

Sony nearly doubles first-half net profits, upgrades forecast

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Sony on Tuesday announced its six-month net profit had nearly doubled from last year to a new record, and upgraded its annual forecasts, with

games and movies leading the way.

The electronics and entertainment giant said April-September [net profit](#) reached 399.4 billion yen (\$3.5 billion), up 88.7 percent from a year ago and marking a record high for the period.

Operating profit and sales were both up, with video games driving the good news, including blockbuster software titles like "God of War" and "Spider-Man".

Unit sales of PlayStation 4 consoles slowed, but Sony's quality sensors for smartphone cameras saw explosive demand, becoming a major pillar of the firm's revenue.

Movies and music segments also contributed to growing profits, though Sony's mobile [phone business](#) continued to struggle.

The robust six-month performance, with [operating profit](#) up 20.1 percent to 434.5 billion yen and sales up 5.5 percent to 4.1 trillion yen, prompted Sony to upgrade forecasts for the second half.

It now projects an annual net profit of 705 billion yen, operating [profit](#) of 870 billion yen and sales of 8.7 trillion yen.

Sony had previously forecast a moderate slowdown for the rest of the year.

Analysts said the company results showed it was entering a growth phase after a remarkable recovery that followed several painful years of huge losses.

"Its game sector has continued spearheading its recovery. Strong titles offset slowing sales of PlayStation 4 consoles," Hideki Yasuda, an

analyst at Ace Research Institute in Tokyo, told AFP ahead of the company's announcement.

"Other than mobile businesses, I have not seen any major risks surrounding Sony," he said.

Yasuo Imanaka, an analyst at Rakuten Securities in Tokyo, said "Sony has already completed a full-fledged comeback and is now heading toward a new growth phase".

"The only concern is its [mobile phone business](#). Sony is required to revamp the sector drastically," he told AFP before the announcement.

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