

This Week's Stories

Rumor roundup: Will AT&T Be the Exclusive Carrier For the New iPhone?

Will AT&T Mobility lose or keep its exclusive grip on the Apple iPhone? The answer should arrive on Monday at around 1 p.m. EST, when Steve Jobs is scheduled to take the stage at Apple's upcoming developers' conference and--as is expected--unveil the company's next iPhone. That unveiling should confirm whether AT&T's exclusive deal to sell the device will go for a fourth year, or whether Apple will open the device to U.S. carriers beyond AT&T.



Since the iPhone launched in 2007 there has been a seemingly constant stream of rumors and speculation on whether Apple will expand U.S. distribution of the device--as the company has since done in most of its overseas iPhone markets. Industry watchers have become hardened to what seem like daily rumors of the iPhone going

to either Verizon Wireless, T-Mobile USA, Sprint Nextel or another carrier.

AT&T yet again stirred the pot yesterday by replacing its unlimited smartphone data plans with 200 MB and 2 GB caps. Does the move foreshadow a pre-emptive action by the carrier to entice users to cheaper service ahead of another carrier scoring rights to sell the iPhone? Or does it reflect AT&T's comfort with its continued exclusivity, that it can refresh its services plans without worry of competition? Only a handful of Apple and AT&T executives (and perhaps executives from another carrier?) know for sure.

Nonetheless, ahead of Apple's expected unveiling of the next iPhone, now is the time to revisit this year's bevy of iPhone rumors and speculation. To make things simple, we've created two columns of items: those that predict AT&T will lose its iPhone exclusivity and those that predict the carrier will retain its exclusivity.

Is there overwhelming evidence one way or the other? We'll let you decide (to be clear, none of these rumors are a sure bet, which makes all of them equally suspect). And we'll let you know how it turns out.

AT&T will lose its exclusive iPhone deal

- [AT&T is set to release a new BlackBerry slider in June, in an effort to dull the impact of losing its grip on the iPhone.](#)
- [AT&T CEO hedges on exclusivity question, but hints at plans beyond iPhone.](#)
- [Verizon will launch an LTE iPhone sometime this year.](#)
- [Apple will produce a CDMA version of its popular iPhone this year, a move likely to end AT&T Mobility's exclusive grip on the device.](#)
- [T-Mobile is working on an iPhone launch.](#)
- [AT&T is improving network capacity to prevent an iPhone exodus to Verizon.](#)
- [Verizon's CEO has asked Apple for the iPhone, but won't say if he's getting it.](#)
- [Analytics data shows non-AT&T iPhones--or does it?](#)

AT&T will keep its exclusive iPhone deal

- [A Verizon Wireless spokesperson said the carrier has no plans to carry the iPhone in the "immediate future."](#)
- [AT&T and Apple did sign a five-year exclusivity deal--but is it still valid?](#)
- [Gizmodo's next-gen iPhone teardown shows a MicroSIM slot, just like the AT&T-powered iPad.](#)
- [Financial analysts continue to believe that Verizon will not get the iPhone this year.](#)
- [Apple must think "very carefully about each of these" exclusivity deals.](#)

<http://www.fiercewireless.com>

Product & Service News

Samsung Seeks to Challenge Apple's iPad

June 2, 2010

Samsung Electronics looks to challenge Apple in the nascent tablet PC market with an aggressive marketing plan.

An industry source told The Korea Herald that the company plans to launch the tentatively named sPad in August and sell hundreds of thousands of units at competitive prices.

The plan is aimed at taking a lead in the domestic market before Apple's hugely popular iPad arrives in Korea as

early as the third quarter of the year.

Samsung will roll out the devices via SK Telecom, the nation's top mobile carrier, said the source.

The sPad will run on Google's Android operating system and initially feature a 7-inch touchscreen, the high-ranking industry official said on condition of anonymity because of the confidentiality of the matter. Samsung will add an 8-inch model in October and a 10-inch model in December, he added.

"Samsung and SK Telecom plan to launch an aggressive sales drive for the sPad," he said.

Samsung declined to comment on the release date and other details of the sPad.

KT, the No. 2 mobile operator, which exclusively sells the iPhone in Korea, reportedly plans to launch the iPad in Korea by the end of this year.

Samsung is striving to catch up with Apple in the smartphone market, even on its home turf, and to prevent a repeat in the tablet category. Apple's iPhone sales have surpassed 700,000 units just six months of its introduction in Korea.

Many analysts doubt, however, whether Samsung will be able to lure customers away from the iPad given a dearth of content, which is key in the larger-screen device.

