

Desktop vs tablet vs mobile: which device rules Africa?

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There is a place we all go to on a daily basis, some people once or twice a day whereas others let it consume their lives, taking up every waking moment of their existence. It is of course the internet.



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The internet provides users with a plethora of content and interactions and has become a necessity in the lives of millions of people around the world. Whether it be for work purposes, communication, social interaction, research, entertainment... the list of uses of the internet is endless.

Africa, just like the rest of the world is reliant on the internet. One of the aspects which differentiates countries around the world in terms of internet usage is how they access it.

The three main devices which people use to access the internet are desktops, tablets or mobiles. The question is which one of these devices dominates the market share in Africa?

In a study compiled by [StatCounter](#), they have identified the market percentage of each device used to search the internet in Africa from March 2016 to March 2017. The results are as follows:

Mobile

Mobile is undoubtedly the device which dominates on the African continent. Mobile devices make up a staggering 60.29% of the total market share in Africa. This is unsurprising as the limitations in Africa with regards to affordability and access are overcome by the availability of affordable smart phones. These mobile devices provide Africans with easy and affordable access to the internet and that's why it is the device which dominates the African market share.

Desktops

Desktops are computers designed for regular use at a fixed location. Although desktops have changed drastically over the years with the adoption of laptops and other devices, they still make up a chunk of the African market share - 36.8% to be precise.

The legacy of desktops in Africa is seen in schools, universities and computer centres, where there are large amounts of desktops in a single area for the use of the community or people linked to those specific organisations.

In the rural areas of Africa where people can't afford mobile devices or their own desktops, computer labs are built and this is often the only point of access to the internet for those communities.

Desktops are also a popular option in many offices around Africa. The in-office desktops provide companies with certain security advantages which cannot be overlooked. These reasons indicate why desktops are Africa's second most used device.

Tablets

When the first tablets got released, a worldwide frenzy began as people started to purchase this mobile computer with a touch screen. In Africa, however, it never really took off. Don't get me wrong, there is still a huge market for tablets and there are still many people in Africa using them, but when you look at the market share, an astonishing 2.91%, it just does not compete against other devices.

There could be for a couple of reasons, but the main one is the cost. Generally tablets are expensive devices because of their size and capabilities and although they can do so many incredible things they do not do much more than a regular smartphone. For this reason, tablets are the third most used device in Africa.

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