

Fans, entrepreneurs among first buyers of new iPad

DINESH RAMDE - Associated Press - Associated Press

Apple's latest iPad drew the customary lines of die-hard fans looking to be first and entrepreneurs looking to make a quick profit.

Many buyers lined up for hours, and in some cases overnight, as the tablet computer went on sale in the U.S. and nine other countries. They did so even though Apple started accepting online orders a week ago.

The new model comes with a faster processor, a much sharper screen and an improved camera, though the changes aren't as big as the upgrade from the original model to the iPad 2.

As with the previous models, prices start at \$499 in the U.S.

"I don't think it's worth the price but I guess I'm a victim of society," Athena May, 21, said in Paris.

Dan Krolikowski, 34, was first in line at a Madison, Wis., mall. He arrived 14 hours before the store's opening and was buying an extra one to sell on the "gray market."

"Last year I sold one on eBay and made over \$500 in profit," Krolikowski said, leaning back in a reclining lawn chair he brought. "I'm hoping to do that again this year."

Those who ordered iPads online started getting them delivered Friday. However, Apple now says there's a two- to three-week shipping delay for online orders. There's also demand in countries where the new iPad isn't available yet.

In Hong Kong, a steady stream of buyers picked up their new devices at preset times at the city's sole Apple store after entering an online lottery.

The system, which required buyers to have local ID cards, helped thwart visitors from mainland China, Apple's fastest growing market. A release date in China has not yet been announced. Apple will begin selling the iPad in 25 additional countries next Friday, mostly in Europe.

At the flagship Apple Store on New York's Fifth Avenue, the composition of the line, and the way many customers were paying for two iPads each with wads of cash, suggested that many of the tablets were destined to be resold abroad.

The gadget also drew entrepreneurs of a dubious nature. In Orlando, Fla.,

Fans, entrepreneurs among first buyers of new iPad

Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

authorities arrested a Best Buy employee and a former worker early Thursday on accusations they schemed to rob a store at gunpoint and steal more than \$1 million in iPads and other Apple products, according to the Orlando Sentinel.

About 450 people lined up outside Apple's Ginza store in downtown Tokyo. Some had spent the night sleeping outside the store.

Dipak Varsani, 21, got in line in London at 1 a.m. Thursday local time and said he was drawn by the new device's better screen.

"You've got clearer movies and clearer games," he said. "I use it as a multimedia device."

Despite competition from cheaper tablet computers such as Amazon.com Inc.'s Kindle Fire, the iPad remains the most popular tablet computer. Apple Inc. has sold more than 55 million iPads since its debut in 2010.

Apple says the iPad is propelling us into a "post-PC era," with computers that work very differently from the traditional laptops and desktops.

Two years after the debut of the first iPad, the device's launch has become the second-biggest "gadget event" of the year, after the annual iPhone release. In Atlanta, one kid in line carried a sign that read "Happy iDay!"

Many said they lined up for the atmosphere, rather than ordering online.

"Sure, it's a marketing ploy, but I still love the experience," said Pam Johnson, 58, a Portage, Wis., writer who traveled about an hour to the Madison store. "You have great conversations. You learn a lot. You don't get that when you just sit at home and wait for it to be delivered to your doorstep."

Peter Svensson reported from New York. Kelvin Chan in Hong Kong, Robert Barr in London, Sharon Chen in Singapore, Malcolm Foster in Tokyo, Kathy Matheson in Philadelphia, Thomas Adamson in Paris and Johnny C. Clark in Atlanta contributed to this report.

Source URL (retrieved on 12/21/2014 - 3:57am):

<http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2012/03/fans-entrepreneurs-among-first-buyers-new-ipad>