

# Half-billion Windows 10 devices, but PC slump stunts growth (Update)

May 10 2017, by Michael Liedtke

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Microsoft employee Dave Rogers pulls off a HoloLens device after trying it out in a Windows mixed reality immersive experience at the Microsoft Build 2017 developers conference, Wednesday, May 10, 2017, in Seattle. Earlier in the day at the annual event, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said that a half billion devices are now running Windows 10, its latest operating system. That's up from 400 million disclosed last September, but far short of a goal of 1 billion by 2018. (AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

Microsoft's latest version of Windows is faring better than its maligned predecessor, but the software's growth is still stunted by a shift away

from personal computers.

Windows 10 is now running on a half-billion devices nearly two years after its release, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella disclosed Wednesday during the software maker's annual conference for applications programmers.

That figure is up from 400 million eight months ago, but far short of Microsoft's goal of putting Windows 10 on 1 billion devices by 2018. The Redmond, Washington, company had already acknowledged it won't reach that goal in time .

Windows 10 represents a comeback for Microsoft after the colossal flop of Windows 8, whose ill-conceived designed deepened a decline in PC sales and contributed to the departure of Nadella's predecessor, Steve Ballmer.

Although it has been easing recently, the PC slump still hasn't ended.

People are increasingly connecting to digital services, checking email and performing other computing tasks on devices powered by Apple's iOS and Google's Android instead of Microsoft's Windows. That's one the prime reasons Microsoft has been eclipsed by both Apple and Google in the technology industry's pecking order after dominating throughout the 1990s.



Workers demonstrate Microsoft Surface devices at the Microsoft Build 2017 developers conference, Wednesday, May 10, 2017, in Seattle. Earlier in the day at the annual event, company CEO Satya Nadella said that a half billion devices are now running Windows 10, its latest operating system. That's up from 400 million disclosed last September, but far short of a goal of 1 billion by 2018. (AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

Microsoft tried to piggyback on the trend by expanding into smartphones, but those attempts have mostly flopped. It's the reason Microsoft cites for failing to meet its 1 billion goal in time. Its Surface tablet has done better, but even that product has hit rough patches. Microsoft blamed disappointing Surface sales for a revenue shortfall in its most recent years.

As consumers have embraced smartphones, Microsoft increasingly is building its products with business and government agencies in mind, said Gartner analyst Ed Anderson.

But Microsoft is still hoping to win over consumers with its digital servant, Cortana, a rival to Apple's Siri, Google's Assistant and Amazon's Alexa.

Earlier this week, Microsoft unveiled an internet-connected speaker featuring Cortana in a partnership with Samsung's Harman Kardon. Microsoft also announced Wednesday that both Intel and HP plan to implant Cortana in upcoming devices, but didn't provide any further details.

Microsoft encouraged programmers Wednesday to design applications that help Cortana do whatever people might want. Both Amazon's Echo and Google's Home devices are striving to do the same thing.



Microsoft employee Ali Hajj demonstrates a large-screen Microsoft Surface device at the Microsoft Build 2017 developers conference, Wednesday, May 10, 2017, in Seattle. Earlier in the day at the annual event, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said that a half billion devices are now running Windows 10, its latest operating system. That's up from 400 million disclosed last September, but far



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Microsoft employee Anne Walker, right, is shown a Surface Studio device by Fei Su at the Microsoft Build 2017 developers conference, Wednesday, May 10, 2017, in Seattle. Earlier in the day at the annual event, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said that a half billion devices are now running Windows 10, its latest operating system. That's up from 400 million disclosed last September, but far short of a goal of 1 billion by 2018. (AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)



Two women wearing HoloLens devices try out a Windows mixed reality immersive experience at the Microsoft Build 2017 developers conference, Wednesday, May 10, 2017, in Seattle. Earlier in the day at the annual event, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said that a half billion devices are now running Windows 10, its latest operating system. That's up from 400 million disclosed last September, but far short of a goal of 1 billion by 2018. (AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

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