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AUGUST 2012

NAG at E3

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CALL OF DUTY

BLACK OPS II

13 · 11 · 12



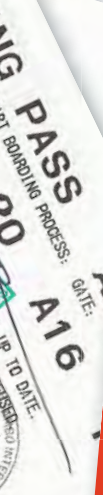
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GEOFF
This is starting to seem a little bit more fair.

EXT. JURASSIC PARK RIDE EXIT. SHORTLY AFTER.
We see the three walking out of the gift shop attached to the ride's exit. LAUREN hustles to the nearest sunny spot, takes off her cap and wrings it out. Water falls to the floor. Her shirt and pants are soaked.

LAUREN
I told you.

CHRIS
That wasn't so bad; I'm barely wet at all. How was it, Geoff?

GEOFF
I'm mostly dry, but I think I hurt my back from straining against the seat so hard.

CHRIS
(LAUGHS)

LAUREN
Come, Savage, are we going on the Transformers ride now?

CHRIS
Ja, let's go check it out. You keen, Geoff?

GEOFF
Ooo, I don't know. All that Jurassic Park ride did was basically re-affirm why I don't like rollercoasters.

The scene fades.

INT. AIRCRAFT CABIN. SHORTLY AFTER. DARK.
An AIR HOSTESS walks past, checking on the passengers.

CHRIS
I swear; I shouldn't have chosen this movie. That hostess must think I'm some sort of perv.

LAUREN
What are you watching?

CHRIS
It's called Shame. It's about a dude who's a sex addict. Every time someone walks past my screen it's showing some raunchy three-way.

GEOFF
I watched John Carter earlier, it's not bad.

CHRIS
Yeah; it's a Disney movie but it's pretty good. Not too kiddy.

LAUREN
Oh my god, remember those Epic Mickey Oswald bunny ears that we tried to get at E3? I swear I tried every day to get a pair. I wanted to get one that said NAG on it.

GEOFF
Those queues were mental.

LAUREN
We should've just gone on the first day, as soon as we went in. That was the only

time I saw the queue any shorter than wrapping around the entire Disney booth.

INT. E3 MEDIA ROOM. Day 2, 13:00.

We see the three seated on beanbags in the crowded media room. They're eating pre-packed lunches. They look tired.

GEOFF
It's so good to eat some veggies.

LAUREN
You should've gone to the 2K stand earlier; they had all sorts of healthy snacks, hey Savage?

CHRIS
Ah man, it was awesome there. I don't even remember what game we went to go see.

LAUREN
Have you got any decent swag yet?

GEOFF
I've got a couple of things. Got a Borderlands shirt earlier and a Spec Ops shirt yesterday which I basically lied my way into getting.

CHRIS
Hah! What did you do?

GEOFF
I saw a bunch of people playing Spec Ops but I had already played it; I just wanted the shirt. So I went to that bus thing that they had and the chick was, like, "Did you play our demo today?" and I said "Yup. Size medium please". Blatant lie.

LAUREN
You're definitely going to hell for that.

GEOFF
It's worth it for a free shirt.

The scene fades.

INT. AIRCRAFT CABIN. SHORTLY AFTER. DARK.
RESHOT FOR PRODUCT PLACEMENT

LAUREN
(LAUGHING)

What an awesome trip.

CHRIS
Sometimes it's fun to be a games journalist.

GEOFF
It's always fun to be a games journalist.

CUE HAPPY FAMILY MUSIC

CHRIS
It's not so fun when you don't have the sponsors willing to send us on these trips.

LAUREN
Yeah, big thanks go out to BT Games and Megarom. Without them, this supplement would never have been this epic.

CHRIS
Woo! Thanks BT and Megarom. You rock!

Roll credits.



NAG's Best of E3 Awards 2012

Every year, gaming publications and websites will tell you all about what the favourite games were from E3. They'll organise them according to genre or booth babe count or the eccentricity of the lead developers' moustaches, but nobody takes the time to tell the readers about the carpets, the snacks and the couches of E3! It's a shame, really, so we've decided to do just that, plus some stuff that you might actually find useful.



