

NEC Casio Mobile To Sell Medias Smartphones In Latin America

TOKYO (Nikkei)--NEC Casio Mobile Communications Ltd. plans to sell smartphones in Central and South America, starting first with Mexico in June.

The company will be selling the NEC-branded Medias series of Android-based smartphones, which are waterproof, dustproof and a slender 8mm thick.

In Mexico, the Medias smartphones will be sold through Telcel, which is Mexico's leading wireless communications provider.

Telcel is a unit of the South American communications giant America Movil. If the smartphones sell well in Mexico, NEC Casio will likely enter Brazil, Argentina and other countries via America Movil.

In Japan, NEC Casio faces severe competition from other smartphone makers and ranks seventh in terms of domestic market share. In fiscal 2011 its domestic shipments declined 24.9% to 3.01 million units.

The company already sells smartphones in the U.S., China and Thailand. With its expansion into Latin America, NEC Casio aims to expand foreign sales to 50% of total shipments in fiscal 2013, compared to 30% in fiscal 2011.

In Mexico, smartphones accounted for around 30% of the roughly 30 million mobile phones sold in 2011. This year they are expected to comprise 40% of total sales due to their growing popularity among affluent consumers.

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