Microsoft to release a free SDK for Kinect this spring

February 22 2011, by Katie Gatto

(PhysOrg.com) -- Kinect, Microsoft's attempt to bring motion controls to the Xbox 360 video game console, is soon to have a non-commercial SDK released for it that will hopefully allow third-party developers to create new uses for the motion-based system, some of them may even be outside of the world of gaming.

The non-commercial SDK is being developed by a team led by Don Mattrick, president of the Interactive Entertainment Business at Microsoft, and is expected to be released to developers as a free download at an as yet undetermined date in the spring of this year.

The SDK is expected to give developers access to the system application programming interfaces and the audio system, as well as granting direct control of the Kinect sensor itself.

Microsoft also has plans to release a commercial version of the SDK at a later date. The free version will be a kind of an SDK starter kit, designed with users from the academic research community and enthusiasts in mind.

For those of you not familiar with the device, Kinect is the motion-based control system that was launched for the Xbox 360 in November of 2010. It uses a camera bar in order to allow users to interact with the games. Kinect currently retails for $150. The device has a fairly large user community, with more than 8 million Kinect devices sold in its first 60 days on the market.

The Kinect device has already had several attempts to hack it made public, with varying levels of success. For example, one successful hack exploited the USB connection which allows the device to connect to the Xbox 360.

  More information: blogs.technet.com/b/microsoft_ … ive-spring-2011.aspx

Using Xbox Kinect, standard graphics chips, researchers achieve highest frame rate yet for streaming holographic video

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