

Computer sales show signs of recovery: Gartner

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A Japanese customer compares computers at an electronics shop in Tokyo in July 2009. A research group says the global computer market is showing signs of recovery, with sales forecast to decline just 2% to 285 million this year, much better than a June prediction of 6%.

The global computer market is showing signs of recovery, with sales forecast to decline just 2.0 percent this year, much better than a June prediction of 6.0 percent, the Gartner research group said Wednesday.

Gartner said worldwide personal computer sales were on pace to reach 285 million units this year, down from 291 million last year.

"PC demand appears to be running much stronger than we expected

back in June, especially in the United States and China," said Gartner research director George Shiffler.

"Mobile PC shipments have regained substantial momentum, especially in emerging markets, and the decline in desk-based PC shipments is slowing down," he said. "We think shipments are likely to be growing again in the fourth quarter of 2009 compared with the fourth quarter of 2008."

Sales are expected to grow 12.6 percent in 2010.

In the first half of this year, PC sales fell 4.4 percent and Gartner said it was unlikely they would post growth for the year, even with the upcoming October 22 release of Microsoft's Windows 7 operating system.

"We don't expect the release of Windows 7 to significantly influence PC demand at year-end," Shiffler said. "At best, Windows 7 may generate a modest bump in home demand and possibly some added demand among small businesses.

"We aren't expecting most larger businesses, governments and educational institutions to express strong demand for the new operating system until late 2010," he said.

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