

Apple launches iPad in India

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A potential customer tries out an iPad at an Apple store. Apple's hugely popular iPad tablet computer went on sale in Indian stores on Friday, nearly 10 months after it launched in the United States.

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Indian consumers have had to order the [iPad](#) from overseas but now it is on sale at Apple-partnered stores across the country.

"iPad is here," declared the Apple [India](#) website.

Apple fans welcomed the news amid some complaints that the product arrived just months before the company is rumoured to be announcing the second generation iPad.

Amit Agarwal, who runs the popular Digital Inspiration tech blog, told AFP: "Apple has a tendency to ignore Indian markets and a lot of people feel that it is trying to dispose of its inventory in India ahead of launching iPad2."

But he said the delay was unlikely to hurt sales, citing the iPad's huge following.

The price in India of the basic model -- 16 GB of memory + Wi-Fi -- is 27,900 rupees (\$609) and ranges up to 44,990 rupees.

The same basic model, which went on sale in the United States last April, sells for \$499 in the US, ranging up to \$829 for more sophisticated versions.

"It's only about 15-20 percent more than the US price, which is not very high, so I think it will do well," Agarwal said. The higher price reflects custom duties.

The iPad will face stiff competition from Samsung's 3G-enabled Galaxy tablet which launched in India in November 2010, initially selling for 36,499 rupees, but now on offer for 29,500 rupees.

"No doubt there will be people who will say, 'Why buy the iPad when iPad2 is around the corner?'" Agarwal said. "But iPad2's official launch in India won't happen for ages."

However, Indian consumers were not flooding stores pick up an iPad.

"We have had lots of calls about the iPad today, but no sales," said Sonu Kumar Deepak, manager of a New Delhi store.

Apple's other range of offerings in India includes its MacBooks, [iPhone](#)

and iPod.

India is the world's fastest-growing mobile market with 730 million cellular subscribers but the sale of smartphones has been slower in the price-sensitive market.

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