

LEGAL MANAGEMENT

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Battle of the iPad Pros: 12.9 vs. 9.7

We love to buy gadgets as soon as they hit the market. We are fully aware that you pay extra for being an early adopter.



BILL & PHIL

*The Bill and Phil Show
Tech News & Reviews*

Guess we enjoy being broke (and also being the first kids on the block with the new toy). So it should come as no surprise that we bought Apple's big-screen 12.9-inch iPad Pro as soon as it hit the market.

THE IPAD PRO 12.9

We must admit, we were a bit disappointed when we started fooling with it. Yes, the iPad Pro 12.9 was the biggest, fastest Apple tablet ever made. You can buy a really nice keyboard to go with it, and we did. You can also buy a pressure-sensitive stylus/pencil to take notes, sketch and really create great art. We bought that, too.

The giant screen is beautiful, and the quad speakers are incredible. The large screen really works well with split-screen apps that are now available in the new iOS 9 series. For example, you can watch movies on the right side of your screen and edit documents on the left. In other words, you can play and work at the same time, which we don't necessarily recommend but do occasionally enjoy.

But we were not as overjoyed with our new pricey toy as we thought we would be.

First, by the time we added additional storage, a cellular modem, a Bluetooth keyboard and the pencil, the price tag was creeping up north of \$1,200. For that price, we could buy a very nice, fully functional laptop — keyboard included.

While the 12.9-inch iPad Pro is a bit more cumbersome to carry, you get spoiled once you have used the larger screen.

In addition, the large size makes the iPad Pro 12.9 seem less portable. Its size almost defeats the purpose of having an iPad. (At least we felt that way after we bought it.) The 12.9-inch display is so large you really need to carry it in a laptop bag; it just doesn't have the portable, compact feel that made the original iPad and its successors so popular.

So, while the iPad Pro 12.9 is powerful and has a great deal of potential (especially for graphic designers and media creators), it is not a laptop killer in our opinion.

THE IPAD PRO 9.7

We're not sure if the Apple executives heard our complaints about the 12.9-inch iPad Pro, but we took it as a nod in our direction when they subsequently announced a smaller iPad Pro, the 9.7. Gadget nerds like us and our money are soon parted. So when the new iPad Pro 9.7 became available, we had to buy one immediately.

As usual, we were excited in anticipation of delivery of our new gadget. We were certain that the new, smaller iPad would be more portable and more in line with the iPads we had come to know and love, while providing all the "Pro" advantages.

Unfortunately, we had become spoiled. After using the iPad Pro 12.9, the screen on the 9.7 seemed tiny. (Yes, we know we complained that the 12.9 was too big; forgive us for being tech divas.)

With the 9.7, we began to feel like we were just looking at an iPhone screen. In fact, it was very hard to tell the difference between a regular iPad or iPad Air 2 and the iPad Pro 9.7. Yes, the iPad Pro 9.7 has a faster, more powerful processor than the iPad Air 2. Yes, Apple has updated the iPad Pro cameras. Yes, you can take great selfies and great pictures with the high-resolution camera that comes with it. Yes, you can even record videos in 4K resolution.

Nevertheless, for just regular users it is very hard to tell the iPad Pro 9.7 apart from the iPad Air. The displays are nearly identical. They run the same software. They use the same apps. There just does not seem to be a great advantage to having an iPad Pro 9.7 versus having a regular iPad (especially the sleek iPad Air 2).

IPAD PRO 12.9 VS. IPAD PRO 9.7

In comparing the two new iPads, we believe the iPad Pro 12.9 is actually a superior product. The high resolution and the four-speaker system take greater advantage of the faster processor and superior display on the iPad Pro models. In addition, you have more screen real estate to use the split screen feature that is bundled into iOS 9 (now 9.3.1). Of course, you can use the split-screen feature on any iPad, but it just works better on the larger screen.

The bottom line is that while the 12.9-inch iPad Pro is a bit more cumbersome to carry, you get spoiled once you have used the larger screen. You do not want to return to a smaller iPad model. So, in our opinion, the iPad 12.9 is the winner (but barely) over the iPad Pro 9.7 or just a regular iPad.

A word to the wise and thrifty: If you are not a spendthrift like us, our best advice is to buy neither Pro model and stick with an iPad Air 2. Save your money.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

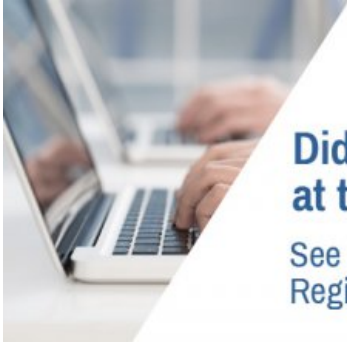
William Ramsey, Partner at Neal & Harwell, and LogicForce Consulting President **Phil Hampton** are best known for The Bill and Phil Show. The duo tours often and provides technology news and reviews on their website www.thebillandphilshow.com.

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