

Video Game Accessories - UK - September 2010

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What is this report about?

In a market that is unlikely to see new games console launches anytime soon, accessories are now increasingly important in keeping existing products fresh and exciting. PlayStation Move and Xbox 360 Kinect, for example, will breathe new life into current console platforms.

Despite leading-edge products such as these, the market does face challenges in terms of generating consumer engagement around more standard accessories, while demand remains focused on controllers – much of it driven by particular needs (for example, a game-specific product breaking) rather than a desire for the most recent offering to the market.

What have we found out?

- A quarter of gamers agree plan to invest in a motion-control system when it becomes available for their console. This is likely to be driven by the innovative nature of next-generation systems, such as Kinect for the Xbox 360. The latter of which allows users to control games via their voice or body movements, and has the potential to revolutionise video gaming going forward.
- The accessory market relies on the basics: controllers (bought by 64% of gamers) and memory (33%). However, consumers are still open to accessories that can provide better gaming experiences. Some 29% of respondents thought it was worth paying a premium for accessories that improve technique, a further 25% thought it worth paying for equipment that makes you feel part of the game.
- The most enthusiastic accessory shoppers are 16-24-year-olds. For example, a third of this age group agree that they are constantly on the look out for new products, compared to 5% of over 45-year-olds. They are also the most disloyal when it comes to choice of store brand, being the most likely to shop at ten or more stores compared to other age groups, presenting a challenge to retailers.
- Two in ten internet users say they never buy accessories for their consoles. This underlines the overall importance of retailers' console-bundling strategies, which have been a mainstay for retailers during the downturn. While offering value savings, they also have the potential to benefit shoppers by simplifying the buying process whilst ensuring gamers get the most out of their consoles.
- In terms of bricks-and-mortar accessory buying only, GAME is the most popular retailer, used by 50% of respondents - mainly because it is a console specialist with a large network of 683 stores. Amazon is the most popular online retailer.
- According to the research, 63% of respondents agree that accessories make good gifts. This is partly because the appeal of console gaming has broadened to the whole family, with consoles such as the Wii. Retailers offer a wide range of accessories to suit every budget – from basic peripherals to more expensive products, which are more likely to appeal to heavier gamers.

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