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For Apple, iPad Said More Than Intended

By BRAD STONE
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SAN FRANCISCO — [Apple](#) has generated a lot of chatter with its new [iPad](#) tablet. But it may not be quite the conversation it wanted.

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Steven P. Jobs introduced the iPad on Wednesday in San Francisco. [More Photos »](#)

Many women are saying the name evokes awkward associations with feminine hygiene products. People from Boston to Ireland are complaining that “iPad,” in their regional brogue, sounds almost indistinguishable from “[iPod](#),” Apple’s music player.

Then there are more serious conflicts. Two other high-tech companies already market products called iPad and are laying claim to the trademark.


In the hours after the iPad announcement on Wednesday, “iTampon” became one of the most popular trending topics on [Twitter](#). Apple’s communication team fielded a wave of queries on the subject but characteristically declined to comment.

“I care about words and their connotations, but you don’t have to be in junior high to make this leap,” said [Robin Bernstein](#), a corporate speech writer on Long Island, who addressed the issue on her [Facebook](#) page on Wednesday. “A lot of women when they hear the word ‘pad’ are going to think about feminine hygiene.”

Michael Cronan, a naming consultant in Berkeley, Calif., whose company has helped come up with brands like [TiVo](#) and Kindle, said many naming experiments show that women tend to reflexively relate words like “pad” and “flow” to bodily concerns.

He is not sure Apple could have found an alternative that ties in as perfectly to its famous brands. “I think we’re going to get over this fairly quickly and we’ll get on with

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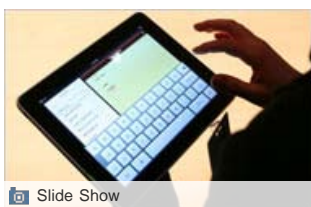
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The Fujitsu iPad, a hand-held device that stores use to check inventory. More Photos >

enjoying the experience.”

But the folks at Fujitsu, the Japanese technology firm, may not be quite so eager to forgive and forget. The company has applied for the iPad trademark in the United States and already sells an iPad — a \$2,000 hand-held device that shop clerks use to check inventory.

STMicroelectronics, the Swiss semiconductor company, owns the iPad trademark in Europe and uses it as an acronym for integrated passive and active devices — which sounds less fun than playing games on a tablet. (A third company, MagTek of Seal Beach, Calif., makes a portable magnetic card reader of the same name.)

These kinds of naming conflicts have not stopped Apple before. In 2007, on the eve of the introduction of the iPhone, the technology giant Cisco Systems pointed out that it already sold an Internet handset called the iPhone. Steven P. Jobs, Apple’s chief executive, led the negotiation for the name, peppering Cisco executives with calls at all

hours, and telling them he was prepared to claim that Cisco was underutilizing the trademark.

Mr. Jobs finally persuaded Cisco to surrender the trademark with a vague promise to market their products jointly — a partnership that never materialized.

“He’s a very tough businessman and tough negotiator,” said Charles Giancarlo, a former Cisco executive who dealt directly with Mr. Jobs on the issue. “I feel sorry for the poor guy at Fujitsu who is going to be negotiating with Steve directly.”

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