

Flurry Finds Growth in Phablet Usage of 148% in One Year

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Skyrocketing in popularity, connected devices and apps have quickly surpassed both the Web and TV in terms of the time people spend consuming media. Smartphones (led by Apple's iPhone) paved the way and tablets (with Apple again leading the way with the iPad) added to the gains. According to mobile app platform and solutions provider Flurry, a third "booster rocket" has emerged: the phablet.



Touch-screen smartphones, tablets and now phablets are driving media consumption, and advertising dollars, toward smaller screens and connected media devices and away from TV sets and desktop computers, Flurry's Simon Khalaf highlights in a blog post. "[I]n January 2010, we labeled the iPad as the 'second-stage media booster rocket.'

Growth in Phablet Usage

Flurry sees the phablet as a "third-stage booster rocket" accelerating this trend. Analyzing mobile device usage in January 2014 and 2015, Flurry found that [phablets are the leading form factor in terms of usage growth](#). Growth in use of phablets, such as the iPhone 6+ and Samsung Galaxy Note shot up 148 percent over the year-long period. That fueled overall year-over-year mobile and app industry usage growth of 78 percent as measured by session count – "3.8 times faster than the growth of medium-sized phones such as the iPhone 4 and iPhone 5 over a similar period," Khalaf points out.

Growth in use of small tablets, in contrast, rose just 14 percent, while that for full-size tablets fell 20 percent. "While this is only one year's worth of data, the numbers are impressive, leading us to believe that the mobile industry has found a killer form factor, combining the tablet's bigger screen and ease of navigation with the true mobility of the phone," Khalaf comments.

Drilling down deeper into the data has led Flurry to conclude that the phablet "has become the ultimate media-consumption device." Looking at phablet usage across media categories, Flurry found that Music, Media & Entertainment, Sports, and News & Magazines grew the fastest, "dramatically over-indexing the growth on other device types." Particularly notable, phablet sports viewing rose 427 percent more on phablets than on any other type of smart device, according to Flurry's data.

It's the mobile Web, as opposed to tablets, that are suffering most from the rise in popularity and usage of phablets, according to Flurry. "Since the ascension of phablets, the total time spent in apps compared to mobile Web picked up an additional two percent, increasing total time spent in apps to 88 percent of total time spent on mobile in the U.S., versus 12 percent on the mobile Web," Khalaf notes. These figures compare to data Flurry gathered in April 2014 that shows U.S. mobile device users spending 86 percent of their time on mobile and 14 percent on the mobile Web, respectively.

"As we've seen before, the introduction of a form factor changes the media and computing landscape. We saw the laptop change the personal computing landscape. We saw the tablet change the smartphone and mobile media consumption landscape," Khalaf concludes. "This time, it's happening again with the phablet. It is not just the third-stage media booster rocket, it is the ultimate mobile form factor."

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