

iPhone 6's popularity drives Apple's China share to record

March 5 2015, by Youkyung Lee

A consumer survey showed the popularity of the iPhone 6 has driven Apple's market share in China to its highest ever while Samsung has continued to lose ground.

Kantar Worldpanel ComTech said Thursday that its latest survey of 15,000 people living in Chinese cities showed Apple's market share reached 25.4 percent in the November-January period, up from 20.9 percent a year earlier.

That was a record for Apple in the world's largest smartphone market, but not enough to catch up Chinese maker Xiaomi, which claimed 27.6 percent.

The research firm said the market share of Samsung Electronics Co. eroded further to 11.3 percent. It was 22.2 percent a year earlier.

Kantar conducts a monthly online survey of the same 15,000 city-dwelling Chinese who are 16 years or older.

Its latest consumer survey sheds more light on the smartphone market in China amid differing figures from market research companies about which manufacturer came out on top after intense competition in 2014.

IHS said Xiaomi was the top seller in China last year followed by Samsung Electronics with 15 percent and 14 percent market shares respectively. But another research firm Canalys said Apple was the

winner for the first time in the last quarter of 2014, followed by Xiaomi and Samsung.

Although the rankings may differ, all the research reflects similar trends: Apple is on the rise in China boosted by iPhone 6 sales and Samsung is likely the biggest loser.

Carolina Milanesi, chief of research at Kantar, said the iPhone 6, released in October, was the best-selling smartphone model in China in the November-January period followed by Xiaomi's Redmi Note.

Tamsin Timpson, the research company's strategic insight director, said Samsung's China market share was at its lowest level since the company began its smartphone consumer survey in 2012.

Samsung Electronics unveiled the Galaxy S6 and S6 Edge on Sunday, part of the company's efforts to improve phone design and reclaim ground lost to Apple and Xiaomi.

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