

Microsoft delays launch of Xbox in China

September 22 2014



Xbox One presentation takes place in Shanghai, on July 30, 2014

Microsoft, which was due to launch the Xbox One in China on Tuesday, has said it will put back the "historic" event to later this year, slowing what was billed as the first game console to enter the market after a 14-year ban.

The company gave no precise reason for the delay in a statement over the weekend, saying only that it needed more time. It said the release would come before the end of the year.

The announcement comes as Microsoft faces a government probe for alleged "monopoly actions" related to its flagship Windows operating system and Office suite of software.

"Despite strong and steady progress, we are going to need more a bit more time to deliver the best experiences possible for our fans in China," Microsoft said in a posting on its official blog in China, an English translation of which was provided to AFP by the company.

"We look forward to launching in China by the end of this year," said the posting on Saturday. "The launch of Xbox One will be a historic moment for gamers and families when Microsoft and BesTV bring the first console of its kind to China."

BesTV New Media, a subsidiary of Shanghai Media Group, is the Chinese partner.

The Xbox One was hailed in July as the first [gaming console](#) available for purchase in China through authorised sales channels since 2000, after the government allowed foreign firms to manufacture them in the Shanghai free-trade zone (FTZ) for sale into the domestic market.

China set up the FTZ a year ago as a test bed for economic reforms.



Yusuf Mehdi, VP Marketing and Strategy for Microsoft's Interactive Entertainment Business, speaks during the presentation of Xbox One, in Shanghai, on July 30, 2014

A joint venture of Japan's Sony, which makes the rival PlayStation console, and a local Chinese firm is planning to start operations in the zone from December, according to a document previously posted on the FTZ website.

An official at the State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC), one of the bodies that enforces anti-monopoly law, said last month that authorities are also looking into "issues" with Microsoft's media player and browser.

Microsoft has said it seeks to comply with Chinese law.

The investigation comes as China heightens scrutiny of foreign

companies in a range of industries, including the pharmaceutical and auto sectors.

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