

S.Korea's top mobile operator to sell iPhone4

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A woman passes in front of an advertisement for SK Telecom in Seoul. South Korea's top mobile operator will start selling the iPhone next month, a report said Thursday, in a break from Apple's practice of selling the smartphones via a single distributor in each major market.

SK Telecom, South Korea's top mobile operator, will start selling the iPhone next month, a report said Thursday, in a break from Apple's practice of selling the smartphones via a single distributor in each major market.

SK Telecom is close to completing negotiations with Apple to sell the popular [iPhone 4](#) in the local market in March, Yonhap news agency reported, citing a source familiar with the matter.

"As the negotiations are going smoothly, it is virtually decided that [SK Telecom](#) will launch the [iPhone](#)," said the source quoted by Yonhap.

An SK Telecom spokeswoman declined to comment.

KT, SK Telecom's smaller rival and currently the sole distributor of iPhones in South Korea, has sold about two million units since the gadget's debut in November 2009.

SK Telecom, which controls about half of the nation's wireless market, has for years sought to dominate the rapidly-growing smartphone market by selling Samsung Electronics' Galaxy S and other devices powered by the Android platform.

Technology research firm Gartner said global smartphone sales soared 72.1 percent in 2010 over the previous year and accounted for 19 percent of total mobile sales last year.

Apple sold 46.6 million units in 2010 and saw its market share increase from 2.1 percent to 2.9 percent, it said.

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