

2023 Insights into the Foldable Smartphone Market in China

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Abstract



The development of bar smartphones have now hit a bottleneck. The contradiction between large screen size and portability is difficult to deal with. Foldable smartphones can meet users' demand for large screens and portability.



Despite the fact that the shipments in China's smartphone industry are falling, the foldable mobile phone market has achieved sustained growth and is expected to boom in 2023, with the number of shipments exceeding 5.5 million.



With maturing technical solutions, foldable phones will become increasingly light and thin. The improvement of software ecology will become a key direction for optimizing user experience.



China's foldable mobile phone market is blooming. Main Chinese mobile phone makers have all entered the market. The combined market shares of Huawei and Samsung have reached 70%. Huawei alone accounts for half of the market and has the highest brand awareness and satisfaction degree.



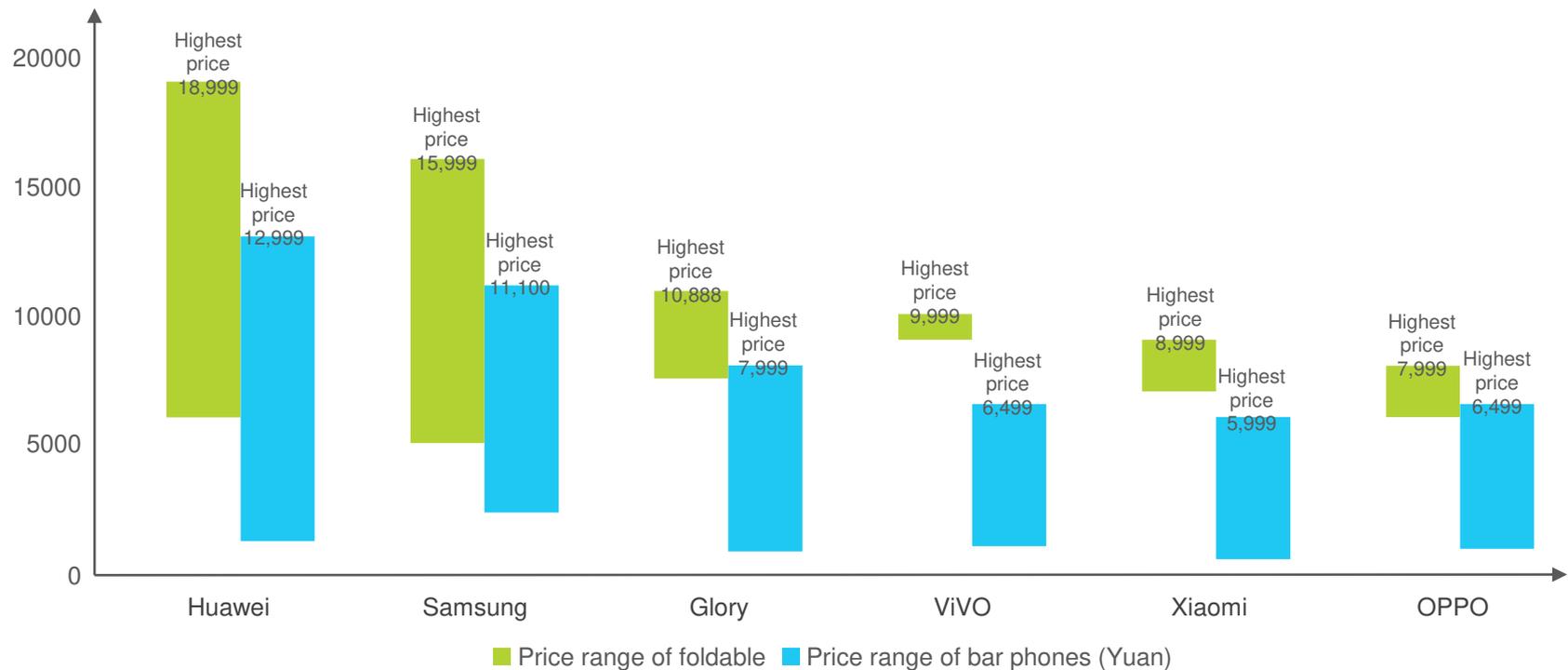
Most current foldable smartphone users are male. The number of female users is expected to grow thanks to the increasingly light and thin products.

