

Jackson film not part of Sony's new 3-D vision

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In this Oct. 28, 2009 photo, Sony Corporation Chief Executive Officer and President Howard Stringer, center, smiles with Japanese guests at Japan premiere of "Michael Jackson's This is it" in Tokyo, Japan. Michael Jackson videos or the next Spider-Man movie won't be among the titles that Sony Corp. releases in 3-D as it gears up to boost TV sales with that technology, Stringer said Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009. (AP Photo/Shizuo Kambayashi)

(AP) -- Michael Jackson videos or the next Spider-Man movie won't be among the titles that Sony Corp. releases in 3-D as it gears up to boost TV sales with that technology, Chief Executive Howard Stringer said Thursday.

"I don't think that would make sense to be honest," he said in an interview at the Japanese electronics and entertainment company's Tokyo headquarters. "I don't think it will reveal anything else about

Michael Jackson we would want to be see."

"Michael Jackson's This Is It," a Sony film about the King of Pop's final rehearsals before his June 25 death, has grossed more than \$70 million in the U.S., and Sony is planning to release CDs and DVDs of the film.

The Jackson release has been one bright spot in a dismal earnings year for Sony, which has been battered by plunging global demand and a strengthening yen.

Stringer said he didn't think the next "Spider-Man" sequel would be in 3-D either, but a 3-D version of "Men in Black" was being considered. It was unclear what titles in Sony's extensive film library might be reissued in 3-D, he added.

With 3-D TVs, viewers perceive an illusion of depth when they wear special glasses. Sony has said it expects a third to a half of Sony TVs on sale will be packed with 3-D features in three years time.

Stringer was confident Sony will finally reap the benefits of being a company whose businesses span video games, gadgets, music and movies. The company has often pointed to its ownership of content as an advantage over competitors but benefits in boosting gadget sales have so far proved illusory.

Besides forays into 3-D, Stringer believes Sony couldn't have won the Blu-ray disc format war against HD-DVD without its strong relations with Hollywood studios.

Sony Pictures includes Columbia, Tristar and a home entertainment division. Sony, which makes Bravia TVs and [PlayStation 3](#) game consoles, is also part of a consortium that owns MGM.

Blu-ray disc won the format battle in high-definition TVs last year, partly because of backing from Hollywood.

Sony's online service, set to be expanded next year from a version now offered for PlayStation 3, is another way its strength in entertainment will work as a plus, Stringer said. The service will offer downloads of games, video and other entertainment, according to Sony.

"You cannot create stand-alone hardware that has value by itself anymore unless you have some differentiating software," said Stringer.

Welsh-born American Stringer has promised "synergy" from owning hardware and software businesses since taking the helm as the first foreigner to head Sony in 2005.

But Stringer said he needed the latest management shuffle, which he spearheaded eight months ago, to remove barriers between Sony's sprawling businesses that he said operated like "silos" - not communicating effectively and sometimes competing.

"I do feel the group is operating in harmony and in the same direction," he said.

Under a comeback plan announced by Stringer last month, Sony is introducing a wireless version of its electronic book Reader later this year in the U.S., targeting 40 percent market share by the [fiscal year](#) ending March 2013.

The company is also developing its own display for TVs and lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles.

Sony is still struggling, expecting its second straight annual loss for the fiscal year through March 2010. The \$1 billion of red ink racked up the

previous fiscal year was its first annual loss in 14 years.

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