

For Sega, future wasn't dreamy

September 18 2009, By Rob Watson



Last week marked a momentous occasion in gaming for me and I am sure for many others as well. Sept. 9 was the 10th anniversary of the release of Sega Dreamcast. Yes, yes, I know. It got whopped in a very short amount of time by the success of PlayStation 2, but that is the last time I can remember getting so excited about the debut of a new console.

Part of it was because I had spent most of my formative gaming years with Sega, saving my own money to buy them all, from the Master System to Genesis, Saturn, even the disastrous 32X.

Sure, I had the early Atari and [Nintendo](#) systems as a kid, but those

consoles and games were all pretty much presents of some kind or another. Sega made me a discriminating buyer.

So, when the Dreamcast launched on Sept. 9, 1999, I was one of the first to buy it at KB Toys. It was the first time I actually played football against another person not sitting next to me thanks to the Visual Concepts 2K series and the included 56k modem. It was hard to believe at the time. Then came "Shenmue," "Soul Calibur," "Metropolis" "Street Racer" (which went on to become "Project Gotham Racing"), "Quake III Arena," "Dead or Alive" and the list went on. Gamers even had their choice of the standard controller, or let's see ... a fishing rod, maracas, flight sticks, bongos, steering wheels -- man, it offered so many different controllers to play games.

While the games were good, Sega did an awful job of marketing and creating relationships with developers, often creating confusion with release dates and technical capabilities.

Then, while DVD players were still costing at least \$300, Sony's DVD-ready [PlayStation 2](#) debuted just over a year later with a tiny game catalog but something the Dreamcast didn't have: backward compatibility with PS1 games and the aforementioned DVD player capability. It was only a year later, in October 2001, that Sega quit making Dreamcast. For many Sega fans who suffered through a number of botched decisions from corporate headquarters, it was the final straw and probably doomed any future hardware considerations from Sega.

So I dug up my Dreamcast last week, throwing in "Fur Fighters," "Crazy Taxi," and "Re-Volt" just for kicks.

They were still as fun as they once were; it's a shame I can't say the same about the company that made the console I was playing them on.

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