

Smartphone market to grow 50 percent in 2011: IDC

29 March 2011



A screen shot of the Google Earth application on the Google Nexus One smartphone. The worldwide smartphone market will grow nearly 50 percent this year and Google's Android will take over as the leading operating system, a technology market research firm said Tuesday.

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International Data Corp. (IDC) said [smartphone](#) vendors are expected to ship more than 450 million smartphones in 2011 compared to 303.4 million last year.

IDC said the smartphone market will grow more than four times faster than the overall [mobile phone market](#) as consumers and enterprise users upgrade their basic handsets to smartphones with advanced features.

The research firm said [Android](#) is expected to surpass Nokia's [Symbian](#) in 2011 and become the leading smartphone platform.

"Android is poised to take over as the leading smartphone operating system in 2011 after racing into the number two position in 2010," said IDC senior research analyst Ramon Llamas.

"For the vendors who made Android the cornerstone of their smartphone strategies, 2010 was the coming-out party," Llamas said.

"This year will see a coronation party as these same vendors broaden and deepen their portfolios to reach more customers, particularly first-time smartphone users," he said.

IDC also predicted strong growth for Microsoft's Windows Phone platform which has been losing [market share](#) but was recently adopted by Finland's Nokia.

"Up until the launch of Windows Phone 7 last year, Microsoft has steadily lost market share while other operating systems have brought forth new and appealing experiences," Llamas said.

"The new alliance brings together Nokia's hardware capabilities and Windows Phone's differentiated platform," he said.

"We expect the first devices to launch in 2012," Llamas said. "By 2015, IDC expects Windows Phone to be number two operating system worldwide behind Android."

IDC said Android will have a 39.5 percent share of the worldwide smartphone operating system market in 2011 followed by Symbian with 20.9 percent, Apple's iOS with 15.7 percent, Research In Motion's Blackberry with 14.9 percent and Windows Phone 7 and Windows Mobile with 5.5 percent.

By 2015, Android will enjoy a 45.4 percent market share followed by [Windows Phone](#) 7 and Windows Mobile with 20.9 percent, Apple's iOS with 15.3 percent and Blackberry with 13.7 percent, it said.

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