

Xbox tops the Xmas Most Wanted

Retailers warn of low stocks as shoppers make an early Xmas run on the must-have Xbox Christmas Bundle

Christmas shoppers across Australia are choosing the Xbox as their console of choice for home entertainment, as retailers are facing the prospect of running out of the Xbox retail bundle The Beast Entertainment Pack, three weeks short of the last shopping day.

Not only has The Beast Entertainment Pack from Xbox topped the console sales chart,* Xbox has also recorded its highest market share for 2003, reaching an amazing 40% of the next generation console market during the last week of November.**

Xbox's Christmas bundle, The Beast Entertainment Pack, has already sold in excess of 35,000 units in less than one month on sale.** If the strong sales trends continue retailers are likely to sell out of the bundle before the end of the Christmas buying period.

Consumers are buying up early this year, and are spending up big with entertainment bundles like The Beast, says Target senior buyer, Scott White. It's been quite phenomenal to have this massive spend so early on, were expecting big things for December as a consequence.

Consumer buying habits during the months of November and December are traditionally used by trend analysts to indicate what is hot for Christmas, and for the last two years the video games industry has experienced an incredible upsurge in sales during this period. Last year the Christmas retail period alone accounted for approximately 36%** of the estimated \$816 million spent by Australians in the sector.***

Sales of the Beast Pack have exceeded expectations and initial indications point towards us surpassing our record breaking sales during the same time last year, said David McLean, regional manager Xbox. The Beast with its second controller, two games and DVD remote is the ideal entertainment pack for the whole family to play together and is proving to be one of the home entertainment sectors hot buys for Christmas.

The Beast Entertainment Pack is available from leading retail outlets for RRP \$369 while stocks last.

*The Xbox Beast Entertainment Pack topped the hardware console charts for the week commencing 24 November 2003. Figures provided by GfK Marketing Services.

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*** Annual spend estimate based on extrapolation of GfK Marketing Services figure.

About Xbox

Xbox (<http://www.xbox.com>) is the video game system from Microsoft that brings people together for the most exhilarating game and entertainment experiences. Xbox delivers an expansive collection of breakthrough games, powerful hardware and the unified Xbox Live online service. The new tagline, its good to play together, captures the spirit of Xbox as the social hub of the new digital entertainment lifestyle. Xbox is now available in North America, Asia, Europe and Australia.

About Xbox Live

Xbox Live is the first comprehensive, online game arena fully dedicated to fast-action broadband gaming experiences. Xbox Live will allow gamers to play multiplayer Xbox games with other gamers everywhere via a high-speed Internet connection. With a built-in hard drive and Ethernet port, the Xbox console was built from the ground up to be an online gaming system so there's no need to buy additional peripherals.

Xbox Live will enable all gamers to find and play with their friends easily; talk to other players during game play through the Xbox Communicator headset; and download current statistics, new levels and characters to their Xbox hard drive.

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