

Smartphone Snapshot: Samsung getting squeezed

January 29 2015, by Brandon Bailey



An advertisement poster shows Apple's iPhone 6 Plus, top, and Samsung Electronics' Galaxy NOTE 4 at a mobile phone shop in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, Jan. 29, 2015. Samsung Electronics Co. said Thursday its quarterly earnings dropped smaller-than-expected 27 percent in the fourth quarter but its forecast-beating profit could not mask that it was losing the battle of the big phones with Apple Inc. (AP Photo/Ahn Young-joon)

The runaway success of Apple's newest iPhone has fueled a dramatic shift in the global market: the California tech giant is now neck-and-

neck with South Korea's Samsung for the title of world's leading seller of smartphones.

Apple set the standard for modern smartphones when it released the first iPhone in 2007, but Samsung has been the market leader since 2011 with its series of supersized smartphones that run on Google's Android software. However, Apple made huge gains in the last quarter, selling 74.5 million iPhones—nearly 50 percent more than a year earlier—after introducing two bigger models to compete with Samsung's high-end Galaxy S phones.

At the same time, Samsung is facing fierce competition at the lower-priced end from Chinese manufacturers Lenovo, Huawei and Xiaomi, which are growing fast in Asia.

Analysts say Apple will likely see a drop-off in iPhone sales now that it's past the December holiday shopping season. But the following estimates from International Data Corp., released Thursday, show how much the market has changed:

2014 GLOBAL 4TH-QUARTER MARKET SHARE

- Samsung: 20 percent
- Apple: 19.8 percent
- Lenovo: 6.6 percent
- Huawei: 6.2 percent
- Xiaomi: 4.4 percent

2013 GLOBAL 4TH-QUARTER MARKET SHARE

— Samsung: 28.8 percent

— Apple: 17.4 percent

— Lenovo: 4.7 percent

— Huawei: 5.7 percent

— Xiaomi: 2 percent

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