

Global Touch Panel Industry: iPhone Phenomenon Fuelling Demand

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The touch panel industry is the latest technology in the world of modern gadgets and portable devices. Developed in the 1970s by the US military, touch screens have come to be a dominating technology in the market for electronic appliances due to their wide application in navigation devices, mobile phones, PDAs, ATMs, and game consoles. With relatively low technological entry barriers and low operating costs, the touch screen technology has gained international attention and acceptance.

Touch panels can be classified in four categories namely, resistive, capacitive, infrared ray (IR), and surface acoustic wave (SAW). Resistive panels are the most commonly used touch screens in the marketplace at present.

The major factor fuelling growth of the touch panel industry will be the launch of iPhone by Apple Inc. Other trends likely to add to the market growth include the increasing usage of tactile feedback technology in touch-screen devices, innovations in the existing technology and a rising demand for large-sized touch-screen. The majority of top suppliers and touch panel makers is located in Japan (Nissha, Gunze, and Panasonic) and Taiwan (Y-Fast, Swenc, and Jtouch), with a special focus on resistive products.

The report analyzes the global touch panel industry -- its size, growth rate, trends, growth drivers, challenges, etc. The report profiles the big four players in the touch panel industry: ELAN Microelectronics, ELO TouchSystems, Wintek Corporation, and 3M Touch Systems, with a discussion of their key business strategies.

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