

# Microsoft to launch Kinect in Japan in November

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A model shows a Microsoft's new Kinect motion-sensing system for the Xbox 360 videogame console at a press briefing in Tokyo Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2010. The new Kinect, featuring a 3-D camera and motion recognition software, people can play videogames by body movements without using any hand-held controllers. It will hit the Japanese market on Nov. 20. (AP Photo/Shizuo Kambayashi)

Microsoft's long-awaited Kinect motion-sensing system for the Xbox 360 videogame console will hit the Japanese market in November, the company said Wednesday, as competition in the sector heats up.

Scheduled for a November 20 release, Kinect uses a 3D camera and motion recognition software to let people play videogames using natural body movements and voice commands, and does not require hand-held controllers.

The launch comes as rivals Microsoft and Sony look to close in on

Japan's Nintendo, which pioneered motion controls with its hit Wii consoles in 2006.

Boasting total lifetime sales of more than 70 million units, a record in Nintendo's history, the Wii has easily outsold Sony's PlayStation 3 and Microsoft's Xbox 360 since its 2006 launch.

The Xbox 360 has sold 40 million units worldwide, Microsoft said.

Kinect was developed by Microsoft under the code name Project Natal and unveiled in June at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angeles. It is expected to launch in the United States on November 4.

Users can play driving games by simply moving their hands as if turning a car steering wheel. On-screen figures in sports or dance titles mimic the body movements of people in the real-world.

In Japan, Microsoft will sell the 4 gigabyte Xbox 360 and Kinect sensor in a 29,800 yen (357 dollar) package. The standalone the Kinect Sensor will be available for 14,800 yen.

The company will also release six Kinect game titles, including "Kinect Adventure!" and "Kinect Sports", while planning to launch four other family friendly gesture-sensing games by early 2011.

Nintendo last September cut prices of the Wii for the first time in response to the tough competition from Sony and Microsoft in the multi-billion dollar industry.

Sony plans to launch its hotly anticipated motion-sensing Move controller that it hopes will fuel new interest in its PlayStation 3 (PS3) console.

"Move" wands that synch with "Eye" cameras on the consoles will hit the market in time for the year-end holiday shopping season.

Sony, Microsoft, and Nintendo are expected to reveal rich line-ups of videogame titles they hope will win players to their motion-control systems.

Competition in 3-D gaming is set to escalate in the coming months.

Upcoming Playstation titles will work with new 3D televisions that Sony unveiled early this year. A software update to existing PS3 consoles will allow them to run 3D videogames.

Nintendo is also due to launch its new generation DS handheld videogame system that lets people play in 3D without having to use special glasses.

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