

US videogame sales slid again in June

SAN FRANCISCO: US videogame sales in June slid for the fourth consecutive month as the previously recession-defying industry yielded ground to tough economic times, according to NPD Group.

Videogame sales of US\$1.17 billion in June were 31% less than those in the same month a year earlier, the greatest such drop since 2000, the industry-tracker reported.

"This is one of the first months where I think the impact of the economy is clearly reflected in the sales numbers," NPD analyst Anita Frazier said.

"The first half of the year has been tough largely due to comparisons against a stellar first-half performance last year. But still, this level of decline is certainly going to cause some pain and reflection in the industry."

Videogame hardware sales in June reportedly totaled 382.62 million as compared to 617.25 million in the same month in 2008.

Microsoft's Xbox 360 consoles were the only videogame platforms to see year-over-year sales rise in June, according to NPD.

Freshly-released "Prototype" was ranked the top selling videogame for the month, with approximately 600,000 units bought.

US videogame industry sales to date are 12% less than they were at this time last year, but releases of hot new titles could result in the annual total matching or slightly surpassing last year's record-high revenues, according to Frazier.

"Of course, that could be put further at risk if more highly anticipated titles move out of 2009 into 2010 or later," Frazier said.

Take-Two Interactive studio recently announced it is delaying the release of a sequel to blockbuster "Bioshock" until next year.

Source: AFP

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