Apple’s Mac Pro clears FCC, hinting at imminent launch

When Apple announced its redesigned Mac Pro this June, the company didn’t give a release date more specific than “this fall” – but the powerful new computer has just shown up in FCC filings, which could indicate an imminent launch.

Showing up in the FCC doesn’t exactly guarantee the Mac Pro will be coming out soon, as many companies’ devices hit the FCC months before they actually launch. But Apple devices often appear in filings right around their announcement. For example, the FCC filings for the AirPods Pro, which were announced on Monday, also showed up in the FCC that same day.

Another interesting tidbit found in filings is that some Mac Pros may be assembled in China. That’s surprising to see, as Apple announced in September that the computer would be manufactured in Austin, Texas. You can see the “Assembled in China” language on this picture of a label on the Mac Pro in the FCC filings:

Image: FCC filing

Of course, there are some explanations for this. Apple may be manufacturing some Mac Pro parts in China and shipping them to Austin. The company could also be splitting up manufacturing and assembly between China and Texas, depending on demand and part availability. The prior-generation Mac Pros had been assembled in Austin, and had the phrase “Assembled in the USA” printed on them to indicate that they included components from overseas manufacturers.

That said, Apple specifically asked the Trump administration back in July for an exemption on the tariffs imposed as part of the ongoing US-China trade war. When the company announced

in September that it would be manufacturing the computer in Austin, that seemed like a move designed to appease Trump. Regardless, Apple was still hit with a 25 percent tax on five Mac Pro parts later that same month, in accordance with the tariff policy. So it’s not clear at this stage whether Apple will stick entirely with Austin, or whether it will indeed move some manufacturing or assembly, or both, back to China.

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