

Title:

Early Info On The Apple Iphone

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Summary:

Apple Computers (Now Apple Inc.) has recovered from years of corporate doldrums through the introduction of an innovative line of computers but more importantly, through the phenomenal success of the iPod. Apple more or less created the market for personal digital MP3 players and has sold millions of units, along with millions of songs through their online music store.

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Article Body:

Apple Computers (Now Apple Inc.) has recovered from years of corporate doldrums through the introduction of an innovative line of computers but more importantly, through the phenomenal success of the iPod. Apple more or less created the market for personal digital MP3 players and has sold millions of units, along with millions of songs through their online music store.

Now the video world is coming into the handheld market - virtually every cell phone has a screen of some sort and the recent iPods have video screens as well. Apple's most recent product introduction is the much-hyped iPhone, which combines the functions of a cell phone, a "wide screen" iPod with touch controls, and an Internet communications device.

Apple has chosen to make an exclusive deal with Cingular, the AT&T cell phone network. Your only source for an iPhone will be through Cingular, along with a Cingular cellular service contract. They plan to make the product available in June. Back in the digital dark ages, Apple made the choice to keep their computer operating system in house, while Microsoft moved beyond IBM and licensed to any computer manufacturer who wanted it. It was the most important misstep that Apple has ever made, and is the reason that they will probably never extend beyond ten to twelve percent of the computer market. It will be interesting to see what happens when iPhone clones begin to appear in Verizon

and other cell operator outlets.

The 4GB iPhone model will cost \$499 with a two-year contract and \$599 for the 8GB version (also with a two-year contract). Those are expensive phones, but Apple is in a unique position in that it has a dedicated core of iPod fans that may become Cingular converts. The iPhone's design is cutting edge: it has done away with keypads and with the exception of a "home" button the controls are operated on a 3.5 inch square touch screen.

According to early reviews the videos and photos look great. One giant touch screen controls the phone, the picture component and the videos - no stylus needed. For text messaging, there will be an onscreen keyboard - again controlled by touch.

Apple's iTunes store has gone into the video business, most recently negotiating a distribution contract with Paramount. Videos are downloaded onto the iPhone the same way that music is: through a wired connection to your computer. Apple's decision to push the viability of the iPhone as a video viewing device raises a couple of questions. The first is how satisfactory watching a movie on a three and a half inch screen will be, and the second is whether or not 8GB is enough to manage a library of music and video content. The current largest video iPod model has 60GB of space, in comparison.

For Internet and video functionality, the iPhone runs on the most recent Mac operating system. It has a 2 megapixel camera and promises support for Google maps, conference calling, and text and multimedia messaging. In short, all the features are included that young people use their phones for today, along with increasing numbers of traveling execs. The iPhone has Bluetooth and WiFi connectivity and includes both email software and a browser.

If you judge by the hype, Apple is betting big on the iPhone. It's worth noting, however, that Steve Jobs is pretty good at hyping every new Apple product. But the integration of telecommunications, video, and full blown Internet interconnectivity into the revered iPod is a major step - and the cell service completes an impressive multimedia package. It should be interesting.