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Sony to pull out of GPS market in Europe

Existing models to be discontinued in 2008

by Amy-Mae Elliott published on 18 April 2008

Pocket-lint has learned that Sony is effectively to withdraw from the competitive, and somewhat crowded, satnav market in Europe after just 3 years of offering GPS receivers to consumers in the territory.

Although the Sony spokesperson who provided us with an official statement on the company's current position says that Sony "will not discontinue" the GPS business, existing models will in fact be discontinued in 2008 with no updated devices planned to replace them.

The Sony spokesperson's statement reads as follows: "Sony will not discontinue the GPS business, however we do not currently have plans to introduce new models during 2008 and we will discontinue existing models during 2008".

"Sony has a certain level of success in Europe, however we have considered various aspects such as position in industry, competitiveness of current product line-up and prospective PND business for next few years in Europe."

"The decision was made based on the difficulty to operate this business within its current structure by taking into account the increase in development cost, accelerating price competition and especially business profitability."

"Future model launches are continually under consideration taking into account business conditions and market situation."

The GPS market in Europe is increasingly competitive with leaders TomTom enjoying a near 50% market share in 2007 and ViaMichelin and Navigon feeling the pinch and recently announcing a joint venture due to "economies of



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scale".