

Nintendo says 3DS sales weaker than expected

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A Nintendo employee displays a portable videogame console with a 3D display called the "Nintendo 3DS" at a conference in Tokyo 2010. Nintendo president Satoru Iwata said Tuesday sales of its new 3DS handheld game player had been weaker than expected in the US and Europe, as well as in Japan where the quake hit consumer sentiment.

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The 3DS, the world's first video game console with a 3-D screen that works without special glasses, went on sale on February 26 in Japan and hit the shelves in the US and Europe in the last week of March.

"Sales of the 3DS have been weaker than expected since the second

week of launch in the US and Europe," even though the first week was solid, Iwata said at a briefing for investors, Dow Jones Newswires reported.

Nintendo had been hoping the device would reverse its sliding fortunes in an increasingly crowded market.

The entertainment giant said Monday it sold 3.61 million of the portable players, short of its forecast of four million.

Nintendo also said it would unveil its new Wii 2 console at the E3 Expo in Los Angeles in June.

The original [Wii](#) with its motion-controller proved a hit with families, selling 86 million units since its 2006 debut, although it has seen a steady decline in recent years in the face of competition from traditional rivals such as Sony and Microsoft and the entry of Apple into the gaming market.

Nintendo also said Monday that [net profit](#) for the year to March plunged 66.1 percent to 77.6 billion yen (\$942 million) and sales slid 29.3 percent to 1.01 trillion yen.

However, the company said it expected sales to surge more than 40 percent over the coming 12 months.

Nintendo said it suffered a serious setback as sales of both hardware and software fell in the United States, Europe and Japan, where the March 11 disasters have seen consumers cut back on non-essential expenditure.

The company said it avoided direct damage to its factories but forecast there could be an indirect impact from consumption patterns or [economic conditions](#) in the future.

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