

Blackberry Curve tops iPhone in first quarter: NPD

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Research in Motion's Blackberry Curve moved past Apple's iPhone to become the top-selling smartphone in the United States in the first quarter of the year, research firm NPD Group reported Monday.

NPD said a "buy-one-get-one" promotion by carrier [Verizon Wireless](#) helped push the Canadian company's BlackBerry Curve past the [iPhone](#)

[3G](#) in the first three months of the year.

It said RIM's share of the consumer smartphone market increased 15 percent over the prior quarter to nearly 50 percent the smartphone market in the first quarter of the year.

Apple's and Palm's share declined 10 percent each, NPD said.

NPD said the BlackBerry Curve was the top-selling smartphone in the first quarter followed by the iPhone 3G, the BlackBerry Storm, the BlackBerry Pearl and the T-Mobile G1.

"Verizon Wireless's aggressive marketing of the BlackBerry Storm and its buy-one-get-one BlackBerry promotion to its large customer base contributed to [RIM](#) capturing three of the top five positions," NPD analyst Ross Rubin said.

"The more familiar, and less expensive Curve benefited from these giveaways and was able to leapfrog the iPhone, due to its broader availability on the four major US national carriers."

The iPhone is currently available through a sole carrier in the United States, AT&T.

NPD also said that smartphones now make up 23 percent of cell phone sales, up from 17 percent in the [first quarter](#) of 2008.

"Even in this challenging economy, consumers are migrating toward Web-capable handsets and their supporting data plans to access more information and entertainment on the go," Rubin said.

Apple's iPhone 3G was released in July of last year and was the best-selling smartphone in the United States in the third and fourth quarters

of last year.

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