

IDC: iPad accounted for 87 pct. of 3Q tablet sales

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(AP) -- The market for tablet computers is exploding - and almost entirely because of the iPad - research group IDC says.

During the third quarter of 2010 - the first complete one with Apple Inc.'s [iPad](#) on sale the entire time - manufacturers shipped 4.8 million tablets worldwide, up 45 percent from 3.3 million in the same period last year.

IDC said the vast majority of those - 87 percent - were iPads. Tablets running Google Inc.'s Android software, a fixture on [smart phones](#), went on sale later and have yet to take off as the iPad has.

IDC only counted media tablets that run software designed for [mobile devices](#). Excluded are devices that have touch screens but run the same software you'd find on a full-fledged PC - namely, Windows.

IDC suggested that as 2011 wears on, newer [Android](#) tablets, such as Motorola Mobility Inc.'s Xoom, could steal [market share](#) from the iPad, though [Apple](#) doesn't seem likely to lose its stronghold in the category it created.

Meanwhile, sales of e-readers jumped 40 percent to 2.7 million during the quarter. Amazon.com Inc., maker of the Kindle, dominated the category, with 41.5 percent market share. Pandigital was a distant runner-up with 16.1 percent. Nook maker Barnes & Noble Inc., Sony Electronics Inc. and Chinese manufacturer Hanvon Technology Co. Ltd.

round out the top five e-reader brands.

IDC estimated that manufacturers sold 17 million media tablets and 10.8 million e-readers in 2010. Although the research group believes U.S. consumers bought about 72 percent of the e-reader market last year, it estimates that only 40 percent of media tablets were sold in the U.S.

Sales of these products - particularly tablets - will continue to grow over the next two years, IDC said, with tablet sales reaching 44.6 million units in 2011 and 70.8 million in 2012. The research group said e-reader shipments will reach 14.7 million units in 2011 and 16.6 million in 2012.

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