Study: Android Is Half Of Smartphone Sales

NEW YORK (AP) — The market share for smartphones running Google Inc.'s Android software doubled in the third quarter as more devices became available and Apple delayed release of a new iPhone, according to the research firm Gartner.

Android had more than half of the worldwide smartphone market in the third quarter, up from 25 percent a year ago. Nokia's Symbian system had 17 percent, down from 36 percent, and Research In Motion Ltd.'s BlackBerry devices dropped to 11 percent, compared with 15 percent a year ago.

Apple's iOS system, which runs the iPhone, also dropped — to 15 percent, compared with 17 percent a year ago. Apple typically releases new models over the summer, but the new iPhone didn't come out until after the third quarter ended.

Sales of the iPhone were expected to pick up in the holiday quarter with the Oct. 14 release of the iPhone 4S. Apple Inc. said it sold more than 4 million units of the new model in the first three days — meaning it was selling more than twice as fast as the previous model did when it launched last year.

Gartner said smartphone sales worldwide increased 42 percent to 115 million in the third quarter. More than 60 million of those phones were Android devices such as HTC Corp.'s ThunderBolt and Samsung Electronics Co.'s Conquer 4G.

"Android benefited from more mass-market offerings, a weaker competitive environment and the lack of exciting new products on alternative operating systems such as Windows Phone 7 and RIM," said Roberta Cozza, principal research analyst at Gartner.

As some analysts have already estimated, Samsung became the No. 1 smartphone maker worldwide, largely because of its Galaxy devices running on Android. Gartner said Samsung sold 24 million smartphones in the quarter, compared with 17 million iPhones.

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