Apple May Release $799 MacBook Air Later This Year

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Apple [1] may be considering the release of a budget-priced MacBook Air to compete against the upcoming second wave of ultrabooks, according to a new report.

Citing unnamed sources in Apple's supply chain, tech site *Digitimes* [2] is reporting that the company might introduce a MacBook Air priced at $799 in the third quarter of this year — right in time for the back-to-school season.

It's key to note that the *DigiTimes* has a hit-or-miss track record for nailing predictions.

If the rumors are true, the MacBook Air could hit shelves with a price cheaper than its other models, including its latest 11-inch 64GB MacBook Air ($999), 11-inch 128GB version ($1,199) and 13-inch 128GB model ($1,299).

The line also features a 256GB version that is priced at $1,599. The launch of a less expensive MacBook Air could put ultrabooks at a huge disadvantage.

Ultrabooks [3] – which are ultra-slim laptops typically under 0.8 inches thick – have become a hot "it" device in computing, giving on-the-go users a lightweight, full-computer alternative. However, ultrabook sales haven't been blockbuster right out of the gate as many consumers have turned their attention to the growing tablet market.

However, it's been reported that Dell's XP13 ultrabook ($999) experienced strong sales [4] that exceeded expectations since it's launch in February. The XPS 13,

which touts a 13-inch display in a compact 12-inch frame and weighs in at only 2.99 pounds, runs on Windows 7. It also features Intel Core i3 processors, but it can also be upgraded to Intel Core i7 processors.

Meanwhile, some believe that ultrabooks overall won't achieve strong sales until the launch of Windows 8.

Will you purchase a $799 MacBook Air if the rumors are true?

www.mashable.com [5]

Posted by Janine E. Mooney, Editor

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