

Taiwan to invest 65 million dollars in e-book industry

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Two workers make their final preparations in February 2009 for the Taipei Book Fair. Taiwan plans to invest more than 65 million US dollars in its competitive electronic-book sector over the next five years, the economic ministry's Industrial Development Bureau said.

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The bureau said it will provide up to 40 percent of the research and development costs for creating an online Chinese-language digital publications service similar to the English-language version operated by Amazon.com.

Specific details were yet to be drafted, with the programme to be formally announced Thursday, the bureau added.

The aim is to boost the annual revenues of digital publication services to 100 billion Taiwan dollars (3.1 billion US) before end of 2013, the bureau said.

The initiative comes as Amazon's [Kindle](#), the most successful [e-book reader](#) to date, continues to post strong sales.

The device, which is manufactured by Taiwan's Foxconn, sold an estimated half a million units in the first year following its November 2007 launch.

More than 20 million e-book readers worth about 4.3 billion US dollars would be sold worldwide in 2013, up from 3.52 million units worth 867 million US dollars, according to Kuo Ming-chi, an analyst at Taipei-based Digitimes.

Taiwan also plans to launch an [open platform](#) that will allow for cooperation in the development and distribution of digital content across countries and companies.

The platform will offer digital publications in different languages, including Chinese, that will be readable using any e-book reader, said Woody T.J. Duh, the bureau's director general.

The ministry plans to discuss technical standards for exchanges of digital information with China in June, which could pave the way for e-book content providers to create a common platform for the Chinese-language market.

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