

Wearables market surge led by Apple, Chinese makers

WASHINGTON - The global market for wearable tech surged in the third quarter, fueled by the Apple watch and gains from Chinese manufacturers, a market tracker said on Thursday.



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The research firm IDC said some 21.7 million wearables were sold in the past quarter, a jump of 197 percent.

Fitness tracker maker Fitbit maintained the top spot with a 22.2 percent market share and unit sales of 4.7 million, according to IDC.

Although Apple has not disclosed sales of the smartwatch which went on sale earlier this year, IDC estimated the tech giant sold 3.9 million units for a market share of 18.6 percent.

Chinese electronics firm Xiaomi vaulted into third place with a 17.4 percent market share, as unit sales surged more than 800 percent, IDC said.

Garmin, the Swiss maker of GPS equipment and consumer technology, was the number four vendor with a 4.1 percent share, followed by Chinese electronics firm BBK at 3.1 percent.

"The early stages of the wearables market have led to tight competition among the leading vendors, and Chinese vendors

have seized upon market momentum to grab market share," said IDC analyst Ramon Llamas.

"China has quickly emerged as the fastest-growing wearables market, attracting companies eager to compete on price and feature sets. In addition, multiple vendors have experimented with a broad range of products and applications."

IDC said Fitbit led the market with its Fitbit Charge and Fitbit Surge fitness trackers, making gains in the corporate wellness market.

Apple managed a slight increase from the previous quarter, mostly the result of additional markets coming on line, according to IDC.

Xiaomi's inexpensive Mi Band was a hit in the past quarter, with more than 97 percent of its sales in China, the research firm said.

Garmin held a strong position by focusing on wearables for running, golf, swimming, hiking, and aquatics while BBK and its XTC subsidiary focused exclusively within China, and with just one device, a children's phone watch, IDC said.

Source: AFP

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