

Cheers and jeers for Apple at iPad's second Asia launch

July 23 2010, by Philip Lim



A customer tries out an iPad in New Zealand at an Apple store in Auckland, on July 23. The third phase of Apple's global rollout of the much-hyped iPad was launched in New Zealand with fans of the brand expressing frustration at the extreme secrecy surrounding the release.

Eager iPad fans in Singapore, Hong Kong and New Zealand braved long queues and discomfort to get their hands on the coveted Apple device as its second wave of Asia-Pacific launches began Friday.

A 20-year-old New Zealander set up camp outside an Apple seller in Auckland two days before the launch, while other buyers in the region

started their vigil in the wee hours of Friday.

Japan and Australia were the first Asia-Pacific markets to receive the iPad, getting it in late May along with several European countries.

Consumers in other Asian markets who could not wait for the release ordered iPads from abroad or bought them through unofficial local resellers.

But this did nothing to dent enthusiasm at Friday's debut at an Apple store in the Wheelock Place mall on Singapore's fashionable Orchard Road.

Housewife Carol Kwang, who was in pole position to clinch two units of the priciest model -- the 64 gigabyte unit with Wi Fi and 3G mobile capability -- said the purchase was a treat for herself and her daughter.

"My daughter said if you don't come, I'll skip school and come buy!" she told AFP after queuing from 6:00 am, four hours before the shop opened.

Prices ranged from 728 Singapore dollars (530 US) for the cheapest model with 16 gigabytes of memory and Wi Fi only, to 1,228 dollars (894 US) each for the Kwang family's new toys.

South Korean student Han Szung Yong, 25, who was third in line at Wheelock Place, interrupted his holiday in neighbouring Malaysia to get to the iPad launch in Singapore.

"I tried to get the [iPad](#) in USA and Australia before but I couldn't get it, so that's the reason I came here to get it," he said.

In Hong Kong's busy Causeway Bay shopping district, a line of more

than 100 eager shoppers trailed from a ninth floor [Apple store](#) down a humid stairwell, with latecomers fanning themselves as they waited.

Eugene Wong said he did not mind waiting at least an hour to get his hands on the device.

"I think it's great -- lots of my friends really like it too. I wanted a device with fast speed," he enthused.

Johnny Ma, a 42-year-old energy saving consultant, and his girlfriend walked happily out of the packed shop.

"This is a special day too because it's my girlfriend's birthday, so we both got one," Ma told AFP.

In Singapore, buyers formed snaking queues of 50 to 100 in front of three retailers selling the device along Orchard Road.

For some New Zealand customers, the launch was marred by the extreme secrecy surrounding the tablet's release.

They were turned off by Apple's refusal to announce in advance where the device would be sold in the country, which meant only the most fanatical of buyers were prepared to queue.

Public relations consultant Michael Tull told Stuff website that there was "a level of arrogance" about the launch.

"Apple produce good products but one wonders if they need to contrive quite so much hype," he said.

Computer malls in [Singapore](#) and [Hong Kong](#) as well as Kiwi online auction sites have been carrying iPads ever since its US launch three

months ago, with shops charging exorbitant prices well above those in the United States.

The device first went on sale in the United States on April 3 before being released nearly two months later in Australia, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain and Switzerland.

Friday's wave of official releases also includes Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Mexico and the Netherlands.

(c) 2010 AFP

Citation: Cheers and jeers for Apple at iPad's second Asia launch (2010, July 23) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-07-jeers-apple-ipad-asia.html>

<p>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.</p>
--