BEST DEMO: TOMB RAIDER

Tomb Raider has impressed us in the past but Crystal Dynamics' behind-closed-doors demo of the game took that to the next level. It might've sparked a bit of controversy from the sensationalists, but we thought it was a deep, moving, and engaging presentation.



BEST BOOTH: STAR WARS 1313

Behind closed doors, in a LucasArts meeting room, by prior appointment only, we sat on wooden benches for what felt like five minutes, watching screens all around us scroll the same dull grey course image over and over. The presentation room was designed to be the inside of your ship as it descended slowly into the depths to level 1313. And only then did the team at LucasArts come into the dimly lit and air-conditioned room to do their presentation.



BEST SNACKS: 2K GAMES

Broccoli! Cauliflower! Carrots! With dip! There's a dire lack of food that won't kill you in the US, and you can only imagine the kind of snacks that float around at a gaming convention. We embraced the veggies and our bodies thanked us for it. It's the little things.



BEST HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE: ZOMBIU

Seeing *ZombiU* and playing *ZombiU* are two entirely unique experiences. It was frightening and challenging, and took us all by surprise. We loved every second of playing this game and can't wait to get some more time with it.



BEST BOOTH BABE: JESSICA NIGRI (LOLLIPOP CHAINSAW)

Jessica began as a semi-pro cosplayer who took a liking to the skimpy outfits of *Lollipop* star Juliet Starling, but it wasn't long before Warner Bros. picked her up as their official model for the game. Of all the booth babes at E3, Jessica looked like she actually wanted to be there. She's also very easy on the eye.



BEST PRESS CONFERENCE: UBISOFT

The press conferences at E3 are practically moot at this stage, but we have to hand it to Ubisoft: they did a fantastic job. The presenters were daring, cheeky (rude, even), and they had fun, which is more than we can say for the army of grey suits that ran the other conferences. Also, we loved the general knowledge trivia questions on the big screen relating to Ubisoft games while we were waiting for the conference to begin.



BEST CARPET: ACTIVISION

Never before have we felt something so soft, so spongy, so comfortable, so soothing to our aching feet, as the carpets at Activision's booth. We could've lied down right there and died happy.



BEST COUCHES: BLACK OPS II

Behind a dark wall there was a dark room. Inside that dark room there was a gigantic TV straddled by a pair of mammoth speakers. Impressive, sure, but nothing can beat the feeling of sinking into the plush leather couch in the *Black Ops II* presentation room when you've spent the last six hours on your feet.



BIGGEST CHEAPSKATES: THQ

The publisher has been in financial dire straits for a while now, and because of that they decided to hold back at this year's E3, having only a few isolated meeting rooms in the secure upstairs areas of the show. That didn't stop them from sending out packs of promo girls to sweep through the show floor with *Darksiders* and *Metro* logos on key body locations, though. Oh THQ, you're so sneaky.

RETURN OF A LEGENDARY (ANTI)-HERO LATE 2012



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Assassin's Creed III

Developer: Ubisoft Montreal / Publisher: Ubisoft / Genre: Action adventure
 Release date: October 2012 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3 / Wii U

Quick fun fact: despite only having been announced earlier this year, development on *Assassin's Creed III* actually began almost immediately after the release of *Assassin's Creed II* – way back in 2009 – by a team of senior Ubisoft developers who did not work on *Brotherhood* or *Revelations*. Now, nearly three years later, Ubisoft's most popular franchise is set to get a true sequel, set in an all-new timeframe and starring an all-new Assassin-garbed protagonist.

Set in America before, during and after the American Revolution (1753-1783), we join Connor Kenway, half-English, half-Native American Assassin ancestor of present-day protagonist Desmond Miles. Our new protagonist's true Native American name is Ratonhnhaké:ton. We're not going to try to teach you how to pronounce it, because to try is to stare into the very face of madness. But trust us: it's bad-ass. And so is Connor.

