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JUN 19, 2012, 12:10 PM

## Few Apps for Microsoft Tablet

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By Quentin Fottrell



Microsoft's new tablet may distinguish itself from the iPad with its keyboard and USB ports, but the device falls flat in one area, experts say: apps. Namely, there aren't many.

Microsoft's Windows runs a distant fourth place when it comes to apps, according to Rick Singer, CEO of [GreatApps.com](#). The mobile version of its flagship operating system has just 70,000 apps on its Windows Smartphones – less than the 100,000 on Blackberry, 400,000 on Android and 600,000 on Apple's iPhone. Though Microsoft says the [Surface](#) will come with a pre-loaded Netflix app, experts say the software shortfall could turn off potential buyers. "The company is still playing catch-up with apps," Singer says. "That's the biggest problem that they're facing."

The company faces a chicken-and-egg dilemma, experts say: Developers are unlikely to create Microsoft apps until tablet proves to be a hot seller, but the tablet may not sell well without a strong selection of apps. "Microsoft is going to have a hell of a time convincing established app-makers to pay attention to its new device," says Alex Goldfayn, owner of [The Evangelist Marketing Institute](#). "iPad and Android users have already bought their favorite apps and downloaded them onto their devices," he says. "They're unlikely to switch to a new operating system now." (Microsoft did not respond to requests for comment.)

On the plus side, the Surface will come with its own pre-loaded suite of Microsoft Office applications, including PowerPoint, Excel and Word. "These are effectively their own range of exclusive apps," says Yung Trang, president of [TechBargains.com](#). In fact, there seems to be a demand for these on other devices, he says. Unauthorized Microsoft apps occasionally pop up in Apple's own store: just last weekend, Apple removed a \$9.99 "[Microsoft Word](#)" app from its app store. However, Singer says Microsoft will need more than

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Office to compete with iPads. "It appears the only competitive thing they'll be doing is running their own apps right now," he says.



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