

Microsoft Challenges Google in Low-Cost Notebooks

Written by Marco Attard
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The Google take on the low-cost notebook, the Chromebook, clearly worries Microsoft-- so much so that at its Worldwide Partner Conference the company reveals how it will "redefine the value category."



During the conference keynote COO Kevin Turner claimed Windows notebooks will win against Chromebooks, and Microsoft partners such as Acer and Toshiba are already working low-cost (\$250) options.

"We are going to participate at the low-end," Turner says. "We've got a great value proposition against Chromebooks, we are not ceding the market to anyone."

According to a conference slide there are 6 things Windows notebooks can do that Chromebooks cannot-- run both native and web apps, run full Office, desktop applications, work well offline, work with many peripherals and print directly to printer.

Also revealed at the conference is "Stream," a cheap 'n' cheerful 7- and 8-inch notebook from HP with as yet unspecified specs and a \$199 pricetag.

Last April ABI Research [described Chromebooks as a "disruptive force" in portable PCs](#) , and while adoption is still relatively low (2.1 million in 2013), the cloud-powered notebooks are forecast to grow to 11 million with a 28% CAGR by 2019. Such growth contrasts with Windows 8-powered ultraportables, who see declines in both sales and ASPs.

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Seeing it that way no wonder Microsoft wants to ensure it does not lose more of its slice of a shrinking low-cost notebook pie.

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