

More than a Quarter of India's Population Will Be Smartphone Users This Year

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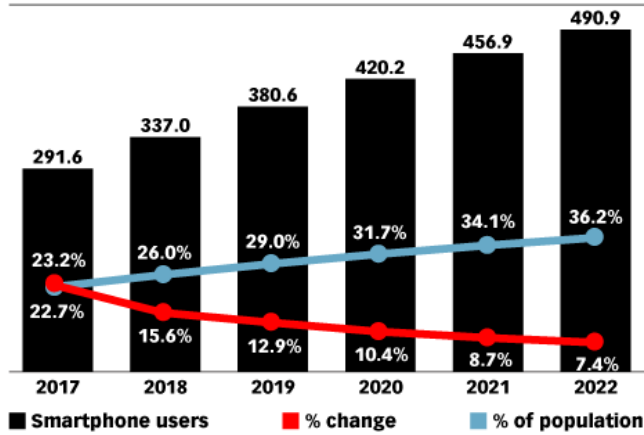
eMarketer Editors

In India, 337.0 million people, or more than a quarter of the population, will use a smartphone in 2018, according to eMarketer's latest forecast.

The number of smartphone users in India will grow by close to 16% this year—the highest growth rate of any country in the world broken out by eMarketer.

Since its last forecast, eMarketer increased its estimate for the smartphone audience in India by more than 31 million people. This uptick is thanks to the growth in smartphone usage in urban areas, where affordable smartphones are becoming widely available.

Smartphone Users and Penetration in India, 2017-2022
 millions, % change and % of population



Note: individuals of any age who own at least one smartphone and use the smartphone(s) at least once per month
 Source: eMarketer, April 2018

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From an advertising point of view, since TV draws large audiences in India, that is where the majority of ad spending traditionally has gone. In recent years, however, as smartphone penetration has increased, mobile ad spend has also risen. eMarketer expects strong double-digit growth to continue: Mobile ad outlays in India will rise by 75.0% in 2018, accounting for more than half of all digital spend.

“India still faces technological challenges that are holding back mass smartphone adoption,” said Chris Bendtsen, senior forecasting analyst at eMarketer. “Mobile internet speeds are among the slowest in the world, around two-thirds of the population still lives in rural areas, and feature phones are by no means obsolete.”

“That being said, advertisers can still be optimistic about the future. Smartphones are getting cheaper, mobile data prices have fallen and urbanization continues. Over the next four years, as speeds and rural reach improve, eMarketer expects the smartphone audience to reach close to half a billion users,” he added.