

Subject: Why I Just Dumped the iPad (Hint: Size Matters)

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Having used a Samsung Galaxy, I tend to agree with many of the comments below (except actually moving off the iPad). I believe there will be a 7" market and we should do one. I expressed this to Steve several times since Thanksgiving and he seemed very receptive the last time. I found email, books, facebook and video very compelling on a 7". Web browsing is definitely the weakest point, but still usable.

http://gigaom.com/mobile/why-i-just-dumped-the-ipad-hint-size-matters/?utm_source=GigaOM+Daily+Newsletters&utm_campaign=0db2e2cd90-c:mob.tec.vid.apl+d:01-24&utm_medium=email

Why I Just Dumped the iPad (Hint: Size Matters)

By Kevin C. Tofel | Jan. 21, 2011, 3:00pm PDT | 92 Comments

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Like a surrogate child carried in the womb and then given to loving parents, I just sold the iPad I've owned for the last nine months. Don't get me wrong: there's much to admire about the iPad with its long battery life, touch-optimized user interface and support for thousands of excellent applications. The problem is that I simply don't use it any more. Actually, let me re-phrase that: I stopped using the iPad about a month ago, after I bought a 7-inch Samsung Galaxy Tab running Google Android.

Before I even continue with the discussion on why I did this, let me pre-empt some assumptions by clarifying a few points:

Apple is doing a phenomenal job with iOS in general and as someone who has used tablets of all kinds since 2004, I acknowledge that Apple has re-invented the tablet market.

I bought my iPad at launch and couldn't put it down when I was on the couch, in bed, etc. It's a great sit-down device.

I'm not suggesting that Android is a better mobile operating system than iOS. Both have

merits and challenges; generally I find iOS to provide a better user experience, although I think Android is slowly catching up.

I'm also not leading any charge against the iPad or Apple here: I use an iMac, MacBook Air and 4th generation iPod touch in addition to an Android smartphone and Android tablet.

I don't assume my mobile computing needs are the same as yours. In fact, they're likely not.

The Galaxy Tab has plenty of room for improvement: [here's a smart list of 50 items that ought to be incorporated into or fixed on future Tab models.](#)

THE BEST TABLET IS THE ONE YOU HAVE WITH YOU

The Tab is roughly the same size as, but thicker than Amazon's Kindle, which ironically I sold when I got my iPad. Prior to iPad ownership, my Kindle would go everywhere with me because of its small size, light weight, stellar battery life and integrated connectivity. And I do mean everywhere: the device would fit in my jacket pocket or could be thrown — figuratively, not literally — in the car or in a gear bag. The Galaxy Tab offers me that same level of portability, while the iPad doesn't.

Here's a perfect example: I purchased the Tab on a weekend at the local T-Mobile store and my family wanted to hit the mall afterwards. I either carried the device in hand or placed it in my back jeans pocket while cruising the mall for hours. As my wife or daughter stopped to browse for clothes, I quickly whipped out the small tablet to manage email, web-surf, and watch YouTube videos. I wouldn't have been able to do that with the iPad for one simple reason: the iPad wouldn't have come with me on a trip to the mall in the first place.

If you look at the Tab and compare the screen size to the iPad, it's easy to think there's little difference between the two: one has a 7-inch display and one has a 9.7-inch display, right? But in actuality, the Galaxy Tab is half the size of an iPad (as shown below), making it far easier to tote around and use while standing or walking. As an aside: the difference in icon size is negligible and icons on my iPod touch are actually smaller than those of the Tab, [so Apple's "sandpaper down your fingers" to use a 7-inch tablet argument](#) is a fallacy in my opinion.





COMPROMISES MUST BE MADE

As I alluded earlier in this post: the iPad surely wins out on the breadth of application choices, media content availability and overall polish of the user interface. But it's difficult to quantify that advantage: is the iPad twice as good as the Tab or is it just a little better? Obviously, the answer will vary for each person, but after a month with the Tab, I find that what it lacks in functionality or ease-of-use is more than offset by the portability for me. And in some cases, the Tab has more functionality than the current iPad: It acts as a mobile hotspot to share the 3G data connection and can accept the microSD card filled with music from my smartphone, for example.

For my needs, both devices work perfectly fine for email, web surfing, occasional gaming, using social networks and other bite-sized activities that don't require a full-blown desktop operating system. Yes, there are more apps for iOS and even when an app is available on both platforms, I often like the iOS version slightly more than its Android equivalent. But to think the Tab is unusable as compared to an iOS device is overstating the difference.

I'm willing to give up a smidge of usability or a wider array of software to gain the ability to easily use the device everywhere I go. It's this very concept that makes the smartphone so enabling, regardless of make, model or platform: the ability to be connected everywhere is

what's driving the mobile revolution forward. In fact, I'm actually using my Android smartphone less as well. The Tab does all of the same things as my Nexus One, but on a larger, higher-resolution screen, making for a better overall experience.

WHAT ABOUT THE NEW HONEYCOMB TABLETS?

It's not likely I'll jump on [one of the new Honeycomb tablets that are coming soon](#), however. [Android 3.0 looks great](#) but all of the announced slates are still 10-inches in size, which means these devices will have the same limited-use to me as my iPad. I'll likely hold off until we see Honeycomb on smaller devices, which I don't expect until mid-year at best. For the same reason, I can't think of any feature of function that might get me interested in the next iPad either, although I reserve the right to change my mind: especially if Apple backtracks on its stated strategy and opts to offer a smaller iPad model. Yup, it's doubtful, but I'm an optimist. Besides, this is the same company that said people don't read books and then entered the market with iBooks.

IS APPLE MISSING A MARKET?

Again, what works for me may not work for you: I'm not suggesting everyone dump their iPads. I'm simply explaining my own decision making process to help you make your own. And aside from our own Darrell Etherington at the GigaOM Apple channel who tried, and then returned a Tab, I've heard from at least a dozen Tab owners that are also finding less use for the iPad (and other devices) based on the 7-inch form factor. Darrell's experience with the Tab ironically made him realize that he wants a 7-inch iPad. I'm inclined to agree and would consider dumping my Tab if Apple were to sell such a device: it's the best of both worlds, regardless of Steve Jobs's insinuation that it will never happen.

Darrell's sentiment highlights a key point I'm trying to make here: we often look at the features of a device, but I contend that form is just as much a feature as the CPU clock cycle or the amount of memory in a mobile device. Of course, you never know that until you try a new form factor to see how it fits in your lifestyle. I'm glad I did that with the Tab.

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