

Huawei, Others Causing Trouble for Apple Brand

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The Apple brand may be losing its luster with consumers according to new research from Strategy Analytics.

Apple's brand preference rating fell by 5.1 points between the second and fourth quarter 2013, which the research firm said was "one of the weakest performances of 21 major technology brands" in its latest survey.

The survey also suggests Apple may be failing to impress its demographic sweet spot. Strategy Analytics says Apple's rating fell furthest in its core affluent and younger demographics.

Samsung remained in first place, gaining ground in continental Europe but falling back in the US and UK. The best performance came from Chinese brand Huawei with an increase of 3.8 points since the second quarter 2013 and strong gains in upper income segments.

The brand preference rating is an indication of the balance between consumers who say they would choose a brand and those who would not, when buying technology products such as computers, mobile phones, TVs and related products. The survey covers 6180 respondents in the US and Europe.

Strategy Analytics concludes that Apple's weak performance may be attributed to its relative lack of new product introductions.

"Apple's challenge is to stem the flow away from its stronghold segments while expanding its presence across other income and age demographics," said David Mercer, principal analyst and the report's author, in a statement. "Our research shows that none of today's leading technology brands can afford to rest on their laurels as newcomers such as Huawei are ready to provide serious competition."

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