

# China Unicom to sell Apple's iPhone with Wi-Fi

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A woman stands in front of a shop selling mobile phone accessories in Shanghai. China Unicom, the only telecom operator offering Apple's iPhone in the world's largest mobile market, said Friday that it would start selling the smartphone with WiFi function next week.

(AP) -- Apple's Chinese partner says it will sell iPhones with Wi-Fi starting Monday, adding to mounting competition in China's smart phone market.

China Unicom Ltd. started selling the iPhone in October but early models lacked wireless connections due to Chinese regulations. Industry analysts say that hurt the iPhone's appeal in China, where black market versions are widely available.

Unicom will sell eight-gigabyte iPhones with third-generation service

and Wi-Fi throughout China starting Monday, a company spokesman, Wen Baoqiu, said Friday.

Wi-Fi is a part of the iPhone's appeal elsewhere and allows phones to use free wireless networks in cafes and offices to download e-mail and the latest applications.

Beijing barred use of Wi-Fi while the government tried to develop a competing Chinese system, dubbed WAPI but regulations issued this year allow Wi-Fi.

Unicom also sells 16- and 32-gigabyte iPhones without Wi-Fi.

The latest [iPhone](#) should help Unicom and Apple Inc. compete in an increasingly crowded Chinese smart phone market. China has the most populous mobile phone market, with some 600 million accounts.

Taiwan's HTC Corp., which supplies smart phones to [Sprint Nextel](#) Corp. and [Verizon Wireless](#) in the United States, launched four models for China last month with Unicom rival [China Mobile](#) Ltd., the world's biggest carrier by subscribers.

**More information:** China Unicom: <http://www.chinaunicom.com.cn>

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