

Amazon to start Japan ebook business: reports

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This file photo shows the latest version of US online retail giant Amazon's Kindle electronic reader. Amazon will start a Japanese-language ebook business as early as this year, the Nikkei business daily and Jiji press reported on Thursday.

US online giant Amazon will start a Japanese-language ebook business as early as this year, the Nikkei business daily and Jiji press said Thursday.

The company, which already has a strong retail presence in Japan, is in the final stages of talks with major Japanese publishers, the Nikkei said.

Amazon is also considering a launch of its Kindle reader for Japanese customers, the Nikkei said.

The company was hoping to start the business in time for the Christmas

sales season, Jiji said.

Amazon's Japanese representatives declined to comment on the report.

Japanese publishers have been reluctant to provide content to Amazon over concerns that the retailer will sell ebooks at bargain prices, the Nikkei said.

The US firm however appears to be making headway in negotiations by proposing a framework in which the timing and scope of price cuts would be discussed with [publishers](#) in advance, the business daily said.

Despite the buzz about ebooks in the rest of the world, [Japan](#) has failed to develop the sector so far, offering only a limited number of book titles with several competing technological standards.

The Japanese [ebook market](#) was estimated at 65 billion yen (\$846 million) in the year to March 2011, compared with roughly two trillion yen for [printed books](#) and magazines, according to the Nikkei.

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