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The new Apple TV, Take 2 interface  
Apple

## [Apple TV, Take 2 + iTunes Movie Rentals: The Next Big Hit in Digital Downloads](#)

*The company from Cupertino rolls out yet another possible winner*

As expected, the Macworld Expo has brought about some huge surprises for the fans of all things Apple, whether we're talking about the damn sexy MacBook Air, the latest updates available for the iPod Touch or the new software for the iPhone. However, one of the most important announcements (even more important than the aforementioned ultra-slim notebook) made by Steve Jobs in his keynote is the one related to the Apple TV's latest iteration, as well as the company's decision to enter the online movie rentals' business. **The new Apple TV** The most important upgrade of the new Apple TV software over the past iteration is the fact that the new version doesn't require any connection to a computer. The device can connect directly to the Internet and rent/purchase content from the iTunes Store, everything being carried out via a very attractive and user-friendly interface. Practically, by eliminating the PC from the whole process of getting content to the user's HDTV, the new Apple TV might suddenly become a lot more appealing to a whole range of consumers, especially those with a low level of computer literacy. Actually, as Steve Jobs, Apple's CEO, puts it, "With the new Apple TV and iTunes Movie Rentals, movie lovers can rent DVD-quality or stunning HD movies from their couch with just a click of a button. No more driving to the video store or waiting for DVDs to arrive in the mail." Furthermore, with Apple TV, users can also view photos from their computers, Flickr and .Mac Web Galleries on their widescreen TV as slideshows or screen savers, as well as browse the iTunes Store podcast directory of over 125,000 video and audio podcasts, view over 50 million videos from YouTube or choose from a selection of six million songs, over 600 TV shows and 10,000 music videos to purchase directly. Moreover, the purchases downloaded to Apple TV are automatically synced back to iTunes on the user's computer. Much in the same way as its predecessor, the new Apple TV easily connects to widescreen TVs and home theater systems via its HDMI, component video, analog and optical audio ports. Moreover, using high-speed AirPort 802.11 wireless networking, Apple TV now automatically plays all of your iTunes content without setup or management. And the best part is that the new Apple TV will have an extremely competitive pricing, since customers will only have to cough up around \$229 for the 40GB model and \$329 for the 160GB model. However, those users who already own an Apple TV won't have to pay a dime for the new software (which, uncharacteristically for Apple's usual marketing strategy, is a completely free upgrade), which makes the service even more attractive. **The iTunes Movie Rentals service** Even if the new Apple TV is quite an interesting device/software combo, the truth of the matter is that the actual "coup-de-grace" delivered by Apple, Inc. to any and every competitor is the new iTunes Movies Rentals service. Thus, the company from Cupertino has partnered with just about every major studio out there, including here 20th Century Fox, The Walt Disney Studios, Warner Bros., Paramount, Universal Studios Home Entertainment, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), Lionsgate and New Line Cinema in order to provide the most recent video content at very affordable prices. Thus, users will be able to choose from over 1,000 titles by the end of February, including over 100 titles in high definition video with 5.1 Dolby Digital surround sound and will have to pay \$2.99 for library titles and \$3.99 for new releases, with high definition versions costing just one dollar more with library titles at \$3.99 and new releases at \$4.99. "iTunes Movie Rentals instantly brings great movies from all the major studios directly to your iPod, iPhone, TV or computer -- without having to drive to the video store or wait for DVDs to arrive in the mail," said Steve Jobs, Apple's CEO. "Movie lovers can now discover and enjoy movies as simply and easily

as music lovers discover and enjoy music today on iTunes."However, despite what El Jobso had to say, as expected, there are also a few restrictions. Thus, after renting, the movie will start downloading in a matter of minutes and customers will have up to 30 days to start watching it. Furthermore, once a movie has started, the respective customers will have 24 hours to finish it or watch it multiple times. This ain't exactly great news, but, after all, this is a movie rental service. So, all in all, Apple might have yet another big hit up its sleeve. Of course, it remains to be seen just how customers will react to this new offering, but, in my opinion, the new iTunes Movie Rentals service, plus the re-designed Apple TV software might really do for digital movie downloads what iTunes did for music.