

Activision planning 'Call of Duty' film, 'Skylanders' show

November 6 2015, byDerrick J. Lang



A man takes pictures of the BlizzCon sign at the opening ceremony of the convention, Friday, Nov. 6, 2015, in Anaheim, Calif. "World of Warcraft" maker Blizzard is hosting its ninth annual fan-centric convention opening Friday. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)

Activision Blizzard Inc. is moving deeper into the film and TV business.

The video game maker unveiled plans Friday at an investors meeting

during the annual BlizzCon fan convention to create and release its own film and TV [series](#).

The first projects from the newly formed Activision Blizzard Studios will be based on the "Call of Duty" military shooter franchise and kid-focused "Skylanders" toy-game series.

Activision Blizzard Studios co-president Nick van Dyk noted that the division will be directly involved in the creation, development and marketing of movies and TV series based on Activision Blizzard properties.

"We'll have a fraction of the overhead of the typical studio since we're starting with a blank page and building an organization that is right-sized for our intended creative output and for the future of the industry," van Dyk told investors.

The first TV series from Activision Blizzard Studios will be "Skylanders Academy." The computer-generated show is set to debut in 2016 and will feature the voices of Justin Long, Ashley Tisdale and Jonathan Banks.

The studio also is working on a "Call of Duty" film series, with the first installment likely ready for deployment in 2018 or 2019, according to van Dky.

"Our releases will be consistent with the high adrenaline, bad-(expletive) action that fans expect from this franchise, but we're going to deliver this intellectual property to the broadest movie-going audience," van Dyk said. "This will be tent-pole action-adventure of the widest appeal."



Katia Schiele, dressed as Leyara from the video game World of Warcraft, pauses for photos at BlizzCon, Friday, Nov. 6, 2015, in Anaheim, Calif. "World of Warcraft" maker Blizzard is hosting its ninth annual fan-centric convention opening Friday. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)

The move follows Activision Blizzard partnering with Legendary Pictures for a film based on Blizzard's "Warcraft" fantasy franchise. The movie centering on the battle between the game's Alliance and Horde factions is set for release June 10 and will be distributed by Universal Pictures.

"Warcraft" filmmaker Duncan Jones was on hand Friday with the film's cast to debut a trailer for the movie at BlizzCon, a two-day celebration of Blizzard series at the Anaheim Convention Center.

The formation of a devoted studio is similar to Activision rival Ubisoft

establishing a film and TV division in 2011. That studio is responsible for the Nickelodeon series "Rabbids Invasion," as well as an "Assassin's Creed" film based on the historical series starring Michael Fassbender, due Dec. 21, 2016.

A similar venture didn't work out for Microsoft. After two years, the company closed its Xbox Entertainment Studios in 2014. The division had been tasked with creating series based on such Microsoft game franchises as "Halo," "Forza" and "Gears of War."



Thousands of people gather outside the Anaheim Convention Center to attend BlizzCon, Friday, Nov. 6, 2015, in Anaheim, Calif. "World of Warcraft" maker Blizzard is hosting its ninth annual fan-centric convention opening Friday. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)

Activision Blizzard announced earlier this week that it is acquiring "Candy Crush Saga" publisher King Entertainment for \$5.9 billion.



In this Nov. 7, 2014 file photo, people gather at the Anaheim Convention Center to attend BlizzCon, the fan-centric celebration of video game publisher Blizzard, in Anaheim, Calif. "World of Warcraft" maker Blizzard is hosting its ninth annual convention opening Friday, Nov. 6, 2015, at the Anaheim Convention Center. The fantasy celebration will include video game competitions and the debut of the "Warcraft" film trailer. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong, File)



Attendees wait for the start of the opening ceremony at BlizzCon, Friday, Nov. 6, 2015, in Anaheim, Calif. "World of Warcraft" maker Blizzard is hosting its ninth annual fan-centric convention opening Friday. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)



An attendee tries out the Samsung Gear VR while waiting in line to attend the BlizzCon at the Anaheim Convention Center, Friday, Nov. 6, 2015, in Anaheim, Calif. "World of Warcraft" maker Blizzard is hosting its ninth annual fan-centric convention opening Friday. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)

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