Apple Poised for Record Quarter as Market Share Slides

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Apple looks like it'll be breaking some holiday quarter records.

When the company Monday announces its fiscal first quarter numbers, analyst estimates put it safely ahead of the same quarter last year [1] in at least a few categories. iPhone estimates range around 54 million for the quarter, trouncing the record 47.8 million the company sold in the first quarter of 2013. Of course, the company sold two iPhones during the holidays compared to a single model in years past.

iPad sales estimates look even to ahead of what the Apple moved in its record holiday quarter last year when the iPad mini was new.

Revenue estimates are also ahead of the $54.5 billion posted during holiday quarter last year. Forbes spots [2] the top of the guidance range at around $58 billion.

But Kantar's newest market share numbers [3] have thrown a wet blanket on Cupertino, showing the iPhone losing share in most countries compared to where it was last year. Kantar's figures, for three months ending December 2013, put Android way out in front in Europe with 68.6 percent share. But the report is careful to note that in key regions like the U.S., Great Britain and China, Apple has maintained strong market share. Apple's 43.9 percent share in the U.S. aligns with Comscore's latest three-month study [4] ending in November that saw Apple's U.S. share grow from 40.7 percent to 41.2 percent.

The 19-percent share Kantar gives Apple in China could be looking up soon as Apple's long-awaited iPhone deal with China Mobile, the largest carrier in the world, has just launched. Apple CEO Tim Cook said that Apple sold a record number of iPhones in China during the holiday quarter [5] and that's before the iPhone went official with China Mobile. That deal could definitely boost the company's second quarter sales figures and likely increase it full-year outlook.

On top of that, Reuters reports [6] that Megafon, the second-biggest Russian carrier, signed a new deal to sell the iPhone after not selling the device at all since 2009. That deal could help to grow Apple's 20-percent share in Russia.

Apple's stock is up more than one percent as of 9:02 a.m. CT.

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