

Global PC sales slow in third quarter

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Boxes of desktop computers are stocked on a shelf at a Best Buy store. Global personal computer sales slowed in the third quarter, notching up growth of just 7.6 percent, well below the previous quarter, technology research firm Gartner said Wednesday.

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PC shipments totalled 88.3 million units in the quarter and the 7.6-percent growth from the third quarter of 2009 was below Gartner's forecast of 12.7 percent and the second quarter, when global PC sales grew 20.7 percent.

Another research firm, International Data Corp., said the global PC market grew 11 percent in the third quarter, three percent below IDC

expectations.

"The major growth inhibitor in the third quarter of 2010 was softness in consumer PC demand in the US and Western Europe," Gartner principal analyst Mikako Kitagawa said in a statement.

"The third quarter historically is a strong consumer quarter, led by back-to-school sales," Kitagawa said.

"Consumer mobile PC demand, driven by low-priced notebooks, including mini-notebooks, slowed after very strong growth the past two years," she said.

Kitagawa said "media tablet hype around devices such as the [iPad](#) has also affected consumer notebook growth by delaying some PC purchases, especially in the US consumer market.

"At this stage, hype around media tablets has led consumers and the channels to take a 'wait and see' approach to buying a new device," she said.

[Gartner](#) said Hewlett-Packard remained the top [computer manufacturer](#) but its worldwide market share slipped to 17.5 percent in the third quarter from 18.9 percent a year ago.

Taiwan's Acer was next but its market share also slipped -- from 14.3 percent a year ago to 13.1 percent in the third quarter.

US computer giant Dell saw its market share increase to 12.2 percent from 12.1 percent while China's [Lenovo](#) saw its market share jump to 10.4 percent from 8.4 percent a year ago.

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