

Apple, AT&T hit with glitches on new iPhone orders

June 16 2010, By PETER SVENSSON , AP Technology Writer



This file photo taken June 7, 2010, shows the new Apple iPhone 4 in San Francisco. On Tuesday, June 15, 2010, the first day Apple and AT&T started taking orders, buyers reported problems. (AP Photo/Paul Sakuma, File)

(AP) -- Apple and AT&T are facing two major problems taking orders for the newest iPhone model just a week before it hits stores: Buyers reported problems registering their orders and an apparent glitch in AT&T's website was depositing some customers into strangers' accounts.

Troubles in meeting demand for the [iPhone](#) aren't new.

But the latest apparent breach and other recent security foul-ups by AT&T could lead to identity theft - and have consequences for both companies. Critics and customers have called for [Apple](#) to allow other

carriers to serve the iPhone in the U.S., and the latest problems offer another argument.

The computer systems at Apple Inc., maker of the iPhone, or AT&T Inc., its exclusive U.S. carrier, have had various problems every year since the first iPhone launched in 2007.

Some customers who tried to buy an iPhone 4 on Tuesday said they were met with error messages on the company websites, and lines formed in stores as clerks tried to get orders into their systems.

Japanese phone company Softbank started taking orders earlier in the day, and was also flooded with requests. Softbank spokesman Furuya Katsuhide said that the better-than-expected demand had stressed the company's systems, which slowed both its website and the reservation process at stores.

On Gizmodo.com, a technology website, several readers posted stories of trying to log into their AT&T accounts to upgrade to the newest iPhone and being sent instead into strangers' accounts. That could set the stage for identity theft scams such as ordering other products under that person's name.

AT&T said it received reports of customers seeing the wrong account information but wasn't able to replicate the problem and was investigating. But the company said the personal information users were seeing in one another's accounts didn't include Social Security numbers, credit card information and detailed call logs.

Just last week, AT&T plugged an embarrassing security hole on its website that exposed the e-mail addresses of people who had bought another new Apple product, the iPad 3G.

And in January, AT&T acknowledged to The Associated Press that a problem in its network was causing some wireless customers to land in strangers' Facebook accounts when they tried to check their own accounts using their smart phones. AT&T said it was fixing that glitch.

It doesn't happen often, but the Internet can forget who is who when multiple people log onto a site at the same time.

AT&T blamed a "misdirected cookie" for at least one of the problems in January. A cookie is a file websites place on users' computers to identify them. If the Internet provider fumbles a cookie and sends it to the wrong computer, the person using that computer will see a Web page he or she wasn't expecting.

Apple representatives didn't immediately respond to requests for comment late Tuesday.

The iPhone 4 goes on sale June 24 starting at \$199. It will feature a higher-resolution screen, longer battery life and thinner design than last year's model.

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