

Apple's Share of Russian Smartphone Market Plummets

By [The Moscow Times](#)

May 27, 2015



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U.S. tech giant Apple saw its share of the Russian smartphone market nearly halve last year by number of units sold as the collapse of the ruble drove up prices, according to a recent report.

Apple's share of the market by units sold fell to 5.2 percent in April, down from 10.3 percent in April of last year, the Vedomosti newspaper reported, citing a study by German market researcher GfK.

Apple's share of the market in monetary terms also fell, though less drastically: from 26.3 percent to 21 percent, the report said.

Korean rival Samsung retained its lead in the Russian smartphone market but saw its share

by units sold drop from 19.3 percent to 17.9 percent, the report said.

Apple's market slide came as the ruble's fall forced the company to raise prices twice last year, bringing the price of its newest models — the iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus — up 35 percent, according to Vedomosti.

The ruble fell more than 40 percent to the U.S. dollar last year as sliding oil prices and Western sanctions on Moscow over its role in the Ukraine crisis scared off investment.

It plunged further early in the year, but has recovered about 33 percent to the U.S. dollar since the beginning of February as oil prices stabilize and a shaky truce between Kiev and Moscow-backed rebels in eastern Ukraine holds.

Apple could begin recovering market share, however, if the ruble continues its tentative recovery and the tech giant lowers its prices further.

Apple lowered the prices of both its coveted smartphones and tablet computers in April, bringing the price of its newest smartphones down 9-10 percent, Vedomosti reported. The most basic model of the iPhone 6 now costs 48,990 rubles (\$950).

Russians bought 26 million smartphones in 2014, spending a total of about 227 billion rubles (\$4.4 billion), the newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported in January, citing research by Russian technology retailer Svyaznoy. Despite the economic turbulence, Svyaznoy said smartphones sales in unit terms were up 39 percent.

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