

Samsung regains lead over Apple in smartphone market (Update)

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IDC said Samsung sold 82.4 million smartphones in the first three

months of the year, for a 24.5 percent market share.

Even though the number sold was down seven percent from a year ago, it outpaced Apple, whose iPhone sales slipped slightly from the final quarter of 2014.

Apple held an 18.2 percent market share in early 2015 after selling 61.2 million iPhones.

The figures were impacted by seasonal and other factors. Samsung notably launched its flagship Galaxy S6 and S6 Edge phones at the end of the quarter in April, while Apple iPhone sales dipped compared with the stronger holiday quarter.

In the fourth quarter, Apple and Samsung were virtually tied with around 20 percent of the market each, according to several surveys.

"The challenge made by Apple for the top spot in the fourth quarter returned to a clear lead for Samsung in the first quarter, despite the soaring global demand for the iPhone 6 and 6 Plus," said IDC analyst Anthony Scarsella.

"Samsung's shipments, given that the S6 was not launched into the market for the full quarter, were driven by large volumes into emerging markets and steady demand for its midrange and lower-priced smartphones."



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Chinese manufacturer Lenovo was third after completing its acquisition of Motorola from Google. Its 5.6 percent market share placed it ahead of fellow Chinese group Huawei, with 5.0 percent, and South Korea's LG at 4.6 percent.

IDC said the overall global smartphone market grew 16.7 percent from a year earlier, with total shipments of 337 million units.

Apple a 'star'

Strategy Analytics, which released a similar report, said the figures show

Apple is a "star" performer because it posted strong sales compared with the same period last year.

"Apple soared 40 percent annually... Apple's new iPhone 6 portfolio is flying off the shelves in China and the United States, its two biggest markets," said Neil Mawston at Strategy Analytics.

Microsoft meanwhile struggled as it took over the Nokia brand of mobile phones, once the world's biggest, according to the research firm.

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