

iPhone Pro users are replacing their phones faster than ever

A report from Counterpoint says that iPhone Pro users are upgrading their devices much faster than those using the base model.

Specifically, the average iPhone Pro owner replaces their device every 2.75 years, while the base model user keeps their device for 3.15 years. While this difference may seem small, in the premium smartphone segment, where Apple is pushing higher-priced models, this represents a significant change.



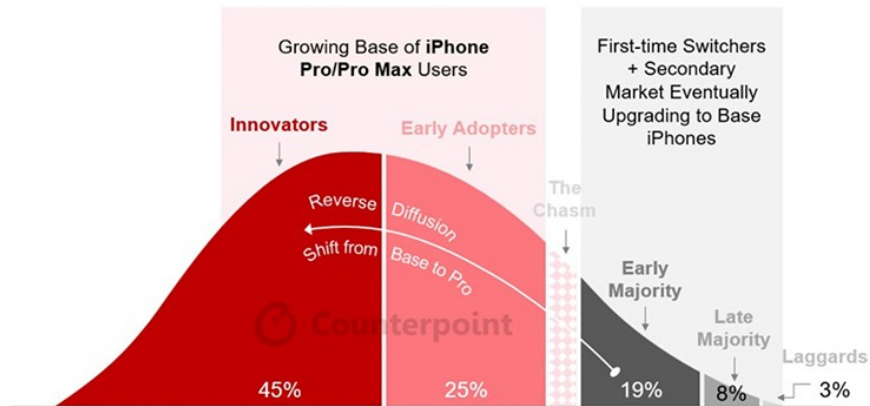
The main reason for this trend is a change in the mindset of iPhone users. Many iPhone Pro owners consider themselves to be innovators, with 45% saying they are early adopters of new technology. Additionally, another 25% consider themselves to be opinion leaders, influencing the purchasing decisions of others.

This perception creates a sense of urgency to upgrade, which typically occurs within two to three years of a phone's launch. At the same time, more and more base model users are switching to the Pro lineup, attracted by exclusive features like advanced cameras, ProMotion displays, and premium materials.

Shorter upgrade cycles are also having a positive effect on the used phone market. As more Pro models enter resale channels, the availability of refurbished devices is improving, especially in regions like India and Southeast Asia, where demand for used iPhones is high. Supply constraints have made it difficult for many people to get their hands on refurbished Pro models, but this change could help alleviate that challenge.

The Growing Reverse Diffusion Curve

- Current Pro iPhone users identify themselves as Innovators and Early Adopters.
- This self-identification is also driving motivation to upgrade faster, i.e. within 24-30 months.
- Base users are increasingly looking to cross the chasm and move towards upgrading to Pro models.



The timing of this trend is all the more interesting with the recent launch of the iPhone 16e. This mid-range iPhone has long catered to price-conscious buyers. However, it's the same product as the iPhone 14, with Face ID and an OLED display. Starting at \$650, it could be an ideal choice for first-time iPhone buyers and those switching from Android.

The report also found that Apple is increasingly successful in luring users away from Android. Nearly half of the iPhone owners surveyed said they had used an Android device, with Samsung and Google being the most affected brands. As more high-end Android users switch to iPhones, companies like Samsung, OnePlus, and Vivo are ramping up AI-powered features and high-end specs to stay competitive.

Recent data from CIRP also reinforces the trend toward shorter upgrade cycles. In Q4 2024, 36% of iPhone users upgraded within two years, up from 31% the year before. Trade-in deals and installment plans have made upgrading easier, while Apple's strategy of introducing exclusive features on new models is adding pressure to upgrade sooner.



While the iPhone may still be good for four to five years, Apple continues to push improvements to create a sense of urgency among its most loyal users. Whether this trend continues will depend on future product launches, but for now, iPhone Pro users are upgrading at a faster rate, and Apple is shaping the market to maintain that momentum.

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