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STEP BACK ANDROID - THE APPLE IS BITING BACK

Ernest Doku, technology expert at uSwitch.com, comments: "If the steep price was the only thing stopping people from grabbing the original iPad, then the wealth of new hardware features and gorgeous slimmer form factor might well tip the scales in iPad 2's favour this time around.

"Apple is well and truly biting back at the competition. It has successfully added a wealth of great features to its breakthrough tablet device, while still managing to launch the iPad 2 at the same price as the original. iPad 2 ticks many of the boxes that gadget fans have been clamouring for, while still maintaining the simplicity that keeps the casual consumers keen. New features include the addition of dual cameras for recording as well as FaceTime video calls, a thinner, lighter frame and a revamped dual-core processor – all without hampering battery life.

"Launching the iPad 2 in the UK on the same date as Nintendo's new 3DS handheld – March 25th - will see gadget lovers go crazy, eager to snap up two of the latest examples of bleeding edge, yet slightly pricey, technology. The fact that it will be out by the end of the month also means that the iPad 2 will steal a march on the Android-powered competition including Motorola's Xoom. Plus, keeping the cost the same as the original iPad makes for an aggressive pricing strategy. \$499 for the 16GB Wi-Fi model may well translate to around £440, much like the original iPad's price upon its launch in the UK. That might have seemed a lot at the time to the average consumer, but ten million sales showed that many were eager to replace their laptop. Apple has really put the cat amongst the pigeons by pricing the iPad 2 head-to-head with the competition, at a time when other manufacturers had been trying to justify higher prices for their tablets.

"But a new software upgrade in iOS 4.3 also means that iPad 1 owners won't be left out and will be able to enjoy many new features, including improved Safari browser and easier content sharing. While the advancements are much more than cosmetic with the iPad 2, we hope that

the original will see a dip in price to really open up the tablet market, making the impressive hardware of the first device available to more consumers at an appealing price."

For more information visit www.uswitch.com or call 0800 093 0607

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