10 reasons why tablets will overtake laptops in the next year

Takeaway: Why are business users ditching their laptops in favor of a tablet when they hit the road?

The laptop has been around for quite some time, but it will more than likely be replaced as the go-to tool for computing on the move. What will be the successor? The tablet — obviously. Many doubters think the tablet is nothing more than a gimmick to help boost sales. I was one of those doubters for quite some time. But after using tablets enough, I have come around to seeing just how incredibly helpful that technology is. Here are some reasons why I believe tablets will replace the laptop as the mobile device of choice.

1: Power consumption

There is no question here: The tablet blows away the laptop with regard to power consumption. On average, I can get a full day out of a tablet on a single charge. A laptop? Not even close. And for anyone on the go, losing power is just another obstacle that interferes with work. With a tablet, you don't have that issue. It would be a rare occasion that you would burn through your power before getting access to a means of recharging.

2: Viruses

Android? iPad? Viruses anyone? I think not. Not that it will ever happen, but it's a pretty safe bet that tablets will never suffer from the same deluge of viruses that plagues a Windows laptop. Because of this, a tablet can safely work on without concern for viruses and malware. Oh sure, you'll find antivirus software in the Android Market, but they are pretty much pointless. Who in the world wouldn't want to work with a portable device that isn't vulnerable to the masses of viruses and malware out in the wild?

3: Portability

You can lug around a 4- to 12-pound laptop or a sub .5-pound tablet. Which do you want when you're going through airports, taxis, hotels, conferences, meetings, etc.? You're going to choose the tablet every time. But not just because of weight. The ability to work with a tablet in confined spaces totally overshadows the laptop. Need to work in a cab? Tablet. Need to work in the bathroom? Tablet. You simply can't beat the tablet for portability.

4: Cost effectiveness

Out of the starting gate, a really good tablet will cost about the same as a low- to mid-range laptop. So you're getting more for your money at the outset. But now figure in the price of an

extra battery and software for the laptop and you can see how quickly the cost will add up. Tablets are fast becoming one of the most cost-effective office tools you will find.

5: Online connection

Pay the extra fee and get your tablet with a 4G connection, and you won't have to worry about finding a Wi-Fi connection to access whatever cloud or service you need. Most models can be purchased with a constant network connection (to the tune of 3G or 4G), which makes the tablet a step ahead of most laptops. Yes, you can purchase aircards for laptops, but that's just another piece of hardware to worry about.

6: Available applications

There are thousands upon thousands of applications now available for tablets. So many in number and variety are these applications, it almost makes going back to a laptop a real pain. And yes, a good portion of those apps are worthless, but not all of them. And a good portion of the solid, useful apps are free! Best of all, those apps can be installed from anywhere without installation media. You have a network connection, you can install software.

7: User friendliness

Tablet interfaces are probably some of the single most user-friendly desktops you will come across. They are simple, elegant, and don't get in the way of work. I fully believe (as do Ubuntu and GNOME) that this is the future of the PC desktop. The applications (for the most part) were also designed with amazing user friendliness in mind. Simple to use, very little clutter to the interface (no Ribbons to get in the way), and singular in purpose (in many cases). So you might have more apps installed than you would on a laptop, but because of the ease of installation/removal, that's not a problem.

8: Bluetooth connectivity

I have become a fond user of the Bluetooth. Headphones, headsets, keyboards, you name it. And tablets make the connection between these devices a breeze. Connecting those same devices to a laptop? Not so easy. Even with a built-in card, the connection process is not nearly as easy as it is when done from a tablet.

9: Efficiency

Getting a laptop and a tablet out of hibernation is like comparing apples and oranges. Tablets are as close to an instant-on tool as we have in the industry. And when on the go, nothing beats instant on. Need to write a note or send off a fast email? You'll be completing that task much more quickly when doing it from a tablet.

10: Social integration

Some might argue that social networking isn't ideal for business use. I would argue that it is. Even when you're on the go, you need to remain in contact with co-workers, family, and friends. Why not do that with the ease of nearly seamless integration? Forget having to use a browser for everything. Instead, grab an Android tablet that can quickly have you Facebooking, Tweeting, and Tumbling. And if you think that's nothing more than a waste of time, remember that small businesses depend upon social networking tools for free marketing.

The tablet era

Tablets are not only here to stay, it will only be a matter of time before they have fully and finally usurped the laptop as the go-to hardware for the mobile business user. After you get past the acclimation period for the keyboard, the tablet is an amazing tool for portable business (or even casual) usage.