

Apple rolls out Macbooks with M2 chips in rare January launch

APPLE Inc. on Tuesday unveiled MacBooks powered by its new and faster M2 Pro and M2 Max chips in a surprise launch weeks ahead of its usual schedule.

The rollout of the devices using Apple's latest versions of the M2 chip, which it debuted

last year, is an outgrowth of the tech giant's decision in 2020 to use semiconductors designed in-house after 15 years of relying on Intel's technology.

The new Mac mini starts at \$599 and will be available from Jan. 24. The 14-inch and 16-inch MacBook Pro with the latest chips

start at \$1,999, compared with the \$1,299 price tag for a 13-inch model fitted with the M2 chip.

The new MacBook Pro models were expected for months, but supply-chain issues meant the launch was delayed from last year to early 2023, Bloomberg News reported in October.

"This is all connected to the delayed chipset transition... With it being delayed, Apple has been faced with the questions to wait for the traditional, expected launch or actually do something a bit unexpected," said Canlys analyst Runar Bjørhovde.

"This is a great way of throwing things around and surprising the consumers and competitors," Mr. Bjørhovde said, adding that the announcement could generate some hype at a time when the broader personal computer market is in a slump.

— Reuters

FULL STORY



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Ninja Van eyes program to support live sellers

TECH-enabled express logistics company Ninja Van Philippines announced on Tuesday that it plans to launch a program aimed at supporting early-stage live sellers through seed money and skills development.

"Ninja Van Philippines plans to conduct its first-ever live-seller accelerator program, designed to equip both new and would-be live-sellers with necessary skills and seed money to bridge their business to live-selling platforms," the company said in a statement.

Citing its own survey, the company noted that more Filipinos now view live selling as a way of bringing in new business, with 74% saying that attracting new customers is a top driver for conducting live selling.

"A secondary driver would be to increase profit, with 52% of Filipino sellers saying live selling is more profitable than just posting items on marketplaces and apps," Ninja Van said.

The company said it surveyed 9,000 respondents across Malaysia,

Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines on the importance of reliable delivery services for online shoppers.

"When asked about their online shopping habits, 92% of Filipino shoppers said it is important to know who the shipping company is," Ninja Van said.

They voted for "real-time tracking" and "delivery where I am located" as their top delivery preferences for a hassle-free delivery experience.

Filipinos have the second largest average basket size at \$33 per single purchase among the six markets, the study showed.

Ninja Van has an automated sorting hub in Cabuyao, Laguna, a 21,000-square-meter facility that is the group's largest in the entire region. It can process 300,000 parcels per day, according to the company.

It has also launched a sorting hub in Novaliches, Quezon City, mainly to serve growing demand in North Metro Manila and Central and Northern Luzon. — Arjay L. Balinbin

Sony relauches Walkman as a high-resolution streaming device

SONY Philippines this week launched the brand's two new Walkman music players in the country, which will be available for purchase by next month, it said in a statement on Tuesday.

The local unit of Sony Electronics Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd., a subsidiary of Sony Corp., said the company recently announced two new additions to the Walkman series, the NW-ZX707 and the NW-A306.

"Both players are designed for listeners to enjoy music the way the artist intended with high-quality sound with a sleek design," Sony Philippines said.

The two new music players will be available at select Sony Authorized Dealers nationwide starting Feb. 10.

The higher end NW-ZX707, priced at P44,999, offers "astounding" sound quality, the company said.

The new music player, built with the philosophy of the com-

pany's Signature Walkman, has upgraded fine-tuned capacitors and an FTCAP3 (high polymer capacitor), and a large solid high polymer capacitor that offers large capacitance and low resistance.

An OFC milled block covers the digital block to strengthen digital ground and improve noise shielding. A large 8mm coil for balanced output also allows for better sound resolution across all frequencies.

"NW-ZX707 integrates a DSD Remastering Engine where PCM (pulse code modulation) audio is resampled into an 11.2 MHz DSD (direct stream digital), offering even more ways to enjoy music," Sony Philippines said.

"With enhanced battery life, a balanced connection, a larger 5-inch display, and Wi-Fi compatibility for easy downloading and streaming functions, it is also portable and stylish for the most demanding music lover," it added.

Meanwhile, the NW-A306, priced at P19,999, is targeted for users "looking for high-quality sound and style," Sony Philippines said.

"This stylish and compact music player lets consumers download and stream more of the music they love. With full Wi-Fi compatibility, weighing just only 7 ounces, and with the comfort and function of both a 3.6-inch touch screen and tactile physical music controls, the NW-A306 series is dedicated to delivering exceptional music experiences right from the users' pocket," it said.

"The premium aluminium milled frame on the NW-A306 provides superior rigidity for low impedance and clear, stable sound and solid bass," it added.

Both models feature the S-Master HX digital amp technology developed for Walkman, which is compatible with the native DSD

format. It reduces distortion and noise across frequencies.

The music players apply a re-flow solder containing gold for improved sound localization and wider sound space. Both also have a dual clock, film capacitor, and fine sound register.

The NW-ZX707 and the NW-A306 both use Edge-AI (artificial intelligence), and DSEE Ultimate (digital sound enhancement engine) to upscale compressed digital music files in real-time.

"With further progress from its predecessor models, consumers can enjoy DSEE Ultimate for upscaling their music, whether it is Wi-Fi streamed or downloaded. Now, listeners can also enjoy DSEE Ultimate with wireless headphones," Sony Philippines added.

The two new music players also feature longer battery life. No plastic is used in their packaging material. — BVR

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