The game is built in the new Anvil 2.0 engine, and features changing

seasons and a day-night cycle. The changing seasons will have an effect on gameplay: for example, when it snows during winter, characters will have difficulty moving on the ground. This shouldn't be a problem for Connor, who is able to dart along the branches of trees and bound across rooftops. Obligatory improvements to AI, animation, combat and stealth will all feature. New combat options include the ability to use an enemy as a human shield. Period-authentic weaponry like pistols will be available for use, and players can use tomahawks, bows and even the bayonets of muskets as weapons against their enemies. Dual wielding weapons will also be an option.

Locations to visit in the game include Boston, New York and the Frontier. The Frontier will reportedly be 1.5 times larger than the series' depiction of Rome seen in *Brotherhood*. Wild animals will star in the game for the first time, and can be hunted and killed, their pelts skinned and sold for varying amounts. While



"Locations to visit in the game include Boston, New York and the Frontier. The Frontier will reportedly be 1.5 times larger than the series' depiction of Rome seen in *Brotherhood*."

combat and stealth have supposedly seen complete redesigns, Connor's fluidity of movement has been greatly improved. Connor can leap over moving objects (carts, horses and such), and can even propel himself from one victim to the next when performing air assassinations.

As with previous games in the series, historical figures will be incorporated in what promises to be an intriguingly complex and beautifully detailed narrative. George Washington, General Charles Lee and Benjamin Franklin (who's rumoured to be this third game's gadget provider – the equivalent of Leonardo da Vinci from former games) will all populate the game's plot. There'll apparently be appropriately substituted mechanics for many franchise-favourite features, like the purchasing and improving of shops. And just in case you're wondering: no, it's been stressed that former series protagonists Altair Ibn-La'Ahad and Ezio Auditore Da Firenze do not feature in this third game.

Simply put, this game looks absolutely fantastic. It looks like a true evolution of the series, rather than the iterative slump it was accused of having fallen into with *Revelations*. ☺



FUN FACT
 2,133.6 meters of Velcro were used at E3.



Aliens: Colonial Marines

Developer: Gearbox Software / Publisher: SEGA / Genre: First-person shooter
Release date: 2013 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3 / Wii U

If you don't love the *Alien* series, you have no nerd-soul. And if you have no nerd-soul, you make us sad. Based specifically on the *Aliens* movie (the second film in the franchise, which was directed by James Cameron), *Colonial Marines* is Gearbox Software's (*Borderlands*, *Brothers in Arms*) take on this renowned xenomorph-littered universe. It's a horrific FPS that puts you in the role of a United States Colonial Marine, and you'll get all the toys that come along with that: the iconic flamethrower, pulse rifle, smartgun, sentry turrets and more will all comprise your arsenal. Also, motion trackers and the ability to weld doors shut.

As you play and murder Facehuggers, Chestbursters and more (including xenomorph types exclusive to Gearbox's vision), you earn experience points, used for upgrading weapons and purchasing skills. You'll also be able to customise your character's experience. All of this carries over into the game's other modes – which, in addition to drop-in/drop-out co-op for up to four players online or two players split-screen has been hinted



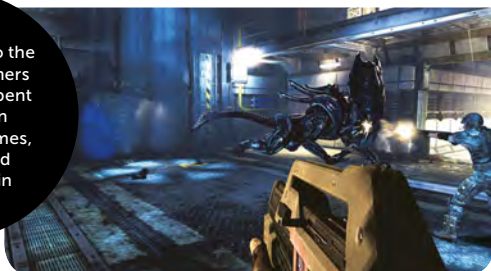
might include competitive aliens versus marines multiplayer.

The story is said to deliver a true sequel to James Cameron's film, although it takes place after the events of *Alien 3*. It's being considered canonical to the franchise, and is seen from the perspective of Corporal Christopher Winter, member of a search and rescue team sent to investigate the *USS Sulaco* and find Ellen Ripley and the rest of the missing marines who'd been dispatched to LV-426. 🚫



FUN FACT

According to the ESA, consumers in the USA spent \$24.75 billion on video games, hardware and accessories in 2011.



