

Apple unveils first new iPod model in four years

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Apple has introduced its first new iPod model in four years

Apple on Tuesday introduced its first new iPod model in four years, highlighting music and games as it continued to make a priority of serving up digital content.

The new-generation iPod touch, essentially an iPhone without the phone calls, was available in more than two dozen countries at Apple's online shop starting at \$199.

"We're making the most affordable iOS device even better with performance that is twice as fast as before, Group FaceTime and augmented reality," said Apple vice president of product marketing Greg Joswiak.

"The ultra-thin and lightweight design of iPod touch has always made it ideal for enjoying games, music and so much more wherever you go."

The iPod touch evolved from the original iPod digital music player first launched by Apple in 2001.

The iPod touch became popular with people, particularly parents of internet-coveting children, who wanted mobile devices for getting online without the cost of telecommunications services.

The mobile devices can connect to the internet using Wi-Fi hotspots.

Apple earlier this year unveiled streaming video plans along with news and game subscription offerings as part of an effort to shift its focus to digital content and services to break free of its reliance on iPhone sales.

An Apple TV+ service, an on-demand, ad-free subscription service, will launch this year in 100 countries, the company said.

Apple News+ was launched in the US and Canada in English and French and will be available later this year in Britain and Australia, the company said.

Separately, the company said it was launching a new game subscription

service called Apple Arcade later this year with at least 100 titles at launch.

"iOS is the world's largest gaming platform, and with three times faster graphics, games on the new iPod touch run even smoother and look even more beautiful," Apple said in a release.

The first new iPod since the year 2015 comes as Apple shifts to emphasize digital content and other services to offset a pullback in the once-sizzling smartphone market, and with many news organizations struggling to monetize their online services.

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