

IDC Improves 2011 Tablet Forecasts

Written by Marco Attard
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Global tablet shipments grow by 264.5% Y-o-Y (and 23.9% Q-o-Q) to reach 18.1M units in Q3 2011 according to IDC-- slightly lower than earlier forecasts from the analyst of shipments reaching 19.2M units.



However IDC still predicts "strong demand" for Q4 2011 and the holiday season, increasing 2011 WW shipment forecasts to 63.3M units (up from previous projections of 62.5M) due to new challengers shaking up the tablet battlefield.

Apple still leads the tablet market, even if it loses market share-- Q3 2011 iPad shipments total 11.1M (up from 9.3M in Q2 2011) with 61.5% market share, down from 63.3% in Q2. The analyst predicts the iPad will "have its best-ever quarter in Q4 2011," thanks to a strong tablet-specific app portfolio and growing physical store presence in emerging markets.

HP entered-- and exited-- the tablet market in Q3 2011, managing to grab 5% WW market share with the ill-fated TouchPad. Shipments total 903354 units, making HP 3rd in the global tablet vendor rankings, behind Samsung (who has 5.6% market share). IDC does not believe webOS will continue to appear in the tablet market, even after HP's "contribution" to the open source community.

The analyst says Android lost tablet market share in Q3 (down to 32.4% from 33.2% in Q2), but forecasts the Google OS will "make dramatic share gains" in Q4 and reach 40.3% thanks to the new kids on the block, the Amazon Kindle Fire and the Barnes & Noble Nook Tablet.

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"Amazon and Barnes & Noble are shaking up the media tablet market, and their success helps prove that there is an appetite for media tablets beyond Apple's iPad," IDC says.

According to IDC eReaders also see strong growth in Q3 2011-- shipments total 6.5M units (up from 5.1M in Q2) with 165.9% Y-o-Y growth. IDC says Q4 2011 shipments in Europe will rise to the "highest volume levels" in the holiday season, but the lack of local language content and a still-uncertain eurozone climate will continue hampering growth.

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