

iPhone Launch Turns Into Remembrance For Steve Jobs

BY CHIP CUTTER
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — It wasn't just the latest iPhone that drew people to Apple stores Friday.

Many consumers waited in lines for hours — sometimes enduring chilly temperatures and overnight thunderstorms — to remember Steve Jobs, Apple's visionary who died last week.

The company's first iPhone release since Jobs' death turned into another tribute. Some customers even joked that the new model 4S stood "for Steve."

Tony Medina, a student from Manhattan, stood outside Apple's flagship store on New York's Fifth Avenue for nine hours, waiting through rain. He had originally planned to order the phone online but decided to join a crowd of about 200 people to honor Jobs.

"For loyalty, I felt I had to do the line," he said. "I had to say thank you."

The new phone, which went on sale Friday in seven countries, is faster than the previous model and comes with better software and an improved camera. Yet the unveiling comes at a time when Apple is finding it difficult to maintain the excitement of previous iPhone introductions.

For starters, the phone is more widely available than in the past. In addition to Apple stores, it's also sold by three wireless carriers: AT&T Inc., Sprint Nextel Corp. and Verizon Wireless. Some Best Buy, Target and Walmart stores also carry the phones, as do authorized resellers.

Buyers were also able to preorder the phone on Apple's website and have it shipped to their homes or offices.

Many die-hard Apple fans and investors were disappointed that Apple did not launch a more radically redesigned new model — an iPhone 5. It's been more than a year since Apple's previous model was released.

That also may have contributed to smaller gatherings at some Apple locations.

"People are not as excited about this version as they might have been" if an iPhone 5 came out, said Charles Prosser, a retired teacher and computer technician from Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Even so, hundreds of buyers camped out in front of stores for hours to be among the first to get an iPhone 4S.

Steve Wozniak, who created Apple with Jobs in a Silicon Valley garage in 1976, was first in line at a store in Los Gatos, Calif., having arrived on his Segway the afternoon before.

Wozniak, who typically waits in line for new Apple products, said he barely slept Thursday night as he was busy chatting with Apple fans, taking photos and giving autographs. Wozniak pre-ordered two new iPhones. He bought two more Friday.

"I just want to be part of an important event, so I feel it more deeply," he said.

Many said the event resembled a remembrance to Jobs, who died a day after Apple Inc. announced the new phone.

Emily Smith, a Web designer, checked in to the line in New York on the location-centric social network Foursquare. She got a virtual Steve Jobs badge that read: "Here's to the crazy ones. ThankYouSteve."

In Chicago, Nicole Pacheco dragged her brother and a friend out to buy Apple's latest gadget.

"I wanted to see how it was, to come out here for once," she said as she looked at the line that stretched past her. "We're kind of a memory for Steve Jobs. It's one of his last inventions. It kind of motivated me to get the next one."

Apple and phone companies started taking orders for the iPhone 4S last Friday. Apple said Monday that more than 1 million orders came in, breaking the record set by last year's model, which was available in fewer countries and on fewer carriers.

Dvorak

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City:

- Sgt. 1st Class Tom Martin, a supply sergeant with the Combined Support Maintenance Shop in Rapid City;
- Staff Sgt. Tom Rauenhurst, a fire direction control chief with Charlie Battery, 1/147th Field Artillery Battalion in Yankton.

The soldiers and NCOs began competing at the battalion level in July. In August, the battalion-level winners competed at the brigade level, and the brigade-level winners competed for the state title. The contestants were tested for physical and mental endurance, literally shedding blood, sweat and tears. The five men are part of one team, but they competed against each other for the state titles.

SDARNG State Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Zimmerman said the NCO and Soldier of the Year competition recognizes the best soldiers to represent the state in regional and national competitions.

"We have chosen the NCO and Soldier of the Year, but all five of the soldiers who participated in this competition are all winners," Zimmerman said. "These soldiers have already surpassed their fellow soldiers at the company, battalion and brigade levels and came here to state and did a fantastic job."

TRAINING HARD

Dvorak, an 11-year National Guard member, received his nursing degree from the University of South Dakota. He works as a psychiatric nurse at the Human Services Center in Yankton.

He said he stepped forward to compete because he liked the challenge. He also wanted to improve himself as a soldier and individual.

