An Achilles' heel for Wii's popularity?

April 15 2009, By Rob Watson

Wii

Awhile back, I had questioned the staying power of Nintendo's Wii. An almost ridiculous notion considering the eye-popping sales numbers the console continues to enjoy. Selling more than 750,000 units in February (Xbox 360: 391,000, PS3: 276,000) is just insane.

Yet, one of the reasons for my concerns about the big N winning a 12-round decision was based on questioning friends about how often they used their Wii. The answers weren't very encouraging.

Now, Nielsen Media Research has published the results of a poll in which console owners were questioned in the fourth quarter of last year

about the time they spent playing. The numbers are as I had suspected.

According to Nielsen, the average sessions for Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and Wii owners were 78, 64 and 58 minutes, respectively. Wii owners also were less likely to use their consoles more than once a week compared with owners of the 360 and PS3.

To be fair, it must be remembered that 360 and PS3 owners also can do other things on their consoles (watch movies, for example) that the Wii camp cannot. Unfortunately, there isn't a breakdown in this poll to separate non-gaming time from gaming time.

It really doesn't matter too much, though, and services offered are services offered. The fact of the matter is that the Wii is selling like mad but isn't being used as much.

Is it such a big deal? To third-party developers and publishers, I would think so. If I buy "Madden" on the Wii but don't play it half as much as the person who bought "Madden" on one of the other consoles, which gamer would be likeliest to get the next "Madden" game?

I wonder how much Nintendo really cares, though, as it counts wads of cash, day in and day out.

Company officials know that casual gaming can attract the largest pool of gamers. Heck, Nielsen also claims "Solitaire" and "Free Cell" were the top-played games for December, so Nintendo is definitely onto something. I just can't help feeling that when all is said and done, the Wii will lose its luster sooner than, say, the 360, because on any given day many Wii owners can take it or leave it when it comes to playing. Owners of 360 and PS3 consoles seem to think, and most definitely play, differently.

(c) 2009, The Philadelphia Inquirer.
Visit Philadelphia Online, the Inquirer's World Wide Web site, at
www.philly.com/
Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Information Services.

Citation: An Achilles' heel for Wii's popularity? (2009, April 15) retrieved 24 April 2024 from
https://phys.org/news/2009-04-achilles-heel-wii-popularity.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.