

Gartner: iPhone "Saved" W. European Smartphone Market

Written by Marco Attard
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A spike in Q4 2011 iPhone sales (due to the iPhone 4S launch) "saved" an otherwise slow W. European smartphone market, Gartner says-- while other vendors such as Nokia, Sony Ericsson and RIM show "disappointing" results.

On a global level, Q4 2011 smartphone sales to end users total 149M units with Y-o-Y growth reaching 47.3%. Smartphone sales for 2011 reach 472M units (up by 58% Y-o-Y) accounting for 31% of the total mobile device market.

Table 2
Worldwide Mobile Device Sales to End Users by Vendor in 2011 (Thousands of Units)

Company	2011 Units	2011 Market Share (%)	2010 Units	2010 Market Share (%)
Nokia	422,478.3	23.8	461,318.2	28.9
Samsung	313,904.2	17.7	281,065.8	17.6
Apple	89,263.2	5.0	46,598.3	2.9
LG Electronics	86,370.9	4.9	114,154.6	7.1
ZTE	56,881.8	3.2	29,686.0	1.9
Research In Motion	51,541.9	2.9	49,651.6	3.1
HTC	43,266.9	2.4	24,688.4	1.5
Huawei	40,663.4	2.3	23,814.7	1.5
Motorola	40,269.0	2.3	38,553.7	2.4
Sony Ericsson	32,597.5	1.8	41,819.2	2.6
Others	597,326.9	33.7	485,452.0	30.4
Total	1,774,564.1	100.01	1,596,802.4	100.0

Source: Gartner (February 2012)

Gartner says Apple is now the biggest smartphone vendor for both Q4 (23.8% market share) and 2011 as a whole (19% market share)-- and the 3rd biggest mobile vendor.

On the other hand Nokia sales decrease by 8.7% Y-o-Y in Q4 2011 (reaching 111.7M units) due to a still troubled European economy and weak brand status. However Gartner predicts

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Nokia will continue offering "aggressive prices" and new devices, such as the Windows Phone-powered Lumia handsets.

Meanwhile global Q4 2011 mobile device sales grow by 5.4% Y-o-Y to reach 476.5M units, while 2011 sales total 1.8 billion units with 11.1% Y-o-Y growth. Gartner expects the overall mobile market to grow by 7% Y-o-Y in 2012, with smartphone growth slowing down to 39% Y-o-Y.

When it comes to operating systems, Android continues dominating, with 50.9% Q4 2011 market share mainly thanks to strong Samsung sales. iOS is close behind, with 23.8% share (up from 15.8% in Q4 2010)-- but Gartner expects iOS share to drop at the upgrade cycle to the iPhone 4S slows down. Microsoft Windows Phone share reaches a mere 1.9%, down from 3.4% in Q4 2010.

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