

Sony latest to demo videogame motion-sensing controller

June 3 2009, by Glenn Chapman



Rick Anton demonstrates a prototype of Sony's new motion-sensing controller during Sony's media briefing at the Electronics and Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angeles, California. Sony's new controller aims to allow gamers to direct game play with a wireless handheld device.

Sony on Tuesday demonstrated a prototype motion-sensing videogame controller, as the maker of PlayStation consoles joined rivals in a trend away from playing with complicated buttons and joysticks.

Sony Computer Entertainment researcher Richard Marks provided a glimpse of the prototype controller at the Japanese firm's press

conference at the open of the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles.

"It's more distinct and cool feature is a glowing sphere on the end that the [PlayStation 3](#) eye can track," said Marks, as a colleague wielded what looked like a pair of television remote controls with lights on the tips.

The camera tracked the player's movements, and software translated his movements to onscreen characters wielding swords, racquets, flashlights, maces, guns, baseball bats, and other implements.

"We want to enable gamers," Marks said. "We expect very casual players."

Nintendo is credited with opening the videogame market to new legions of "casual" players with family-friendly Wii consoles launched in 2006.

Nintendo on Tuesday showed off Wii MotionPlus gizmos that enhance the precision of the consoles motion-sensing wand controllers.

Wii offers controllers shaped like television remotes, car steering wheels, guns, and bathroom scales.

Nintendo said it will release Wii MotionPlus gadgets, essentially cubes that plug into bases of the consoles' wand-shaped controllers, in the United States on July 26.

French videogame powerhouse Ubisoft is releasing a "Your Shape" videogame designed for [Wii](#) that uses a camera to scan players' bodies and replicate them on-screen, where a virtual trainer coaches them through exercise routines.

[Ubisoft](#) said it worked with Nintendo to develop a camera to scan

players' body shapes into consoles for an exercise game that gauges what shape people are in, lets them set fitness goals and tracks progress.

"Your Shape" is to be available in time for the year-end holiday shopping season.

Microsoft revealed on Monday that it has been secretly developing technology that lets people play videogames using natural body movements instead of hand-held controllers.

The US software giant behind Xbox 360 videogame consoles revealed a prototype of a project code named "Natal," a system that combines cameras and voice and face recognition software to recognize people and their actions.

Natal lets people play driving games by simply moving hands as if turning a car [steering wheel](#). In-game characters in boxing, skateboard, soccer and other sports titles mimic the body movements of real-world players.

The system scans faces and voices to determine who is playing, a demonstration showed.

Xbox 360 consoles equipped with Natal will be able to respond to spoken commands for actions such as playing movies or connecting online with friends for video chats.

An expected completion date for Natal was not disclosed, but Microsoft on Monday released a software kit for videogame makers interested in designing titles to take advantage of Natal's capabilities.

Nintendo of America president Reggie Fils-Aime on Tuesday said "physical reality has become the new proving ground for videogame

innovation."

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