

Gartner: Q4 2019 Smartphone Sales Down "Slightly"

Written by Marco Attard
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Global smartphone sales to end users are down by -0.4% Y-o-Y in Q4 2019, Gartner reports. Sales are also on the decline for overall 2019 as they contract by -1%, a "little bit better" than the analyst expected.

Table 1

Worldwide Smartphone Sales to End Users by Vendor in 4Q19 (Thousands of Units)

Vendor	4Q19 Units	4Q19 Market Share (%)	4Q18 Units	4Q18 Market Share (%)
Samsung	70,404.4	17.3	70,782.5	17.3
Apple	69,550.6	17.1	64,527.8	15.8
Huawei	58,301.6	14.3	60,409.8	14.8
Xiaomi	32,446.9	8.0	27,843.6	6.8
OPPO	30,452.5	7.5	31,589.9	7.7
Others	145,482.1	35.8	153,312.9	37.5
Total	406,638.1	100.0	408,466.4	100.0

Due to rounding, numbers may not add up precisely to the totals shown

Source: Gartner (March 2020)

Apple and Xiaomi are the only two vendors in the top 5 to see growth in Q4 2019, even if Samsung maintains the top position with 17.3% market share despite a slight -0.5% Y-o-Y sales decline. The S. Korean giant also remains on top for full-year 2019, with sales growing by 0.4% to 296.2 million units. The company managed to revamp its midtier and entry-level smartphone offering in 2019, and in 2020 will be butting heads with the likes of Huawei in high-end foldable devices.

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The fierce battle between Samsung and Huawei in the foldable phone market will be interesting to follow this year, as each vendor takes a different approach," Gartner says. "Samsung has switched from a horizontal to a vertical fold in the Galaxy Z Flip and reduced this phone's size and price. Huawei has launched the Mate Xs-- with Huawei Mobile Services now accessible via the Huawei AppGallery worldwide and increased its price."

Table 2

Worldwide Smartphone Sales to End Users by Vendor in 2019 (Thousands of Units)

Vendor	2019 Units	2019 Market Share (%)	2018 Units	2018 Market Share (%)
Samsung	296,194.0	19.2	295,043.7	19.0
Huawei	240,615.5	15.6	202,901.4	13.0
Apple	193,475.1	12.6	209,048.4	13.4
Xiaomi	126,049.2	8.2	122,387.0	7.9
OPPO	118,693.2	7.7	118,787.1	7.6
Others	565,630.0	36.7	607,445.4	39.0
Total	1,540,657.0	100.0	1,555,613.0	100.0

Due to rounding, numbers may not add up precisely to the totals shown

Source: Gartner (March 2020)

Speaking of Huawei, the company takes 2nd place in overall 2019 smartphone sales with an annual increase of 18.6%. The company continues to face an extended ban from the US, but it has an aggressive smartphone strategy in China leading to 37% home market share in 2019. That said, a continued ban from US technology will severely impact Huawei prospects in the international smartphone market.

Apple secures the 2nd position with 17.1% of the Q4 2019 market, up from 15.8% in Q4 2018. It

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also sees a return to growth in iPhone sales after four consecutive quarters of declines, the result of a slight lowering of iPhone 11 series prices and other price reductions for previous-generation iPhones. This led to strong sales in a number of European markets, including the UK, France and Germany.

Xiaomi sales total 32.4 million units in Q4 2019-- a 16.5% Y-o-Y increase leading the company to overtake Oppo and gain the 4th spot. Redmi models drive Xiaomi smartphone sales growth, and the company does well in emerging Asia/Pacific. In China Xiaomi is increasing prices to increase profits, and the coronavirus outbreak should present an opportunity for the company as it expands its online channel strategy.

Looking on to the future, while Gartner believes the coronavirus will negatively impact smartphone demand in China on Q1 2020, it should not lead to a contraction of the international market, at least during the period.

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