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## FLASHBACK: Steve Ballmer's First Take On The iPhone, January 2007

Henry Blodget | June 30, 2010 | 🔥17,994 | € 57

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January 2007:

**INTERVIEWER:** ... The Zune was getting some traction. Then [Steve Jobs](#) goes to MacWorld and he pulls out this iPhone. What was your reaction when you saw that?

**STEVE BALLMER:** [500](#) dollars? Fully subsidized? With a plan? I said that is the most expensive phone in the world. And it doesn't appeal to business customers because it doesn't have a keyboard. Which makes it not a very good email machine.

**INTERVIEWER:** How do you compete with that, though? He sucked out a lot of the spotlight...

**STEVE BALLMER:** Let's take phones first. Right now, we're selling millions and millions and millions of phones a year. Apple is selling zero phones a year. In six months, they'll have the most expensive phone by far ever in the marketplace...

Watch...

(via [Eric Jackson](#))

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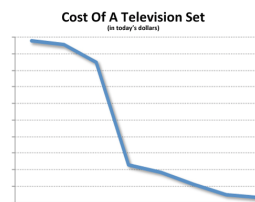
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## The Water Cooler

57 comments

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**Olternaut** on Jun 30, 6:23 PM said:

Look, we all know Ballmer needs to go. Well actually, he needs to go back doing whatever he was doing before at Microsoft all these years. He was fine at that. But as a CEO of a major tech company.....he needs to go. The real question is when? When is Steve Ballmer stepping down as CEO of MSFT? Who is going to replace him? Whatever happens, the change had better take place soon.

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**Lycaon** on Jun 30, 6:24 PM said:

What arrogance! With leadership like, no wonder Microsoft is a shadow of the company it once.

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**Ian White** on Jun 30, 6:27 PM said:

Pretty sure he made those comments a lot earlier than September 2007. The iPhone had already been on sale for three months by that time, so it wouldn't make sense for him to say "Right now... Apple is selling zero phones." Based on the context, I suspect that video was recorded shortly after Jobs unveiled the iPhone in January 2007. Here are some similar (and equally damning) comments from Ballmer from April 2007:  
<http://arstechnica.com/microsoft/news/2007/04/ballmer-says-iphone-has-no-chance-to-gain-significant-market-share.ars>

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**Formerly LOL (orig)** on Jun 30, 6:34 PM said:

C'mon, what do you expect a hard nosed CEO to say when asked about a competing product? And he was right about the pricing of iphone. It was too expensive (500 or 600 initially?) and Apple had to lower it pretty quickly.

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**Bo Gowan** on Jun 30, 6:40 PM said:

Great video. Not a big deal, but I think your date is slightly off on when this interview happened. This video was *posted* onto YouTube on Sept 22, 2007, but this interview actually happened in NYC on Jan 17, 2007. The other guy in the video (at the very beginning before the shot pans to Ballmer) is ex-Nortel CEO Mike Zafirovski. On Jan 17, 2007, the two companies were in NYC announcing a new alliance around VoIP. Ballmer says in the interview that "in six months Apple will have the most expensive phone on the market", and I believe the iPhone went on sale in the summer of 2007.

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