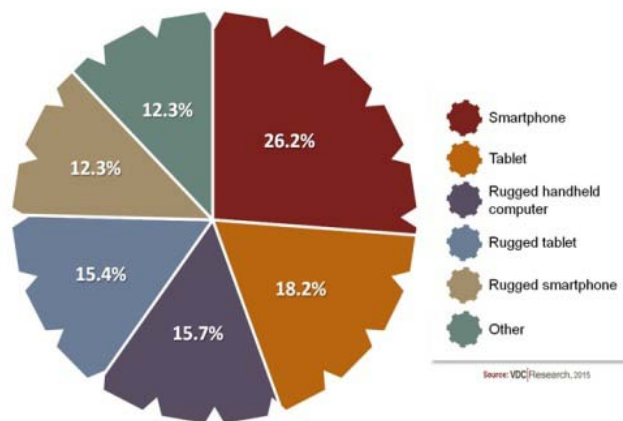


## Rugged Handheld Devices and Smartphones Rising in Enterprise, According to VDC Research

*Following a protracted period of contraction fueled by OS uncertainty, the handheld market has regained much-needed buoyancy, particularly with the emergence of the enterprise-grade rugged smartphone.*

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Enterprises will deploy a total of 3.4 million rugged handheld computers and 32 million smartphones in 2015 to support a variety of line of business applications, according to a new report from VDC Research ([click here](#) for more info). While there is some overlap between use cases for rugged handheld devices and for smartphones, the latter are more aligned with highly business- and mission-critical applications, which place a premium on reliability and data capture requirements. However, the rugged smartphone has emerged as a new form factor in recent years. These devices are similar in design and user experience to the consumer-grade smartphone, but they feature enterprise-grade levels of ruggedness and improved daylight readability. The rugged smartphone caters to end-users who want a more ergonomic and touch-centric device without sacrificing some of their more enterprise-focused features.



The rugged market, despite its recent return to growth, will face numerous challenges ranging from shifts in consumer demands to macroeconomic trends. While the Americas remain the primary engine for growth throughout 2015 and onward, this growth will largely be overshadowed by a weakening European market that has been exacerbated by Greece's economic instability and a weakening euro that has dropped to historic lows in much of 2015. Additionally, with legacy Windows platforms nearing EOL, uncertainty regarding migration path for existing rugged handheld customers could provide continued migration and upgrade headwinds.

For consumer-grade smartphones, the growing availability of peripherals and to augment the functionality of these devices and provide better protection are further opening their opportunity in the enterprise. In addition, leading vendors such as Apple and Samsung are now actively targeting the enterprise, looking to develop new and higher value-adding opportunities, particularly as consumer sales have begun to peak. Their addition to the enterprise market has the potential to have a significant impact on how organizations choose to mobilize their workforce, affecting not only price sensitivity, but OS choice, application development, and replacement cycles.

"The influence of the consumer market continues to spread in the enterprise, particularly with an increasingly tech-savvy workforce," says David Krebs, EVP at VDC. "Both rugged and consumer manufacturers are looking to meet the needs of the enterprise as the global mobile workforce grows while meeting end-user experience expectations, especially regarding ease of use and intuitive design."

**About VDC Research**

Founded in 1971, VDC Research provides in-depth insights to technology vendors, end users, and investors across the globe. As a market research and consulting firm, VDC's coverage of AutoID, enterprise mobility, industrial automation, and IoT and embedded technologies is among the most advanced in the industry, helping our clients make critical decisions with confidence. Offering syndicated reports and custom consultation, our methodologies consistently provide accurate forecasts and unmatched thought leadership for deeply technical markets. Located in Natick, Massachusetts, VDC prides itself on its close personal relationships with clients, delivering an attention to detail and a unique perspective that is second to none.