

Sony Wants Number Two Spot in Tablets in 2012

Written by Bob Snyder
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An entire group of reporters at CES listened as top Sony execs told them Sony wants to take the number two spot behind Apple's iPad in terms of tablet PC sales by 2012.

"I wants don't get" may be a familiar expression in Europe but maybe not in Tokyo.

For Sony (who has yet to decide on a tablet) to become Number Two in a very, very competitive tablet world, sounds a lot like "Californian dreaming" or at least Las Vegas loose talk. You would normally dismiss this if it wasn't Sony and if it wasn't their top elite.



"We would really like to take the no. 2 position in a year," says Kunimasa Suzuki, deputy president of Sony Computer Entertainment.

So would many other companies who seem to be faster a foot than Sony these days.

Sony has been slow to market because "it is carefully considering how to create a distinct product" to stand out from the tablet deluge.

"We have to put a table on the market that's differentiated," explains Sony CEO Howard Stringer.

But the *geijin* head of Sony seems settling into the Japanese style of consensus management rather than the uglier Western version where Steve, Bill and Larry run roughshod over the

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organization in the hope to keep the elephant dancing.

In fact, this may be the first recording of a discussion where Sony publicly admitted to aiming for a Number 2 position. So it's hard to tell whether this is good news (a less arrogant Sony) or bad news (still an unrealistic Sony).

When asked about taking advantage of the Sony Ericsson experience, Suzuki rationalises "...we have to have a unified strategy." Hmm, more company meetings while iPad sells another 7 million.

Sony has had tablets in development for some time (since May 2010 at least) and now plans to launch some this year. Maybe their relationship with Google Android might turn out a stunning product...

They would certainly need a Walkman-size hit to get even close to the second position in tablet sales mark by 2012.

And Sony, for decades the most feared brand for innovation in consumer electronics, still looks like its once-Elvis-size appeal has left the building. Maybe Sony's new slogan does sum it all up for vision and mindset: **SONY. make.believe.**

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