Development Background of Foldable Smartphones iResearch

艾 瑞 咨 询

As the smartphone market has hit a bottleneck, major phone makers have turned their attention to the high-end mobile phone market. Due to the advancement of supply chain technology and changes in consumer demand, foldable mobile phones with high market value and differentiated competitive advantages have great performance in the mid-to-high price market; The related technologies have gradually matured thanks to the active promotion of leading phone makers such as Huawei and Samsung. The high-value attribute and differentiated product forms of foldable mobile phones will help domestic brands to expand their shares in the high-end smartphone market.

Price Range and the Highest Price of Products (on sale) of Major Chinese Mobile Phone Makers



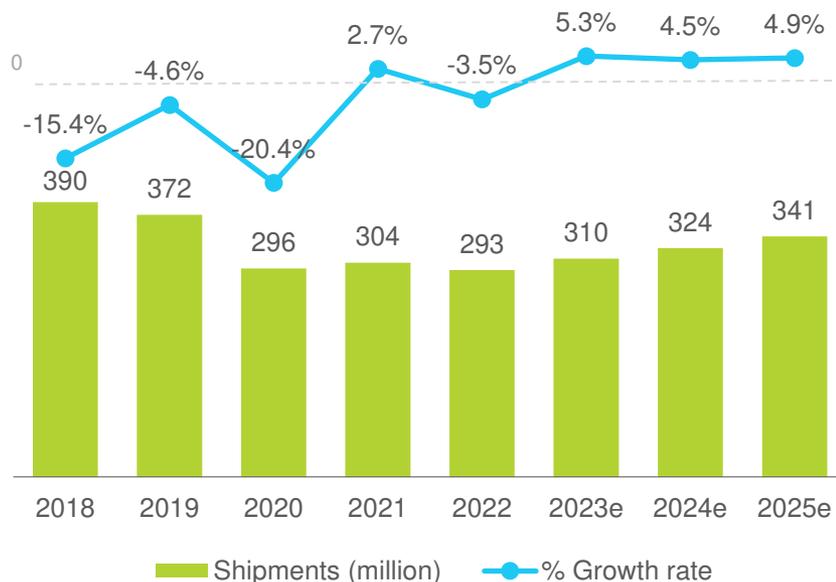
Source: Independent research by iResearch.

Note: The prices of products on sale are the prices of the lowest configuration.

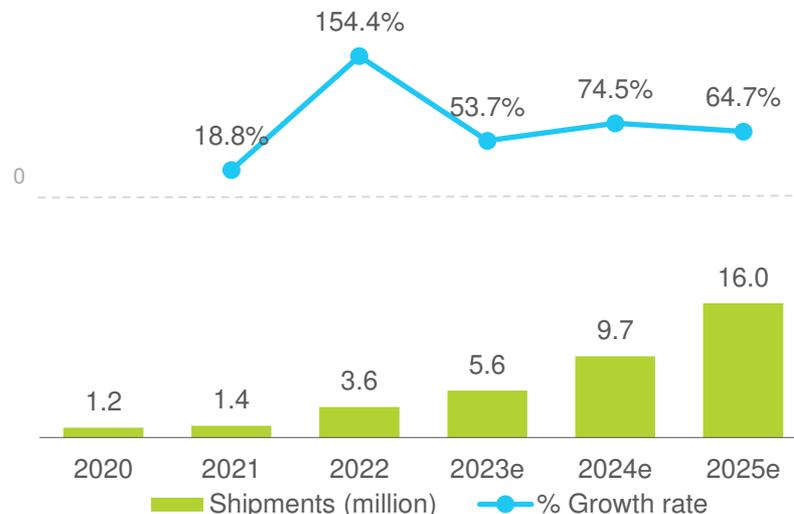
Status Quo of the Foldable Smartphone Market in China

