

Android extends dominance in smartphones worldwide, thanks to Samsung's phones

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NEW YORK (AP) -- Got an iPhone? You're in the minority.

There were four Android phones for every iPhone shipped in the second quarter, research firm IDC said Wednesday. That's up from a ratio of 2.5 to 1 in the same period last year.

The success of Samsung's Android phones helped Google's operating system extend its dominance in the smartphone market.

Samsung Electronics Co. and other phone makers shipped nearly 105 million Android smartphones in the April-June quarter, giving Android 68 percent of the worldwide market, up from 47 percent last year.

The gains came largely at the expense of BlackBerry phones made by Research in Motion Ltd. and Symbian phones made largely by Nokia Corp. Each saw its market share drop below 5 percent. Nokia is now making phones that use Microsoft Corp.'s Windows system.

The market share for Apple Inc.'s iPhone, powered by its iOS software, fell slightly to 17 percent, from 19 percent. But the company shipped more iPhones than a year ago. Apple is the No. 2 smartphone maker, behind Samsung, and is likely to get a boost when it releases its new iPhone model as expected this fall.

Apple shook up the smartphone market when it released its first iPhone in 2007. It showed that phones can do much more than make calls and send email.

But in recent years, Google has mounted a serious challenge with Android and benefits from having several manufacturers as partners, including Samsung, HTC Corp. and Motorola Mobility, which Google ended up buying this year.

Apple still dominates in tablet computers, with 68 percent of the market in the second quarter, according to IDC. Google is trying to close the gap with its own branded Android tablet, the Nexus 7. Amazon.com Inc. and Barnes & Noble Inc. have made some in-roads will lower-cost tablets that run modified versions of Android.

Samsung's Galaxy S III phone received good reviews when it was released late in the second quarter. It also benefits from the company's strategy of making various devices that target a range of consumers. By contrast, Apple targets only the high-end market with its iPhone.

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Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

According to IDC, Samsung accounted for 44 percent of all Android phones in the second quarter and shipped more Android phones than the next seven Android phone makers combined.

IDC estimates that Samsung shipped 50.2 million smartphones in the quarter, though that includes a few million phones running the Bada system based on Linux. Apple shipped 26 million iPhones.

Worldwide smartphone shipments grew 42 percent to 154 million in the second quarter. Combined, Android and Apple had 85 percent of the market, up from 66 percent a year ago.

"The mobile OS market is now unquestionably a two-horse race due to the dominance of Android and iOS," Kevin Restivo, a senior research analyst at IDC, said in a statement.

But it's still possible for rivals to gain share because smartphones represent fewer than 40 percent of all cellphones shipped in the quarter. However, "such efforts will become increasingly difficult as smartphone penetration increases," Restivo said.

Microsoft and RIM are both coming out with new versions of their operating systems - Windows in October and BlackBerry early next year. The share of Windows phone grew to 3.5 percent, from 2.3 percent, in the latest quarter, largely because of its adoption by Nokia. Windows was the fifth-largest phone operating system but was gaining on No. 3 BlackBerry and No. 4 Symbian.

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