

Futuresource Consulting reports growing shipments of low-cost Android devices are leading to dilution of the Apple share of the tablet market, as well as "dramatic" tablet ASP declines during the 2010-2014 period.



The analyst predicts a slowdown of the global tablet market, as consumer sales plateau and retail prices continue to drop further. A number of territories should still see growth-- 2014 shipments in some emerging markets are up by over 30%-- but several major markets see low or even negative growth.

Smaller-screen tablets hold 71% 2014 shipment share, but the category is at risk of cannibalisation by larger smartphones/phablets. Thus vendors are expected to shift production from 7-8-inch+ devices by end 2015.

One tablet opportunity in developed markets comes in the enterprise segment, and Futuresource says B2B sales will become "an increasingly significant" demand driver thanks to productivity apps, unifying software platforms, improved battery life and technology comparable to current PCs.

"Workplace tablet use has been driven principally by bring your own device "BYOD" and tablets are used in a more complementary role rather than as a replacement for the PC," the analyst says. "Issues of security and untested apps on tablets have also previously suppressed B2B demand, although many of these fears have been allayed with many tablets now carrying the same security policies and enforcement as a laptop."

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