

Apple supplier used illegal teenage labor to assemble the iPhone X: report

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If you own an iPhone X, there is a chance your prized smartphone was built from forced labor of Chinese high school students.

Apple and its largest Chinese supplier, Foxconn, acknowledged that students did work in the latter's factories to assemble the iPhone X to keep up with the demand. Despite Apple and Foxconn saying the students volunteered to work at the factories, students told the Financial Times that they needed to work at the factories for three months to graduate [high school](#).

A group of 3,000 students ages 17 to 19 routinely worked 11 hours a day at the factory starting in September, which constituted illegal overtime work for [student](#) interns in China. One 18-year old girl told the Financial Times she assembled 1,200 iPhone X cameras a day.

Apple told the Financial Times that an audit found there were indeed students working overtime but also insisted the students were voluntarily working and appropriately compensated.

"We've confirmed the students worked voluntarily, were compensated and provided benefits, but they should not have been allowed to work overtime," said Apple to the Financial Times.

Foxconn issued a statement to the Financial Times and Bloomberg that company policy does not allow student interns to work overtime. But the company did acknowledge that a "number of cases where portions of our

campuses have not adhered to this policy" and that it has taken steps to prevent this from happening again.

"We have investigated all of these cases and confirmed that while all work was voluntary and compensated appropriately, the interns did work overtime in violation of our policy," said Foxconn in a statement.

Taiwan-based Foxconn said its internship programs are carried out in cooperation with local governments and vocational schools in China. The Zhengzhou Urban Rail Transit School, located in central China, told its 3,000 students that assembling iPhone X was required "work experience" for graduation. Another Foxconn worker told the Financial Times students from other nearby cities were sourced in as well.

During the busy season in Foxconn's Zhengzhou factory, the number of workers would rise from 100,000 to 300,000 to build new iPhones to ship them around the world. For the iPhone X - which faced production delays due to new components such as the TrueDepth suite of cameras and sensors, which enable facial recognition - the pressure to meet demand and the need for more seasonal workers were greater than in past years, says the Financial Times.

Foxconn, the exclusive assembler of the iPhone X, has taken a huge hit because of the iPhone X's production delays. The company saw its net profits tumble 42 percent below analyst estimates for the July to September quarter.

Despite the iPhone X being released two months after the iPhone 8, demand for the deluxe iPhone was not quelled. Long lines were seen outside Apple stores around the world on the day of its release, and Apple forecasted its biggest quarter yet thanks to iPhone X sales.

While Apple reportedly still faces supply shortage for the iPhone X, wait

times for pre-ordered iPhone X have dropped from 5 to 6 weeks, at most, to 2 to 3 weeks. Apple is expected to boost its iPhone X production up to 45 percent, according to noted Apple analyst Ming-Chi Kuo.

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