A Year for Tablets-- Or Was It?

Written by Marco Attard
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Analysts might describe 2011 as year of the tablet, with forecasts predicting further growth for a device category most vendors dismissed before 2010. But one can also say 2011 was a very hard year for all tablets that weren't iPads...

Apple launched the iPad 2 on March-- and while the device was more of an lighter and thinner evolution than an outright revolution, it still sold an estimated 500000 on its first weekend in the US.

In the meantime, other vendors scrambled to launch the competition. Google optimised Android for tablet use with Honeycomb, which found use in the Motorola Xoom (the first tablet to run the OS), the Samsung Galaxy Tab 10.1 (more about that later) and the Asus Eee Pad Transformer Prime, the first tablet using Nvidia's quad-core Tegra 3 processor.

HP tried to take on tablets with the TouchPad-- a promising webOS-powered device that ended up victim of HP's Garage Sale. HP managed to shift remaining TouchPad inventory [through the means of low, low prices](#), before "contributing" webOS to the open source community... but most remain skeptical webOS will manage to find a place in the current market.

RIM also gave tablets a shot with the PlayBook-- the 7" device aiming for enterprise use lacking some crucial features, including native email support. Unlike HP, RIM promises it will still support the tablet, and should release a long-awaited 2.0 upgrade to the PlayBook OS on February 2012.

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Amazon managed to disrupt the tablet market with the Kindle Fire and its $199 price tag-- $300 cheaper than the iPad. The Kindle Fire is still to launch in Europe, but Amazon claims it already sold "millions," even if it won't provide specific numbers.

To conclude... law suits. [Apple managed to ban sale of the Samsung Galaxy Tab 10.1 in 26 (out of 27) EU Countries](#)   through the Düsseldorf Regional Court. Samsung also lost the chance to showcase the Galaxy Tab 7.7 at IFA 2011.