

# China piracy spurred Apple to action: WikiLeaks

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A model displays a black iPod nano in Hong Kong. Apple set up a global security team three years ago to combat rampant counterfeiting of the iPod and iPhone in China, according to a US diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks.

Apple set up a global security team three years ago to combat rampant counterfeiting of the iPod and iPhone in China, according to a US diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks.

The California-based gadget-maker hired away employees from the drug company Pfizer who led a crackdown on pirate Viagra to head its anti-counterfeiting efforts, the September 2008 cable from the US embassy in Beijing said.

The unclassified embassy cable was among nearly 134,000 diplomatic messages released by [WikiLeaks](http://www.wikileaks.org) over the past week and was first

located among the sea of documents by CNN.

The cable said that "as amazing as it seems" Apple did not have a global security team until it created the team to go after counterfeiting in China in March 2008.

It said the Apple security team was "targeting retailers, manufacturers, distributors, and online vendors to take a bite out of China's counterfeit iPod and [iPhone](#) production.

"Early evidence suggests nearly 100 percent of Apple products in unauthorized mainland markets are knock-offs, while factories in Guangdong province are exporting enough counterfeits to single-handedly supply the world with fake Apple products," it said.

Fake products include "what appear to be real [iPods](#) with 80 gigabytes of storage, but that in fact have only a very inexpensive 1GB hard drive inside," it said.

China is home to the biggest counterfeit market in the world, despite repeated government pledges to root out fake goods.

Apple opened its first official store in China in July 2008 and now has four stores in the country -- two in Beijing and two in Shanghai.

Numerous fake [Apple stores](#) have been discovered recently, however, including as many as two dozen in the southwestern Chinese city of Kunming alone, according to state-run China National Radio.

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