Borderlands 2

Developer: Gearbox Software / Publisher: 2K Games / Genre: Role-playing shooter
Release date: September 2012 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Much has changed on the lawless planet of Pandora. Following the events of the first *Borderlands*, five years prior, a man by the name of Handsome Jack has all but taken over the planet after he claimed the wealth of the Eridian Vault for himself and embarked on a campaign to eradicate the original colonists and industrialise the planet. Players will once again choose their destiny from a pool of four unique characters, and will attempt to rid Pandora of Handsome Jack and stop him from discovering an ancient evil named "The Warrior" which is located somewhere on the planet.

Brick, Lilith, Roland and Mordecai will make a return, but only as NPCs that the players will occasionally encounter during certain missions. Instead, four entirely new characters are available, each with their own unique and new abilities as well as those based on the original character classes. Salvador the "Gunzerker" is similar to Brick but gains the ability to dual-wield any combination of guns. Maya is a siren, much like Lilith, but has a new ability called Phaselock. There's also a commando named Axton who uses turrets for defence, and a stealthy character named Zer0 who replaces Mordecai but prefers to stick to close-range backstabs and critical hits while cloaked. 🚫



Hitman: Absolution

Developer: IO Interactive / Publisher: Square Enix / Genre: Third-person shooter / stealth
 Release date: November 2012 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Axxgent 47 has been betrayed by those he trusted, and, now hunted by the police and the agency that once employed him, he's been forced into the epicentre of a conspiracy in search of the truth. It's pretty standard stuff, really; you know – a walk in the park for our seasoned killer who's now on his fifth title. The *Hitman* series has come a long way over the years but many feel it's fallen behind the times, with other stealth action titles like *Assassin's Creed* and more recently the *Batman: Arkham* series taking over. Now IO Interactive is getting ready to take back the crown with *Absolution*; they've even gone and built a whole new game engine to make sure that they get this one just right.

Most of the gameplay you're no-doubt familiar with by now will make a return, but IO is keen to make the game more accessible with a greater focus on gunplay and action. Make no mistake, however, the gameplay that we've seen shows as many stealthy antics as we'd expect to find, but by improving the combat mechanisms and adding in the new Instinct Mode, there's hope from the devs that new players will pick up the title and have a poke around.

Instinct Mode is one of the new tools available to Agent 47. Now a seasoned veteran, he's capable of predicting enemy movements and can take a pretty good guess at where they're standing, even when they're out of

"Agent 47 has a huge variety of tools at his disposal to deal with his targets, as well as goons, thugs, bodyguards and other unfortunately-employed individuals."



sight. While in this mode, a regenerating Instinct metre will deplete, so you won't be able to use it forever, and those looking for a more hardcore experience have the option to disable this feature entirely.

Of course, the real meat of any *Hitman* title is the hit – taking down one or multiple targets in the most (or least, if you're eager and don't mind a fire fight) stealthy way possible. Agent 47 has a huge variety of tools at his disposal to deal with his targets, as well as goons, thugs, bodyguards and other unfortunately-employed individuals.

It's in the hit that players will have access to a playground of options. Do you patiently stalk your target, learning their movements and habits, and wait for that perfect time to wrap a garrotte around their neck? Do you don the clothes of the chap he's supposed to meet and lure away your target to a quiet room, where you wait for him to turn his back on you while you slip a kitchen knife into his neck? Maybe you're more straight-forward, and prefer to walk right up to your target, pop off a couple of rounds into the cops standing by his side and finish the job with a quick twist of his neck; or perhaps you prefer the classic approach of finding a remote location, carefully setting up your high-calibre sniper rifle, holding your breath and taking that perfect shot. Whatever your taste in assassination, it looks like *Hitman: Absolution* will cater for you.



FUN FACT
 There are 2,556 different brands of Root Beer, of which we tried at least 14.