Influenced by market saturation, long replacement cycle and other factors, the shipments of China's smartphone market have been falling since 2018. Thanks to the recovery of the economy, in the long run, the industry will gradually recover. Relying on their innovative forms and large screens, foldable phones have achieved sustained high growth despite the fact that the overall shipments of the industry has reduced. The shipments of foldable phones in China increased by 154% year on year in 2022 and are expected to reach 5.5 million in 2023.

2018 – 2025 Shipments of Smartphones in China



2020 – 2025 Shipments of Foldable Smartphones in China



Source: The research and chart are done by iResearch based on public information and interviews with experts.

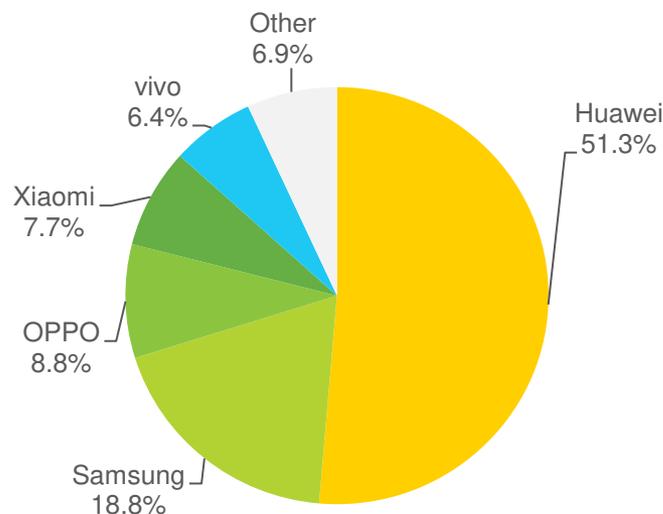
Source :The research and chart are done by iResearch based on public information and interviews with experts.

Note: The historical data and forecast data of scale in the report are rounded to integers (when the difference is smaller than 1, it is accurate to one decimal place); rounding is included; growth rate calculations are based on precise numerical values.

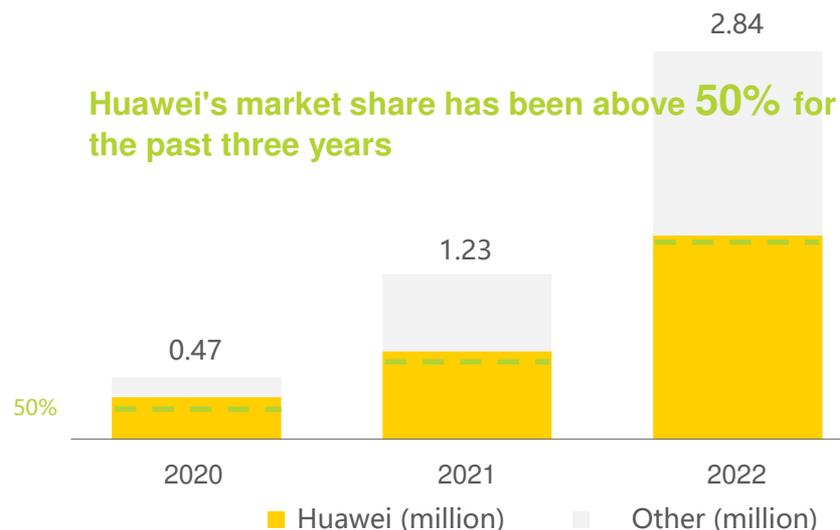
Status Quo of the Foldable Smartphone Market in China

Mainstream Chinese smartphone brands, such as Huawei, OPPO, Xiaomi, and vivo, have entered the foldable smartphone market. In 2022, with the release and iteration of flagship foldable smartphones, the domestic market shares of various brands have been changing rapidly. With its first-mover advantage and influence in the high-end smartphone market, Huawei has been leading the development of China's foldable smartphone market with a market share above 50% for three consecutive years.

