According to IDC, Q4 2018 EMEA smartphone shipments total 98.8 million units, a flat result bringing just 0.4% Y-o-Y growth. Revenues, on the other hand, are up by 2.5% Y-o-Y to reach $35.5 billion, with increases across Europe and a drop in MEA.

The quarter sees the rapid increase of Huawei in EMEA-- the Chinese company not only sees impressive 73.7% Y-o-Y shipment growth, but currently holds 21.2% share of the market, beating Apple and inching increasingly closer to leader Samsung. The S. Korean giant holds 28% share of Q4 2018 shipments, even if it sees a -3.8% Y-o-Y drop in unit unit numbers.

Top 5 Smartphone Companies, EMEA Shipments, Market Share, and Year-Over-Year Growth, Fourth Quarter 2018 (Units in Millions)

Company	4Q18 Unit Shipments	4Q18 Market Share	4Q17 Unit Shipments	4Q17 Market Share	Year-Over-Year Growth
1. Samsung	27.7	28.0%	28.8	29.3%	-3.8%
2. Huawei	20.9	21.2%	12.0	12.2%	73.7%
3. Apple	16.4	16.6%	19.3	19.6%	-14.8%
4. Transsion	8.2	8.3%	6.3	6.4%	31.5%
5. Xiaomi	4.2	4.3%	2.4	2.5%	70.5%
Others	21.4	21.6%	29.5	30.1	-27.6%
Total	**98.8**	**100%**	**98.3**	**100%**	**0.4%**

Source: *IDC Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker, February 8, 2019*

"In the EU and EEA, a key market for Huawei, the company came close to overtaking Samsung," IDC remarks. "Eyes in the industry have been on Huawei, to see how much it would grow, but also on Apple, to see how much it might fall after the company's recent profit warning. In this context, Apple had a reasonable quarter, though not as strong as the Q4 2017. Its value share of the EMEA market was down to 41% from 46% a year ago."

Another Chinese company with a strong EMEA results is Xiaomi, with shipments growing by 70.5% Y-o-Y. The company is slowly but steadily entering new markets across Europe, leading to increasing market share. However doing so means facing Huawei, who currently is present in all European markets, especially in operator retail, and is set to leverage such presence to go head-to-head against Samsung.

One weapon in the Huawei battle against Samsung is the Honor brand. The Honor brand is run independently from Huawei, so much so the two brands compete with each other. Honor phones sell at lower price points compared to Huawei-brand devices, and the company sells more Honor phones through retail chains than operator shops. Such a combination allows Huawei to play more points on the market.

Moving to the future, IDC predicts a -0.1% decline in 2019 EMEA smartphone shipments, with the drop mainly felt in W. Europe and CEE. On the other hand, MEA should see 2.8% growth as customers within the region continue to replace feature phones with affordable Android-based smartphones.

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