

Video Games - UK - November 2011

Report Price: £1750 / \$2837 / €1995



"Publishers are developing ways in which to potentially increase acceptance of the play pass model (for example through the inclusion of a multiplayer aspect), but consumers will inevitably expect the initial cost of second-hand games to fall to allow for the subsequent expected outlay. So while publishers' revenues may receive a boost, the success of the play pass would represent another blow to any high street retailers offering pre-owned games, many of whom are already facing a tough time in the music and video market."

– Samuel Gee, Technology Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

- Are bricks and mortar retailers at risk from the growth of downloadable content (DLC)?
- Can game publishers profit from second-hand sales without angering consumers?
- Is DRM a long term solution to protect profits?
- How can retailers boost sales at launch without discounting?

Definition

The consoles which video games rely on usually require slightly refreshed releases of hardware to maintain interest between major updates – these typically include, for example, a greater hard drive space or wireless functionality. Unless otherwise specified, references to sales of a console such as "the Xbox 360" in this report refer to combined sales for all releases of consoles which fall under the Xbox 360 brand, including specially-themed versions or those with slightly different hardware specifications.

"Video games" in this report refers to software playable on a fixed or portable games console, but not a personal computer. Games sold as standalone software pieces are included, as well as those sold as part of a bundle. Games which require a peripheral to play are also included for consideration, regardless of whether the peripheral is included with the original sale, or required as a separate purchase.

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