

Facebook out to play at Electronic Entertainment Expo

June 16 2016, by Glenn Chapman



People 'skateboard' while sampling Samsung's Gear VR headsets powered by Oculus at E3 on June 15, 2016 in Los Angeles, California

Facebook has come a long way since early days when "Farmville" players reached out to one another for help tending virtual acreage.

But, the leading social network was very much in the [game](#) at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) that ends Thursday in Los Angeles.

Facebook global games partnerships director Leo Olebe led a team at the premier [video game](#) industry gathering to find stellar new titles and meet with players, developers, publishers, and even online commentators who have become celebrities in their own rights.

"Facebook plays a critical role in how people connect to the games they love and share them," Olebe told AFP in a meeting room above the show floor.

"We still have this thriving group playing games on Facebook."

Game play accounts for about 15 percent of the time people spend at the social network, where some 650 million people each month play or connect with game-related content, according to Olebe.

Facebook has partnered with publishers to let people log into online play using their social network credentials.

Games go Live

Facebook early this month jumped into the field of video games as spectator sports in a challenge to Amazon-owned Twitch and Google's YouTube Gaming.

People will be able to use Facebook accounts to log in to Blizzard Entertainment computer games such as "World of Warcraft."

The move will pave the way for Blizzard game fans to use the leading social network's Live video service to broadcast play in real time.

Yahoo Esports launched about two months ago as an online venue for the booming trend of video games as spectator sports.

"We envision this broad universe of people watching and playing games," Olebe said.



Gaming fans sample Samsung's Gear VR powered by Oculus during the 2016 Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) annual video game conference and show on June 14, 2016 in Los Angeles, California

Virtual sociability

A dawning age of [virtual reality](#) games on display at E3 promised to make play even more social, letting friends who are far apart virtually appear in fantasy worlds to compete or collaborate.

Facebook-owned Oculus began selling its Rift virtual reality headsets earlier this year for \$599, a price which does not include the cost of a computer that can handle the processing and graphics demands of the

technology.

Sony Interactive Entertainment's keenly awaited PlayStation virtual reality headset will hit the market on October 13 at a price of \$399.

HTC set a price of \$799 for Vive VR gear, which also requires computer systems that can handle the rich experience.

Olebe harkened back to early days of Facebook, when Zynga was social gaming royalty and "Farmville" a prince of the kingdom.

As the gaming world has changed, shifting to smartphones and tablets, so has Facebook.

The social network has not only tuned itself to Internet lifestyles gone mobile, it has improved its understanding of who is interested in games and what types they like.

It now boasts 1.6 billion monthly users around the world, a good portion of them game players.

Facebook has worked with game makers to build social network capabilities into titles and provide them with analytical data about play.

"We have really evolved to understand how social gaming is," Olebe said.

"It has been almost a total transformation. So that is what brings us here to E3."

In turn, people in the industry are embracing the power of building social experiences into games when it comes to entertaining players and ramping sales, according to Peter Jonas, head Facebook head of games

and mobile apps in North America.

© 2016 AFP

Citation: Facebook out to play at Electronic Entertainment Expo (2016, June 16) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-06-facebook-electronic-expo.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.