

Worldwide smartphone sales down 5% in Q4, but Apple back on top: Gartner



[Smartphones sales](#) worldwide declined 5.4 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2020 which marks an improvement in the market compared to the sales slump in the full year, Gartner said on Monday.

Overall, global sales of smartphones declined 12.5 per cent in full year 2020.

The launch of the 5G iPhone 12 series helped Apple record double-digit growth in the fourth quarter of 2020.

Apple surpassed Samsung to retake the No. 1 global smartphone vendor spot, said the report.

The last time Apple was the top smartphone vendor was in the fourth quarter for 2016.

"The sales of more 5G smartphones and lower-to-mid-tier smartphones minimised the market decline in the fourth quarter of 2020," Anshul Gupta, Senior Research Director at Gartner, said in a statement.

"Even as consumers remained cautious in their spending and held off on some discretionary purchases, 5G smartphones and pro-camera features encouraged some end users to purchase new smartphones or upgrade their current smartphones in the quarter."

Samsung experienced a year-on-year decline of 14.6 per cent in 2020, but this did not prevent it from retaining its No. 1 global smartphone vendor position in full year results.

It faced tough competition from regional smartphone vendors such as Xiaomi, OPPO and Vivo as these brands grew more aggressive in global markets.

In 2020, Apple and Xiaomi were the only two smartphone vendors of the top five ranking to experience growth.

Huawei recorded the highest decline among the top five smartphone vendors which made it lose the No. 2 position to Apple in 2020.

The impact of the ban on use of Google applications on Huawei's smartphones was detrimental to Huawei's performance in the year and negatively affected sales, Gartner said.

"In 2021, the availability of lower end 5G smartphones and innovative features will be deciding factors for end users to upgrade their existing smartphones," said Gupta.

"The rising demand for affordable 5G smartphones outside China will boost smartphone sales in 2021."

[Smartphones Sales](#)