

# Apple's iOS Concedes Majority Share of Tablet Market to Android

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Apple has lost its grip on tablet dominance, as Gartner today released numbers that show Android was the top tablet operating system in 2014.

While sales of iOS tablets grew in the fourth quarter of 2013, iOS's share declined to 36 percent last year, while Android captured 62 percent of the market.

Worldwide sales of tablets to end users reached 195.4 million units in 2013, a 68 percent increase on 2012, according to Gartner.

Roberta Cozza, research director at Gartner, said in a statement that a significant drop in price for Android tablets was one of the reasons for the overall growth in slate sales, but she cautioned Android OEMs will now have to refine their products to keep customers coming back.

"As the Android tablet market becomes highly commoditized, in 2014, it will be critical for vendors to focus on device experience and meaningful technology and ecosystem value — beyond just hardware and cost — to ensure brand loyalty and improved margins," Cozza said.

Apple, which has always preferred higher margins to selling cheaper devices, saw a 16.8 drop in market share, as market demand was driven by the improved quality of smaller low-cost tablets from branded vendors, and white-box products continued to grow in emerging markets.

"Apple's tablets remain strong in the higher end of the market and, Apple's approach will continue to force vendors to compete with full ecosystem offerings, even in the smaller-screen market as the iPad mini sees a greater share" Cozza added.

Apple was still the top tablet vendor in 2013, followed by Samsung, which claimed 19 percent of the market.

Gartner considers tablets part of the "wider ultramobile market" that also includes hybrids and clamshells. The research firm said sales of ultramobiles to end users reached 216 million units in 2013, an increase of 68 percent on 2012. The tablet remained the most popular device, accounting for 90 percent of overall sales of ultramobiles in 2013 — followed by the clamshell and the hybrid, with 8 percent and 2 percent of sales, respectively.

"Although there were few models available last year, the hybrid form factor was the fastest growing category in 2013. Hybrid ultramobiles attracted users' attention

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because the keyboard offers better use of productivity applications and benefits from a tablet form factor," said Cozza.

Gartner said it expects replacement buyers to start upgrading to hybrid ultramobiles that will be introduced into the market from 2014, satisfying users who no longer want to deal with owning multiple devices or who want to keep up with the latest computing trend.

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