

# Interview: The man in charge of Xbox Live

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As an original member of the Xbox planning and launch team, Aaron Greenberg has spent the last six years working on the Xbox business. Greenberg spent his first few years on Xbox as the business manager, which included managing the worldwide Xbox business intelligence team. Today Greenberg is a key member of the Xbox global marketing team (Global Marketing Manager, Xbox Global Marketing) and specifically focused on growing and maintain the Xbox Live service around the world.

He was instrumental in helping drive new subscribers to the Xbox Live service, which doubled from one million to two million over the last year. As a key member of cross-functional planning teams, Greenberg continues to help drive global marketing objectives and strategies, as well as work with the global subsidiaries on their go to market plans.

We caught up with Aaron on the eve of the Japanese launch of the Xbox 360 to get a more in-depth look at Xbox Live Market Place.

UPI: What exactly do you do for Microsoft in general and Xbox Live in particular?

Aaron Greenberg: I am responsible for product marketing of our online gaming service, Xbox Live, as part of the global marketing organization.

Q. What was the genesis of Xbox Live Market Place? Why did Microsoft feel that this would be the next step for MS?

A. This all really started with the first version of the Xbox. We made a lot of big bets, online broadband gaming, voice in every game and adding a hard drive to the console experience. This allowed us to introduce for the first time ever new downloadable game content. The response was huge, over 60 percent of all Xbox Live members to date have downloaded some type of add-on content to their console, which in total drove over 20 millions downloads in the first three years of the service.

Today with Xbox Live marketplace, we have built a one-stop download center into the console, so you no longer need to put in each game disc and search for add-on content, you can access this from one central place. In addition to this, we are able to allow every single Xbox 360 owner free access to not just game add-on content, but also full version of digitally distributed games from the Xbox Live Arcade. Finally, we have some other entertainment content for our users as well like music videos and movie trailers, which can be downloaded for on-demand viewing.

A. Xbox Live Marketplace is a digital download center for additional content for your favorite games, such as new levels, characters and weapons, new game trailers and demos, new gamer pictures and themes for personalization of your Xbox 360 experience, new release titles from Xbox Live Arcade as well as entertainment content such as movie trailers and music videos. Xbox Live Marketplace is accessible to all Xbox Live member, from either the free Silver membership or the premium Gold subscription.

Xbox Live Marketplace will become the digital destination for gamers looking to get more from their games. They can download new gamer trailers and demos as well as episodic content, new game levels, maps, weapons, vehicles, skins and themes, new release titles from Xbox Live Arcade and other types of content on demand, allowing for the most personalized gaming experience available on any console.

Xbox Live Marketplace enables users to personalize and extend their gaming experience, while simultaneously providing an outlet for publishers and partners to showcase new brands and titles via demos and trailers.

A. Live Marketplace content is distributed directly from the Xbox Live servers.

A. While opening allowing users to share their own content is an exciting one, we want to be sure we

have the right processes in place to be sure the content is appropriate to the community as well as being sure the right safeguards like our Family Settings before really opening this up. But the platform and infrastructure has been set to enable some very cool scenarios via user created content that we are all super excited about.

A. The timeline for that has not yet been set, but we will over time provide upgrades to Xbox Live and the Marketplace to allow sharing of user created content.

A. Every piece of content on Xbox 360 goes through a certification process, so even in a world with users sharing their own content, we will have processes in place to make sure it works and is safe for the community.

A. Right now there is a submission and approval process where content for marketplace would need to be submitted through.

Q. Hard to say at this point in time, but the size of the community will likely grow over time well beyond the two-plus million we have today, so it is conceivable this could scale in a big way.

A. Microsoft Points is a pre-paid system that enables consumers to purchase value to store in their account and then redeem for digital goods -- in small increments if desired -- from Xbox Live Marketplace. Like most stored value models Microsoft Points may be purchased through the Xbox 360 Dashboard using a credit card or via the Microsoft Points cards that can be purchased at participating retail outlets. In North America, consumers can purchase a card worth 1600 Points for an MSRP of \$19.99. Offers in the dashboard will range from 500 Points and up.

Once purchased, consumers can decide how to redeem Microsoft Points online. They might use them to acquire a new gamer picture from their favorite game, or download an entirely new action game from Xbox Live Arcade. Users can manage their account either through the Xbox 360 dashboard or online.

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