

Google predicts online search battle on mobile phones

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The battle for leadership in Asia's search engine market will shift from computers to mobile phones as more and more Asians use their handsets to go online, a Google executive said Thursday.

Unlike in the United States, Asians have been quick to embrace cell phones as a means to surf the Internet or check e-mails, said corporate development head Charles Rim.

"The [mobile Internet](#) and the proliferation of useage of mobile Internet is becoming very profound," he said in a conference organised by Bank of America-Merrill Lynch in Singapore.

"So in Asia we have already seen that dynamic where for instance in many markets... the mobile handsets overtook landlines."

He said that for [Google](#) "the battlefield in terms of search is really going to be a mobile battlefield and that's really going to be more important and relevant than the PC battlefield."

The search business remains an important one for Google which is why the California-based Internet giant decided to enter into the highly competitive but lucrative smartphone market.

"Why are we getting involved in phones?" asked Rim. "Not because we make a lot of money selling handsets but we want to help the proliferation of cheap handsets, cheap devices that would see more

Internet proliferation and we know at Google that feeds back into our search engine," he said.

Google marked its entry into the smartphone market with the launch of its [Nexus One](#) device in January, putting it into direct competition with Apple's ultra successful [iPhone](#).

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