2022 Market Shares of Foldable Smartphone Brands in China



2020-2022 Sales and Market Shares of the Head Foldable Smartphone Brand Huawei in China



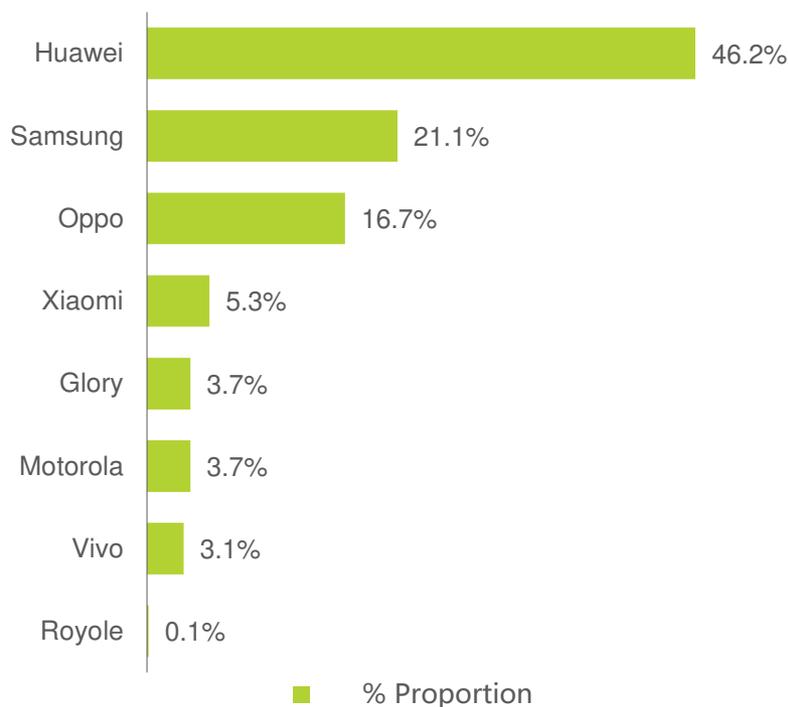
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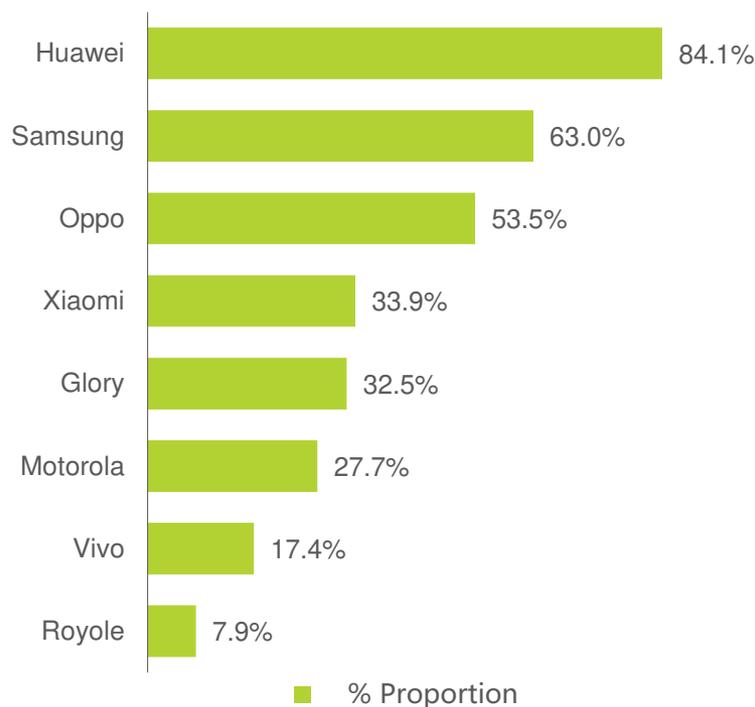
Awareness of Foldable Smartphone Brands

