

'NintendoLand,' 'Mario Bros.' coming to Wii U

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This undated product image released by Nintendo shows Nintendo's new Wii U console. The Japanese gaming giant unleashed 23 games for its upcoming console that features a touchscreen controller. (AP Photo/Nintendo)

(AP) — Nintendo is relying on a famous plumber, zombies and a virtual theme park to build buzz for the Wii U.

The Japanese gaming giant unleashed 23 games for its upcoming console featuring a touchscreen controller during a news conference Tuesday at the Electronic Entertainment Expo, the gaming industry's annual trade show.

Among the titles announced were the cooperative platform game "New Super Mario Bros. U" and the amusement-park-themed mini-game collection "NintendoLand." Nintendo also demonstrated the fantastical

strategy sequel "Pikmin 3" and first-person undead-fighting game "ZombiU" from Ubisoft Entertainment.

The titles employed what the company is dubbing "asymmetric gameplay," which gives players using the 6.2-inch (15.75-centimeter) touchscreen controller called the Wii U GamePad a different experience than those armed with traditional Wii controllers. The Wii U will be compatible with previous Wii controllers, including the Wii Nunchuk and Wii Balance Board.

"When we launched the Wii at the press conference in 2006, people were still wondering what this thing is all about," said Reggie Fils-Aime, president of Nintendo of America, backstage after the press conference. "To make a comparison of where we are with the Wii U vs. the Wii, I think we're actually much further along. I say that because here at this press conference, we're able to show off over 20 games, and we've got fantastic third-party support."

Nintendo illustrated that "New Super Mario Bros. U" could be played on either a TV or the touchscreen controller, and that the latest installment in the brick-smashing, coin-collecting franchise would allow up to four players to play simultaneously with traditional controllers, while another could join in with the touchscreen controller to jab enemies and build platforms from afar.

"With the Wii U GamePad, we have the first dedicated personal screen in the long history of game machines," Shigeru Miyamoto, who created "Super Mario Bros." and "Legend of Zelda," said at the news conference through a translator.

Other games announced for the successor to the popular Wii console included the fitness title "Wii Fit U," a sing-and-dance-along game called "SiNG" and the word-filled puzzler "Scribblenauts Unlimited"

from Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment.

Nintendo Co. jumped ahead of rivals Microsoft Corp. and Sony Corp. to build hype at E3 by streaming an online video Sunday revealing that the touchscreen controller would be called the Wii U GamePad. The company also announced Sunday that it would release a traditional controller outfitted with two analog sticks called the Wii U Pro Controller, and that the Wii U's interface would be an online virtual hub called Miiverse.

Fils-Aime said Wii U users would be able to connect to the Miiverse, which is populated by cartoony Nintendo avatars called Miis, with Internet-enabled smartphones, tablets and other devices after the console's launch.

Microsoft and Sony showed off similar second-screen capabilities Monday. Microsoft unveiled an app called Xbox SmartGlass that would allow users to stream and share content across their TVs, tablets and smartphones using the Xbox 360, while Sony continued to hype what it calls "cross-play" between its PlayStation 3 console and PlayStation Vita hand-held device.

No price or release date was announced for the Wii U system, which was unveiled last year at E3. The tablet-like Wii U GamePad is equipped with an infrared transceiver, gyroscope and accelerometer. It also has a camera, stylus, two analog sticks and multiple buttons.

Fils-Aime said the Wii U console would work with two Wii U GamePads, but that feature was not demonstrated Tuesday.

Nintendo also previewed a trio of games for its 3DS handheld device starring its famous plumber siblings: "New Super Mario Bros. 2" introducing a golden Mario, "Paper Mario: Sticker Star" presenting a

2-D version of the protagonist in 3-D, and "Luigi's Mansion: Dark Moon" focusing on Mario's ghost-capturing brother.

Following the news conference at the Nokia Theatre, long lines of people snaked around the Nintendo booth inside the Los Angeles Convention Center as they waited to try "NintendoLand," which features mini-games inspired by 12 different Nintendo franchises, such as "Legend of Zelda," "Animal Crossing" and "Donkey Kong."

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