

iPhone demand exceeds production

Initial sales limited to AT&T locations, corporate stores

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Some call it revolutionary. Bloggers are calling it the "Jesus Phone," claiming last Friday's release was the Second Coming. But whatever you might call the iPhone, the demand and media frenzy for the product has been strong.

"I'd say we get about a dozen calls per day about it," said Tim Braun, technology director of the Illini Apple Center, a subsidiary of Illini Media Company, the parent company of The Daily Illini. "In a day with the calls and walk-ins we get about 20 people asking about it, and we don't even carry it."

The only retail outlets for the phone currently are the AT&T Wireless and Apple corporate stores, which the Illini Apple Center at 512 E. Green St., is not. Once production is in full swing, Apple has claimed that it will sell the iPhone at non-corporate stores.

In the C-U area, this means the AT&T Wireless Store in Savoy is the only place to get one of the devices. According to Braun, there were about 75 people waiting outside the store on Friday morning and countless others who were placed on a waitlist.

"I'm on the waitlist and I'm supposed to get mine by August," said Braun. "But something interesting about Friday's release were the teardowns that went on online."

Instead of enjoying the device, some decided to take a look inside. By night's end, teardowns, step-by-step deconstructions of the iPhone into its component parts like the hard drive, camera and screen, were available at ThinkSecret.com and iFixit.com.

Investors quickly took notice, and all but a few of the component makers' stocks jumped on Monday. Large technology firms such as Intel Corp., Broadcom Corp., Texas Instruments Inc. and Infineon Technologies AG have all been tapped to produce the innards for the iPhone, but until the teardowns were complete, the companies had been tight-lipped about their role in production.

Apple hopes to sell around 10 million of the devices worldwide by the end of 2008, which would give them about 1 percent of the entire market. They are expected to meet that goal. For now, a lot of customers will have to wait till production reaches its pinnacle and the phone is offered at non-corporate stores.

At the Apple Store on campus, that time could not come soon enough.

"We're really eager to get our hands on it," said Braun.

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