

Mobile-Phone Users Spending More Dough On Accessories



Mobile-phone owners are not just spending money on their phones and monthly subscriptions.

Sales of mobile-phone accessories shot up 32 percent during the first half of 2012 compared with the same period last year, says a new report from NPD Group.

Cases proved the most popular accessory, with sales soaring 70 percent over 2011 despite an average 25 percent increase in case prices. Stereo headphones with microphones took second place, with their sales rising 67 percent over the same period.

Protection and durability were ranked as the most desirable feature among 86 percent of case buyers. The quality of the case material and the lack of bulkiness also played a role in their buying decision.

"Smartphones tend to feature slim designs and glass materials, so protection accessories have become a virtual necessity to safeguard smartphone owners' investments," NPD analyst Ben Arnold said in a statement. "Price holds less importance than protection on the list of purchase influencers, and consumer concern over the quality of materials indicates the performance of these accessories is more important than their aesthetics or cost."

Half of all consumers who bought their phones at a brick-and-mortar store picked up an accessory at the time of purchase. Those buyers also tended to spend more on accessories, almost three times as much as consumers who bought their items online.

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