

Gartner report: smartphones yield sales growth

According to a report by Gartner, global sales for smartphones returned to growth in the first quarter of 2018. The report shows a 1,3% increase over the same period in 2017.



Image source: Gilles Lambert on Unsplash

“ Compared to the first quarter of 2017, sales of total mobile phones stalled and reached 455 million units in the first quarter of 2018. Nearly 384 million smartphones were sold in the first quarter of 2018, representing 84% of total mobile phones sold. ”

Continued weakness in greater China's mobile phone market limited growth potential for top global brands, including Chinese brands such as Oppo and Vivo, with over 70% of their sales coming from greater China.

Samsung growth slows, Apple share increases

Samsung's midtier smartphones faced continued competition from Chinese brands, which led to unit sales contraction year on year. This is despite the earlier launch of its flagship Galaxy S9/S9+ compared to the S8/S8+ in 2017, and despite the Note 8 having a positive impact on Samsung sales in the first quarter of 2018. Samsung's smartphone growth rate will remain under pressure through 2018.

The delayed sales boost for Apple from last quarter materialised. Apple's smartphone unit sales returned to growth in the first quarter of 2018, with an increase of 4% year on year.

Huawei and Xiaomi see growth

Huawei's smartphone portfolio helped strengthen its number three global smartphone vendor position.

Research director at Gartner, Anshul Gupta, says: "Achieving 18.3% growth in the first quarter of 2018 helped Huawei close the gap with Apple. However, its future growth increasingly depends on the vendor ramping up share in emerging Asia/Pacific and resolving issues in the US market, through the development of a stronger consumer brand".



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Xiaomi achieved a growth of 124% year on year. Xiaomi's refreshed portfolio of smartphones and aggressive pricing strategy helped it hold the number four spot in the first quarter of 2018.

In the smartphone operating system (OS) market, Google's Android and Apple's iOS achieved growth in units in the first quarter of 2018, but Android saw its share slightly contract.

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