

Sony to launch PlayStation smartphone in spring

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A model displays a Sony PlayStation Portable in Chiba, suburban Tokyo. The firm's long-rumoured PlayStation Portable smartphone is set to be launched in North America and Europe as early as the spring, according to a Japanese newspaper report Wednesday.

Sony's long-rumoured PlayStation Portable smartphone is set to be launched in North America and Europe as early as the spring, according to a Japanese newspaper report Wednesday.

The device would likely be based on Sony's handheld PSP Go game console, would be made by Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications and run Google's [Android](#) operating system, said the Asahi Shimbun's English edition, citing unnamed sources.

Sony hopes to take on Apple's [iPhone](#), Research in Motion's [BlackBerry](#) and Nokia devices by offering the first [smartphone](#) that is based on a portable game console, with a set of controls that allows very advanced gaming.

The PSP Go, launched in November 2009, already features software downloads through a wireless connection, allowing players to also browse the Internet, watch movies, play music and read books and comics.

The new PlayStation handset would similarly work with Sony's online media platform, the company's answer to Apple's iTunes.

Sony hopes the phone will stimulate sales in the sluggish videogame console market, said the Asahi.

Sony called the newspaper report "speculation" and declined to comment.

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