

AR/VR headsets can't compete with smartphones

Article

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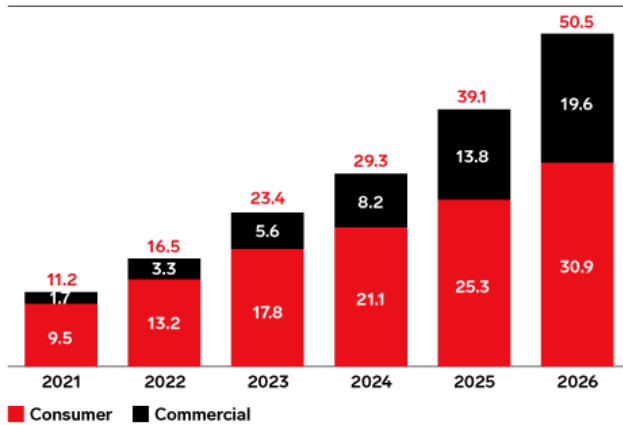
Global shipments of augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR) headsets will hit **16.5 million** this year, up more than **5 million** or **32.1%** from last year. Most of these shipments are to

consumers, but commercial sales are set to multiply over the next five years, driven by the opportunity for product visualization prior to purchase.

Beyond the chart: Even with the rapid growth of headset shipments over the next five years, AR/VR sales are quite small compared to global smartphone sales, which hit **1.3 billion** in 2021, per International Data Corporation. That presents a challenge for headsets since AR/VR is predominantly accessed via smartphone right now. Filters on **Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok** present an entry point for AR use that isn't translating to headset purchases quite yet. **So while the future of AR/VR looks bright, headsets—which can be bulky, expensive, and require wifi—aren't lighting the way for most users.**

**AR/VR Headset Shipments Worldwide,
Commercial vs. Consumer, 2021-2026**

millions



Source: International Data Corporation (IDC); Insider Intelligence calculations, March 22, 2022

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