Apple May Discontinue iPad 2 to Make Room for iPad Mini

Apple [1] is set to drop the iPad 2 [2] from its product lineup when the so-called iPad Mini [3] launches, a financial analyst suspects. Eliminating the iPad 2 may also give a hint about how Apple intends to price the new tablet.

First reported by Apple Insider, analyst Rob Cihra said in a note to investors this week that he sees the introduction of a smaller-screen iPad [4] as an opportunity to streamline its lineup into “clearer product tiers.” He goes on to say he predicts Apple will sell 7 million iPad Minis by the end of the year.

Killing the iPad 2 does make a great deal of sense. The product is a year and a half old — an eternity as far as mobile technology goes — and the upcoming iPad Mini is expected to have exactly the same screen resolution.

The iPad 2?s presence in Apple’s product lineup also creates an issue in how to position the iPad Mini. The iPod touch [5], which has a 4-inch screen, has a starting price of $299. The iPad 2, which has a 9.7-inch screen, starts at $399. That leaves little room for an in-between product.

However, if the iPad Mini is intended to compete with the likes of the Kindle Fire HD [6] and Nexus 7 [7] tablets — which typically start at $199 — its price may be lower than that of the iPod touch in any case.

Do you think Apple will end-of-life the iPad 2 when the iPad Mini arrives?

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October 19, 2012

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