

Smartphone use to soar in Asia: Nielsen

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Two commuters stand using mobile phones on a railway platform in front of public housing apartments in Hong Kong in April 2011. Smartphone use is poised to soar in Asia bringing with it a dramatic change in how people there access information on the Internet, according to industry tracker Nielsen Company.

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While fewer than 20 percent of [mobile phone users](#) in the Asia Pacific have smartphones, nearly half of consumers intend to buy smartphones this year, Nielsen reported.

"Higher smartphone ownership will drastically change how [mobile data](#) is consumed," Nielsen said in an online message outlining its findings.

Data from the United States shows that smartphone users are far more likely to access the Internet or tend to their email using [mobile gadgets](#).

Smartphone owners are also prone to downloading applications to handsets, with [iPhone](#) users reportedly averaging 48 "apps" each and owners of Android-powered handsets installing about 35 of the mini-software programs.

Some smartphone users spend about a quarter of their time on the gadgets tending to Facebook posts and pages, according to Nielsen.

The market research company also expected the [tablet computer](#) craze in the United States and Western Europe to spread into Asia.

"As the substitution effect of tablets tends to be against laptops, PCs and netbooks, many -- if not most -- tablet owners will also own a smartphone," Nielsen predicted.

"This creates an attractive niche group of 'super consumers' who can be reached through an additional high-engagement screen, but who will also have an additional need for seamless service and content mobility," it concluded.

Affordable and ample data plans from telecom service providers will be important to the adoption of smartphone lifestyles in Asia, according to Nielsen.

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