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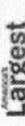
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FEBRUARY 8, 2011 9:17 AM PST

# Android outshines Apple in 4th quarter

by [Lance Whitney](#)

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Android has swiped second place from Apple as it climbs the ranks of the top smartphone platforms in the U.S., ComScore reported yesterday.

In the fourth quarter, the **Android** operating system accounted for 28.7 percent of U.S. smartphone market share, edging out Apple's OS, which captured 25 percent of the market. That represents a reversal from the third quarter when ComScore tracked Android with a 21.4 percent share and Apple with 24.3 percent.

The rankings show BlackBerry maker Research In Motion still at the top. However, its 31.6 percent slice of the market was a 5.7 point drop from the third quarter.

In fourth place with 8.4 percent share was Microsoft, which released its new **Windows Phone 7** platform in October. The No. 5 slot went to Hewlett-Packard's Palm, which held 3.7 percent of the market.

For the quarter, only Android and Apple showed gains in smartphone market share among the top five, noted ComScore. But the market as a whole continues to swell. Overall, 63.2 million people in the U.S. owned smartphones during the quarter, a 60 percent increase from the fourth quarter of 2009.

Android's rise in the U.S. market reflects its **growth worldwide**, according to a recent report from Canalys.

Eying the entire mobile phone landscape--not just smartphones--Samsung devices grabbed 24.8 percent of U.S. subscribers in the fourth quarter, ComScore said. Capturing the highest market share among all device makers, Samsung was also the only handset maker among the top five to see its share increase during the quarter. LG, Motorola, RIM, and Nokia rounded out ComScore's list of top handset makers.

Top Smartphone Platforms 3 Month Avg. Ending Dec. 2010 vs. 3 Month Avg. Ending Sep. 2010 Total U.S. Smartphone Subscribers Ages 13+			
Source: comScore MobiLens			
	Share (%) of Smartphone Subscribers		
	Sep-10	Dec-10	Point Change
Total Smartphone Subscribers	100.0%	100.0%	N/A
RIM	37.3%	31.6%	-5.7
Google	21.4%	28.7%	7.3
Apple	24.3%	25.0%	0.7
Microsoft	9.9%	8.4%	-1.5
Palm	4.2%	3.7%	-0.5

(Credit: ComScore)

ComScore also reported on how people are using their phones. Beyond talking, more people are using their cell phones for text messaging (68 percent) and mobile browsing (36.4 percent). Using downloaded apps (34.4 percent), accessing social network sites (24.7 percent), playing games (23.2 percent), and listening to music (15.7 percent) were also top activities.



**Lance Whitney**

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Lance Whitney wears a few different technology hats--journalist, Web developer, and software trainer. He's a contributing editor for Microsoft TechNet Magazine and writes for other computer publications and Web sites. Lance is a member of the CNET Blog Network, and he is not an employee of CNET.

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