

Smartphones now a majority of mobile sales: survey

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South Korean children display their smartphones at an elementary school in Seongnam, south of Seoul on June 11, 2013. Smartphones took a majority of mobile phone sales worldwide for the first time in the April-June quarter, a survey showed Wednesday.

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The report by the research firm Gartner found smartphone sales totaled 225 million in the second quarter, or 51.8 percent of all mobile phones sold in the period.

It was the first time smartphone sales exceeded those of feature phones, which are more basic phones with limited or no access to the Internet and applications.

The survey found Samsung remained the leading vendor of smartphones and all mobile phones, and that the Google Android system solidified its position with a 79 percent share of smartphones sold.

Gartner said Windows Phone, the mobile operating system from Microsoft, moved into third place with a 3.3 percent share, ahead of troubled BlackBerry, whose share slid to 2.7 percent.

"While Microsoft has managed to increase share and volume in the quarter, Microsoft should continue to focus on growing interest from app developers to help grow its appeal among users," said Anshul Gupta, a Gartner analyst.

Apple's iOS, the operating system for the iPhone, remained second with a 14.2 percent share, down from 18.8 percent a year earlier.

Gartner said Apple's average prices dropped because many of its phones sold were older, discounted models of the iPhone. This "demonstrates the need for a new flagship model," Gupta said, but added that "it is risky for Apple to introduce a new lower-priced model too."

Gartner's data showed Samsung sold 71.3 million smartphones in the quarter, representing a market share of 31.7 percent. Apple was second with 31.9 million, followed by South Korea's LG, with 11.4 million and a share of 5.1 percent, and China's Lenovo and ZTE.

Samsung was also the top seller of all mobile phones, with a total of 107 million in the period, or 24.7 percent. Finland-based Nokia was second with a market share of 14 percent and 60.9 million phones sold, Gartner said.

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