

Counterpoint on the MEA Smartphone Opportunity

Written by Marco Attard
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As smartphone demand in mature markets slows down Counterpoint Research says MEA is "the next frontier and key geography for smartphone growth," as Q3 2015 shipments are up by 31% Y-o-Y.

Such a growth is nearly 3x the global rate.



"This region is not only huge geographically but is also quite diverse i.e. home to some of the most underpenetrated emerging as well as some richer mobile phone markets in the world," the analyst continues.

According to the analyst Samsung currently dominates MEA thanks to a "stronger pan-MEA distribution network," even if the S. Korean giant is losing market share (Q3 2015 share totals 41.1%, down from 49.8% in Q3 2014). Huawei takes second place with 9.3% market share, followed by Africa-based Tecno taking over 8.2% market share through "competitive mid-tier smartphones."

Apple follows TCL-Alcatel (4.5% share) to 5th place with 3.9% Q3 2015 share and sales growth reaching 133% Y-o-Y. The iPhone is the premium smartphone of choice in the region, but a rumoured iPhone 6c could boost volumes further in emerging territories.

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Last year saw Apple open two flagship stores in the UAE, a major shopping destination not only in the M. East but also in the emerging Indian market-- one currently hampered by high import taxes and unfavourable currency exchange, Indian residents go to Dubai for iDevice shopping.

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