A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a white eyelet dress, is taking a selfie with a light blue iPhone. She is holding a large bouquet of yellow sunflowers in her left hand. The background is a field of sunflowers under a soft, hazy sky. A straw hat is visible in the foreground, partially obscured by the bouquet.

Jacob Stacey

Intuitive: Impactful: Important

A reflection on the iPhone's
impact in standardising swipes,
moulding markets and creating
new forms of entertainment

Intuitive: Impactful: Important

Jacob Stacey

Wherever the topic of mankind's post-industrial innovations are concerned, one sentiment seems to have triumphed over all and become an ideal that epitomises humanity – the lack of involvement in getting the best possible outcome. Whether it be the effortless access to transportation brought on by planes and cars, the eradication of distance through fibre-optic cables or the ability to easily access an ever-growing wealth of information through the Internet, humanity has dedicated a concentrated effort towards requiring none at all.

Yet, amid these great inventions, there is one that seems to have been overlooked. Something that serves as an integral multi-tool of everyday life, yet remains obscured by the 'telephone' qualifier that it falls under. This elusive device is, of course, the iPhone. Debuting in June of 2007 to immediate success, Apple's smartphone has grown to encompass 1.8 billion active users, 2.2 billion total units and average quarterly sales of USD \$54.288 billion throughout 2022.



Though Apple is estimated to control a mere 16.75% of the smartphone market, the impact the iPhone has had in streamlining accessibility and creating new economies is undeniable.

While not the first to introduce touchscreens to the world of smartphones, Apple's involvement in revolutionising their use through the iPhone has led to their success being attributed most closely to them. Today, the global touchscreen market is valued at \$29.5 billion dollars, a figure that is expected to triple due to the increased contexts that touchscreens are used in. However, this innovation has not been without its detriments. A 2014 study from SAGE Publishing noted that the mere presence of smartphones in face-to-face conversations marked a decline in the quality and depth of discussed topics, with groups conversing in the presence of mobile phones noting a lower level of empathy for the people they were conversing with – even more so in the case that they were acquainted.

If anything can be deduced from this phenomena, it's that smartphone touchscreens are a clear testament to the intuitive and stimulating design philosophy of the iPhone, creating a device that is impossible to avoid fidgeting with.

However, While Apple's gambit with touchscreen technology succeeded in making the iPhone desirable to the general public, Apple had yet to make smartphones desirable to developers. This would soon change with what could veritably be described as Apple's most notable accomplishment – the launch of the App Store and the rise of the app economy. Debuting in July of 2008, the App Store has grown to contain over 1.8 million applications, 600 million weekly users and total developer payouts of \$260 billion dollars. These figures are owed most prominently to the flourishing popularity of mobile gaming, an industry estimated to have grossed \$90.7 billion dollars in 2021, with revenue from the App Store accounting for \$41.1 billion (45.3%)

of the total sum. While not a gaming company, the money generated from the App Store has elevated Apple to being the third highest-grossing video game company, outpacing industry mainstays Microsoft and Nintendo with a yearly revenue of \$15.3 billion dollars in 2021. Clearly, the success of mobile gaming has transcended the success of the iPhone, created millions of jobs and redefined the way people engage with entertainment on a global scale. Such successes can be directly attributed to the launch of the App Store and the faith Apple had in creating a platform for developers and users alike.

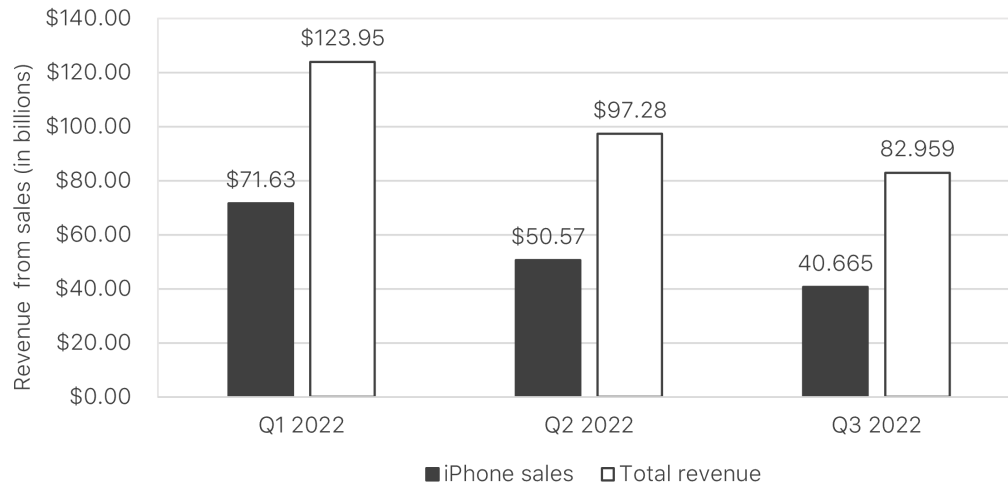
In the fifteen years following the short-lived lifespan of the first generation Phone, it has become easy to overlook the many ways that the device has revolutionised the world. This is not due to a lack of innovation or succeeding technologies rendering it obsolete, but because there are so few areas that the iPhone was unable to change through its timeless and ambitious design.