When it comes to foldable smartphone brands, nearly half of the smartphone users first think of Huawei. 84.1% of smartphone users have heard of the foldable mobile phone series launched by Huawei. The overall brand awareness of Huawei and Samsung are both above 60%. They have an obvious first-mover advantage in the field of foldable mobile phones. In recent years, with the joining of more brands and the release of more models, users' awareness of foldable mobile phone brands is also changing rapidly.

First Mentioned Brand of Foldable Smartphones



Brand Awareness of Foldable Smartphone Brands



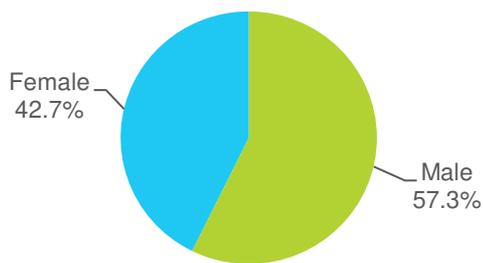
Sample: N=1500, obtained in February 2023 through iResearch consumer insight database surveys.

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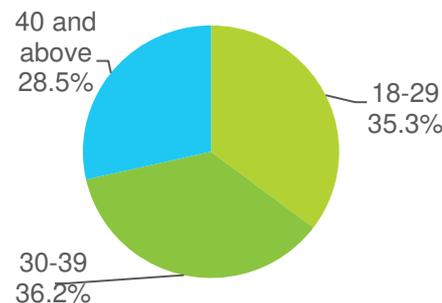
Profile of Horizontal Folding Smartphone Users

Most of the horizontal folding smartphone users are male. Consumers between 18-29 years old are young and love to try new things. Consumers aged between 30 and 39 have a stable income. These two groups account for the highest proportion of horizontal folding smartphones. From the perspective of cities and income, horizontal folding smartphone consumers mostly live in higher-tier cities and over half of them have a monthly income of over 10000 yuan.

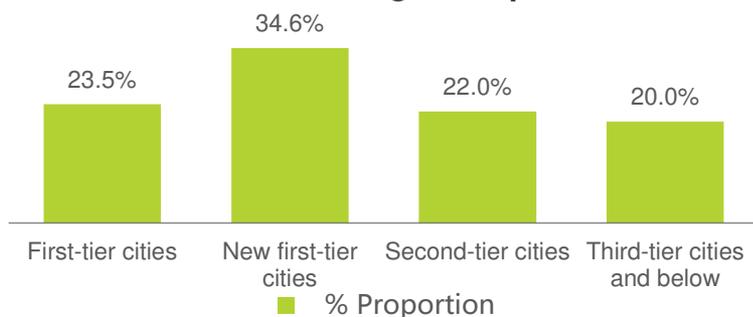
Gender Structure of Horizontal Folding Smartphone Users



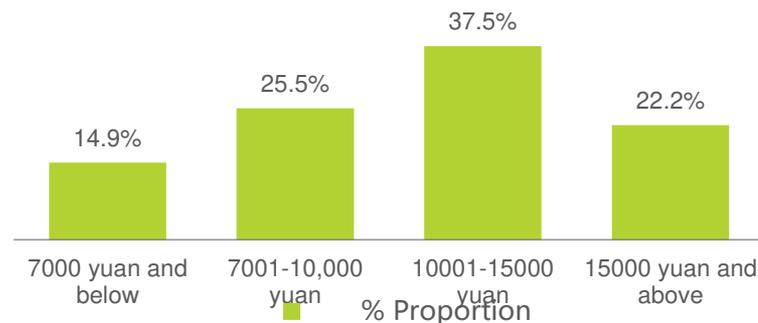
Age Structure of Horizontal Folding Smartphone Users



