

Japan's DoCoMo ties up with publisher to launch e-books

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Japan's NTT DoCoMo executive vice president Kiyoyuki Tsujimura (L) shakes hands with Japan's Dai Nippon Printing executive vice president Koichi Takanami as they announce a tie-up for the new electronic book publishing business during a press conference at a Tokyo hotel.

Japan's top mobile phone operator NTT DoCoMo said Wednesday it would tie up with a major publisher to launch an electronic book service, as it aims to compete with Apple and its hugely popular iPad.

DoCoMo and Dai Nippon Printing (DNP) will also work on eventually developing devices that can read digital literature including novels and manga comics, the two companies said. DNP plans to distribute content from October.

DoCoMo has a solid subscription base, with more than 56.5 million registered users, roughly fifty percent of the market.

Users will be able to access content through an open platform combining DoCoMo's existing content distribution and payment systems with DNP's planned digital bookstores using smartphones, e-book readers and tablet computers, the companies said.

Competition in e-books is heating up on the heels of the global launch of Apple's iPad in May. Apple says it sold 3.27 million iPads in the fiscal quarter ended June.

In Japan, wireless carrier Softbank is Apple's exclusive distribution partner for the iPad and iPhone.

Japan's number two [telecom operator](#) KDDI recently set up a new company with Sony, Toppan Printing and Asahi Shimbun daily to lay the groundwork for selling and distributing [e-books](#).

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