Apple might claim its biggest iPhone-driven quarter ever , but Android also reaches a milestone in 2014-- global Google-powered smartphone shipments reach 1 billion units in 2014, a first according to Strategy Analytics.



The analyst says overall 2014 smartphone shipments total 1.3bn (another industry record) with 30% growth, up from 1bn in 2013. Android device account for 81% of the total, one driven by shipments in emerging markets such as China and Indonesia.

The only threat to Android is, of course, iOS-- 2014 iPhone shipments total 192.7m with 15% smartphone share according to the analyst, as the iPhone 6 and 6 Plus models reenergise Apple growth through high-end market sales. On the other hand Windows Phone remains niche with 3% share and shipments reaching 38.8m units.

Speaking of Apple, Strategy Analytics says the iPhone maker shares the top Q4 2014 smartphone vendor accolade with Samsung, as both companies ship 74.5m units and manage to take over 19.6% market share. Such a situation is due to the aforementioned Apple revitalisation (particularly in China, where the larger iPhone 6 and 6 Plus are a runaway success) combined with Samsung struggling against competition from all market tiers, be it higher (Apple), middle (Xiaomi) and lower (Huawei).

Strategy Analytics even suggests Samsung might need to buy a rival, such as BlackBerry, if it wants to revitalise growth for the rest of 2015, even if the S. Korean giant remains top smartphone vendor on a full-year 2014 basis.

Go Android Shipped 1 Billion Smartphones WW in 2014

Go Apple Becomes World's Largest Smartphone Vendor in Q4 2014