



GAME DESIGN AND HISTORY

UNIVERSITY OF WALES
TRINITY ST DAVID





Game History – The 2010s

- Early 2010's
- The Next Generation
- Games and Online Culture
- Gamergate
- Mid to Late 2010's
- Financial and Cultural Evolution



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EARLY 2010'S



During the seventh generation of consoles, **motion controllers** were introduced (Wii, PlayStation Move) and, in 2010, Microsoft's Kinect was released.

This was a motion sensor device that eliminated the need for controllers entirely, instead tracking the player's body movements and translating this into game inputs.



However, motion sensor technology did not completely replace traditional input devices.

While some players welcomed a more physical engagement with games, others maintained a preference for traditional input devices.



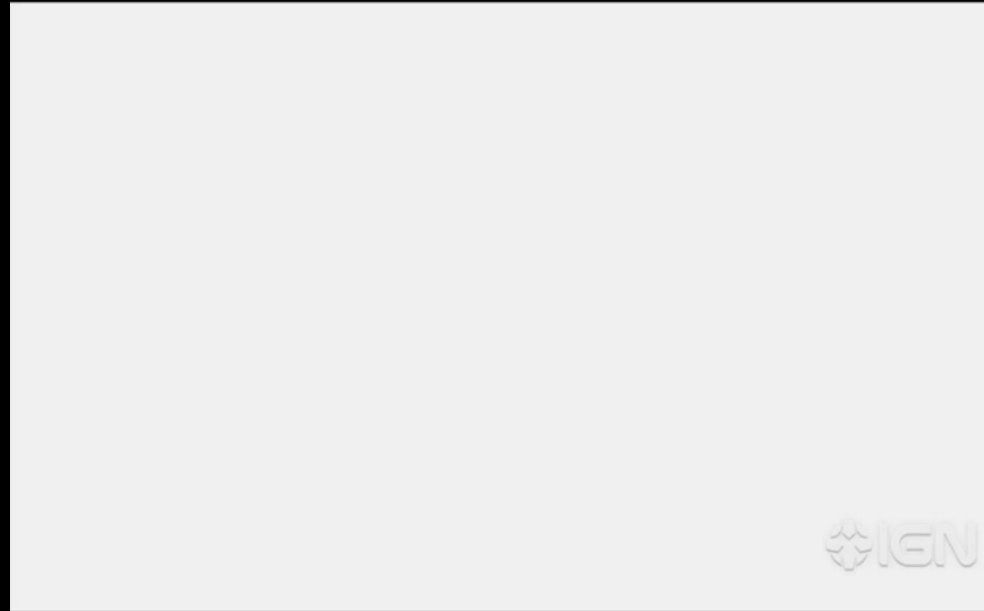
The **3DS**, an evolution of Nintendo's handheld DS system, was released in 2011.



Stereoscopic 3D effects – something that was trending in TV and cinema at the time - were possible on this system only **without the need to wear passive or active stereoscopic glasses.**



With Microsoft investing heavily in its *Kinect* technology, Nintendo incorporating **3D stereoscopic effects** in the handheld *3DS*, the introduction of the *Wii U* and developments such as **head tracking software / hardware**, the next generation of games had potential for new innovation and progression in terms of immersion and consumer experience.





Though despite these radical technological developments, the decade continued to be dominated by more traditional forms of console / PC screen-based games.

3D Stereoscopic effects were largely discarded by popular media by the mid 2010s.



Nintendo's **Wii U** would be the first of the next generation of consoles released in 2012 but met with much less success than it's predecessor.

With 13.6 million units sold, the **Wii U** became the company's worst performing console, selling just over half of the Gamecube's numbers and trailing far behind the Wii's 101.6 million!





Many people at the time mistakenly saw this as an incremental upgrade rather than a completely new console.

That said, the **Wii U** was a sign of things to come for Nintendo, though this would have to wait until the later half of the decade.





In addition to more familiar dedicated hardware, products such as the **Ouya** in 2013 transcended classic and mobile platforms, offering the ability to play Android games on console.



Ouya was noted for being a significant **Kickstarter** crowd-funded success but failed to make an impact as a platform.



2013 saw the launch of one of the most successful games of all time – Rockstar's *Grand Theft Auto V*.

What made *GTAV* stand out from previous titles in the series was its inclusion of *Grand Theft Auto Online*, a multiplayer GTA experience that kept GTAV in the games sales charts for a number of years.

