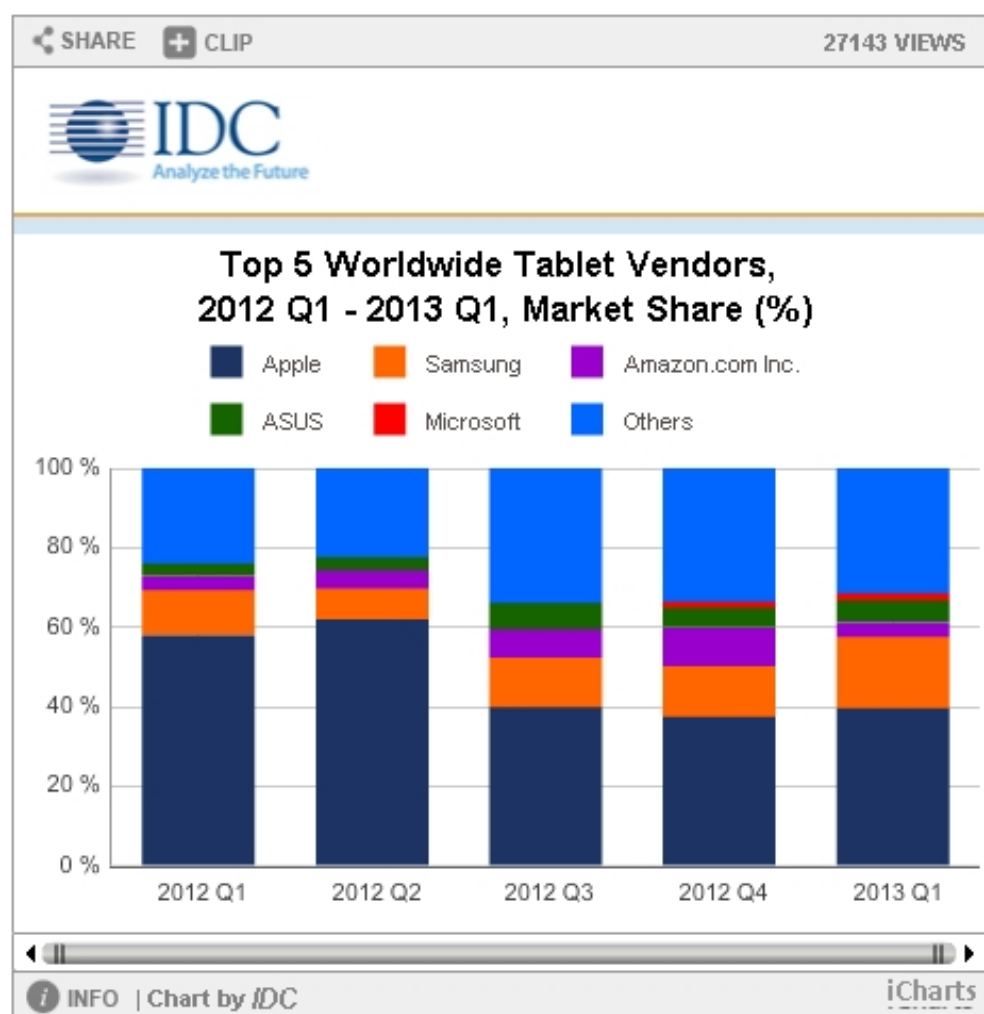


IDC: Tablet Market "Surges Ahead"

Written by Marco Attard
02 May 2013

The global tablet market remains strong IDC reports-- Q1 2013 shipments grow by 142.4% Y-o-Y to 49.2 million units, with demand for smaller screen devices fueling shipments.

Apple outperforms earlier IDC projections for the quarter, managing to beat seasonal Q1 shipment drop off (following strong Q4 sales) with shipments reaching 19.5m units compared to a forecast of 18.7m.



"Sustained demand for the iPad mini and increasingly strong commercial shipments led to a better-than expected Q1 2012 for Apple," IDC says. "In addition, by moving the iPad launch to

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Q4 2012 Apple seems to have avoided the typical Q1 slowdown that traditionally occurred when consumers held off buying in January and February in anticipation of a new product launch in March."

Samsung follows with equally above-expectations performance, using recent Android smartphone growth to bring tablet product lines into new markets and channels and leveraging the opportunity to package and bundle.

Taking over 3rd place is Asus with the highly marketed Nexus 7 driving "decent" shipments, even if the company might need a new means to sustain momentum following expected Google-branded device refreshes. Amazon follows, falling to 4th place due to a highly seasonal product cycle.

Microsoft makes it in the Top 5 for the first time. IDC estimates Surface RT and Pro shipments total nearly 900000 units, while combined Q1 2013 Windows 8 and RT device shipments from all vendors total 1.8m units.

"Recent rumors have circulated about the possibility of smaller screen Windows RT and Windows 8 tablets hitting the market," IDC concludes. "However, the notion that this will be the saving grace is flawed. Clearly the market is moving toward smart 7-8-inch devices, but Microsoft's larger challenges center around consumer messaging and lower cost competition. If these challenges are addressed, along with the desired screen size variations, then we could see Microsoft make even further headway in 2013 and beyond."

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