X Lion is a brand-new piece of software designed specifically for the non-enterprise rollout of iOS devices that is much easier to use than the previously available enterprise tools.⁴ You have the opportunity to configure and deploy iOS devices in three distinct ways.

First, you can prepare new devices by creating a standard installation for your devices, including the version of iOS to install, the apps that you want installed, and the data you want synced. Second, you can supervise existing devices that you need to "clean" after each use by reinstalling to a known state every time they are plugged in; this is the option that seems perfect for libraries that wish to circulate iOS devices. Last, you can assign devices to specific users and manage that user's interactions with the device, which is also applicable to staff-side uses of iOS devices.

One note on limitations of the program. The documentation says that the Configurator can handle up to 30 devices simultaneously, but that's not a hard limit as to the total devices it can manage, just a limit on managing all at once. If you have 60 iPads, you could manage them in batches of 30 with no issues, just no more than 30 at once. The URL in the gray box is for the Configurator documentation, and I highly suggest that if you are managing iOS devices, you check it out. It's going to be incredibly useful in dealing with iPads, iPhones, and iPod Touches in the library and education fields.

Configurator documentation

<http://help.apple.com/configurator/mac/1.0>

There was more news on the same day from Apple, including iPhoto for iOS, a new Apple TV that supports 1080 HD AirPlay, and more. But the new iPad and the Configurator are the two that will be huge in the next twelve months.

Notes

1. "Features," iPad, accessed March 16, 2012, www.apple.com/ipad/features.
2. Ibid.
3. "3GPP Long Term Evolution," Wikipedia, last modified March 15, 2012, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_term_evolution.
4. "Apple Configurator Help," accessed March 16, 2012, <http://help.apple.com/configurator/mac/1.0>.

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