

March 2012

### **The new iPad: is the tablet changing the face of business?**

March 2012. It's here: the new iPad, the first product launch from Apple since the death of Steve Jobs. It's the higher screen resolution that most tech reviewers are gushing over. This has been described as: "simply stunning".

The other changes (faster connectivity; better camera) are more 'evolutionary' – improving an existing product – than revolutionary. Of course, criticism of the device continues (cost; the lack of ports), but one thing is sure: sales will continue to rise. Not just iPad sales, but sales of other tablet devices.

Not bad for a product which did not exist two years ago. Is it now a must-have accessory? Noticing the number of business people clutching their iPads has got me thinking about how tablets are changing the way we do business.

Many business users may be just relaxing and watching movies on their tablet, but some will be reading the FT online; using it for note-taking in meetings; finalising that presentation or spread-sheet, or downloading one of the vast and growing number of business apps. You can now track flights; photograph a document and fax (yes, fax) it; record a business call (with the other person's permission, of course); snap business cards and store them; even join a business video chat with WebEx.

So, is all this work (supposedly!) going on using tablets leading to an increase in productivity?

Not everyone is happy. Many IT managers dislike employees using personal devices at work. Integrating them into a corporate network may be risky. Neither do they like too many users logging onto the wi-fi at the same time.

Some companies are actually buying tablets to replace PCs, which strikes me as a bit premature. Will there come a day when the pc and the laptop disappear? Love them or not, the tablet has certainly made a splash in the business world. I'm actually off to a conference next week. Of course, I've just downloaded the free conference app.....

Here are a couple of interesting sites:

Top 25 apps for business

<http://www.cio.com/slideshow/detail/33317/Top-25-iPhone---iPad-Apps-for-Business>

The best iPad business apps

<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2372150,00.asp>