

Apple CEO Tim Cook makes surprise visit to China

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Apple CEO Tim Cook's visit to China comes as the company suffers a drop in iPhone sales in the country.

Apple chief Tim Cook made a surprise visit to China this week, greeting gamers in the southwestern city of Chengdu as his company faces

slumping phone sales in its biggest market.

In a post late Monday on his account on the Weibo social media platform, Cook said he had visited Apple's Taikoo Li store in Chengdu and met young players of the "Honour of Kings" game.

The online battle arena game, published by Chinese tech giant Tencent, is one of the world's most-played mobile games.

"The energy tonight was off the charts!" he wrote.

"Honour of Kings," he said, "started here in Chengdu and is now a [global phenomenon](#) on the App Store."

"The game sets a new bar. It is so popular in China and around the world," he told the state-run China Daily. "You can see that people are so passionate about the game and so excited. It's great to see."

Since the US tech giant first established a presence in China in 1993, Apple has grown into a major provider of smartphones, laptops and [consumer electronics](#) in the country.

During a visit in March to Beijing, Cook said his company enjoyed a "symbiotic" relationship with China.

But Apple has struggled in the country in recent years—last year, sales were hit by curtailed production at factories as a result of China's zero-COVID policy.

US export controls on high-tech components are also threatening the company's supply chain.

And sales of its new iPhone 15 in China are down significantly

compared with previous models, Bloomberg reported this week, citing market analysts.

They pointed to flagging consumption in the world's second largest economy, as well as stiffer competition from local competitors such as Huawei.

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