

# Microsoft to launch Xbox 360

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The Xbox 360 is an improved version of this technology. Xbox was first introduced in 2001. While it was of superior quality and technology, it was later defeated by the rival PS2. PS2 sold forty million units against eleven million for Xbox and nine million for GameCube. This time, Microsoft is poised to lead the industry.

With the 360 Microsoft aims to shake up the

market and sell beyond ordinary games. The company wants the product to make its mark in the home theater as well as in other entertainment technologies like HDTV, portable digital devices and online gaming with the use of the Xbox Live.

As well as being lighter, the new Xbox 360 system is considered to be between two and 10 times as powerful as the current Xbox. While the current system is powered by a single chip, three IBM CPU "cores" power the 360. It also has a wider memory, making it faster than the current product.

Gaming fans will love the vehicles and environments in Project Gotham Racing 3, the realistically rendered stadia in Madden NFL 06 and the Saving Private Ryan-like combat in Call of Duty 2. However, the law of supply and demand may make it tough to get a system before Christmas. Microsoft expects to sell all it can ship before year's end. Though the company hasn't committed to a specific number, analysts expect 800,000 to 1 million to reach stores this year.

The Xbox system will connect to standard analog. However, every 360 game is developed to support HD so the images will look better on a newer set. On standard TVs, video should look marginally better than current games but HD graphics and surround sound "make all the difference for many hard-core gamers and early adopters," says Rob Smith, editor of Official Xbox Magazine.

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