Global Q1 2012 mobile phone sales decline by 2% Y-o-Y to total 419.1m units, Gartner reports-- the first decline for the mobile market since Q2 2009.

While all vendors feel the drop, white box vendors suffer the most due to being unable to adjust production, ending up with inventory build-up by the end of the quarter.

Worldwide Mobile Device Sales to End Users by Vendor in 1Q12 (Thousands of Units)

Company	1Q12 Units	1Q12 Market Share (%)	1Q11 Units	1Q11 Market Share (%)
Samsung	86,567.6	20.7	68,782.0	16.1
Nokia	83,162.5	19.8	107,556.1	25.1
Apple	33,120.5	7.9	16,883.2	3.9
ZTE	17,439.3	4.2	10,788.7	2.5
LG	14,720.4	3.5	23,997.2	5.6
Huawei Device	10,796.1	2.6	7,002.9	1.6
Research in Motion	9,939.3	2.4	13,004.0	3.0
Motorola	8,368.2	2.0	8,789.7	2.1
Sony Mobile Communications	7,898.4	1.9	7,919.4	1.9
HTC	7,703.4	1.8	9,313.5	2.2
Others	139,392.6	33.3	153,809.0	35.9
Total	**419,108.3**	**100.0**	**427,845.7**	**100.0**

Source: Gartner (May 2012)

“The lower results in the first quarter of 2012 have led us to be cautious about sales for the remainder of the year,” Gartner says. New Android- and Windows Phone-based devicese and the inevitable iPhone refresh should boost H2 2012 sales in mature markets like W. Europe-- but Gartner still adjusts 2012 sales predictions downwards to the 20m units range.

Smartphones remain the mobile market driver, with sales reaching 144.4m units and 44.7% Y-o-Y growth.

Nokia loses the top WW mobile handset vendor position (the first time since 1998) to Samsung, who now has 20.7% global market share. Samsung is also top smartphone vendor (beating Apple with sales reaching 38m units) and top Android market share holder (40%).

Android accounts for 56.1% of Q1 2012 smartphone sales. Gartner remarks the smartphone market is becoming increasingly commoditised, with the result of differentiation becoming harder for vendors. Price is the main (if not only) differentiator, particularly within the mid- to low-end market segments.

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