GTA Online has more recently become a stand-alone title and is being released – once again – on current gen platforms!





Grand Theft Auto Online: Announcement Trailer (2013)

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THE NEXT GENERATION



The **next generation of consoles** emerged in 2013 with the launch of Sony's **PS4** and Microsoft's **Xbox One** in 2013.

This generation proved to be a success for Sony with the PS4's sales steadily overtaking the XB1 during this generation of games.





This is in contrast to the previous generation of hardware, where the 360 helped Microsoft to become a serious contender in the console market.

Advantage PS4: Why Sony is winning the console war

Editorial: The Xbox One and PlayStation 4 are going to have a great 2014, but Sony is a clear number one in the continuing console "war."

 3856 Comments

By [Justin Haywald](#) on March 4, 2014 at 8:09AM PST

Just in case you're someone who's inclined to read the title of this opinion piece, skim the first paragraph, and then jump straight to the comments section, this is not a doom-and-gloom message for Microsoft. The Xbox One is selling really well, the Microsoft games division isn't about to go out of business, and the launch of the Xbox One has not been a complete disaster (though it's been a small one). But the Xbox One is in second place, and that's where it's going to stay for this console cycle.

Closer to the next-gen launch, I wrote about [why the sales numbers didn't really matter](#). Both the Xbox One and PS4 systems were initially available than at any previous



The **Xbox One** launch was heavily criticised for it's emphasis on non-game functionality.



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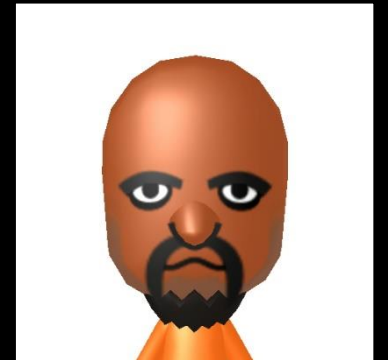
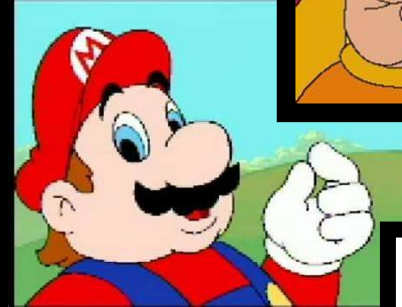
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GAMES AND ONLINE CULTURE



In the previous decade, **YouTube** became a prominent form of entertainment and communication online, with user generated content forming the bulk of content watched.

This allowed the rise of obscure game culture and an increase in shared content – after a decade certain content has become well known (and sometimes infamous) to a contemporary audience.





Garry's Mod, although originally released in 2006, enabled user generated content of various Steam games which led to many Valve and Steam content memes.

Source Filmmaker, originally used for official projects such as the *Meet The Team* TF2 shorts, continued this trend when released to the public.



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GAMERGATE



A controversial event in game history was reported on in August 2014 - social media and the internet played a part in what was to become known as **Gamergate**.

Perreault & Vos (2016) stated that Gamergate was a viral campaign from August 2014 to January 2015 that **questioned journalistic ethics and harassed women** involved in game development and gaming criticism.

Gaming journalists found themselves managing a debate on two fronts - defending the honesty and decency of gaming journalism and to try and provide a remedy for these attacks on women.



Eron Gjoni made a blog post on the alleged infidelity of his ex-girlfriend, video game developer Zoe Quinn. Members of the video game industry and press were implicated.

This led to an initial outcry over corruption in the video game press.

While the initial concerns were quickly proven to be all smoke and no fire, the revelations led to further questions by many gamers - particularly via online sources such as Reddit, Twitter and 4Chan - and the #GamerGate movement was born.



“Whatever Gamergate may have started as, it is now an Internet culture war. On one side are independent game-makers and critics, many of them women, who advocate for greater inclusion in gaming.

On the other side of the equation are a motley alliance of vitriolic naysayers: misogynists, anti-feminists, trolls, people convinced they’re being manipulated by a left-leaning and / or corrupt press, and traditionalists who just don’t want their games to change.”

(Dewey 2014)



This was an example of the **spread of online outrage** that would unfortunately become commonplace throughout the rest of the decade in culture and current affairs.

Needless to say, Gamergate wasn't a positive portrayal of gamers in the wider public's eyes.

