

## Digital Trends Spring - UK - April 2017

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“The smartphone market can no longer rely on new owners for growth. This means that handset manufacturers need to provide existing smartphone owners with compelling reasons to upgrade. But this is made difficult by the fact that smartphones have evolved to the stage where it is difficult to provide significant improvements.”

– **Matt King** – Category Director, Technology and Media Research

This report looks at the following areas:

- **The challenge of smartphone innovation**
- **Focus on hybrids is key as tablet sales plateau continues**
- **Ultra HD slowly but surely edging HD out of UK households**
- **Social media platforms focusing on live video**

There are no signs of imminent further ownership growth in either the smartphone, laptop and tablet markets, with manufacturers in all three sectors faced with the challenge of finding innovations that will help them win share from their rivals. Smartwatch ownership, however, continues to grow. Ultra HD 4K TV penetration is also on the rise, alongside a drop in ownership of HD (720p or 1080p) sets. Mintel's data suggests that despite the smartphone market's maturity, these are by far the most regularly-replaced device, with many people having bought their most recent handset in the last year. Despite a shift towards SIM-only deals, many people retain the mindset that it's the norm to replace their smartphones every couple of years, if not sooner. Handset manufacturers are launching their own upgrade programmes to cater for this desire, which is an approach that companies in other sectors could use to stimulate more frequent replacements.

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