

There's little doubt that [Verizon Wireless](#) has an instant hit on its hands with the Apple [iPhone 4](#), which the U.S. carrier starts selling on [February 10](#)

. But how many millions of iPhones will Verizon sell in 2011? According to one analyst, sales could approach a jaw-dropping 25 million.

As [reported](#) by *All Things Digital's* John Paczkowski, R.W. Baird & Co. analyst William Power estimates that Verizon could sell 23.8 million iPhones to its subscribers this year. That figure, combined with the 5.6 percent of AT&T iPhone users who, Baird says, will switch to Verizon in 2011, and you've got a sales number that approaches 25 million—an estimate more than twice that of the rosier predictions (9 to 12 million) from other analysts.

Baird cautions, however, that his estimate is a "directional number" rather than a forecast, adding that it's unclear whether Apple could deliver that many iPhones.

Another variable is how Verizon customers will react to the array of [hidden fees](#) associated with the carrier's service plans, including wireless tethering (\$20 for 2 GB, and \$20 for each additional GB) and visual voicemail (\$2.99 per month for other Verizon phones, but unknown at this time for the iPhone).

There's also the question of whether Verizon's service will be significantly better than AT&T's—a question that won't be resolved until millions of iPhone users are putting Verizon's network through its paces on a daily basis. Until then, Verizon and iPhone users will remain in pre-matrimonial bliss. The unvarnished truth—be it dirty or delightful—will start to emerge in about two weeks.

Source: [Jeff Bertolucci, PCWorld](#)