

Japanese fans set up watch for iPhone

September 10 2014, by Katie Forster



Apple gadget fans queue outside of an Apple store for the iPhone 6's release in Tokyo, on September 10, 2014

It may still be several days before they can even order a new iPhone and more than a week until they can pick it up, but dedicated fans in Japan have already begun queueing.

In a country known for taking its hobbies extremely seriously, Apple acolytes in Tokyo began bagging their spots on the pavement days before the world knew what the California tech giant had up its sleeve.

Tetsuya Tamura, 45, and his 20-year-old son set up camp outside the company's flagship store in glitzy Ginza on Saturday, and had to wait until the small hours of Wednesday to hear about the Apple Watch and the two new iPhone models.

"The unveiling of the Apple Watch here was very tense. Everyone said, 'Yeah, they did it!'," said Tamura, an office worker who has taken time off work to queue.

He proudly told AFP he works weekends to build up credit, and spends it every year on his Apple vigil.

Around a dozen pop-up seats were lined up on the pavement outside the store, surrounded by camping equipment, suitcases and even a rubber Steve Jobs mask.

Kajigaya Takuya, a 30 year old comedian, arrived Tuesday to join the line.

He said despite difficulties sleeping through a chilly Tokyo night, he had been having fun so far.

"The staff at the Apple Store are kind, they let us charge our iPads and iPhones, and we can use the toilet in the shop," he said.



An Apple gadget fan queues outside an Apple store for the iPhone 6 release in Tokyo, on September 10, 2014

Takuya said he enjoys the challenge of waiting outside to be among the first to touch the device, which is also available in gold.

"Of course, you need patience, it's like climbing a mountain—in the end you feel as if you've achieved something, I think it's great," he said.

In China, which is not going to get the iPhone 6 until a week later, Internet users stayed up late to watch the live feed of the unveiling, with many joking about selling internal organs to fund a purchase.

"Good morning everyone. I have two kidneys. One is for urgent sale next week for the iPhone6 Plus. The other is to be sold in four months' time

for the Apple Watch. First come, first served," quipped one.



Crowds queue for the Apple product launch event on September 9, 2014, in Cupertino, California

In 2012, a Chinese teenager had his kidney removed to fund the purchase of an iPhone and an iPad. That led to the arrest of members of an illegal organ trading group.

Despite the furore over the launch, there was some doubt as to the real significance of the news to the technology sector, with many pointing out that there was nothing very cutting edge about the new products.

Japanese Twitter users questioned the originality of the phones' contactless cash feature, Apple Pay, pointing out that mobiles in Japan have had this feature for years.

And Twitter user @sinomoritsukasa couldn't see what all the fuss was about, having made his own Apple Watch, carved from an actual apple.

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