Google's Android Market lags far behind Apple's App Store in terms of the number and variety of applications available, especially ones for entertainment/ebook devices. Apple said on Monday that there are over 5,000 applications for the iPad, which will also run almost all of the more than 200,000 applications from the App Store, including apps already purchased for iPhones or iPod Touches.

"I expect the iPad to have the upper hand in content. In terms of hardware, the screen size of the sPad is somewhat small," Choi Nam-kon, an analyst at Tong Yang Investment Bank, said. The iPad features a 9.7 inch touch screen.

"The iPad is a proven model. Given that the sPad is not yet proven, it is not even a matter for discussion which one is better," he said.

The iPad is surging in popularity, with its international sales surpassing 2 million units in less than 60 days of its launch, Apple's announced Monday.

A number of PC and handset makers including LG Electronics, Hewlett-Packard, Dell and Nokia are expected to jump into the tablet PC market with devices mostly powered by the Android operating system.

The global media tablet market is expected to jump six-

fold by 2014, according to recent data from IDC. The market research firm forecast on May 20 that worldwide media tablet shipments will grow from 7.6 million units in 2010 to more than 46 million units in 2014.

"These are early days for media tablets, an altogether new device category that takes its place between smartphones and portable PCs. IDC expects consumer demand for media tablets to be strongly driven by the number and variety of compatible third-party apps for content and services," noted Susan Kevorkian, program director, Digital Marketplace: Mobile Media & Entertainment.

<http://www.koreaherald.com>

Evo 4G Hits Stores

June 4, 2010

Consumers can finally get their hands on America's first 4G phone, the HTC Evo 4G from Sprint Nextel. Starting today, customers can purchase the Evo at retail stores, online from Sprint and through RadioShack, Best Buy and Walmart retail outlets.

The device will cost \$199.99 with a two-year service agreement and after a \$100 mail-in rebate with a new line activation or eligible upgrade.

HTC EVO 4G features the increasingly popular Android platform, Android 2.1, a 4.3-inch touchscreen, simultaneous voice and data capability in 4G or Wi-Fi coverage areas, 1 GHz Snapdragon processor, an 8-megapixel auto-focus camera with HD-capable video camcorder and a forward-facing 1.3-megapixel camera.

Sprint has been touting the Evo's ability to act as a personal Wi-Fi hot spot for up to eight devices. The optional service costs \$29.99 per month.

HTC CEO Peter Chou yesterday was on hand at The Wall Street Journal's All Things Digital D8 conference to talk about the Evo, among a host of other topics.

According to a live blog of the interview with the Wall Street Journal's tech guru, Walt Mossberg, Chou was asked about the Evo's poor battery performance, a common problem with many of today's high-end smartphones.

"We understand that if you're a heavy mobile user, the battery is a concern. The Evo's battery is removable – not like the iPhone," Chou said, possibly implying that users carry an extra one. "We are trying to innovate here. We're aware of the problem. I hope someday this won't be an issue."

When asked whether HTC would be dabbling in the increasingly popular tablet space, Chou stressed that his company is currently focused on smartphones.

"We're very focused on smartphones today. We're focusing our business on mobile operators. However, as an innovator, one of our defining characteristics is to create new technologies. So in our labs, we're developing new devices like the HTC Shift," Chou said, but didn't elaborate on what kind of device the Shift was.

The complete interview with Chou can be found [here](#).

Sprint currently offers 4G service today in 33 markets. By the end of 2010, the carrier expects to launch 4G service in multiple markets, including but not limited to Boston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Denver, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New York City, Pittsburgh, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, St. Louis and Washington, D.C.

<http://www.wirelessweek.com/>

Qualcomm: Flo TV a Disappointment

June 4, 2010

Flo TV hasn't found the audience the company had hoped for, according to Qualcomm CEO Paul Jacobs.

"There are people who love it, but the numbers are not nearly what we expected," Jacobs said, as quoted by The Wall Street Journal. Jacobs was speaking at the *WSJ's* All Things Digital conference earlier this week.

Flo TV was supposed to be a video product, but Qualcomm might reposition it as a broadband service for mobile devices that just happens to also include video.

Jacobs also showed a screen technology called Mirasol developed by Qualcomm that he said will allow cell phones and other mobile devices to display text with the legibility of an electronic-book reader like Kindle, but with color and video capabilities, according to the article.

Jacobs said Mirasol will consume so little power compared with other devices that handset makers will be able to use it to leave mobile phone screens lit all of the time, rather than shutting them off when they're not in use.

