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Muscovites Go Crazy Over New iPhones, Spending Thousands of Dollars for a Spot in Line

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

People in Moscow reportedly spent up to five days in the bitter cold and thousands of dollars for a chance to be among the first to buy new iPhone XS models, with sales kicking off in Russia on Friday.

In addition to the XS, Apple Inc. introduced its largest-ever iPhone XS Max and an aluminum lower-cost XR this month. The new souped-up devices cost 87,990 rubles ($1,3400) and 96,990 rubles ($1,500) in Russia.

Reports in the run-up to the sale said some people were selling their place in line for as much as $6,000.

The first person in line ripped his ticket apart after stores opened because he failed to sell his

spot for half a million rubles ($7,600), the local 360 TV broadcaster reported.

The state-run RIA Novosti news agency said Moscow's first buyer stood a mere 2.5 hours in line to get his hands on the new smartphone after eight people before him failed to turn up and the ninth person did not buy anything.

"I got here at 6:30 a.m., got a ticket and didn't buy a place in the line," said Anatoly, who bought a 512 Gigabyte XS Max. 360 TV reports he was originally 247th in line.

Apple sold $2.6 billion worth of iPhones and doubled its volume share to 20 percent in Russia last year.

Retailers sold out of the iPhone X within an hour after stores opened their doors in 2017.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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