

Google Reveals Tablet, Android Update at I/O

Written by Marco Attard
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Yet another industry giant enters tablet space-- Google reveals the Nexus 7 at the I/O Developer Conference, a 7-inch Google-branded device carrying an other fresh announcement, Android version 4.1 (aka Jelly Bean).



However, unlike the high-end Microsoft Surface, Google's take on tablets (a co-development with Asus) appears more humble. With a \$199 price point, the Nexus 7 aims for the lower end of the market where the Amazon Kindle Fire currently dominates.

The 7-inch display handles 1280x800 resolutions with a 178-degree viewing angle, while the tablet carries a Tegra 3 quad-core processor, 12-core Nvidia GPU and 1GB of RAM. It also supports bluetooth and NFC connections and includes a front-facing camera.

The second biggest I/O announcement is the latest Android version. Code named Jelly Bean, Android 4.1 includes a number of improvements aimed at polishing what already lies within version 4.0 (Ice Cream Sandwich).

The most major addition is "Project Butter"-- a modification allowing Android to run the CPU, GPU and display in parallel in order to speed up the UI frame rate to 60fps.

Jelly Bean also includes a yet unnamed rival to Apple's Siri voice assistant, with improved Google-powered voice search and offline voice typing. First available only in US English,

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Google promises it will add more languages (including 18 new ones) "soon."

Further input improvements include gesture control, allowing users to navigate the UI by swiping.

Apps also get encryption-- Jelly Bean receives apps with a device-specific key.

The Nexus 7 is the first device running on Android 4.1, and the Galaxy Nexus, Motorola Xoom and the Nexus S will receive it as an over-the-update sometime in July 2012.

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