Crysis 3

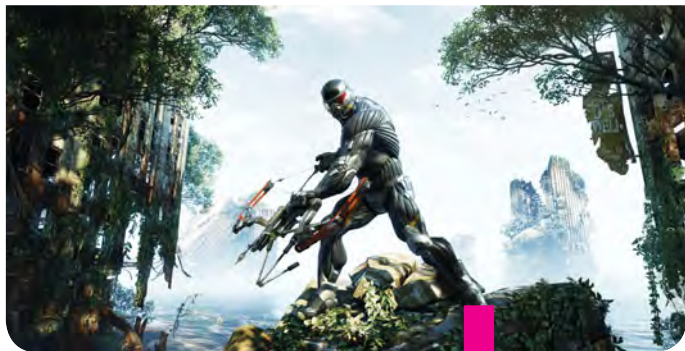
Developer: Crytek Frankfurt / Publisher: Electronic Arts /
Genre: First-person shooter / Release date: February 2013 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

It's been 20 years since the events of *Crysis 2*, and the Earth is a very different place. CELL Corporation has become corrupted by an unknown entity and bent on world domination through power and technology. In an attempt to combat the rampant Ceph, giant domes were built around major cities to form massive greenhouses. These domes would serve two purposes: to encourage natural rainforest formations within the cities and allow the planet to take back the land, and to keep in the Ceph that populate the ruins.

Players will take on the role of Prophet, who's decided that he no longer wishes to serve the whims of his military leaders and takes matters into his own hands. He'll do battle against both the Ceph and CELL agents using conventional weaponry (well, conventional in the scope of *Crysis*) as well as ultra powerful "use and discard" Ceph weaponry.

Described by the developers as a "sandbox shooter", *Crysis 3* will give players even more options to engage

their opponents. The stealth aspects, in particular, have been improved upon, and now players will be able to use a powerful compound bow to launch arrows while cloaked. There's also a lot more to do while out of direct combat, such as hacking turrets and doors to infiltrate areas and turn the enemy's own defences against them. ☞



FUN FACT

In the 1940s, the iconic Hollywood sign's official caretaker, Albert Kothe, destroyed the letter "H" after crashing into it while driving drunk.

Darksiders II

Developer: Vigil Games / Publisher: THQ / Genre: Action adventure
Release date: 2012 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3 / Wii U

Darksiders II's story runs in parallel with that of the first game. When War, one of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, is accused of unleashing the apocalypse early, stripped of his powers by the Charred Council, and sent back to Earth on account of his crimes, his brother Death does not take kindly to the news. Refusing to believe that War would do any such thing, Death rides forth to the Nether Realms, a place somewhere between Heaven and Hell, to search for a way to prove his War's innocence.

And that's where we come in, stepping into Death's impossibly angry boots as he travels across a number of city hubs and clears out a great many dungeons with his irrefutable badass-ness. All-new environments add up to a game that is reportedly double the size of its predecessor in terms of places to explore – and *Darksiders* was already filled with exploratory opportunities, so this is impressive. The city hubs will feature NPCs who'll hand out quests for you to undertake, and it's said that one of these city areas

will feature more dungeons than the whole of the original game did.

Moreover, the game has a bit of action RPG flair attached to it for good measure, as enemy encounters drop loot like armour pieces – which, when equipped, power up Death's deadly Wrath abilities. Also, being a Horseman of the Apocalypse, Death's got access to his own horse, just as his brother did. Its name is Despair. ☞



Tomb Raider

Developer: Crystal Dynamics / Publisher: Square Enix / Genre: Action adventure
 Release date: March 2013 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

When we first saw Crystal Dynamic's fresh take on the *Tomb Raider* series, we were impressed and intrigued, but the gritty visuals, panicky quicktime events and cursing protagonist was just the beginning. Crystal wanted to create a believable character that was more focused on survival than treasure hunting and, hopefully, would encourage the audience to spend less time finagling the camera into boob close-ups and more time immersed in Lara's intense new adventure. Clearly with those hopes in mind, Crystal's E3 presentation of *Tomb Raider* further helped to carve out the story of a young lady desperate to survive on an island filled with things that are trying to kill her.

