

Personal computer sales slip during holiday season

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File picture. Personal computer sales slipped at the end of last year, despite the holiday shopping season and the release of new Windows operating software for machines, a leading industry tracker reported. It was said to be the first time in more than five years that there was a year-on-year decline in PC shipments during the holiday season.

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Worldwide PC shipments totalled 89.8 million units in the fourth quarter of 2012, finishing 6.4 percent lower than the same period the prior year, according to International Data Corporation.

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"Consumers as well as [PC vendors](#) and distribution channels continued to be diverted from PC sales by ongoing demand for tablets and smartphones," IDC said in a release.

"The PC market continued to take a back seat to competing devices and sustained [economic woes](#)."

Microsoft released the new Windows 8 operating system worldwide on October 26 as a way to help the dominant PC software maker get a bigger share of the market for mobile devices such as tablets.

Windows 8 was designed with touch-screen capabilities in mind and to make it easier to synchronize computer content across the array of Internet-linked gadgets used in modern life.

"Consumers expected all sorts of cool PCs with tablet and touch capabilities," said IDC research director David Daoud.

"Instead, they mostly saw traditional PCs that feature a new OS (Windows 8) optimized for touch and tablet with applications and hardware that are not yet able to fully utilize these capabilities."

PC shipments in the US market dropped 4.5 percent in the quarter and ended with a seven percent decline for the year, according to IDC.

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