

what's in a game?

Next Generation video game systems promise innovation, fun



By Jon Arndt
Columnist

The new dawn of video game systems is upon us. Playstation 2 has done well ever since its release last Christmas, and soon X-Box and GameCube will join it on the market.

X-Box, Microsoft's venture into video gaming, hits store shelves Nov. 8. Some features include a DVD player, built-in Ethernet port (to connect players to the internet) and a built-in hard drive that allows players to save their games to the system without having to worry about memory cards.

There will be 12 games to choose from on the X-Box's release date. These are "WWF: Raw is War," "Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2," "Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee," "Madden 2002" and "Project Gotham."

X-Box has announced many more titles of popular games that will be coming out soon.

Developers of popular game series like Metal Gear Solid have announced they will be creating games for the X-Box.

With the ability to save your games and rip CDs (allowing you to listen to your own music while playing your games) right to the hard drive, there is no doubt in my head that the X-Box will have a highly successful future.

What other system allows players to update their football team's players and

uniforms if they change in the actual season?

Coming in second is Playstation 2. Since Playstation 2 has been out for almost a year, Sony has already had time to fix and update the system based on customer feedback.

Sony is going to have the upper hand since they're already released a second generation of games by the time X-Box and GameCube's first generation games come out.

Even though Playstation 2 also has a DVD player, it ultimately falls short of X-Box in the hardware department.

X-Box's CPU speed (how fast the console works) is 733 MHz, while Playstation 2's is only 295 MHz.

The kicker is that both the X-Box and Playstation 2 cost \$300.

GameCube, which was designed by Nintendo, comes out on Nov. 5. It does not allow players to play DVDs and it does not run as fast or smoothly as X-Box, but it costs \$100 less than the other two video game systems.

Expect more Mario games, such as Luigi's Mansion. With a loyal fan base, and some pretty cool graphics, GameCube should go over pretty well. With all these new video game systems being released, one has to wonder what makes a good video game system. Is it playing DVDs, online hookups or CPU speed?

Is it gameplay? I don't know, but I remember having fun just playing my regular of 8-bit Nintendo.

at a glance...

Xbox

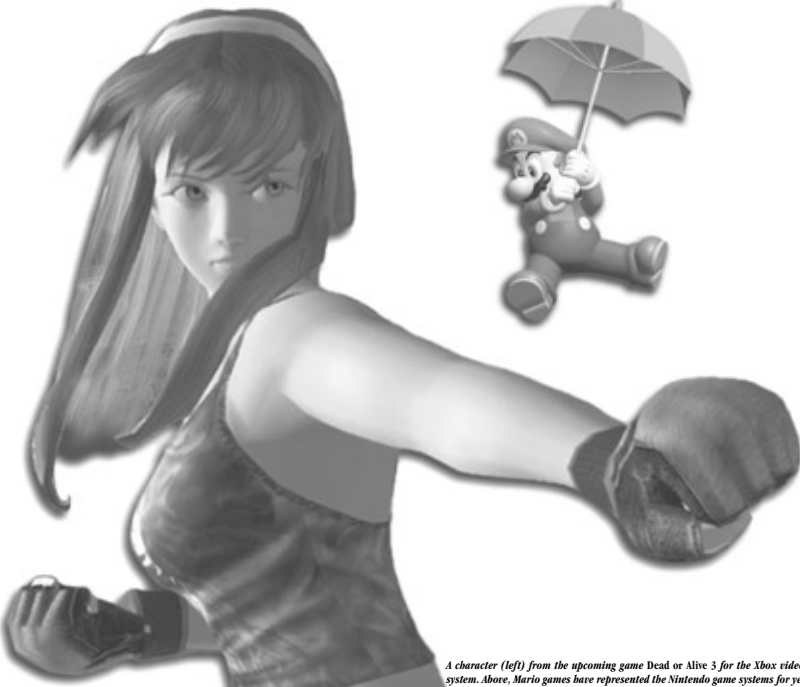
CPU Speed: 733 mhz
Graphics Processor: 250 mhz
Audio Channels: 256
Controller Ports: Four
Online Capability: Built-in ethernet port
Storage Medium(s): DVD Discs, 8 megabyte memory cards, 8 gigabyte hard drive
DVD Playback: Yes
Release Date: Nov. 15
Price: \$299

PlayStation 2

CPU Speed: 295 mhz
Graphics Processor: 147 mhz
Audio Channels: 48
Controller Ports: Two (four with optional adapter)
Online Capability: Optional adapter sold separately
Storage Medium(s): DVD discs, 8 megabyte memory cards
DVD Playback: Yes
Release Date: Currently Available
Price: \$299

GameCube

CPU Speed: 485 mhz
Graphics Processor: 202 mhz
Audio Channels: 64
Controller Ports: Four
Online Capability: Optional adapter sold separately
Storage Medium(s): Mini DVD discs, 1/2 megabyte memory cards
DVD Playback: No
Release Date: Nov. 18
Price: \$199



A character (left) from the upcoming game Dead or Alive 3 for the Xbox video game system. Above, Mario games have represented the Nintendo game systems for years.

from pong to mario — video game evolution 101

<p>1972 - Magnavox's Odyssey becomes the first home video game system.</p> <p>Magnavox Odyssey</p>	<p>1975 - Atari releases the game Pong with the Sears Roebuck company.</p> <p>Pong</p>	<p>1977 - The Atari 2600 is introduced at a retail value of \$249.95.</p> <p>Atari 2600</p>	<p>1983 - The Commodore 64 is introduced.</p> <p>Commodore 64</p>	<p>1985 - Russian programmer Alex Pajimov releases the first computer game Tetris.</p> <p>Tetris</p>	<p>1986 - Nintendo releases the NES in the United States.</p> <p>Nintendo</p>	<p>1989 - Nintendo introduces the Game Boy for \$109. NEC releases the TurboGrafx-16 and the first system to store a video game on compact disc: Sega Genesis, another value of \$249.95. Atari develops the color handheld game system Lynx for \$149.</p> <p>Game Boy TurboGrafx-16</p>	<p>1991 - Nintendo releases the Super NES for \$249.95.</p> <p>Super Nintendo</p>	<p>1994 - The Entertainment Software Rating Board is created to rate content in video games.</p> <p>ESRB</p>	<p>1995 - Sony releases the PlayStation in the U.S. for \$299. Nintendo 64 debuts in Japan.</p> <p>PlayStation Nintendo 64</p>	<p>1996 - Nintendo 64 is released in the United States.</p> <p>Nintendo 64</p>	<p>1999 - Billy Mitchell attains the highest score ever on the game Pac-Man.</p> <p>Pac-Man</p>	<p>2000 - Sony releases Play Station 2 for \$299.99.</p> <p>PlayStation 2</p>	<p>2001 - Microsoft releases the Xbox for \$299.99.</p> <p>Xbox</p>	<p>2001 - Nintendo GameCube is introduced for \$199.99.</p> <p>GameCube</p>
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