VDC Research
Insights for the Connected World

Press Release

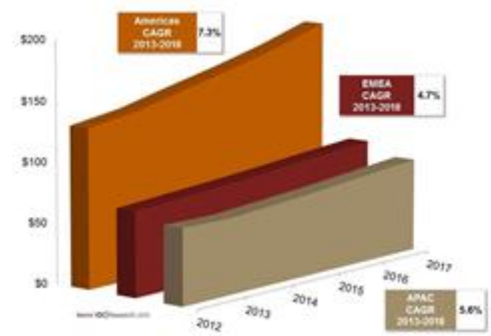
$290 Million Mobile Printer Market Hotbed for Solution Innovation, According to VDC Research

Extensive competitive landscape fragmentation will drive mobile printer vendors to reformulate growth strategies.

“Increasing demand for print-as-you-go functionality, flexible connectivity options, and printer payment processing and acceptance will be anchors for mobile printer market growth in the next 5 years.”

Natick, MA (PRWEB) February 13, 2015

Mobile printer revenues posted a 6% growth in 2014 to $290 million and are expected to increase to $371 million by 2018, according to new global market analysis and by VDC Research. The Americas will drive global revenue growth with an anticipated 7.3% CAGR through the forecast period, while the European and Asian markets will generate revenues at a slower rate. According to insights from VDC’s recently conducted end-user survey, mobile printer deployments will rise sharply in Europe and North America in the next 3 years, especially among industrial supply chain participants. Mobile printers are primed to account for a 20% share of overall printer installed base in these regions.



Global Shipments by Region of Mobile Thermal Printers (USD Million)

These printers are riding the mobility wave with several enterprises capitalizing on rising interest and existing growth opportunities. Workforce mobilization and related requirements will spur current and anticipated product development enhancements, requiring support for various mobile operating systems, and will also spur seamless integration with various transaction-enabling solutions and contactless technologies like NFC. Mobile printer adoption will not be concentrated in any one vertical market. That said, applications such as mobile point-of-sale (for receipts), ticket printing, and shelf-edge labeling will drive growth.

“The mobile printer market is faced with equal parts growth opportunities and challenges due to highly fragmented user environments,” said VDC Senior Analyst Richa Gupta. “Increased investments in R&D, distribution channels, and solution partnering are critical to ensure that product and market development strategies align with evolving user requirements and preferences.”

Competition from emerging markets has intensified. The past 2-3 years has seen an influx of suppliers – largely from Asia-Pacific – designing, manufacturing, and selling low-cost mobile printers. Market leaders such as Datamax-O’Neil, Intermec (now part of Honeywell), SATO, and Zebra Technologies face stiff price competition from these entrants including Sewoo Tech and Woosim Systems, eroding margins, and overall profitability. Vendors’ go-to-market strategies will need to become more application-specific as they seek ways to compete effectively and differentiate themselves in this highly fragmented global marketplace. For this, partnerships with value-adding channels like Systems Integrators (SIs) and Independent Software vendors (ISVs) will be critical. Channel organizations with domain expertise in POS and direct store delivery-type applications are in especially high demand.

Mobile device connectivity agnosticism will also be critical to product success in the long run. Demand is rising for solutions that are not only Wi-Fi or Bluetooth-enabled but that can also be integrated with a range of mobile options for both on-premise and in-field use. As smart device options increase, so will the need for mobile printers to be both platform- as well as OS-independent. It is also important for vendors to develop and release the necessary drivers to support the breadth of mobile OS platforms.

About VDC Research:
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