

Tablets Reach W. European Saturation

Written by Marco Attard
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According to Futuresource Consulting both smartphone and tablet markets are reaching saturation in W. Europe, but while smartphone shipments continue to grow the same cannot be said on a tablet market headed for decline.



In fact, the analyst says major markets have reached tablet saturation earlier than expected, and as such W. European tablet shipments are slowing down during 2015 before consumer shipment start declining by 2017.

Apple and Samsung make "more than half" of 2014 tablet shipments.

"There has been a significant shift towards smaller screen sizes in the last few years, but this is now stabilising, with 60% of the market falling into the 7- to 8-inch category in 2014," Futuresource adds. "In the UK, overall tablet shipments declined by 2%, despite double digit growth in the total W. European market and 24% growth in E. Europe."

On the other hand 2014 W. European smartphone shipments are up by 14% to 200 million units. Lower-end devices gain ground throughout the region even as the Samsung-Apple duopoly remains "solid." Interestingly, while lower-cost smartphones are popular a "persistent" shift towards higher-priced handsets is leading to an increase in ASPs.

"We're seeing a smartphone growth bubble in E. Europe, perpetuated by the low level of ownership in many of its countries," the analyst concludes. "It's not all good news, as we expect growth to slow in 2015 as Russia-- the largest market in the region by some distance-- faces

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increasing economic uncertainty."

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