

# Smartphone market to stay cool this year: forecast

31 May 2018



Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan holds a mobile phone during a commercial event in Mumbai

International Data Corporation forecast Wednesday that global smartphone sales would cool this year before heating up with help from new 5G networks and India's vibrant market.

An IDC Worldwide Mobile Phone Tracker expected smartphone sales to slip two-tenths of a percent this year to total 1.462 billion in a second straight year of slight decline.

But IDC predicted that the smartphone [market](#) would reignite next year, growing about 3 percent annually to 1.654 billion in the year 2022.

The "biggest driver" of the downturn last year was said by IDC to be the China market, which it expected to be down 7.1 percent this year after shrinking 4.9 percent last year.

IDC forecast that the smartphone market in China would flatten out next year, while sales in India were expected to continue to boom on low-priced

handsets sold by Chinese companies.

"China remains the focal point for many given that it consumes roughly 30 percent of the world's smartphones," IDC Worldwide Quarterly Mobile Device Tracker program vice president Ryan Reith said in a release.

"But, plenty of pockets of growth can be found beyond China."

A "catalyst to watch" will be arrival next year of smartphones tailored for ultra-fast 5G telecommunications networks, according to IDC.

While [smartphone](#) shipments will ebb this year, the average selling price will rise more than 10 percent to \$345 and remain on an upward trend, said IDC research manager Anthony Scarsella.

"This year will continue to focus on the ultra-high-end segment of the market as we expect a surge of premium flagship devices to launch in developed markets," Scarsella said.

A trend toward premium smartphones would play to Apple's strength, and IDC expected iPhone sales to grow 2.6 percent to 221 million total this year and to climb to 242 million by the year 2022.

Handsets powered by Google-backed Android mobile were expected to continue to dominate the [smartphone market](#), with a share of about 85 percent remaining relatively stable during the coming five years.

"There is no question that Android is the OS (operating system) of choice for the mass market and nothing leads us to believe this will change," IDC said in its forecast.

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