iPhone 5 Reshuffles The Smartphone Market

Contributed by eMarketer
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Nearly three-quarters of current smartphone owners plan to buy a new smartphone in the next six months

Appleâ€™s release of the iPhone 5 may be swaying some smartphone buyers to invest in the latest and greatest devices on the market.

According to a study by AYTM in conjunction with Mashable, in September, 73% of US consumers who planned to buy a smartphone in the next six months already owned a smartphone. Only 27% of prospective smartphone buyers were new to the market.

The AYTM/Mashable study points to current iPhone owners as the most likely to purchase a new iPhoneâ€”an iPhone 5 in most cases, or an upgrade at a price reduced since the iPhone 5 launched. The study also presents some interesting findings about Android users.

Android device owners were 2.4 times more likely to switch to an iPhone in the next six months. Meanwhile, only 9% of iPhone owners planned to switch over to Android.

The propensity to switch operating systems might be correlated to when users first adopted a smartphone. A study by The NPD Group, for instance, found that 57% of first-time smartphone buyers in Q4 2011, bought an Android device, compared to 48% of total buyers opting for Android and 43% for iOS.

This data suggests that Android users were generally newer to the smartphone market than iPhone users, perhaps explaining why they might be more likely to switch operating systems.

The AYTM/Mashable study found market share overall produced a bigger split between operating systems than The NPD Groupâ€™s data. AYTM found Android owners accounting for 55% of the market, and iPhone owners about 31%.

Based on their survey of prospective smartphone buyers, though, AYTM and Mashable depicted Apple gaining more market shareâ€”8 percentage pointsâ€”in coming months, as users adopt newer devices like the iPhone 5.

Regardless of OS orientation, eMarketer anticipates that smartphone penetration in the US will continue to grow, reaching 43% of the total population by 2013, and nearly 60% by 2016. By 2013 smartphones will be in the hands of almost 56% of US mobile phone users and by 2016, that figure is expected to reach 74%.

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