

Few surprises for gamers at E3

June 6 2012, by DERRIK J. LANG



Microsoft Xbox LIVE Corporate Vice President Marc Whitten, left, presents Xbox SmartGlass technology, at the Microsoft Xbox E3 2012 media briefing in Los Angeles, Calif., Monday, June 4, 2012. The Electronic Entertainment Expo runs from June 5-7 in Los Angeles. (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

(AP) — Looking across the waves of sweaty, passionate gamers during the flashy press conferences and detailed demonstrations at this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo, there's been very few wide eyes, gasps or dropped jaws. Sure, a "woo-hoo" has been yelled here and a "yay" screamed there, but the reactions have been far more subdued than in

previous years.

At the annual extravaganza, which continues through Thursday, publishers and developers simply haven't delivered very many I-can't-believe-they-just-announced-that moments that folks who usually attend this trade show have come to expect over the past 17 years. Ultimately, it's been E3 as expected, which has made this year's surprises all the more shocking:

— SMARTYPANTS: Ahead of E3, rumors swirled Microsoft Corp. would unveil an app called Smart Glass that could turn tablets and smartphones into touchscreen controllers. While that turned out to be true, virtual remotes were just the beginning. Microsoft proved that its Xbox SmartGlass app could also spread content beyond one screen, like unraveling a map of the mythical realm of Westeros on a tablet while an episode of "[Game of Thrones](#)" played on a TV. Victory!



Show attendees walk past Microsoft Xbox booth at E3 2012 in Los Angeles, Tuesday, June 5, 2012. The Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), the premier convention for the computer and video game industry, is returning once again to Los Angeles for its annual gathering from June 5-7. (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

— **BEYOND THE PALE:** Sony Corp. kicked off their E3 press conference by revealing that the latest endeavor from narrative-loving "Heavy Rain" creator David Cage was a title called "Beyond: Two Souls." It stars "Juno" actress Ellen Page as a mysterious women named Jodie Holmes who harbors dangerous powers. Cage teased the game would follow Holmes over 15 years of her life. An unsettling cinematic clip of Page portraying a mostly quiet Holmes left the E3 crowd wanting more.



Shigeru Miyamoto, senior manager director of Nintendo Co., Ltd., left, with Bill Trinen, director of product marketing of Treehouse, introduce the Wii U at the

Nintendo All-Access presentation at the E3 2012 in Los Angeles Tuesday, June 5, 2012. The Electronic Entertainment Expo runs from June 5-7 in Los Angeles. (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

— **DOUBLING DOWN:** After previously hinting that the Wii U would only support one Wii U GamePad at a time, Nintendo Co. pulled a one-two-punch at its E3 press conference Tuesday by announcing that the Wii's successor could actually handle two of the gizmos. That pleasant surprise was slightly spoiled later Tuesday, though. The company tweeted that employing two Wii U GamePads at the same time would slice the high-definition graphics from 60 to 30 frames per second.

— **WATCHFUL EYE:** At the end of Ubisoft Entertainment's press conference Monday, the developer unleashed an epic nine-minute demonstration of "Watch Dogs," a moody action-adventure game inspired by the 2003 blackout that allows players to mine data — like hacking phones, changing traffic lights and even checking out a stranger's student loan debt — as they navigate a virtual Chicago. Much like the game's moving-through-the-shadows protagonist, nobody saw this one coming.



An attendee plays a video game using Nintendo's Wii U controller at E3 2012 in Los Angeles, Tuesday, June 5, 2012. Nintendo unleashed 23 games for its upcoming console featuring a touchscreen controller at the Electronic Entertainment Expo, or E3, the gaming industry's annual trade show. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)

— **GAME OVER:** For every E3 surprise, there were even more snubs: Where was "The Last Guardian," the much ballyhooed title from the "Shadow of the Colossus" makers that Sony unveiled at E3 three years ago? Why didn't Nintendo announce the price or release date of the Wii U? How come Sony barely showed any new games for PlayStation Vita? And did Ubisoft really need to show someone using a Wii U GamePad on the toilet during a clip for its "Sports Connection" game?

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