



# Sony plans first foreign-led PlayStation launch

TOKYO, JAPAN: Sony said on Monday, 9 September, it would sell its new PlayStation 4 games console in Japan next year after its US launch, the first time its declining home market has taken second place.

## SONY

The company released earlier versions of the PlayStation at home before making it available overseas.

But Sony said its newest console would be available in Japan in late February, several months after its 15 November release in North America.

"We decided this would be the best timing for the launch in Japan because we want to make sure game titles that are popular in Europe and North America and those for the Japanese market will all be ready by the release," Hiroshi Kawano, president of Sony Computer Entertainment Japan Asia, told a press briefing in Tokyo.

Japan has been a declining market for Sony's games unit. For the original PlayStation, 18.6% of global sales were in Japan.

Its successor, the PlayStation 2, tallied 14.7% of sales in Japan, while the PS3 racked up 11.9% of sales at home, according to data from VGChartz Network.

North America, by comparison, accounted for about one-third of all PlayStation sales.

The new PlayStation would sell for just under ¥40,000 in Japan, about the same as in the United States, it said, as rival Microsoft gets set to release its new Xbox One console in November.

Last month, domestic rival Nintendo cut the price of its Wii U video game console and introduced an entry-level version of its DS handheld gaming device in moves aimed at boosting sales.

Nintendo, maker of the Donkey Kong and Super Mario brands, has been locked in a war with Sony and Microsoft for dominance of a sector worth about \$44bn a year. But the trio has faced a big challenge from cheap - or sometimes free - downloadable games for smartphones and tablets.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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