From business to personal, informative to entertaining, one thing is certain: billions of people live by and through the iPhone.

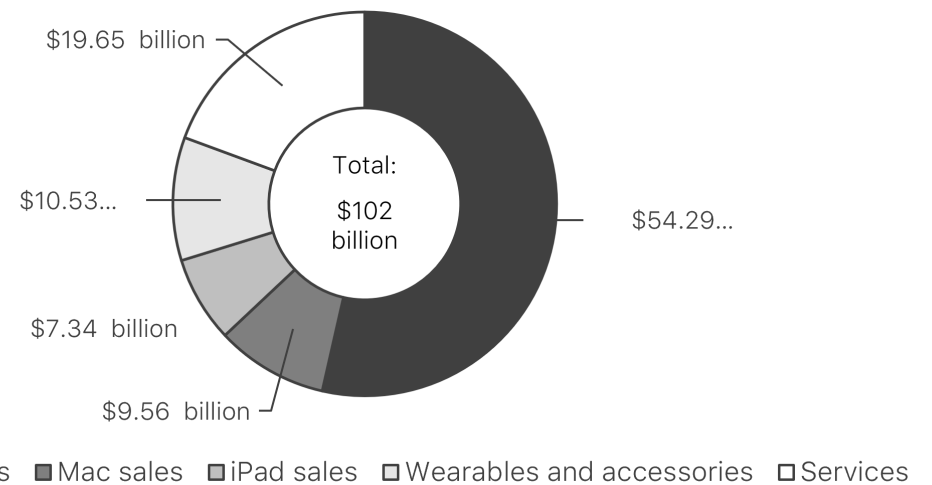


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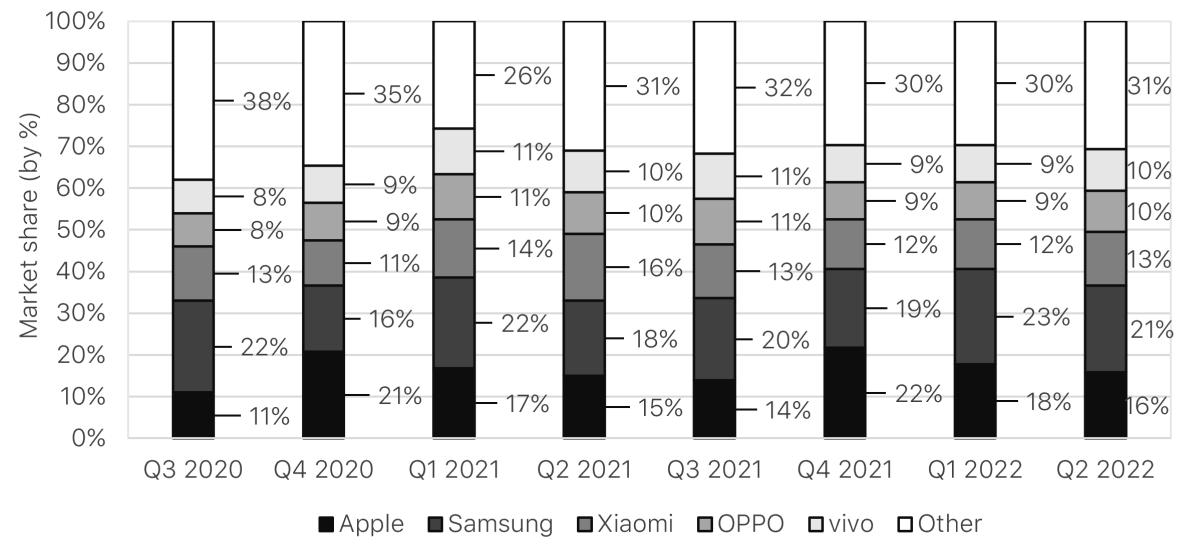
Sales of the iPhone relative to Apple's quarterly revenue throughout 2022