<http://www.wirelessweek.com>

Mergers/Acquisitions/Partnerships

Verizon Will Partner with Tower Companies, Backhaul Firms on Rural LTE

June 4, 2010

Verizon Wireless launched a new website that provides more information on its plans to partner with rural operators to bring LTE services to rural America. Interestingly, on the website--"LTE in Rural America"--Verizon said it is interested in partnering with firms that own towers or provide backhaul services, in addition to rural operators.

Verizon Wireless spokesman Jeffrey Nelson said the carrier launched the site to make information available to all the companies and organizations that have expressed interest in working with Verizon to bring LTE to rural America.

Rural Cellular Association President Steven Berry said the group is pleased Verizon recognizes rural carriers as essential to bringing LTE to rural America. However, he said the association is still concerned that Verizon is only interested in partnerships that will benefit its bottom line by filling in current coverage gaps rather than finding solutions to data roaming, 700 MHz spectrum interoperability and handset availability.

"We can work to bring interoperable, 4G services to all rural Americans, not just the select few that Verizon is willing to partner with, through data roaming agreements, by ending handset exclusivity and allowing a full build out of the 700 MHz spectrum," Berry said.

<http://www.fiercewireless.com>

Industry News

The Fastest Mobile Networks 2010

June 3, 2010

It's a boom time for 3G. Where Americans were once happy with hotspots, now they're demanding to be connected anywhere—whether it's with their smartphones, iPads, or laptops. And 3G is beginning to turn into 4G, as wireless carriers start to install faster technologies that can match or beat many home Internet connections.

There's more mobile data competition than ever before, and more people are surfing the Internet on the move. So PCMag.com decided to take a snapshot of America's mobile networks and see who's doing the best in 18 cities.

Using more than a dozen staffers and freelancers with software of our own design, we cruised streets from Boise to Miami checking AT&T, Cricket, T-Mobile, Verizon Wireless, Sprint 3G, and Sprint 4G against each other.

In testing 3G and 4G across the continental USA, we wanted to do things differently from the competition, with more cities and more control—blanketing as many places as we could with tests of our own design.

We didn't test voice quality, dropped calls, or coverage areas; while those are very important measurements, these tests were all about mobile Internet. We ran approximately 1,000 rounds of tests (totaling more than 10,000 individual tests) in 20 cities. We had to throw out two cities, Las Vegas and Philadelphia, because of technical problems, but overall our testing produced consistent, repeatable results. Two of our networks, Sprint 4G and Cricket, weren't available in all the cities we tested. That made them ineligible for regional and national awards, though we rated them for the individual cities they served.

Bear in mind mobile networks are constantly changing, and almost always for the better. And because speeds vary based on tower location, network load, device used, and even the weather, we can't predict performance in a specific location; rather, we're giving a snapshot of a specific day's usage in several locations across a metro area.

As we were editing this article, T-Mobile rolled out their new, faster HSPA+ technology in more of the Northeast, Memphis and Las Vegas. Sprint promises more and better 4G WiMAX coverage over the next few months, too. But for now, the speed crown goes to AT&T.

National: **AT&T**
 With its HSPA 7.2 3G network, AT&T was the fastest (albeit the least consistent) of the four nationwide carriers. The network's dropouts couldn't erase the fact that AT&T's nationwide reach and relatively current technology deliver faster average 3G speeds than the competition.

NATIONAL							
Carrier	PCMag.com Mobile Speed Index	Consistency (percent)	D/L speed (Mbits/sec)		U/L speed (Mbits/sec)		Time to first byte (seconds)
			Avg	Max	Avg	Max	
AT&T	93	86.20	1.79	2.75	0.28	0.36	1.00
Cricket		95.32	0.94	1.54	0.34	0.43	1.06
Sprint 3G	76	95.90	0.99	1.26	0.30	0.37	1.12
T-Mobile	83	92.78	1.17	2.26	0.34	0.63	1.21
Verizon	77	88.22	1.01	1.40	0.35	0.47	1.02
Sprint 4G		84.27	2.11	3.14	0.40	0.50	1.00

* Cricket in 10 of 18 cities; WiMAX in 9 of 18 cities

Northeast: **T-Mobile**
 T-Mobile's aggressive deployment of HSPA+ in New York

City, and its solid HSPA 7.2 showings in Boston, Baltimore, and D.C., made it the fastest carrier available in our four Northeastern cities overall. AT&T here was hurt by a low consistency score. While Sprint and Verizon were more consistent, their EVDO technology is inherently slower than HSPA 7.2 or HSPA+. Note that WiMAX was only available in one of our Northeastern cities, Baltimore. Sprint turned WiMAX on in Washington, DC after our testing period ended.

