

IDC: Detachables Grow as Tablets Decline

Written by Marco Attard
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IDC brings bad news on the state of the Q4 2015 tablet market as global shipments total 65.9 million units, a -13.7% Y-o-Y decline, while overall 2015 shipments are down by -10.1% to 206.8m units.



However the analyst's report does have a silver lining-- detachable/hybrid devices are "in full swing," with Q4 2015 shipments reaching a record of 8.1m devices, double the amount from the previous year. In comparison "pure" tablets see a greatest annual decline to date of 21.1% Y-o-Y.

"This quarter was unique as we had new detachables in the market from all three of the major platform players," IDC says. "Despite lukewarm reviews, the iPad Pro was the clear winner this season as it was the top selling detachable, surpassing notable entries from Microsoft and other PC vendors. It's also important to note that the transition towards detachable tablets has presented positive opportunities for both Apple and Microsoft. However, Google's recent foray into this space has been rather lackluster as the Android platform will require a lot more refinement to achieve any measurable success."

Why are customers going for detachables? According to the analyst it boils down to a want for PC replacements, since detachable pricing is still to hit the rock bottom of Amazon or Huawei tablet offerings. As a result, the main draw for detachables (including the likes of the iPad Pro and the Surface Pro) is performance, not price.

When it comes to vendors, Apple continues to lead in Q4 2015 despite a -24.8% Y-o-Y decline

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thanks to a successful iPad Pro launch with shipments reaching "just over" 2m units. Samsung follows with a -18.1% Y-o-Y decline, even if it retains a deep portfolio of devices in all screen sizes and price points.

Amazon makes it to the 3rd place through growth of the cheap and cheerful Kindle tablet reaching 175.7% Y-o-Y, the highest in the top 5. In 4th and 5th place are Lenovo and Huawei respectively.

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