

Apple beats Blackberry maker in smartphone sales

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Sydney resident May Tong uses her new Apple iPhone 4. Apple has for the first time outpaced Blackberry-maker Research in Motion in global smartphone sales thanks to the success of its iPhone 4, a report said.

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Industry tracker IDC said Apple sold 14.1 million [iPhone](#) units in the third quarter while Canada's [Research in Motion](#) shipped 12.4 million Blackberry devices.

"The company's record shipment performance can be attributed to the introduction of the [iPhone 4](#) in 17 new countries last quarter," said the International Data Corporation (IDC).

"The record performance came despite 'Antennagate,' the name used to describe the controversy around alleged iPhone reception problems, in July."

Global [mobile phone sales](#) surged 14.6 percent to 340.5 million units in the third quarter from a year earlier, driven mainly by the strong appetite for smartphones, IDC said.

Apple ranked as the fourth largest mobile phone vendor in the third quarter with Research in Motion one place behind the US giant, according to IDC's quarterly tracker of the industry.

IDC said Apple's rise to the top five showed the growth potential of smartphones.

"The entrance of Apple to the top five vendor ranking underscores the increased importance of smartphones to the overall market," said Kevin Restivo, a senior research analyst with IDC.

"Moreover, the mobile phone makers that are delivering popular smartphone models are among the fastest growing firms.... Vendors that aren't developing a strong portfolio of smartphones will be challenged to maintain and grow [market share](#) in the future."

Globally, Nokia remains the world's top mobile phone seller with sales of 110.4 million units in the third quarter but the Finnish company continues to feel the pressure from handset makers in the highly competitive market.

"Nokia still leads all vendors by a significant margin for converged mobile devices and mobile phones as a whole," said Ramon Llamas, senior research analyst with IDC's Mobile Devices Technology and Trends team.

"However, Nokia's grip on the traditional [mobile phone](#) market has been somewhat loosened, as multiple Chinese vendors have gained ground, especially within emerging markets.

"To bolster its overall competitiveness, Nokia has been focused on improving its smartphone offerings."

South Korea's Samsung came second with sales of 71.4 million units followed by LG Electronics, which sold 28.4 million handsets, IDC said.

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