Telecommunications: Smartphone Shipments Fall 20%, Creating Tension Between Refurbished Demand and Trade-In Supply — Global Outlook

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Global smartphone shipments fell 20% year over year during the third quarter of 2026, according to preliminary figures from Omdia released October 15. Rising memory and storage costs have constrained manufacturers' pricing options and contributed to a pullback in lower-margin models. Counterpoint Research independently reported a similar decline, identifying the lowest third-quarter shipment level since 2012. Its senior analyst Shilpi Jain said consumers are keeping their phones longer than the firm had estimated, increasingly considering refurbished alternatives and prioritizing higher-value devices.

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