'Gamergate': Feminist video game critic Anita Sarkeesian cancels Utah lecture after threat

Zoe Quinn: 'All Gamergate has done is ruin people's lives'

The first target of the controversial Gamergate campaign tells of death threats, hate mail and misogynistic rage the summer

4chan hacks and doxes Zoe Quinn's biggest supporter

4chan and Anonymous have gone on an all-out dox fest against a man who defended a woman they don't like.

GamerGate: A Closer Look At The Controversy Sweeping Video Games

Sep 4, 2014, 04:19pm EDT

Jilted ex-boyfriend Eron Gjoni wrote a long treatise on the alleged infidelity of his ex-girlfriend, video game developer Zoe Quinn. Members of the video game industry and press were implicated.

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MID TO LATE 2010'S



In 2014, **Ralph Baer** died at the age of 92.

Baer developed the **Brown Box** prototype in 1966, which would later become the first publicly available dedicated games machine – the **Magnavox Odyssey**.



The New York Times

Ralph H. Baer, Inventor of First System for Home Video Games, Is Dead at 92



Ralph H. Baer in Manchester, N.H., in 2005 with the game system he invented called the "brown box," later named Odyssey. He was also a co-inventor of the electronic game Simon, pictured in the foreground. Ken Williams/Concord Monitor, via Associated Press



Virtual Reality gaming resurfaced in the middle of the 2010s with products such as the **Oculus Rift** being announced for PC platforms.

Computing technology had developed substantially since the 1990s when VR had last been used for game development.





The Rift (and more recently, the **Quest**) has been well received, though VR would not become the mainstay of gaming experiences as some had predicted at the time.

Other companies joined the sector with similar (but incompatible) products such as the **HTC Vive** and **Playstation VR**.





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Sony in particular placed a lot of marketing behind the PSVR in 2016-17.



In 2016, **Niantic** released *Pokémon Go* for smartphone platforms.

The concept of mixing real-world exploration with the popular Pokemon franchise in an **augmented reality experience** was embraced by millions of players around the world – despite criticism that it lacked depth and polish.

By September 2016, *Pokémon Go* had been downloaded over 500 million times worldwide, and became the fastest game to make over \$500 million in revenue.



Pokémon Go (2016)



Though an interesting social phenomenon that highlights the social nature of games, *Pokémon Go* has apparently been held responsible for a significant number of mishaps, accidents and criminal acts caused as a result of the game's success.

That said, the game continues to be popular to this day.





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In August 2016, after years of hype and speculation, *No Man's Sky* was released (initially as a PS4 exclusive) by small UK developer Hello Games.



The response of such a highly anticipated game was notably negative, partially due to the **apparent lack of content and reduced scope** of what was promised in trailers.

No Man's Sky Loses Nearly 90% Of Players

By Elias Blondeau - Aug 24, 2016 - Category: Featured, News



Sean Murray, the founder of the company came under criticism and was accused of lying to consumers about the state of the game.



The **Wii U** did not enjoy as much success as its predecessor but Nintendo appear to have made up for this later in the decade with the **Switch**, released in 2017.

This console bridges the gap between portable and console gaming in a way that players in the early 1990s could only dream of.





NINTENDO
SWITCH™



Being a product of Nintendo, the Switch gained popularity not just for its innovative design but also because the platform is host to many well-loved (and exclusive) game franchises.

Games such as *Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild*, *Super Mario Odyssey* and *Mariokart 8 Deluxe* have all sold millions of units in a very short space of time.

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FINANCIAL AND
CULTURAL EVOLUTION



A growing topic of debate in the mid-to late 2010s was the number of **micro transactions** featured in games.

Loot boxes, season passes and additional paid content have all been heavily criticised by players – one of the most public of these instances was the controversy surrounding EA's ***Star Wars Battlefront II*** and its 'pay to win' approach to game balancing in 2017.





