

Microsoft Kinect makes moves on computers

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Photographers take pictures of the Kinect peripheral and the Xbox 360 console. Microsoft on Thursday began letting software developers imbue computers with voice and motion-sensing technology from its Kinect controller for the Xbox 360 videogame console.

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A free Kinect for Windows [Software Development Kit](#) opens doors for computer programs enhanced with [depth-perception](#), voice recognition, or gesture controls using the popular console accessory. (c) 2011 AFP

"We are looking at taking the Kinect out of the game space a bit and putting it in other spaces," said Halimat Alabi, a developer who attended a 24-hour Kinect coding marathon at Microsoft's headquarters in Redmond, Washington.

The kit was available for download at research.microsoft.com/kinectsdk.

Microsoft last week added YouTube, voice commands, television shows and more to Xbox 360 with Kinect as the hot-selling videogame console matures into an entertainment center for all.

Microsoft ramped up voice capabilities in Kinect to allow Xbox users not only to give commands to in-game characters but to speak Bing searches for games, movies, television shows, music and other entertainment content.

Microsoft has sold more than 10 million of the gesture-sensing Kinect accessories for the Xbox 360 worldwide since they hit the market in November of last year.

Kinect uses a [3D camera](#) and [motion recognition](#) software to let people play videogames on the [Xbox 360](#) using natural body movements and voice commands instead of hand-held controllers.

New "body scan" software will let people take their own pictures using Kinect cameras and then convert the images into on-screen or even in-game animated characters, or avatars, with their features and clothing.

Microsoft has expressed a vision of Kinect moving beyond the living room to medical centers, schools and other places where technology to track skeletal movement and recognize voices could be useful.

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