

# Apple opens first India store in market push

April 18 2023

---



People queue outside India's first Apple store ahead of its Tuesday opening in Mumbai.

Apple opened its first retail store in India on Tuesday, underscoring the US tech titan's increasing focus on the South Asian nation as a key sales market and alternative manufacturing hub to China.

Apple CEO Tim Cook personally opened the doors to welcome customers as staff cheered.

Hundreds of admirers of the iPhone giant queued around the store in a swanky shopping mall in the financial capital Mumbai, some of them waiting overnight.

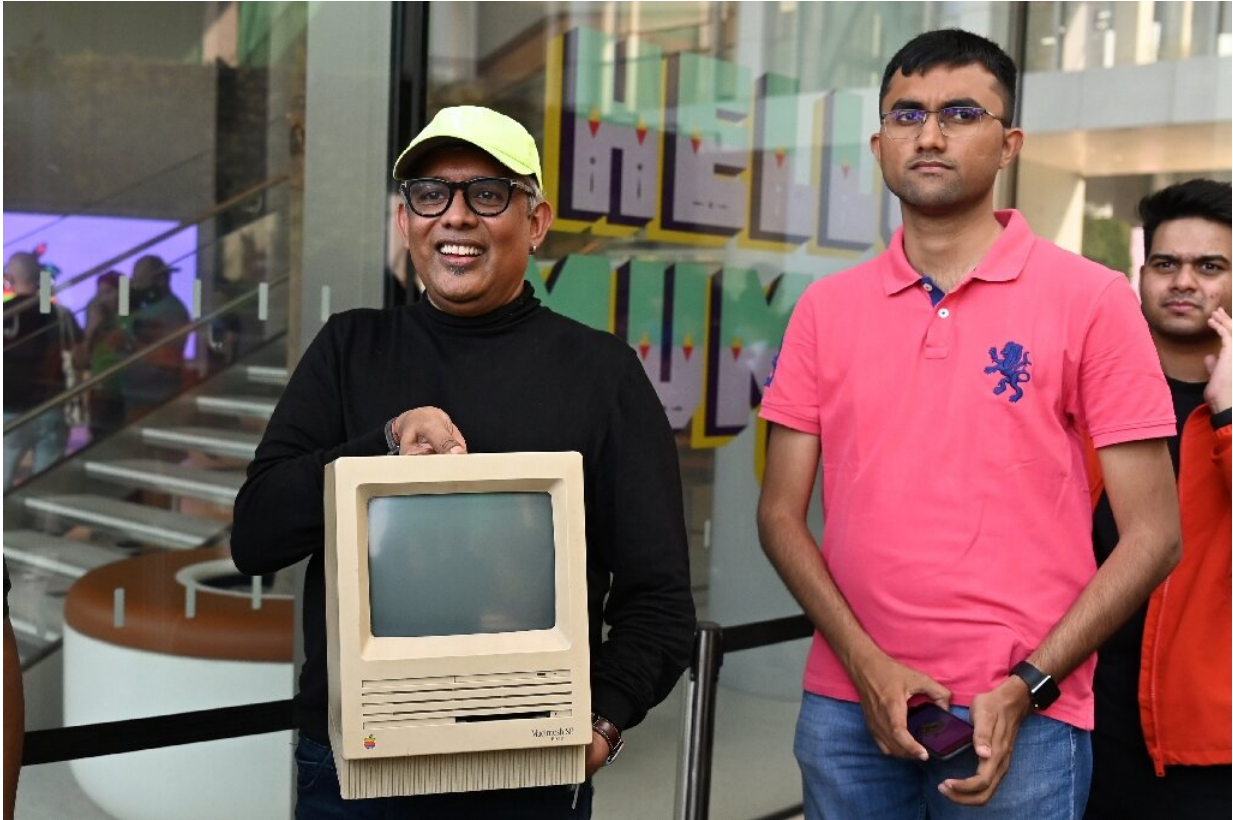
The California-based firm is betting big on the nation of 1.4 billion people—home to the second-highest number of smartphone users in the world, after China—with a second store to open in the capital Delhi on Thursday.

The world's biggest company in terms of [market](#) value is also expanding its manufacturing footprint in India as it seeks to diversify its supply chain away from a heavy dependence on neighboring China.

Apple called the stores a "major expansion" of its presence in India in a statement on Monday.

"We're excited to build on our longstanding history," Cook said in the statement.

Apple launched its [online store](#) in India in 2020, but had not opened an official physical shop until now due to previous investment rules, since relaxed, requiring foreign retailers to source 30 percent of raw materials locally, and pandemic delays.



A man queuing outside India's first official Apple store shows off his vintage Macintosh computer.

Sales and marketing executive Purav Mehta, 30, camped overnight outside the store ahead of the opening, bringing with him his still-unopened 2013 iPod Touch.

"We've been looking forward to it... for a long time we've been waiting for this," he told AFP.

Stationery dealer Madhav Mimani, 27, traveled about 900 kilometers (560 miles) from Rajasthan for the event.

"I think with Apple manufacturing in India, the prices are going to go



down because it's local manufacturing, which makes the iPhones affordable," he said.

"It also increases chances of the Indians buying iPhones made in India because of the sentimental value."

India has more than 600 million smartphone users, with Android devices dominating the price-sensitive market.

Chinese smartphone makers Xiaomi, vivo, OPPO and realme had a combined market share of 66 percent in 2022, according to research firm Canalys, while Samsung held a 19 percent share.



A new Apple retail store is pictured on the eve of its opening in Mumbai.

Apple's iPhones compete in the premium segment of the market and had just a four percent share last year.

But Canalys analyst Sanyam Chaurasia told AFP that Apple could benefit from the premiumisation of India's smartphone market and financing schemes for both retailers and consumers.

"Apple is emphasizing more on the Indian market because they see more opportunity," he said.

## Supply chain

Cook said in a February earnings call that "India is a hugely exciting market for us and is a major focus".

"We are, in essence, taking what we learned in China years ago and how we scale... and bringing that to bear.

Apple was "putting a significant amount of energy" into India, he added, saying he was "very bullish" on the country.

India is also becoming central to Apple's plans to shift its production of devices and components away from China amid diplomatic tensions between Washington and Beijing and the [supply chain](#) fallout from strict COVID policies.



Apple fans pose outside the company's new Mumbai store during a media preview.

Just one percent of Apple's iPhones were made in India in 2021, but that jumped to seven percent last year, Bloomberg News reported last week, citing sources.

The company began manufacturing iPhones in India in 2017 through Taiwanese suppliers Foxconn, Wistron and Pegatron.

Foxconn said in March that its chairman had visited India but there was no "definitive agreement" for investments in the country after the chief minister of Karnataka in the south said iPhones would be manufactured in his state.

© 2023 AFP

Citation: Apple opens first India store in market push (2023, April 18) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2023-04-apple-india.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.