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 BUSINESS WITH PERSONALITY



MENU

Europe mobile market cooling



by **James Titcomb**
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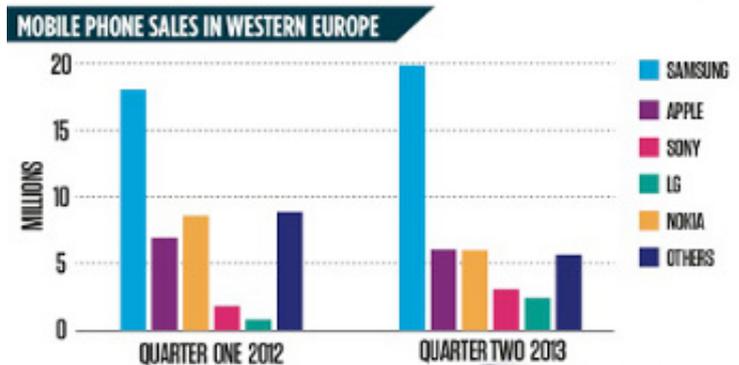
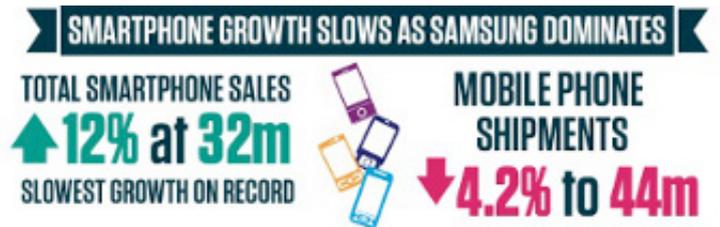
THE BOOMING market for mobiles is showing signs of slowing in western Europe, according to new research.

Figures from IDC released yesterday showed that mobile phone sales fell by 4.2 per cent year-on-year in the region during the first three months of 2013, while smartphone shipments grew at their slowest level on record.

Nokia and Apple – the second and third-biggest players in the market – saw sales decline, although Samsung, Sony and LG all improved compared to a year previously.

While the mobile phone market in Asia, Africa and Latin America is still expanding rapidly, sales in developed markets appear close to saturation, presenting a problem for high-end manufacturers such as Apple. Smartphones accounted for a record 72 per cent of total sales but IDC’s Francisco Jeronimo said that smartphones grew at 12 per cent year-on-year – the slowest rate since the firm started tracking the market.

Jeronimo said that growth in smartphone sales was now being driven by less tech savvy, more price-sensitive consumers likely to buy handsets at the low end of the market. Overall, 43.6m mobiles were sold during the quarter. Samsung took almost half the market with 19.9m handsets shipped, and though Apple saw sales decline slightly, it



leapfrogged Nokia to become western Europe's second largest manufacturer by sales.

The data was especially promising for LG and Sony, which became the fourth and fifth biggest manufacturers in the region.

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