

Microsoft to bring Kinect to Windows PCs

January 10 2012, by Chris Lefkow



Microsoft's new Kinect controller for the Xbox 360 is displayed on a shelf at a store in Miami Beach in 2010. Microsoft plans to bring its Kinect technology to bear on personal computers following its phenomenal success with the gesture and voice-recognition sensor in the Xbox 360 game console.

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"I'm thrilled to announce that Kinect is coming to Windows on February 1," Microsoft chief executive [Steve Ballmer](#) said in his final keynote address at the [Consumer Electronics Show](#) (CES), which opens in Las Vegas on Tuesday.

"We're already working with over 200 companies on unique Kinect for Windows applications," including American Express, Mattel, Telefonica, Toyota and the United Health Group, he told a packed ballroom at the

Venetian hotel on Monday.

"The breadth of what they're doing is mind-blowing," Ballmer said, without providing further details.

Microsoft has shipped more than 18 million Kinects since the Xbox peripheral went on sale just a little over a year ago, Ballmer said.

He said there are currently 66 million Xbox users and more than 40 million subscribers to [Xbox Live](#), which links the game console to the Internet, allowing for real-time game play but also providing access to online content.



The Microsoft booth at the 2010 International Consumer Electronics Show at the Las Vegas Hilton. Microsoft plans to bring its Kinect technology to bear on personal computers following its phenomenal success with the gesture and voice-recognition sensor in the Xbox 360 game console.

Ballmer said the Xbox has evolved into "an entertainment hub for live TV, on demand videos, movies and news, social (networking), music and of course still games."

"Xbox is your all-in-one entertainment device for the living room," he said, adding that a partnership with News Corp. would bring [Fox television](#) channels and The Wall Street Journal to the Xbox this year.

Microsoft's plan to integrate the Kinect's voice and [gesture recognition](#) capabilities into PCs using the [Windows operating system](#) was the highlight of Ballmer's last appearance on stage at the CES.

Ballmer or his predecessor, Microsoft co-founder [Bill Gates](#), have delivered keynote speeches at CES for the past 15 years, but Microsoft announced last month that this year's gadget extravaganza will be its last.

Microsoft said it will no longer have a booth at the show or deliver a keynote because the January timing of the event does not coincide with its product development calendar.

Ballmer also used his final address to provide a preview of Windows-powered smartphones from Microsoft's new partner, Finland's Nokia, and of Windows 8, the next generation of its personal computer operating system.

Apple, BlackBerry-maker Research In Motion and handsets powered by Google's Android software dominate the smartphone market, but Ballmer said he believed that "with Windows Phone, we're clearly on the right track."

Ballmer said Windows 8 "will deliver the best of the PC and the best of the tablet."

Windows chief marketing officer Tami Reller said Windows 8, a test version of which will be available next month, is "designed to work with touch and with a mouse and keyboard."

Ballmer said that PC owners whose machines are running Windows 7 will be able to immediately upgrade to Windows 8 when it becomes available.

"Every Windows 7 PC will be ready for Windows 8 on day one," he said.

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