

# Sony eyes December launch of e-readers in Japan

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An Agatha Christie novel is displayed on a Sony e-reader at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2008.

Sony, battling Amazon and Apple in the electronic book reader race, said on Thursday it would launch its latest devices in Japan in December along with a dedicated virtual library.

The move will mark a return to Japan for the electronic giant's e-reader business since it left the market in 2007 after seeing low demand at a time when Japanese consumers were focused on mobile phone books.

The success of Apple's iPad and Amazon's Kindle has however sent electronics makers scrambling to gain a slice of the growing [tablet computer](#) and e-reader market.

Sony has cut the size and weight of its e-readers while expanding the use of touch technology to all models -- allowing users to turn pages with a swipe of the finger like the [Apple](#) iPad.

Unlike the colour [iPad](#), the Sony Reader uses black-and-white e-ink technology.

Its two models, Reader Pocket Edition and Reader Touch Edition will be available December 10 in about 300 Japanese stores, selling for 20,000 yen and 25,000 yen (240 and 300 dollars).

Sony will also open a digital bookstore for the device in Japan as it has elsewhere, offering downloads of around 20,000 titles.

The group hopes to sell 300,000 e-readers in Japan in the first year and expects a 50 percent market share by 2012, the company said.

It also recently created a joint venture with Japan's second-largest telecommunications operator KDDI, the Asahi newspaper group and printing technology firm Toppan to offer services for a variety of devices.

Sony unveiled the latest devices in September and expanded their availability to Australia, China, Italy, and Spain as well as the United States.

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