

Global tablet sales up 78% in 2012

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The global market for tablet computers surged 78.4 percent last year, with 128 million of the devices shipped, a survey showed Thursday.

Research firm IDC said tablets made up 10.7 percent of the [global market](#) last year for "smart connected devices," which include smartphones, and portable and desktop PCs.

Overall, the market for these devices grew 29 percent to 1.2 billion, according to IDC, with growth in tablets and smartphones—which saw a 46 percent rise—offsetting declines in PC sales.

Although tablet sales sizzled, they have not yet eclipsed sales of traditional PCs yet, the figures showed. Some analysts say that could happen in the next year or two.

IDC data showed a 3.4 percent drop in portable PC sales to 202 million and a 4.1 percent decline in [desktop PC](#) sales to 148.4 million.

These were dwarfed by the 722 million smartphones sold last year, a figure which was previously released.

Smartphones and tablets are growing at a pace that PCs cannot keep up with, said IDC analyst Ryan Reith.

"The average selling price for a tablet declined 15 percent in 2012 to \$461, and we expect that trend to continue in 2013."

IDC said smartphone prices averaged \$408 and are generally replaced more often than other devices.

In the overall market for connected devices, Samsung rose to the top position with at least 20 percent of the market in each category, and an overall market share of 20.8 percent, overtaking last year's leader Apple.

Apple held 18.2 percent of the market for 2012, up from 16.3 percent in 2011. The maker of the [iPhone](#) and [iPad](#) saw 44 percent growth for the year but was unable to keep pace with [South Korea](#)'s Samsung, which more than doubled its sales.

The number three company was China-based [Lenovo](#) with a 6.5 percent

market share in all devices, followed by US-based Hewlett-Packard (4.8 percent) and Dell (3.2 percent).

IDC said Apple fared better in the fourth quarter than earlier in the year, and was boosted by its release of the iPhone 5 and iPad mini.

"The fourth quarter market share numbers showed a fairly dramatic resurgence for Apple," said IDC's Bob O'Donnell.

"After falling well behind Samsung early in 2012, Apple came roaring back in final quarter of the year... The question moving forward will be whether or not Apple can maintain its hit parade against the juggernaut of Samsung."

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