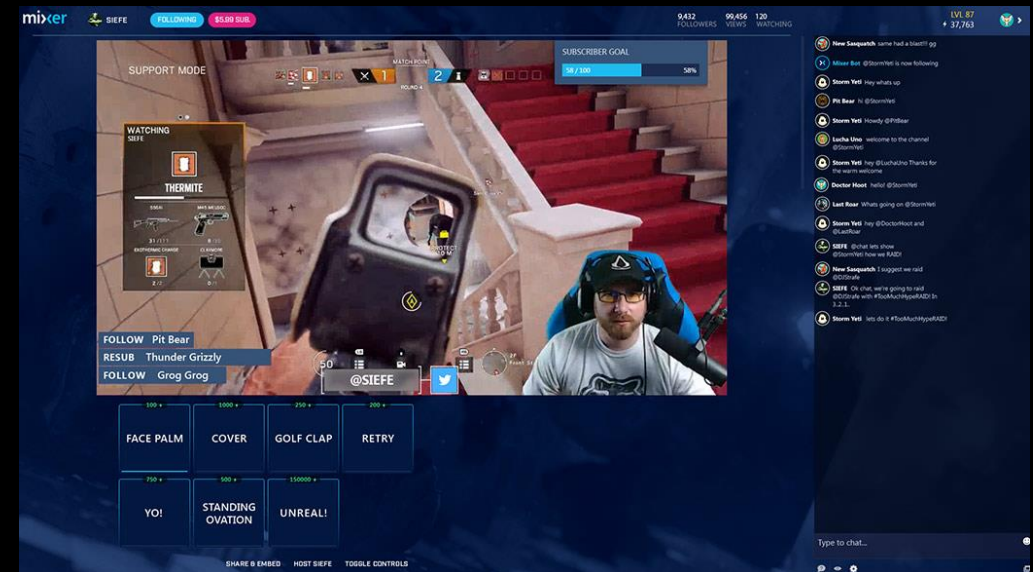
Microtransactions in games began in **free-to-play** mobile apps but have been adopted by larger publishers and AAA titles and are increasingly normalised and incorporated into game design with each passing year.

These have evolved into '**Season Passes**' in recent years.



The 2010s also saw the rise of 'Let's Play' footage and live streaming broadcasts of players sharing their gaming experiences via platforms such as **Twitch** and **Mixer**.

As with YouTube, these platforms soon showcased prolific content creators, elevating them to celebrity status in some cases.





Modern game platforms are increasingly pushing for **digital/streaming methods** for distribution, adopting a model similar to Netflix's on-demand services for TV and film.



Minecraft now spans millions of devices, unified via **cross-platform** multiplayer attributed to its shared "Bedrock" engine. The unification breaks long-established barriers between **platforms**, including home **console** rivals, the Xbox One, and Nintendo Switch. 17 Jul 2019

Platform: Nintendo Switch; Xbox One

How to use Minecraft cross-play on Xbox One &
[pcworld.com.au](https://www.pcworld.com.au/news/technology/minecraft-cross-play-guide/) > minecraft-cross-play-guide

