

Lots of tablets, no headaches

WASHINGTON, USA: The global market for tablet computers surged 78.4% last year, with 128m of the devices sold, a survey showed on Thursday (21 February).



Research firm IDC said tablets made up 10.7% of the global market last year for "smart connected devices," which include smartphones, and portable and desktop PCs.

Overall, the market for these devices grew 29% to 1.2bn, according to IDC, with growth in tablets and smartphones - which saw a 46% rise - offsetting declines in PC sales.

Although tablet sales sizzled, they have not yet eclipsed sales of traditional PCs, the figures showed. Some analysts say that could happen in the next year or two.

IDC data showed a 3.4% drop in portable PC sales to 202m and a 4.1% decline in desktop PC sales to 148.4m.

These were dwarfed by the 722m smartphones sold last year.

"Smartphones and tablets are growing at a pace that PCs cannot keep up with," said IDC analyst Ryan Reith.

"The average selling price for a tablet declined 15% in 2012 to US\$461, and we expect that trend to continue in 2013," he said.

IDC said smartphone prices averaged US\$408 and are replaced more often than other devices.

In the overall market for connected devices, Samsung rose to the top position with at least 20% of the market in each category, and an overall market share of 20.8%, overtaking last year's leader Apple.

Apple held 18.2% of the market for 2012, up from 16.3% in 2011. Apple saw 44% growth for the year but was unable to keep pace with South Korea's Samsung, which more than doubled its sales.

The number three company was China-based Lenovo with a 6.5% market share in all devices, followed by US-based

Hewlett-Packard (4.8%) and Dell (3.2%).

IDC said Apple fared better in the fourth quarter than earlier in the year and was boosted by its release of the iPhone 5 and iPad mini.

"The fourth quarter market share numbers showed a fairly dramatic resurgence for Apple," said IDC's Bob O'Donnell.

"After falling well behind Samsung early in 2012, Apple came back in final quarter of the year. The question is whether or not Apple can fight off Samsung," he added.

Source: *AFP* via I-Net Bridge

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