

Sony names two executives to lead PlayStation

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Sony on Monday said two veteran executives will take over as CEOs of its powerhouse gaming unit, taking the reins from Jim Ryan who retired in March.

Hermen Hulst and Hideaki Nishino will report to Sony Interactive Entertainment's (SIE) group chairman Hiroki Totoki, who had been filling in as interim CEO, a statement said.

Industry observers noted that it was not usual practice to split the leadership of a Sony division.

Hulst will be CEO of the newly named Studio Business Group, which includes PlayStation's developers and covers the expansion of PlayStation brands into TV and film.

Nishino will lead the Platform Business Group, which includes console hardware, technology, and accessories. He will also be in charge of relations with major publishers and indie studios.

Ryan joined SIE in 1994 and held a number of senior positions before heading the division from 2019 and is credited with putting the PlayStation 5 on track to become its most successful console yet.

After its launch in 2020, production of the PlayStation 5 was initially hit by the global shortage of semiconductors in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

The PlayStation then quickly gained ground, but the company in February announced a round of layoffs as the tech industry suffered a wave of job cuts.

The PlayStation 5 is also facing stiff competition from the Nintendo Switch and could see a tougher rivalry with Microsoft's Xbox, after the tech giant's buyout of "Call of Duty" maker Activision Blizzard.

Ryan was at the forefront of Sony's failed fight to prevent Microsoft's mammoth takeover of Activision Blizzard.

Sony under Ryan spent heavily on buying games studios. In 2022, it bought Bungie, makers of "Halo" and "Destiny," for \$3.6 billion.

Sony has also invested in Epic Games, the makers of "Fortnite," and bought a stake in Japan's FromSoftware, the company behind "Elden Ring" and "Dark Souls."

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