

China smartphone market 'to overtake US'

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This file photo shows Chinese-made E-readers and smartphones at an electronics mall in Beijing, in 2010. China is set to be the biggest smartphone market this year after shipments in the second-half of 2011 outstripped the US, according to a technology research firm.

China is set to be the biggest smartphone market this year after shipments in the second-half of 2011 outstripped the US, a technology research firm said.

Figures by US-based International Data Corporation (IDC) indicate China will account for 20.7 percent or almost 137 million units of the global smartphone market from 18.2 percent in 2011.

In contrast, the US share of the overall market is expected to decline to 20.6 percent this year from 21.3 percent in 2011, said IDC, which is projecting 660 million smartphones will be shipped in 2012.

"(China) smartphone shipments are expected to take a slim lead over the US in 2012 before the gap widens in the coming years," said Wong Teck Zhung, IDC's regional senior market analyst with the client devices team.

"There will be no turning back this leadership changeover."

Much of the growth in smartphone shipments in China, and also for the other emerging markets such as India and Brazil, are being fuelled by [mobile handsets](#) running on Google's [Android](#) platform, said IDC.

"A lot of the Android models in China are priced competitively," said Melissa Chau, IDC's regional research manager.

"That is actually driving the huge growth."

Chau said the average price of a non-Apple smartphone in China sold for \$324 excluding telco subsidies last year while an [iPhone](#) retailed at a much higher \$760.

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