Location Distribution of Horizontal Folding Smartphone Users



Income Distribution of Horizontal Folding Smartphone Users

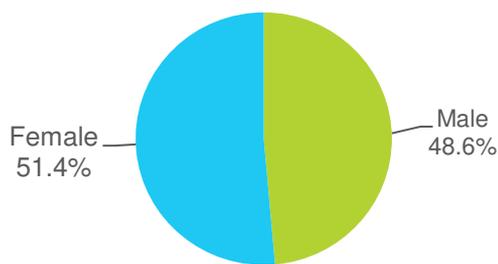


Sample: N=550, obtained in April 2022 and February 2023 through iResearch consumer insight database surveys.

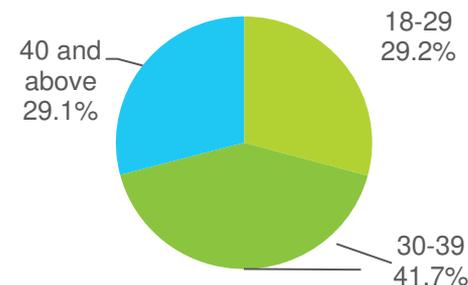
Profile of Vertical Folding Smartphone Users

Vertical folding smartphones and high-end bar smartphones have similar prices and software ecologies. Thus, it is easier to get used to vertical folding smartphones than horizontal folding ones. Vertical folding smartphones are more popular in lower-tier markets and are favored by consumers aged between 30 and 39, who make up 41.7% of the users. From the perspective of cities vertical folding smartphone users are more widely distributed, covering both high-tier and low-tier markets. A large part of users is in lower-tier cities. As to the income of the consumers, the overall distribution is relatively balanced.

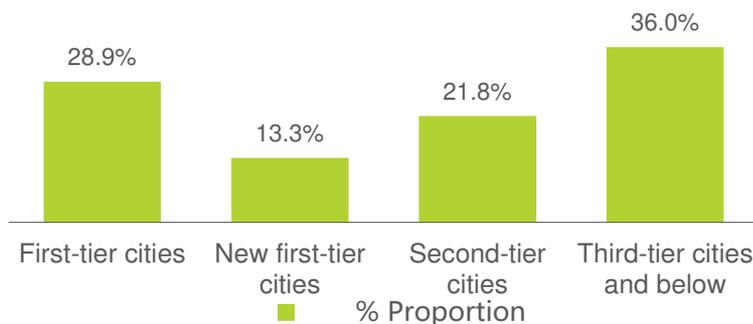
Gender Structure of Vertical Folding Smartphone Users



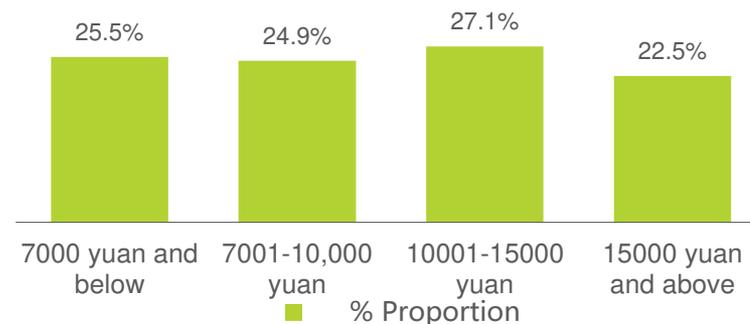
Age Structure of Vertical Folding Smartphone Users



