

Microsoft hires Qualcomm exec to make more deals (Update)

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Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella has lured away an executive from smartphone chip maker Qualcomm to hammer out more deals that will expand the software maker's presence in the mobile device market.

Margaret "Peggy" Johnson will serve as Microsoft Corp.'s executive vice president of business development after spending the past 24 years at Qualcomm Corp. She will report directly to Nadella in her new job.

Since succeeding Steve Ballmer as Microsoft's CEO six months ago, Nadella has been focused on ways to make Microsoft's software and other services more appealing to use on smartphones and tablets as people increasingly rely on those devices instead of desktop and laptop computers.

Microsoft Windows operating system has long been the most influential force on personal computers, but the Redmond, Washington, company has been eclipsed by Apple Inc. and Google Inc. in the mobile market. Apple has become the world's most valuable company, largely because of its trend-setting iPhone and iPad, while Google parlayed its dominance of Internet search to create Android, the mostly widely used mobile operating system.

"Peggy shares our worldview and knows what it takes to drive new growth in mobility and the cloud," Nadella said.

Johnson, 52, most recently was an executive vice president of

Qualcomm Technologies and was also president of the San Diego company's global market development. With her hiring, Johnson becomes the third woman on Microsoft's 15-person team of senior executives at a time when technology companies are under intensifying pressure to diversify their leadership and lessen their reliance on men.

Besides her past stint at Qualcomm, Johnson also sits on the board of concert promoter and ticket seller Live Nation Entertainment Inc.

Johnson starts her new job at Microsoft on Sept. 1.

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