

Microsoft sold 8 mln Kinects in first two months

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Ballmer used much of his time on stage for a keynote presentation on the eve of the [Consumer Electronics Show](#) (CES) to tout the booming popularity of [Xbox 360](#) devices and the Live online community linked to the consoles.

More than 50 million Xbox 360 consoles have been sold worldwide, and Live membership has topped 30 million, according to Ballmer.

"This has been the biggest holiday and the biggest year ever for Xbox," Ballmer said. "A new member joins Xbox Live every two seconds."

The Live network lets people play videogames with one another online, access websites such as Facebook, and download movies, music or other digital content.

"Your Xbox is becoming the hub of your living room," Ballmer said. "It is your gaming system, but it's your movie, it's your TV experience, it's a TV show, and it's your sporting event."

Ballmer boasted that Microsoft sold more than eight million Kinect devices in the 60 days after it hit the market in November.

Kinect lets people control on-screen action with body movements or spoken commands and is priced at 150 dollars.



A woman plays with an Xbox games console at a consumer electronics fair in Paris. More than 50 million of the consoles have been sold worldwide.

Microsoft is tapping into Kinect camera and face recognition technology to let people represent themselves in the Live [virtual world](#) with

animated characters that resemble them and copy expressions and gestures in real time.

The Avatar Kinect feature will be available by mid-year to people who subscribe to [Xbox Live](#) "gold" memberships.

Ballmer also used the keynote speech to extol smartphones running on freshly released Windows Phone 7 software and promise that versions for Sprint and Verizon telecom networks in the United States would be out in coming months.

He also highlighted the array of slick new computers on display at CES running on Microsoft's latest operating system.

"Only the imagination limits what can be done with Windows PCs today: write on them, draw on them, hang them on the wall, touch them, use a wireless keyboard, play a game, and much, much more," Ballmer said.

Noticeably absent was any sign of Microsoft plans to take on Apple and Google in the hot tablet computer market.

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