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# Eww is that an Android

Is the iPhone the social status pass of the  
21st century



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Social status has always been a thing. From our earliest memories as human beings, we've always looked at other ways to look better than everyone else. Be it our clothes, what house we live in, how many cars we have or even what breed our dog is. From our earliest memories as human beings, society has been divided based on wealth and notoriety. It started with the serfdom in the 19th century where the rich and the poor were divided into two distinct camps, and has since evolved in history. In the 21st century the divide is less pronounced i.e. people don't get sentenced to a life-time of farming potatoes because they're poor, but the themes of social status based on wealth have still remained. As humans we've been trained through social conditioning to identify what makes someone look rich and what makes someone look poor. Clothing, style, choice of car and home are all obvious indicators, however they're not the single largest indicator of wealth. The single most identified trait of being wealthy is actually an iPhone.

A study published in a paper from the National Bureau of Economic research highlighted that the Apple iPhone is the most noted indicator of wealth amongst people. People that have iPhones are seen to be richer and more socially established than their android counterparts. The reasoning behind this isn't straightforward but rather a combination of variety of different circumstances that leads people to attributing social status with what phone you have in your pocket. What does the Apple iPhone offer that Android doesn't and why are people so hooked? Is it the camera? No- iPhones use Sony lenses and some Android phones offer higher quality cameras, is it the screen? No- Samsung actually supplies the screen on the iPhones for some time now. Is it build quality? Nope, some Android phones utilize higher quality materials and more interesting looks like the Galaxy Flip phone. The reason why people prefer iPhones and place such a large level of importance can be boiled down to one simple idea: image.



Apple since its early days has cultivated an image for its brand as being, innovative, premium and design oriented. Any apple ad you've ever probably seen echoes the same image of a desirable, well-designed product that is minimal and sleek. Its premium price-tag is echoed through its advertisements and its display. People have generally always wanted apple products because of this premium look- which makes people feel like they are part of a tribe if they have this product. Its exclusiveness and high price-tag help root Apple's brand identity in the fields of luxury, effectively helping establish apple products as a must-have item to have to complete the look.

This brand identity extends to every apple product from their recently launched \$19 USD screen cleaner to their \$5000 Macbook pro, they all share the same theme of products dressed in a premium treatment that have people craving to own them to look premium themselves. The iPhone is no stranger to this.

Apple's agenda to make the iPhone the most desirable phone on the market has worked. It's a culmination of apple's design philosophy, minimal and premium

Android users sending a selfie like



packaging and shopping experience and of course let's not forget influencers. Let's be honest, if Kim Kardashian and other Hollywood elites were to use Samsung phones, everyone would suddenly use a Samsung phone. It's an interesting idea, but it's simple too. Everyone aspires to be rich and famous or important, and the most easily accessible way to have this sensation is by owning a product that temporarily connects you to the same world that Kim Kardashian is living in. Gripping your phone, you feel

part of this community of people and you feel like your purchase is justified because everyone else has it. Now this wasn't something that just happened- it snowballed. Back in the early 2000's, the unsung hero of the smartphone world was the blackberry. Celebrities, presidents and CEO's had them, and so naturally the consumer market followed. It was desirable, exclusive and expensive, and like the iPhone its primary source of exposure wasn't the ads blackberry published but rather who had them. Its assumed value grew out the roof, superseding its competition and overshadowing any phone similar to it.

Hey it's Ali from the bar

Oh hey...wow a green text, that's a first. Look idk if this is gonna work out, I don't really date poor people...

