

# South Korea approves sale of Apple's iPhone

September 23 2009, By KELLY OLSEN , AP Business Writer

---



A customer walks near a screen showing an iPhone at a local store in Seoul, South Korea, Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2009. South Korea's telecommunications regulator said Wednesday it has given approval for Apple Inc.'s hit iPhone to be sold in the country. (AP Photo/ Lee Jin-man)

(AP) -- South Korea's telecommunications regulator said Wednesday it has given approval for Apple Inc.'s hit iPhone to be sold in the country - potentially shaking up a handset market controlled by domestic manufacturers.

The Korea Communications Commission approved the sale of the device at a meeting attended by its five commissioners, said commission spokesman Lee Sang-hun.

The introduction of the [iPhone](#) has been keenly awaited in [South Korea](#), where the handset market is dominated by [Samsung Electronics](#) Co., LG Electronics Inc. and other domestic manufacturers.

[Apple](#) spokesman Steve Park said the company had no comment on the commission's decision and added that nothing was decided or planned on the iPhone's release in South Korea.

Local service providers, however, said that they are in talks with Cupertino, California-based Apple regarding the iPhone's introduction to South Korea.

"We will try to release the iPhone as soon as possible," said Yeom Woo-jong, a spokesman for KT Corp.

Yeom, who welcomed the commission's decision, said discussions with Apple were under way but that nothing had been decided.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency, citing KT officials it did not identify, said the company plans to start selling iPhones in South Korea next month.

Lauren Kim, a spokeswoman for SK Telecom Co., also said it was in discussions with Apple, though nothing was decided. But she said her company was reviewing the situation and has "plans to respond" if competitors decide to introduce the iPhone.

According to Apple's iPhone Web site, the device is available in nearly 90 countries or territories and will soon be available in five more. South Korea was not listed as one of them.

South Korean law requires companies that provide so-called location-based services - which in the iPhone's case relate to functions such as maps and finding directions - to obtain government permission, said Oh Sang-jin, director of the KCC's privacy protection and ethics division.

The commission decided that to facilitate the iPhone's entry to South

Korea, local telecommunication service providers can obtain permission on Apple's behalf, Oh said.

The commission sought a "flexible way to apply Korean law to Apple's case," Oh said.

*©2009 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.*

Citation: South Korea approves sale of Apple's iPhone (2009, September 23) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-09-south-korea-sale-apple-iphone.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.