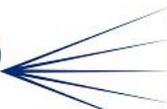


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For over a decade, Apple TV has been the middle child of the tech giant's product lineup. Despite its

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push to produce original content to challenge Netflix and others, analysts say.

In addition to the Cupertino tech giant's content push, the TV can serve as a complement to the recently introduced HomePod home speaker to give an immersive Apple experience in a user's living room.

early entry in 2007 with the goal of disrupting cable television, Apple TV has been slow to innovate and has fallen behind competitors such as Roku.

But on Tuesday, in addition to unveiling a new iPhone, Apple is expected to show off its fifth and newest TV model since 2015. The new Apple TV is expected to be 4K compatible, meaning it will offer far sharper resolution.

Rather than being a television disrupter, Apple plans to use the new TV as a hardware base to grow its recent

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"If Apple wants to be competitive, they have to go all in," said Creative Strategies' consumer tech analyst Carolina Milanesi. "The reason you would have Apple TV was to navigate content an easier way, but more and more smart TVs and cable providers are getting better at giving what you want. With a new Apple TV, original content is a box you need to check to be taken seriously."

Apple has just started producing or acquiring original content but has been moving aggressively. Its first two shows, "Planet of the Apps" and "Carpool Karaoke," received mixed reviews after being released on Apple Music earlier this year. With plans to spend \$1 billion in original content in 2018, Apple has brought a cadre of Sony executives to lead its programming ambitions and has been looking to set up a base in a movie studio that produced "Gone With the Wind" and "The Matrix."

Last week, Apple showed it is willing to keep up with the Hollywood powerhouses by entering a bidding war to win distribution rights to the upcoming James Bond movies.

"In five years, I bet Apple will either be investing \$10 billion a year in content or zero," Loup Ventures managing partner Gene Munster told the Associated Press. "It's going to be one or the other."

Some analysts say the target for Apple TV may not be Netflix and its original content empire but rather Amazon and its Echo speaker. While not confirmed, they expect the TV and HomePod to be synchronized as part of the larger Apple ecosystem.

While the HomePod was introduced as a music-focused speaker rather than a smart home speaker at the Worldwide Developers Conference in June, it was a ploy to take the pressure off Apple's newest product, said CCS Insights analyst Geoff Blaber.

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He expected more information to come out about the HomePod Tuesday in conjunction with the TV.

"Apple deliberately kept the feature sets for the HomePod very quiet in the WWDC," said Blaber. "The reason the Apple ecosystem is successful is because they are nicely integrated. You'd certainly expect a degree of compatibility, like a Bose sound bar or a Sonos connects with a television." – **The Mercury News**

