

Futuresource: Gaming Accessories Break \$3bn Barrier

Written by Frederick Douglas
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According to Futuresource Consulting the gaming accessory market remains firmly on a growth trajectory, with 2018 global shipments reaching 76 million units, a 22% increase over 2017, with revenues worth \$3.1 billion.



The market covers headsets, speakers, keyboards and mice. Gaming headsets are the most popular category, accounting for around 50% of 2018 shipments as use-cases appeal to both console and PC gamers. The analyst attributes such growth to the surge in popularity of Battle Royale games, with the most famous examples being Fortnite and PUBG. The two games have both new and existing bases buying into the market, pushing sales up by 35% in unit terms and even more in value.

That said, Futuresource warns such growth will not see a repeat in 2019-- in fact, the analyst predicts a "minor" decline in shipments for the year, the result of cyclical games console hardware trends. The coming year should see headsets return to growth though, thanks to the 2020 launch of next-gen consoles, and in any case a strong gaming PC hardware market and the rapid increase in competitive mobile gaming should offset good part of the decline.

"Moving forward, we expect continued strong growth in the market throughout our forecast period," the analyst says. "Gaming headsets compatible with mobile devices are a key driver of volumes, especially in developing regions, and will account for around one in eight purchases by 2023. Next-generation consoles, tipped for release in 2020, will also continue to propel the market forward. With all this activity, gaming headsets are on track to achieve solid long-term growth in volumes out to 2023."

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Meanwhile 2018 gaming speaker shipments are up by 7%, thanks to growth in gaming. Dominating the segment are Razer, Logitech and Creative. Speakers remain small in terms of value compared to other accessories, since they in direct competition with PC speakers and the aforementioned success of gaming headsets. Futuresource does point an opportunity in soundbars, since many gamers use dual-screen setups lacking in space to fit rear speakers.

Finally, the market for gaming mice and keyboards should see 13% and 11% respective growth in 2019. with N. America and W. Europe generating more retail value.

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