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AT&T Prepares to Sell iPhone to Business Market

But it has no buttons...

It looks like Apple and AT&T are partners beyond just an exclusive contract and will be working together to give out as many iPhones as possible, each to the market it has the most access to.

In a recent IDG News report, Nancy Gohring cites anonymous sources familiar with AT&T's plans. Apparently, Cingular "decided that the iPhone will appeal to business users and the operator is now working hard to ensure that its backend enterprise billing and support systems will accommodate the device when it ships."

This makes a lot of sense. Apple has great sway in the consumer marketplace, and through its Apple Stores and brand name, it will drive sales of the new device. However, Apple has, traditionally, not been in the best position to deal with the corporate sector, and AT&T, which has had plenty of such deals before, will be better suited. Such a strategy makes a lot of sense, since it leverages the advantages that each of the companies has, and, if reports of the Apple AT&T deal are to be believed, both companies will be profiting from each and every iPhone customer out there.

Several analysts have commented on such a possible move on AT&T's part, mainly to point out how bad an idea they think it is. Ken Dulaney, an analyst with Gartner, thinks that no matter what reputation a manufacturer might enjoy, he would not recommend it if it was making its first phone. "Building a phone is one of the most difficult things to do," he said.

Undoubtedly, making a portable music player that sells over 100 million units in five years is a much easier task, as it is creating a first class operating system like OS X, or even making computers for the past 30 years. Dulaney goes on to talk about other reasons why the iPhone is bad, starting with the removable battery, and going on with the fact that it has no buttons, making it difficult to dial while driving.

Hopefully, if AT&T does have such plans, it won't get discouraged by the in-depth analysis that iPhones are not good for business users because they have no buttons.