Location Distribution of Vertical Folding Smartphone Users



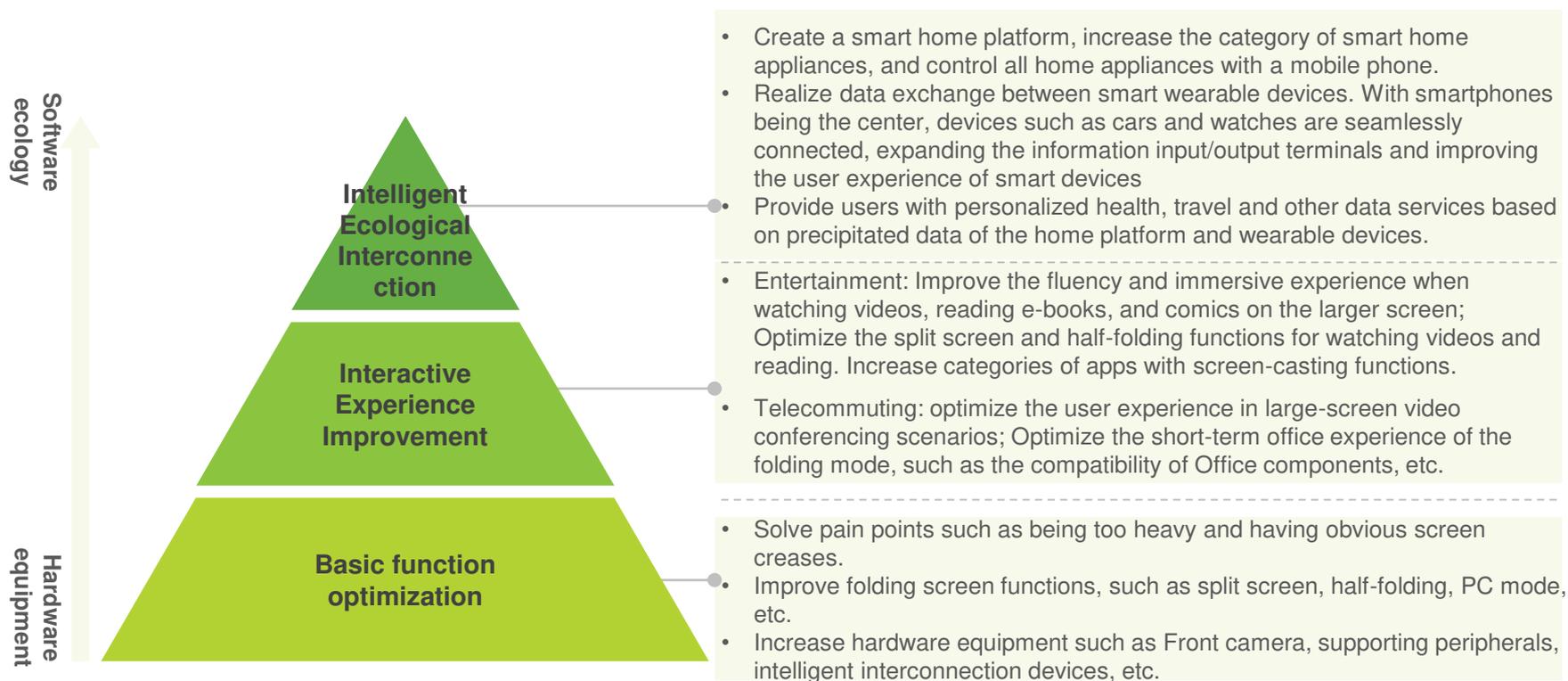
Income Distribution of Vertical Folding Smartphone Users



Sample: N=550, obtained in April 2022 and February 2023 through iResearch consumer insight database surveys.

Development Trends of Foldable Smartphones

Foldable smartphones appeared a few years ago and have been growing rapidly ever since. Relevant hardware equipment and software systems are also being iterated and optimized. Basic function optimization represented by hardware devices is now a priority of brands. However, with the development of technology and the maturing technical, the optimization of basic functions will hit a bottleneck and software ecology will become the main direction when improving user experience. The usage rate and interaction level of the larger screen will increase rapidly.



Source: Public information, interviews with experts and independent research and modeling by iResearch.

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5.1 Development Trends of Foldable Smartphones

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