NORTHEAST							
Carrier	PCMag.com Mobile Speed Index	Consistency (percent)	D/L speed (Mbits/sec)		U/L speed (Mbits/sec)		Time to first byte (seconds)
			Avg	Max	Avg	Max	
AT&T	84	78.87	1.57	2.20	0.30	0.31	1.04
Cricket		87.59	0.98	0.98	0.36	0.36	0.76
Sprint 3G	69	92.87	0.96	1.24	0.28	0.33	1.20
T-Mobile	94	89.18	1.42	2.01	0.51	0.63	2.01
Verizon	67	89.20	0.88	1.05	0.34	0.36	0.84
Sprint 4G		92.59	3.09	3.09	0.46	0.46	0.77

* Cricket in 2 of 4 cities; WiMAX in 1 of 4 cities

Southeast: **AT&T**
 We tested four cities in the Southeast: Atlanta, Charlotte, Miami, and Raleigh. AT&T won the Southeast, as the fastest and most consistent of the national 3G carriers overall. Sprint's 4G WiMAX showed wildly varying results in Atlanta, Charlotte and Raleigh, the three cities where it was installed. Atlanta gave us the fastest WiMAX speed we saw anywhere in the country—but in Raleigh, Sprint's 4G was slower than AT&T's 3G.

SOUTHEAST							
Carrier	PCMag.com Mobile Speed Index	Consistency (percent)	D/L speed (Mbits/sec)		U/L speed (Mbits/sec)		Time to first byte (seconds)
			Avg	Max	Avg	Max	
AT&T	95	96.25	1.79	1.95	0.35	0.36	0.67
Cricket		93.33	0.76	0.80	0.35	0.37	1.22
Sprint 3G	72	93.04	1.02	1.26	0.30	0.32	0.76
T-Mobile	77	92.12	1.11	2.05	0.34	0.52	0.96
Verizon	72	89.43	0.89	1.21	0.30	0.41	1.44
Sprint 4G		83.33	2.27	3.14	0.40	0.48	0.76

* Cricket in 1 of 4 cities; WiMAX in 3 of 4 cities

Central: **AT&T**
 Industry-leading download and Web speeds let AT&T take the award for our Central region overall, which includes Chicago, Dallas, Denver, St. Louis, and San Antonio. Once again, though, the winner was the least consistent of the four national networks. AT&T only won one of the five Central cities individually, splitting the city laurels with T-Mobile, Verizon, and Sprint 4G.

For the Week Ending June 4, 2010

CENTRAL							
Carrier	PCMag.com Mobile Speed Index	Consistency (percent)	D/L speed (Mbits/sec)		U/L speed (Mbits/sec)		Time to first byte (seconds)
			Avg	Max	Avg	Max	
AT&T	93	82.91	1.58	2.08	0.24	0.36	1.26
Cricket		97.50	0.93	1.54	0.29	0.34	0.98
Sprint 3G	80	98.67	0.94	1.13	0.28	0.34	1.10
T-Mobile	81	95.49	1.24	2.26	0.22	0.38	1.02
Verizon	80	90.96	1.02	1.40	0.30	0.36	0.98
Sprint 4G		85.66	2.04	2.94	0.32	0.35	1.09

* Cricket in all 5 cities; WiMAX in 3 of 5 cities

West: **AT&T**
 In the western U.S., we tested networks in Boise, LA, Phoenix, Portland, and the San Francisco Bay Area. AT&T won two cities (Phoenix and San Francisco) and the overall crown thanks to commanding Web and download speeds. The West saw Cricket's only city win, in Boise, where that network's reliability (and Sprint 4G's startlingly slow showing) helped push the low-cost carrier to the lead.

WEST							
Carrier	PCMag.com Mobile Speed Index	Consistency (percent)	D/L speed (Mbits/sec)		U/L speed (Mbits/sec)		Time to first byte (seconds)
			Avg	Max	Avg	Max	
AT&T	87	87.32	2.11	2.75	0.25	0.28	1.01
Cricket		98.89	1.04	1.13	0.39	0.43	1.12
Sprint 3G	72	97.84	1.04	1.14	0.33	0.37	1.34
T-Mobile	71	93.48	1.03	1.33	0.35	0.61	1.15
Verizon	75	83.71	1.16	1.26	0.42	0.47	0.87
Sprint 4G		79.42	1.55	2.08	0.49	0.50	1.29

* Cricket in 2 of 5 cities; WiMAX in 2 of 5 cities

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