

Japan's Sharp to stop sales of Galapagos tablets

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Models display the Japan Sharp Corp. Galapagos 5.5-inch and 10.8-inch tablet computers at a press event in Tokyo on November 29, 2010. Sharp said Thursday it will stop production and sales of the both editions of the tablet computer, just nine months after it was launched.

Japan's Sharp Corp. said Thursday it will stop production and sales of the original editions of its "Galapagos" tablet computer, just nine months after it was launched.

The Osaka-based electronics maker said it will no longer produce its 5.5-inch and 10.8-inch screens, as Apple's iPhone and [iPad](#) continue to dominate the [Japanese market](#).

It will, however, continue to make the 7-inch model that was launched last month for Internet and mobile phone firm eAccess, a Sharp spokeswoman said.

"This is a new and expanding market. Many new products and services have been launched. We believe (the older editions) have fulfilled the purposes that they were designed for," she said.

The company declined to discuss sales figures or performance of the products, only saying the Galapagos business will continue with the eAccess model.

"We believe the market for electronic books will continue to expand. We are continuing our business in the segment" with the 7-inch model, the Sharp spokeswoman said.

Local media said Sharp was effectively pulling out of the market, with Galapagos' sales suffering as consumers opted instead for iPhones and iPads.

Sharp launched the original editions of "Galapagos" in December in a shift, the company said, from conventional one-off sales of stand-alone products to devices that will continue to "evolve" through software updates.

The 5.5-inch screen model with a trackball allowed one-handed operation and was intended for commuters on crowded trains, while the 10.8-inch screen version accommodated a two-page magazine spread for home users.

Sharp sold the products only via mail or Internet-based orders.

But Apple's [iPhone](#) with a 3.5-inch screen and iPad with a 9.7-inch

screen have dominated the Japanese market, despite aggressive efforts by Japanese and foreign manufacturers to expand their influence.

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