

Smartphone sales surge as consumer upgrades gain momentum: survey

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Samsung led a surging smartphone market in the first quarter with consumers looking for upgrades and 5G handsets, a research firm says

Global smartphone sales snapped back in the first quarter of the year to show the strongest growth since 2015, a market tracker said Tuesday.

Strategy Analytics said smartphone makers shipped some 340 million units in the first three months of the year, a 24 percent jump from the same period last year.

The rebound followed a pandemic-induced slump in 2020 for the market as many consumers postponed purchases or upgrades.

The research firm said the first quarter gains were driven by robust demand from consumers with aging devices and a strong 5G push from Chinese vendors.

"The China smartphone market had a sensational quarter driven by 5G product success across multiple price tiers," said Strategy Analytics senior director Linda Sui, noting a 35 percent jump in the Chinese market.

"Chip shortages and supply side constraints did not have a significant impact in Q1 among the top five brands but was and will be a concern for smaller vendors over the next few quarters in our view."

Samsung led the market with a 23 percent [market](#) share, following by Apple at 17 percent and three Chinese vendors, Xiaomi (15 percent) and Oppo and Vivo (11 percent each).

Strategy Analytics executive director Neil Mawston said Samsung's 32 percent growth came from the launch of the "more affordable A series 4G and 5G phones," as well as solid sales of its flagship Galaxy S21 series.

Mawston said Apple also delivered strong growth of 44 percent from the prior year.

"The strong momentum behind the 5G iPhone 12 series continued across

multiple markets," the analyst added.

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