

China's Huawei eyes smartphone summit after passing Apple

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Huawei CEO Richard Yu said the company shifted 95 million smartphones in the first six months of the year

China's Huawei on Friday said it could replace Samsung as the world's top smartphone maker by late next year, just days after data showed it

surpassed Apple for the number-two spot despite being essentially barred from the key US market.

The chief of Huawei's consumer division, Richard Yu, made the remark at the release of business results for the first half of 2018, during which unlisted Huawei said it shipped more than 95 million smartphones, an increase of about 30 percent.

"It's no question that we become the number two next year. In Q4 next year it's possible we become number one," Yu said in Shenzhen, the southern Chinese city where Huawei is based.

He added that "the past six months have been incredible".

Huawei took second place from Apple in a tightening global [smartphone market](#) during the second quarter, according to figures released Tuesday by tech-industry trackers International Data Corporation (IDC).

South Korean titan Samsung remained on top in April-June, shipping 71.5 million handsets for a 20.9 percent market share, IDC said.

But Huawei sold 54.2 million phones for a 15.8 percent market share, followed by Apple's 41.3 million iPhones that gave it 12.1 percent of the market.

It was the first time since early 2010 that Apple was not in the top two.

IDC said 342 million smartphones were shipped during the second quarter, down 1.8 percent from the same period of 2017 and the third consecutive quarter of year-over-year declines.

Market saturation and rising prices are among factors blamed for cooling growth rates.

The leader in global telecommunications equipment, Huawei is essentially blocked from selling phones in the United States on security grounds owing to suspicions of the company's links to the Chinese government.

Huawei has long disputed any such links.

Frozen out of the US phone market, Huawei has made inroads worldwide largely by shipping high volumes of its cheaper handsets in Europe, Africa and Asia.

Mo Jia, a Shanghai-based smartphone market analyst with Canalys, said achieving Yu's end-2019 goal would be "very challenging" given the market doldrums and competition.

"After all, it does not have the ability to enter the world's third-largest market—the US. This is an obvious shortcoming," Mo said.

"For Huawei to surpass Samsung, it depends on whether it can continue to carry out its current strategy of pursuing low-end product volume."

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