

Bloomberg: Nikon Eyes Smartphones

Written by Marco Attard
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As point-and-shoot camera sales drop, so do Nikon earnings-- therefore there is no surprise when president Makoto Kimura admits to Bloomberg the company is looking into ways to tap into smartphone growth.



"The number of people taking snapshots is exploding by use of smartphones that sold 750 million or so last year and are still growing," Kimura says. "We've centralized our ideas around cameras but can change our approach to offer products to that bigger market."

According to Kimura camera sales "across the industry" for the April-May period are down by about -25% Y-o-Y basis, while Nikon results come "a little short" to "fairly low" estimates.

The Nikon imaging division expects expects the overall compact camera market to shrink by -12% during fiscal 2013, while high-end models might grow by 9%. In fact the company hopes high-end demand will compensate for slower compact sales "for several more years," even as the company looks for more growth drivers.

"We want to create a product that will change the concept of cameras," Kimura tells Bloomberg. "It could be a non-camera consumer product."

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As well as mystery products (maybe smartphones?) Nikon might follow Canon, Sony and Olympus in a non-consumer growth market-- medical imaging. No specific deals are going on, but both Canon and Sony have tie-ups with hospitals and medical equipment makers, and Olympus is the biggest endoscope maker in the world.

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