However, he quickly emphasized that he benefited from a team effort. His wife, Crystal, backed him during the past three months of competition — on top of running their home, caring for daughters Ashlyn, age 7, and Alexis, age 5, and finishing the final year of her doctorate of audiology degree at USD.

"(Her sacrifice) allows me to make this big commitment," James said. "It lets me put in the time and study an incredible amount of information. I'm amazed how my wife puts up with it."

At 5-foot-11 and 175 pounds, Dvorak came into the NCO competition already committed to physical fitness. He competes in triathlons, and his daily regimen includes a morning swim at the Summit Activities Center and running 5 to 10 miles after getting off work. He also bikes as part of his training.

Dvorak said his SDARNG work at the Rapid City training center also requires mental and physical endurance. A major part of his assignment requires setting up and maintaining the site for Operation Golden Coyote, an annual two-week training exercise.

Dvorak believes he benefits greatly from organizing and maintaining Operation Golden Coyote over a three- to four-week period.

"It's a huge task, considering our battalion is made up of a handful of people," he said. "We do an outstanding job. We have a lot of guys who put in more than what is requested out there."

PUT TO THE TEST

Even with such experience under his belt, Dvorak found the preparation for the NCO competition to be a daunting task. The contestants competed at the firing range, land navigation, obstacle course, hand-to-hand combat and memorizing the 365 pages of Warrior Tasks.

The obstacle course tested both strength and dexterity, Dvorak said.

"If you look at the obstacle course from the side, it looks like a pyramid of large poles," he said. "We had to weave in and out (of the poles), down to the ground."

Dvorak took to the mat for hand-to-hand combat, which he said resembled a combination of wrestling and mixed martial arts. Names were drawn from a hat, and the first two combatants battled during a three-minute bout, with the winner determined by submission or a point system. After a 10-minute rest period, the winner moved on to a match with the third contestant.

"You work for a take-down. It's a lot of strategy," Dvorak said. "Our referee owns a martial arts studio and is himself very proficient (at hand-to-hand combat)."

Another segment, the oral boards, tested knowledge of the "Warrior Tasks" compiled in the 365-page book, Dvorak said.

"It's a massive amount of information. Generally, it's what a soldier is supposed to know. It includes information on every kind of weapon," he said. "The oral board members also ask about current events. They like to stick with current events that are politically oriented toward the military."

The format becomes nerve-racking, Dvorak said.

"Every soldier would agree (the oral board) is the most stressful part of the competition," he said. "You're sitting in front of five command sergeant majors. Each one of them asks three questions over the Warrior Tasks to test your knowledge. You have no idea what questions they're going to ask you."

The three NCO contestants were deadlocked in a horse race, trading places throughout the competition, Dvorak said. The contest was decided by the last event: land navigation.

Using Army protractors and a topography map, the contestants worked with elevations and land masses to locate coordinates, Dvorak said. Each contestant was

required to take down the code found at each location, with the winner determined by the correct codes.

"It was very intense competition," he said.

BECOMING A BETTER MAN

Dvorak said the NCO title really hasn't sunk in just yet. He has just been taking things one step at a time.

"I honestly didn't think ahead of how I would be training for the regional (at Idaho). At the state competition, I was focused on the task at hand," he said.

"But I know I have a lot more (preparation) ahead of me. In preparing for Region 6, I will have more book work, more chapters, and keep plugging away on the questions they are going to ask for the regional boards."

In the "Best Warrior" competition, the judges look not only at the soldier but also his uniform, Dvorak said.

"As far as Region 6, they want you to send your picture on file in your uniform dress," he said.

"Then (at the regional), they will have you present in your Class A dress blue. They nitpick how you present yourself at the oral boards."

While the competition has placed great emphasis on him, Dvorak believes it has made him a better soldier and a better man.

"I want to be as proficient as I can in the different tasks. After this experience, I definitely feel more confidence," he said. "If I wanted to do it again, I wouldn't for a few years because I would definitely push other NCOs to consider doing it."

No matter how he fares at Idaho, Dvorak said he feels like a winner for entering the competition.

"You are put under a lot of stress, and you shine or fall by the wayside," he said. "It's a good way to know exactly what I still need to work on. If I hadn't had such stiff competition, it wouldn't have made me try as hard as I could."

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