

Mobile computer shipments surge: Gartner

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A visitor looks at laptops at a computer fair. Shipments of mobile personal computers surged worldwide in the first three months of 2010 due to the popularity of low-cost mini-notebooks, Gartner said Tuesday.

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Worldwide mobile [PC shipments](#) totaled 49.4 million units in the first quarter of this year, a 43.4 percent increase from the same period in 2009, according to the industry-tracking firm.

The year-over-year climb was the greatest in eight years and was estimated to represent about 36 billion dollars in spending by mobile [computer](#) buyers.

"Mini-notebook PCs were a big part of the bump in mobile PC shipments in the first quarter of 2010, with shipments growing 71 percent over the same period last year," said Gartner principal analyst Mikako Kitagawa.

"However, mini-notebooks' share slowed in some regions as consumers begin to understand the limitations of mini-notebooks, especially in the face of aggressive price cuts of regular notebooks."

Bare-bones notebooks are designed essentially for getting on the Internet and tending to a few basic applications.

The average selling price of a mobile PC in the quarter was 732 dollars, nearly 16 percent lower than the mean of 868 dollars in the same period last year, according to Gartner.

Hewlett-Packard held its title as the number one seller of mobile PCs worldwide, accounting for 19.2 percent of the shipments in the quarter.

Gartner estimated that there are 500 million mobile computers being used around the world and said it is watching to see whether sales of tablet computers such as the Apple iPad will eat into the market.

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