There was a range of gameplay on display at the show, both during Microsoft's press conference (during which the first DLC was announced

as a timed exclusive for the 360) and at Square Enix's booth, behind closed doors. To put at ease those players who might think that *Tomb Raider* has become nothing but a series of quick time events and dialogue, there was plenty of action on display. While she'll start off unskilled and uncertain, Lara will grow into a combative and agile explorer. A new weapon, the increasingly-popular bow will ensure that the young Lara spends some time coming to grips with killing (both animals and humans) the old-fashioned way before she gets to use those fancy pistols the series heroine is famous for, and it'll go a long way to increase the player immersion that is so easily shattered when a character becomes more powerful than you'd reasonably expect.

But Lara will be powerful; it'll just take a while. When she does eventually

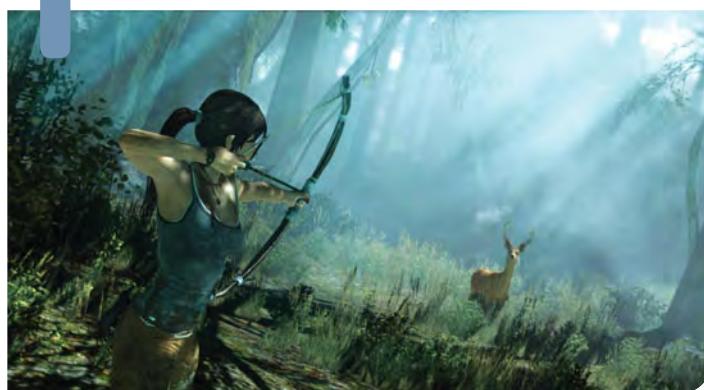


"Lara will be powerful; it'll just take a while. When she does eventually get to that level of prowess we all know so well, she'll be able to leap giant gaps, slide down zip-lines, and make use of her environment while in combat."



FUN FACT

Nine inventors have stars on The Hollywood Walk of Fame. As of May 23, 2012, the Walk consists of 2,472 stars.



get to that level of prowess we all know so well, she'll be able to leap giant gaps, slide down zip-lines, and make use of her environment while in combat. Crouching behind cover is the best way to avoid a quick death (essential during a night-time stealth sequence we caught a glimpse of), and that oil lantern dangling precariously over a bad guy's head is practically begging to be shot down.

While she's not in combat or jumping about, Lara will be able to explore the island on which she and her friends were marooned. At first the

space which you have access to will be limited by Lara's gear, but as she finds and upgrades items to help her reach new locations, she'll be able to explore freely. There's even a hint from the developers that there'll be activities to keep you entertained outside of the main game, such as hunting animals for XP which is used to improve Lara's survival and gear skills. It certainly looks like we're going to have a whole lot to do in this upcoming *Tomb Raider*, so perhaps the recent news that it's been pushed back to March 2013 is in fact good.



Dishonored

Developer: Arkane Studios / Publisher: Bethesda Softworks / Genre: First-person action adventure / Release date: October 2012 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

You are Corvo Atano. Formerly a renowned and loyal bodyguard of the Empress, your life was full of win and an abundance of precious whale oil. That is, until you were framed for her assassination by the Lord Regent and the Empress you were sworn to protect died in your arms. Now, you seek vengeance against the Lord Regent using your skills as a marksman, swordsman and silent infiltrator – as well as your powerful supernatural abilities.

Dishonored promises to be a massively immersive exercise in player choice, born of the minds of Harvey Smith (co-designer of *Deus Ex*) and Raf Colantonio – founder of Arkane Studios, who worked on *Arx Fatalis* and *Dark Messiah of Might and Magic*. Stealth will play a

pivotal role in the game, but it'll still be your choice whether or not to actually be stealthy. Either way, when stealth isn't an option, you'll have access to swords, daggers, guns (like pistols and muskets, to match the Neo-Victorian/steampunk setting) and a range of powerful magical abilities to fend off foes. Some of these abilities include freezing time for a limited period, summoning rats to overwhelm enemies, and short-range teleportation.

