

Gartner: Global Device Shipments Down in 2019

Written by Marco Attard
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According to Gartner, global device-- namely PCs, tablets and mobile phones-- shipments will total 2.2 billion in 2019, a -3.3% decline, with mobile phones recording the worst performance with a -3.8% decline.

“The current mobile phone market of 1.7bn shipments is around 910% below the 1.9 billion shipments reached in 2015,” the analyst says. “If mobile phones don’t provide significant new utility, efficiency or experiences, users won’t upgrade them, and will consequently increase these devices’ life spans.”

Table 1

Worldwide Device Shipments by Device Type, 2018-2021 (Millions of Units)

| Device Type | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Traditional PCs (Desk-Based and Notebook) | 195.3 | 187.2 | 177.5 | 171.2 |
| Ultramobiles (Premium) | 64.4 | 69.8 | 75.2 | 81.4 |
| Total PC Market | 259.7 | 257.0 | 252.7 | 252.6 |
| Ultramobiles (Basic and Utility) | 149.6 | 146.1 | 144.6 | 142.4 |
| Computing Device Market | 409.3 | 403.1 | 397.3 | 395.0 |
| Mobile Phones | 1,813.4 | 1,745.4 | 1,771.1 | 1,762.6 |
| Total Device Market | 2,222.7 | 2,148.5 | 2,168.4 | 2,157.6 |

Source: Gartner (July 2019)

The trend of lengthening mobile phone lifespans started in 2018, and will continue through 2019. Gartner says high-end phone lifespans will increase from 2.6 years to around 2.9 years through 2023. In addition, smartphone sales are set to drop by -2.5% in 2019, the worst decline yet.

This year saw the launch of 5G services in Switzerland, Finland and the UK, as well as parts of

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the UK and S. Korea. However it will take time for carriers to expand 5G coverage beyond major cities, and by 2020 around 7% of global communications service providers will have a commercially viable wireless 5G service. This is "significant" progress from the proofs of concept and commercial network construction work of 2018, Gartner remarks.

At least "several" vendors will release 5G-enabled smartphones in H1 2019, and will also start making more affordable 5G-enabled handsets to help improve slowing sales. Gartner predicts 5G-enabled smartphones will make 6% of 2020 phone sales, and as 5G service coverage increases, user experience will improve and prices will decrease. The leap should take place in 2023, when 5G phones will account for 51% of all phone sales.

Meanwhile global PC shipments are up by 1.5% Y-o-Y in Q2 2019, even if PC demand for full-year 2019 remains uncertain. Gartner forecasts PC shipments will total 257m in 2019, a -1% decline from 2018 as the ongoing US-China trade dispute and the potential imposition of tariffs are "likely" to affect the market.

Go [Gartner Forecast PCs, Ultramobiles and Mobile Phones, WW, 2017-2023, Q2 2019 Update](#)