

Mobile phone sales rise in 3rd quarter: study

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A woman walks past an advertising poster hung up outside a mobile phone shop in downtown Hanoi in April 2009. Global sales of mobile phones reversed a slide that began late last year and turned positive in third quarter 2009, a trend expected to accelerate thanks to smartphones, a study disclosed Thursday.

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The research group Gartner said mobile telephone sales inched up 0.1 percent in the third quarter compared with the same period last year.

Sales of smartphones, which offers access to the Internet and other multimedia services, rose 12.8 percent in the third quarter to 41 million units, according to Gartner.

Overall [mobile phone sales](#) came to 308.9 million units.

Gartner said sales should gain steam between now and the end of the year and should show an increase of 5.0 to 7.0 percent in 2010. The smartphone market is likely to expand 48 percent next year.

Sales of Apple's iPhone surged nearly 50 percent in the third quarter. The iPhone now accounts for 17.1 percent of smartphone sales worldwide compared with 12.9 percent a year earlier.

Gartner predicted that Apple, the world's third largest [smartphone](#) provider, would report a further sales hike in the fourth quarter as it has begun to market its product in China and 16 other countries for the first time.

Nokia of Finland remains the world leader in mobile sales, although its market share fell to 36.7 percent in the third quarter from 38.2 percent in third quarter 2008.

In second place is Samsung from [South Korea](#), with 19.6 percent of the market, up from 17.1 percent a year earlier.

Motorola of the United States and the Japanese-Swedish group Sony-Ericsson suffered an annual sales decline of more than 40 percent in the third quarter, according to Gartner.

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