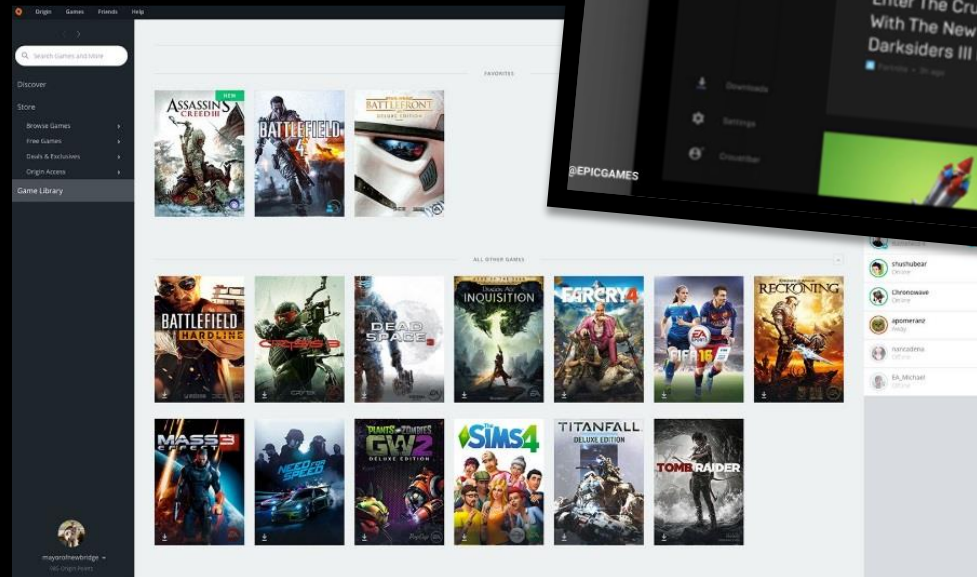
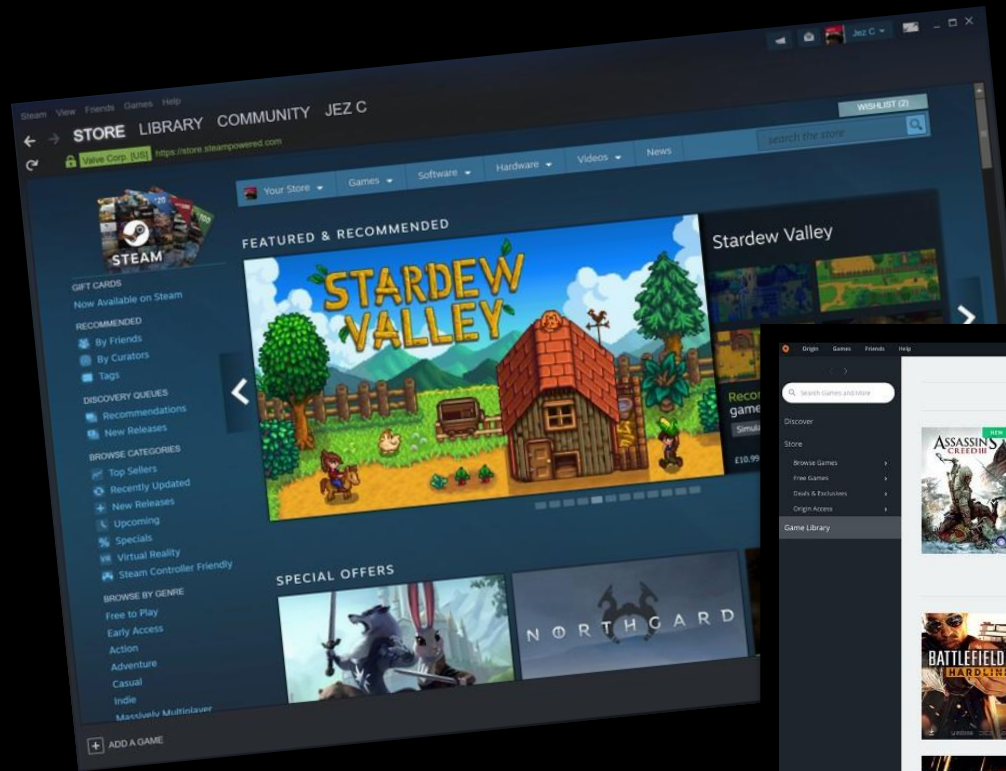
Cross platform play has started to become a feature of some games, with titles such as *Minecraft* and *Rocket League* offering the ability to connect to other players on different platforms – even ones that are in direct competition!



This allows for greater connectivity and better population of online game lobbies.



In contrast to this, it appears that the late 2010s have seen a fragmentation in **PC gaming**, with a number of competing services offering 'exclusive' content unavailable on other storefronts.





GAME DESIGN AND HISTORY

We are still creating and experiencing game history, with significant releases, events and platforms being recorded in time...





A collection of various video game consoles and controllers, including the Nintendo Game Boy, PlayStation 2, Xbox 360, Virtual Boy, Sega Saturn, and others. The consoles are arranged in a cluster, showcasing different designs and colors. The controllers are also displayed, some connected to their respective consoles. The background is a solid black, making the colorful consoles stand out.

GAME OVER



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- 2010 - Microsoft produces the *Kinect*, a motion sensor controller for the Xbox 360.
- 2011 - Nintendo release the *3DS*, a stereoscopic 3D handheld that requires no eyewear to see the 3D effects.
- After 14 years of turbulent development and the closure of **3D Realms**, *Duke Nukem Forever* is finally released by 2K Games.
- 2012 - Ouya, an open-source games console, is supported globally via Kickstarter, reaching its target funding in just eight hours.



2012 -

Halo 4 is released for the *Xbox 360*.

Nintendo releases the *Wii U* in November.

2013 -

Sony announces the *PS4*.

Microsoft launches the *Xbox One* to mixed reactions.

Don Mattrick leaves his position at Microsoft to become CEO of Zynga.

Former Nintendo President Hiroshi Yamauchi dies, aged 85.



2013 -

GTA V is released for the *Xbox 360* and *PS3*. It quickly becomes the UK's fastest-ever selling game title.

Valve announce Steam OS and the haptic Steam Controller.



Hardware examples:

- Microsoft Xbox One
- Sony Playstation 4
- Nintendo Switch



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