

Apple and Samsung rule smartphone market, study says

November 14 2012



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Smartphone sales climbed 46.9 percent to 169.2 million units from the

same quarter last year as buyers increasingly opted for Internet-linked devices instead of "feature phones."

The smartphone market was "dominated" by Samsung and Apple, "leaving a handful of vendors fighting over a distant third spot," Gartner principal [research analyst](#) Anshul Gupta said in written findings accompanying a report.

South Korean consumer electronics giant Samsung sold 55 million smartphones in the recently-ended quarter and commanded 32.5 percent of the global market, "widening the gap with Apple," according to Gartner.

Apple sold 23.6 million iPhones in the third quarter in a 36.2 percent increase from the same period last year, Gartner reported.

The company was on track for strong [iPhone](#) sales in the holiday season with the newest version of the smartphone rolling out in China and other parts of the world, according to Gupta.

The [Google](#)-backed Android [operating software](#) used by Samsung and other smartphone makers continued to gain ground in the quarter, increasing its market share by 19.9 percent to claim 72.4 percent of the market.

California-based Apple's mobile gadget software powered 13.9 percent of the smartphones sold in the third quarter.

Overall [mobile phone sales](#) declined 3.1 percent to slightly less than 428 million units in the quarter.

"After two consecutive quarter of decline in mobile phone sales, demand has improved in both mature and emerging markets as sales increased

sequentially," Gupta said.

"In mature markets, we finally saw replacement sales pick up with the launch of new devices in the quarter."

While Gartner analysts expected mobile phone sales to be buoyed in the year-end [holiday shopping](#) season, they cautioned that the boost might be tempered by gift-buyers opting for tablet computers.

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