Apple: New iPhone 5 Is Thinner, Lighter

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SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Apple Inc. on Wednesday unveiled the iPhone 5, saying it's thinner and lighter than the previous model, even though it has a bigger screen.

Apple marketing head Phil Schiller unveiled the year's most eagerly awaited phone at an Apple event in San Francisco.

The release is expected to help Apple recapture attention and revenue after it lost the lead in smartphones to Samsung this year.

Apple shares were up $4.42, or 0.7 percent, to $665.01 in afternoon trading.

As expected, the iPhone 5 screen is taller than on the iPhone 4S, making room for another row of icons.

Schiller said the screen is 18 percent thinner and 20 percent lighter because of new technology that eliminates a separate touch-sensing layer in the screen. The new phone is made entirely of glass and aluminium.

The iPhone 5 will also come with the capability to connect to the fastest new wireless data networks, both in the U.S. and overseas. That's another feature that was widely expected.

Sales of Apple's iPhones are still strong. Samsung Electronics Co. benefited from having its Galaxy S III out in the U.S. in June, while Apple was still selling an iPhone model it released last October.

Amid expectations of a new iPhone, Amazon, Nokia and Motorola all tried to generate interest in their products last week, hoping that a head start on the buzz will translate into stronger sales.

Makers of consumer electronics also are refreshing their products for the holiday shopping season.

One big change: The new iPhone is getting a new connector to attach to computers and chargers. It had been using the same one from the iPod. Schiller said the old connector has "served us well for nearly a decade, but so much has changed."

That means the new iPhone won't be compatible with old accessories, though Schiller said accessory makers are already working to update their products. Apple will sell an adapter to work with older accessories.

Also as expected, Apple is releasing a new version of its phone software, iOS 6. It will have a new mapping software, as Apple ditches the one from Google it had

been using. The new software will have turn-by-turn voice navagation — a feature Google had limited to Android versions of its mapping app.

Apple said the phone's virtual assistant, Siri, will be giving the directions.

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