Ouya sub-$100 game box challenges console giants

July 11 2012, by Nancy Owano

(Phys.org) -- A Los Angeles-based startup looking for Kickstarter pledges is seeing big bucks. Ouya wants to bring to market a $99 gamer's home console with controller featuring free games. As of early

Wednesday, Ouya was already topping $2.5 million with 28 days more to go. That people think their idea is welcome could be an understatement. What the company wants to do is to sell a free-to-play model that will make upstart history as "the people's console." To date, home gamers in a living-room environment pay for games upfront or a monthly fee to access libraries.

The Android-powered video game console would allow gamers to access free games that could be played out on big screens, up from just enjoying freebies on smartphones and tablets.

Julie Uhrman, Ouya's chief executive, has asked, "With all our technological advancements, shouldn't costs be going down? Gaming could be cheaper!" Her team is looking to make home gaming less expensive to make and less expensive to buy.

The unit, under $100, carries features and a design concept that are additional drawing points in the project. Yves Behar, who designed the XO laptop for One Laptop Per Child, is behind the Ouya console design. The device is to come with eight gigabytes of flash storage, Nvidia's Tegra3 quad-core processor, 1GB RAM, and Bluetooth connectivity (Bluetooth LE 4.0). There are standard controls (two analog sticks, d-pad, eight action buttons, a system button), and a touchpad. The games are connected up to the TV via HDMI connection, with support for up to 1080p HD.

Games developed for the platform must have a trial portion that is playable for free. The system would have its own online store for finding titles. The business model for developers would be that, while only games with a free component would be featured, players could be charged in other ways. The developers could profit by offering a game upgrade, game items for purchase, or by asking users to subscribe.

Developers would receive 70 percent of the revenue for anything they sell on the platform.

The product is only in prototype stage, although the company team said they are far along in the user interface and industrial design process.

Ouya went on Kickstarter, a site that lets people pledge dollars to various projects, for money to convert the prototype into production-ready models, work out regulatory approvals, place production orders, and deliver developer kits.

As for global reach, the Ouya team said, "Gaming is global, and we will get you OUYA. We still have a lot to figure out in regards to rights and countries, but it can be done."

Reactions to Ouya's plans have been met with interest but also with a sobering wait-and-see. Said a blog in *The Guardian*: "While dollars pouring in are impressive, success will come in 2013, if the company uses that funding to deliver a device (and a store, and a developer ecosystem around it) that delivers on its considerable potential."

 More information: www.kickstarter.com/projects/o … f-video-game-console

© 2012 Phys.org

Citation: Ouya sub-$100 game box challenges console giants (2012, July 11) retrieved 1 May 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2012-07-ouya-sub-game-console-giants.html