

US videogame sales continue downward slide

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Visitors are seen trying out games at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angeles, in June 2010. US videogame sales slid again in August as the industry hoped that hot titles and new motion-sensing controllers due out in coming months would reverse its fortunes.

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Revenue from videogame software and hardware tallied 818.9 million dollars, 10 percent less than the 910.3 million dollars taken in during the same month last year, according to data released Thursday by NPD Group.

"In fact, this month reflected the lowest sales for August since 2006," said NPD analyst Anita Frazier.

"While all categories are down in both dollars and units, the portable portion of the industry is down to a greater extent than is the console portion."

Sales of portable videogame devices, accessories and games plunged 25 percent as compared to August of 2010, while revenue from consoles was down six percent, NPD reported.

The disappointing figures came with fading hopes that a recovering economy would re-ignite sales in a videogame industry that was booming at the start of the global fiscal crisis.

Sales of [videogames](#) and gear as of the end of August were 8.37 billion dollars, down 8.0 percent from the 9.09 billion dollars taken in at the same point the previous year, according to NPD.

US videogame industry sales slipped about one percent in July despite a jump in the number of shoppers snatching up [Xbox 360](#), [PlayStation 3](#) (PS3) and [Wii](#) consoles, the market tracker reported.

Xbox 360 was the top selling videogame console in August, with people spending 356,700 dollars on the Microsoft-made consoles.

Sony posted a 13th straight month of improved year-over-year PS3 sales in the United States, taking in 226,000 dollars in August.

Spending on videogame software dropped 14 percent to 403.5 million, with the freshly released "Madden NFL 11" sports title centered on US football being the best-seller.

Next week's release of "Halo: Reach" is expected to boost videogame sales as the franchise has a broad and devoted following.

Frazier expected the videogame to kick off a wave of "mega-title releases" in the remainder of the year.

In coming months, Sony is to begin selling a Move accessory to add motion-sensing control capabilities to PS3 consoles and Microsoft is to release Kinect hardware that lets players use body movement to command the Xbox 360.

Frazier predicted the US retail videogame sales for this year would be in the range of 18.6 to 20 billion dollars given "the incredible games and accessories (e.g., Move and Kinect) that are coming out."

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