

# Sony Ericsson targeting China's smartphone market

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A man walks past a mobile phone outlet in Beijing in 2009. Sony Ericsson said China would become its biggest handset market by volume in the next three to four years, as it moved to grab a bigger slice of the fast-growing smartphone market.

Sony Ericsson said Wednesday China would become its biggest handset market by volume in the next three to four years, as it moved to grab a bigger slice of the fast-growing smartphone market.

The Japanese-Swedish mobile phone manufacturer estimated smartphone use in China would reach 50 percent of all mobile phone users in the country by 2015, as it launched its latest smartphone, called the A8i, in Beijing.

Smartphones accounted for 11.2 percent of the mobile phone market in the second quarter, according to research firm Analysys International.

"People want smartphones and affordability will be there because smartphones will quickly go down in price range," Sony Ericsson global president Bert Nordberg told reporters.

Sony Ericsson, a joint venture between Ericsson of Sweden and Sony of Japan, said the A8i was developed with [China Mobile](#) and supports the Chinese homegrown third-generation network TD-SCDMA.

The smartphone uses an operating system based on Google's [Android](#) and will hit store shelves in the fourth quarter of this year, Nordberg said.

Sony Ericsson had 9.3 percent of China's smartphone market in the second quarter, ranking the company fourth behind Nokia, [Samsung Electronics](#) and Motorola, according to Analysys.

The A8i was the "first step" in developing smartphones that support the TD-SCDMA network, said Magnus Ahlqvist, president of Sony Ericsson Mobile Communication in China.

"We have a plan to engage more broadly and cover more price ranges," Ahlqvist told reporters.

[Sony Ericsson](#) said the price tag for the A8i smartphone would be decided by China Mobile.

[China](#) had 814 million mobile phone users at the end of July, official data showed.

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