

Analysts see 1 billion cell phones shipped

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Telecom analysts said Thursday that this could be the year the industry ships 1 billion wireless handsets in a single year.

IDC said worldwide mobile-phone shipments in the second quarter totaled nearly 238 million units this year, up 2.1 percent from the first quarter and close to an all-time quarterly record.

For the year to date, 470.7 million units have gone out the door.

"The industry has been eyeing the milestone of 1 billion handsets shipped in a single year for some time, and many believe 2006 will be the year it happens," declared IDC analyst Ryan Reith.

Reith said that demand for handsets remains red hot, particularly for entry-level units in emerging markets; however, some mature segments have cooled down. As a result, he said, IDC saw it as unlikely that third-quarter shipments will top the second quarter.

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