It looks like a potent mixture of *Thief's* stealth elements, *Deus Ex's* simulation aspects and *BioShock's* political intrigue and powerful supernatural abilities. It might not be set in a fully open world – but it certainly looks to provide a powerful choice-driven narrative regardless.



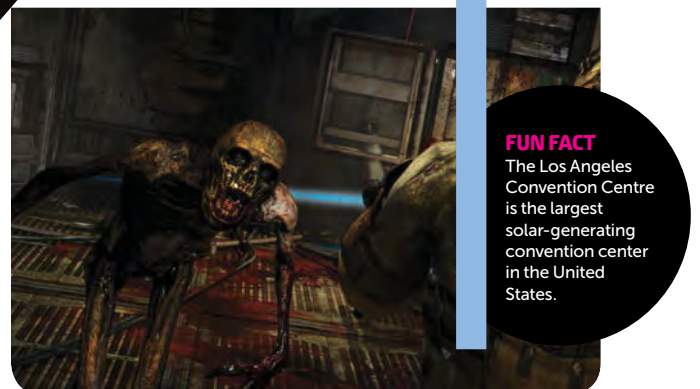
Dead Space 3

Developer: Visceral Games / Publisher: Electronic Arts / Genre: Survival horror / Release date: February 2013 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

As the *Dead Space* series has grown and improved, so have the abilities of its protagonist Isaac Clarke. No longer a lowly engineer, Isaac has become more capable in combat, less terrified of his opponents and a bit more brazen in his approach to encounters with the Necromorphs. To facilitate this shift, the series will undergo a few changes of its own. There'll be a greater focus on action and combat, and Clarke has been given a few new moves to deal with the Necromorphs and the firearm-wielding Unitarians – humans who believe that the Necromorphs are the next evolution of mankind and will die to protect them.

With this in mind, the developers have been quick to discount claims that the series will lose its edge, and art director Ian Milham states clearly that "The *Dead Space* experience that people know and love is intact." While we'd love to believe him, the inclusion of optional two-player co-op throughout the campaign leaves us a little sceptical. A second

player will take on the role of new character John Carver and while in this mode, players will be treated to new cutscenes and character developments, so those of you who are interested in such things would do well to give the game at least two play-throughs.



FUN FACT
The Los Angeles Convention Centre is the largest solar-generating convention center in the United States.

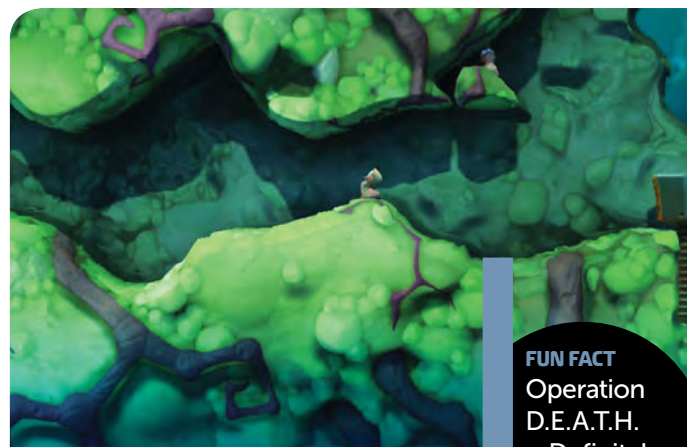


Worms: Revolution

Developer: Team17 / Publisher: Warner Brothers Interactive Entertainment
 Genre: Turn-based strategy / Release date: September 2012 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

