

'Destiny' video game has \$500-million debut

September 10 2014, by Glenn Chapman

Bungie studio's new science fiction action video game "Destiny" landed in the record books on Wednesday, boasting the biggest ever launch of a new franchise.

Activision Publishing announced that more than \$500 million worth of copies of "Destiny" had been snapped up by people eager to play or shops eyeing to sell the hotly-anticipated new game from the studio behind blockbuster "Halo."

"Based on extraordinary audience demand, retail and first party orders worldwide have exceeded \$500 million for Destiny," said Bobby Kotick, chief executive of the publisher's parent company Activision Blizzard.

"This industry milestone marks another blockbuster success for our company."

Bungie split from Microsoft about seven years ago and went on to align itself with Activision Blizzard, the publisher behind "Call of Duty" and other hit franchises.

While talking about the money pumped into developing and promoting "Destiny," Activision has referred to it as a \$500 million bet that it will be a winning new franchise.

That given, the publisher appears to have broken even on Tuesday with a soaring launch of the title.

"Since the beginning, we've been confident that our investment and belief in 'Destiny' would pay off," said Activision Publishing chief Eric Hirshberg.

"But, not many people believed we'd be able to say it did so on day one."

The history-making debut boosted Activision's confidence the game will be the publisher's "next billion dollar brand."

"Most importantly, it's just a great game which we can't stop playing," Hirshberg said.

Topping 'Halo'

The game puts players in the role of guardians of the last city on Earth, with enemies to battle; special powers to wield, and planets to explore.

Console processing power and Internet capabilities have been taken advantage of to create "an unprecedented combination" of play options from spontaneous co-operative online skirmishes to immersive solo action.

"Destiny is the game we've always wanted to make," Bungie president Harold Ryan said at launch.

Versions of "Destiny" were released for play on PlayStation 4 and Xbox One consoles as well as their predecessors the Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3.

The game is priced at \$60, but special edition versions with added perks and higher prices are being offered.

Bungie is out to eclipse the enviable success it had with "Halo" with

massive new science-fiction action title "Destiny."

Those behind the [video game](#) franchise envision it spanning a decade or more, with new installments released over time.

The first "expansion pack" adding more missions and activities to the game is set for release in December.

"We're really proud of the world we created with 'Halo,' and the millions of gamers we attracted, but with 'Destiny' we wanted the worlds to be bigger and feel more alive," Bungie studio chief operating officer Pete Parsons told AFP.

"To do that, we added in the most exciting and unpredictable ingredient we could think of: players. Destiny's worlds are connected and alive."

Armies of players joined the virtual fray during a test run of "Destiny" online capabilities in recent months.

The number of players topped 4.6 million, making it the largest test run ever for a new video [game](#) franchise, according to Activision Publishing.

At one point during the test run, more than 850,000 people were playing simultaneously.

Microsoft bought US-based Bungie in 2000 and the studio came out with "Halo" games that scored as a blockbuster franchise exclusively playable on Xbox.

Some in the industry credit "Halo" with being the franchise on which the success of the Xbox was built.

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