

Panasonic profit soars on automotive business growth

May 10 2018



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Japanese electronics giant Panasonic on Thursday said its full-year net profit surged, helped by growth in its automotive-related business.

The Osaka-based [company](#) said net profit for the fiscal year to March

rose 58 percent to 236 billion yen (\$2.1 million), up from 149 billion yen in the previous year.

"Increases in both sales and profit were achieved for fiscal 2018 due mainly to growth in the automotive and industrial-related businesses," the company said in a statement, adding that exchange rates also contributed to increased revenue.

The company has been enjoying a solid recovery, particularly with healthy sales of electronics products for automobiles such as navigation units.

The automotive sales increased thanks to "market growth for eco-cars and expanded demand in advanced driver-assistance systems," Panasonic said.

Panasonic has partnered with local automotive titan Toyota and has provided batteries for US electric vehicle innovator Tesla, as it explores ways to expand beyond its mainstay electronics.

Jointly with Tesla, Panasonic produces lithium-ion battery cells at a "gigafactory" but Tesla's new mass-market model has been hit by a production delay.

Panasonic added that it is also boosting production capacity for automotive batteries at a new factory in Dalian, China.

Operating [profit](#) jumped 37.5 percent to 381 billion yen while sales rose 8.7 percent to 7.9 trillion yen, the company said.

It forecast [net profit](#) would climb 5.9 percent to 250 billion yen with [sales](#) rising 4.0 percent to 8.3 trillion yen for the coming year.

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Citation: Panasonic profit soars on automotive business growth (2018, May 10) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-05-panasonic-profit-soars-automotive-business.html>

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