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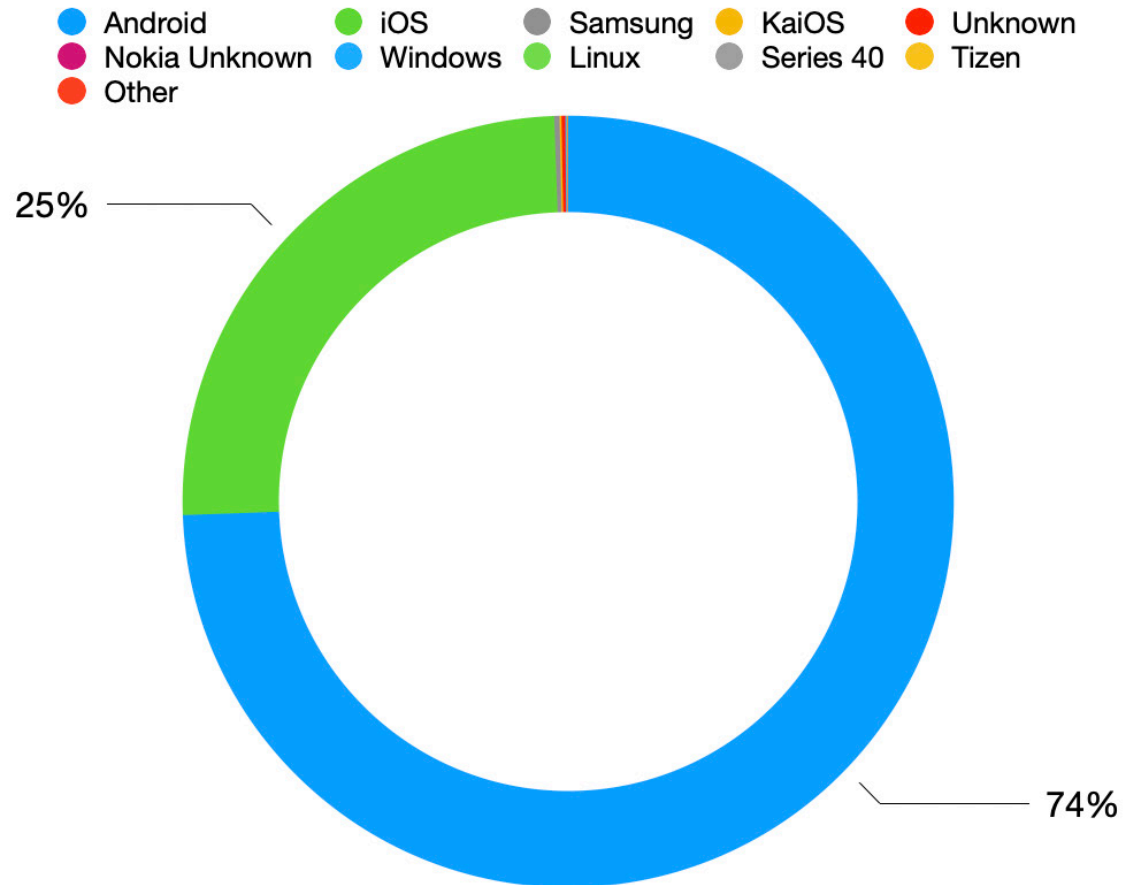
These meme's, help highlight a pattern within society, where social segregation is established through the choice of one's phone. School kids get bullied and are made to feel "poor" because they don't have an iPhone, and someone's social credit score is often dictated by the colour of their text messages. This although harmless is destructive as it infects people with a false sense of achievement and status, helping perpetuate a 'flex' culture where people are not seen to be socially rich if they don't have an iPhone.

Apple's domination in the smart-phone space is materialised more culturally than through sales, as Android have far more market coverage than Apple due partly because of the affordability of Android phones and the plethora of options available. Android phone's account for 72.4% of all phone's worldwide and iOS accounts for only 26.75%. However despite this, Apple still hold the fort when it comes down to what product is most desirable. In a way it not being the most widely used phone world-wide helps present a strong case of exclusivity for Apple- further strengthening the social divide that occurs from this.

Intentional or not, the Apple iPhone's social influence cannot be underestimated, people know iPhones are premium products, and

are eager to buy into this culture to become a member of the tribe and not be signaled out for having an iPhone. Thus the statistic at the beginning makes a little bit more sense now. Apple pushes a premium image

with it's products, celebrities and known people in society use these products and as a result a desire is created to be part of this world.



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