

Poll: Samsung, Apple seen pulling ahead in smartphone race

([Reuters](#) [1]) - Samsung and Apple pulled ahead in the global smartphone race last quarter, according to forecasts by analysts in a Reuters poll, while Nokia and others are expected to have fallen further behind.

Overall shipments of handsets are expected to have risen in the fourth quarter, with most of that growth dominated by Samsung. Analysts forecast the South Korean company shipped 61 million smart devices, up 71 percent from a year earlier.

Samsung forecast earlier this month that it expected to earn a quarterly profit of \$8.3 billion on strong sales of its Galaxy handsets as well as solid demand for flat screens used in mobile devices. Samsung's full results are due by Jan 25.

While some are wary that Samsung's momentum may slow in coming quarters owing to market saturation, it is still expected to outpace Apple as sales of the new iPhone 5 appear slightly weaker than originally forecast.

Apple is forecast to have shipped 46 million iPhones in the quarter, up 25 percent from a year earlier, according to the poll.

Shares in Apple dipped below \$500 earlier this week for the first time in almost a year after reports it was slashing orders for screens and other components as intensifying competition eroded demand for the new iPhone.

The poll showed analysts expect Apple's full-year shipments to grow to 167 million this year from 134 million in 2012, while Samsung's shipments are expected to grow to 283 million smartphones in 2013 compared to 210 million in 2012.

NOKIA, RIM AIM TO CATCH UP

Nokia, once the world's biggest handset maker, is expected to have lost more market share. It is now pinning its recovery hopes on Lumia smartphones, which use Microsoft's Windows Phone [software](#) [2].

Analysts forecast Nokia's fourth-quarter shipments of mobile phones fell 15 percent to 80 million units while those of smartphones, including Lumias, fell 65 percent to 7 million units.

Nokia last week said it sold around 4.4 million Lumia handsets in the fourth quarter. Full results are due on Jan 24, and analysts are anxious to hear whether Nokia is confident that Lumia sales will continue to grow in coming quarters.

BlackBerry-maker RIM, another handset maker struggling to claw back market

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share, is expected to report a 30 percent fall in fourth-quarter shipments to 7 million units, the poll showed.

RIM is to launch new BlackBerry 10 smartphones later this month. The poll showed, however, that analysts expect its full-year sales to fall to around 30 million in 2013 from 33 million in 2012.

(Reporting by Ritsuko Ando; Editing by Sophie Walker)

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