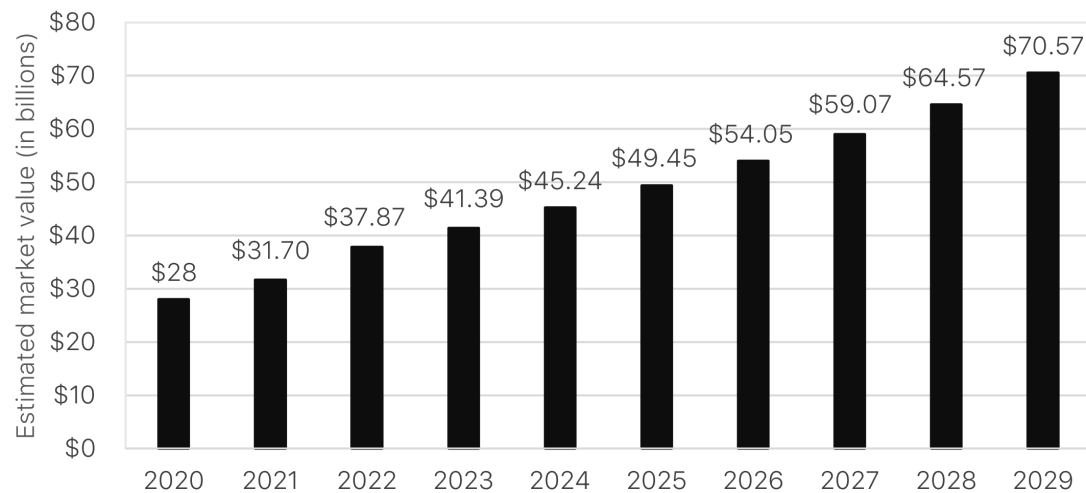
Average quarterly sales of the iPhone relative to Apple's other quarterly sales in 2022



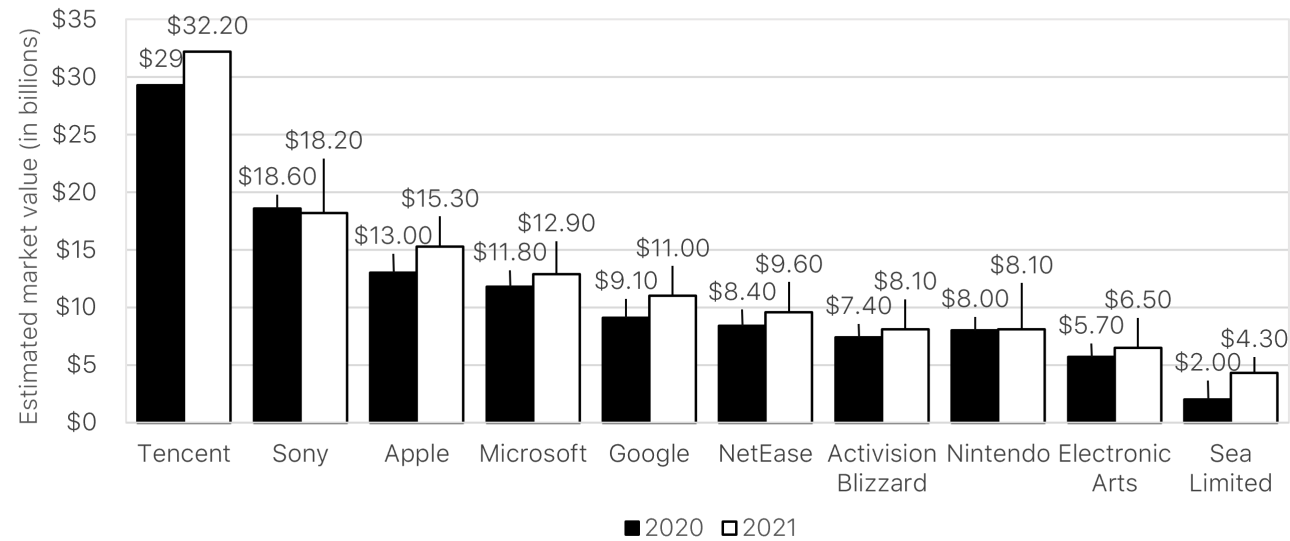
Apple smartphone market share relative to competitors over two years



Projected growth of the touchscreen market in the Asia Pacific Region over a 9 year period



Highest-grossing video game companies in 2021



Yearly revenue of the App Store relative to other digital storefronts

