

Smartphone sales top billion, Samsung leads

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Attendees visit the Android booth during the Google I/O developers conference at the Moscone Center on May 15, 2013 in San Francisco, California

The smartphone market hit a milestone in 2013 with more than a billion shipped, a survey showed Monday.

Samsung extended its lead as the world's biggest vendor, accounting for 31.3 percent of sales, ahead of Apple's 15.3 percent, according to the poll by [market](#) research and analysis firm IDC.

IDC said vendors delivered a total of 1.004 billion smartphones last year, up 38.4 percent from 2012. And smartphones made up 55 percent of the total mobile phone shipments of 1.8 billion.

"The sheer volume and strong growth attest to the smartphone's continued popularity in 2013," says Ramon Llamas, an IDC analyst.

"Total smartphone shipments reached 494.4 million units worldwide in 2011, and doubling that volume in just two years demonstrates strong end-user demand and vendor strategies to highlight smartphones."

South Korea's Samsung saw growth of 42.9 percent, allowing it to extend its dominance in the global market, the IDC figures showed.

Apple saw 12.9 percent growth, slower than the overall market, resulting in a declining market share.

China's Huawei narrowly captured the number three spot with a 4.9 percent market share, ahead of South Korea's LG (4.8 percent) and Chinese maker Lenovo (4.5 percent), IDC said.

Data from the fourth quarter showed Apple rebounding slightly with the release of its new iPhone models, and capturing 17.9 percent of sales to Samsung's 28.8 percent.

A separate survey out Monday showed that the Android smartphone platform has extended its lead over Apple's iPhone in key markets including the United States, Europe and China.

Windows Phone, meanwhile, has made inroads to secure a strong third place showing in some markets, and is ahead of Apple in Italy, according to the survey of fourth quarter sales released by Kantar Worldpanel.

The survey showed that Android, the free operating system from Google, remained on top in Europe and most other major markets outside Japan.

Android ended 2013 as the top platform across the five major markets in Europe with 68.6 percent share, while Apple held second place with 18.5 percent.

Windows Phone showed strong year-on-year growth, and in Italy captured 17.1 percent of the market, ahead of Apple's 12.8 percent, but behind Android's 66.2 percent, according to the survey.

In the United States, the survey showed Android's share rising more than four percentage points over the past year to 50.6 percent, while Apple's share declined to 43.9 percent.

In Japan, Apple held 68.7 percent of smartphone sales.

In China, Android's share increased to 78.6 percent while Apple's declined to 19 percent.

"Android finished 2013 strongly, showing year-on-year share growth across 12 major global markets including Europe, USA, Latin America, China and Japan," said Kantar's Dominic Sunnebo.

"Windows Phone has now held double-digit [share](#) across Europe for three consecutive months," Sunnebo said.

But "unfortunately for Nokia the European smartphone market is only growing at three percent year-on-year so success in this market has not been enough to turn around its fortunes—reflected in its recent disappointing results."

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