

Sony unveils new 'NGP' portable game console

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At a special media event in Tokyo, Sony also unveiled a "Suite" application for older PlayStation games, allowing them to be played on mobile phones and tablet computers running Google's Android operating system.

The device, codenamed "Next Generation Portable" will succeed Sony's [PlayStation Portable](#) handheld device and boasts 3G [mobile connectivity](#) and WiFi, allowing users to download games and other content, said Kazuo Hirai, president and group chief executive of [Sony Computer Entertainment](#).

The NGP features a five-inch [organic light-emitting diode \(OLED\)](#) touchscreen, a GPS receiver, a motion sensor and a rear panel touchpad to control certain actions, as well as navigation buttons and a joystick.

Software titles will be available on a small, flash-based memory card, Sony said.

The device will also incorporate front and back cameras and gyroscopic controls.

Sony said the device would be available by the end of 2011, entering the market ahead of the key holiday shopping season. It did not indicate a price.



President of Sony Computer Entertainment, Kazuo Hirai, introduces the

company's next generation portable entertainment device at an event in Tokyo.

The Japanese giant's 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.

Its gaming rival Nintendo is also set to introduce its new 3DS handheld device next month which allows users to play 3D videogames without the need for special glasses, the first major game machine to do so.

"NGP has fascinating new features, such as a touch panel on the backside, which would be enough to differentiate itself from rival game consoles," said Hiroshi Sakai, an analyst at SMBC Friend Securities.

"It's easy to try to compare NGP to Nintendo's 3DS, but they have earned two different customer groups already. Sony has earned serious game fans by providing sophisticated consoles."

Sony sold nearly 65 million PSPs as of the end of September 2010, but the device has been overshadowed by the popularity of Nintendo's DS, which has sold at least double that since its release the same year.

Sony's move comes as smartphones and tablet computers such as Apple's iPhone and iPad take a growing share of the market for portable gaming devices on to which high quality games can be easily downloaded and played in minutes.

The PlayStation Suite, an application for Google's Android market that will run videogames of older PlayStation console quality, will be available later this year.

Sony Corp. shares closed 1.71 percent higher in Tokyo Thursday.

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