

Xbox Live boots pirate videogame players; will link to Twitter, Facebook, Last.fm

November 12 2009



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Users of Web-connected Xbox consoles, a premium service called Xbox Live that allows videogame players to compete online, will also be able to view video from Zune, Microsoft's digital media player, the company said.

Microsoft said the service will go live on Tuesday.

Users will be able to access [Facebook](#) using the [Xbox 360](#) console, view and send Twitter messages, listen to music on Last.fm or watch Zune video.

"We've already seen a tremendous response to these features in our public preview," said Xbox Live general manager Marc Whitten.

The move is the latest attempt by Microsoft to put the Xbox 360 console at the heart of home entertainment.

Console owners who subscribe to [Xbox Live](#) are already able to connect to online movie rental service Netflix.

Xbox Live boots pirate videogame players

Internet classified ad and auction websites were rife Thursday with Xbox 360 consoles modified to play pirated videogames in the wake of the devices being banned from Microsoft's online game community.

Microsoft declined to specify how many "modded Xbox" consoles were booted from the US technology giant's Xbox Live network but reports have pegged the figure at more than half a million.

"Microsoft's commitment to combat piracy and support safer and more secure gameplay for the more than 20 million members of the Xbox Live community remains a top priority," the company said in response to an AFP inquiry.

"All consumers should know that piracy is illegal and modifying their Xbox 360 console violates the Xbox Live terms of use, will void their warranty and result in a ban from Xbox Live."

The Microsoft crackdown on modified consoles was evidently triggered

in part by online play of hotly-anticipated "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2" prior to its blockbuster worldwide debut on Tuesday.

"We can assure you that if an Xbox Live member follows the Xbox Live terms of use, purchased a retail copy of 'Modern Warfare 2' and played the game on an unmodified Xbox 360, no action will be taken," Microsoft said.

Leading online auction house eBay and popular Internet classified ad website Craigslist abounded on Thursday with offers to sell modded Xbox 360 consoles, with some sellers mentioning the Xbox Live ban up front.

"Got banned last week," wrote one aspiring Xbox 360 seller in a Craigslist post in the San Francisco area. "I'm ok with a trade for an unbanned modded or unmodded Xbox 360."

Many ads tried to entice buyers by tossing console accessories or videogames into deals.

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Citation: Xbox Live boots pirate videogame players; will link to Twitter, Facebook, Last.fm (2009, November 12) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-11-xbox-boots-pirate-videogame-players.html>

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