It's *Worms* in 3D! Plus loads of new innovations that will make your siege on the enemy team more intense and strategic than ever before. A new class-based system comes into play where you start your campaign with a standard (Soldier) worm and, as you progress and unlock levels, you have access to all four classes in the game – Soldier, Scout, Scientist and Heavy. In total there are sixteen worms to unlock, four in each class. Then there's the new water physics element that adds a really unique dimension to

the game when you're planning your next move. Using your water gun or water bomb you can fill up a hole that your enemy worm is sitting in, or use the force of the water to woosh your enemies in a certain direction. Worms will slowly lose health when stuck in these water pockets. The new engine which has been built from the ground up, along with the addition of physics objects, gives you the ability to manipulate objects within your environment, which creates an entirely new gameplay experience. 🍔



FUN FACT
 Operation
 D.E.A.T.H.
 = Definitely
 Eat All The
 Hamburgers



Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance

Developer: Platinum Games
 Publisher: Konami
 Genre: Action
 Release date: 2013
 Platforms: 360 / PS3

Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance is what was born from the ashes of *Metal Gear Solid: Rising* when that title was doomed to be cancelled due to development troubles. Handed over to Platinum Games, the stealth elements have been removed and the setting has been changed to give Platinum more creative freedom – but Kojima Productions is still responsible for the plot – now set after *Metal Gear Solid 4* – and characters.

Players step into the cyborg ninja boots of Raiden, wielding his signature katana in a game that is purely driven by action, its foundation built on sword-fighting and a “free slicing” system that will allow you to precisely slash enemies, vehicles, objects and almost anything in the game world. Called Blade Mode, there are many ways to appreciate the slow-motion swordplay it facilitates – such as by slicing a falling enemy multiple times before his body hits the ground. Cutting through enemy cover, severing support columns to bring their structures down on enemies, targeting weak points on enemies and even deflecting enemy fire will all be made possible. 🍔



Wonderbook: Book of Spells

Developer: London Studio
 Publisher: Sony
 Genre: Augmented reality
 Release date: November 2012
 Platforms: PS3

If you're wondering what *Harry Potter* novelist JK Rowling has been up to, she's been working on this original story for *Wonderbook*. Using advanced Augmented Reality technology in conjunction with your PlayStation Move peripherals, the game is played out through the use of an interactive book that brings the world of *Harry Potter* to life. The first story to be released, *Book of Spells*, will unfold over five chapters, where you will learn 20 spells by using the Move controller as your wand. Not only have all the spell descriptions been written by JK Rowling; revealed within the story through a mechanism of rewards called a Conundrum piece, are five original poems also written by her. There will be integration with the Pottermore website, so best you get practising your *incendio*, *expelliarmus* and *wingardium leviosa* spells young wizards. 🍔



A REVOLUTION IS COMING

WE'VE BEEN TO E3. WE'VE SEEN THE FUTURE.

CALL OF DUTY
BLACK OPS II



DEAD SPACE
3

MEDAL OF HONOR
WARFIGHTER

FARCRY
3

DARKSIDERS
II



GEARS OF WAR
JUDGMENT

CRYSIS
3

FORZA
HORIZON

NEED FOR SPEED
MOST WANTED

ASSASSIN'S
CREED III



INJUSTICE
GODS AMONG US



FIFA
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METAL GEAR
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FALL OF CYBERTRON

ZOMBIU



ALIENS
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RAYMAN
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TOM CLANCY'S
SPLINTER CELL
BLACKLIST

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"Wonderbook: Book of Spells is the closest a Muggle can come to a real spellbook. I've loved working with Sony's creative team to bring my spells, and some of the history behind them, to life. This is an extraordinary device that offers a reading experience like no other."

J.K. Rowling on Wonderbook: Book of Spells

Far Cry 3

Developer: Ubisoft Montreal / Publisher: Ubisoft / Genre: First-person shooter
 Release date: 29 November 2012 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Far Cry 3 is holding nothing back. If you thought you were in for another safari outing with a couple of guns and some explosions here and there, best you buckle up tight for the ride. We're talking pirates, islands, hallucinations, a topless girl with dreadlocks, tattoos, drugs and shipwrecks. Co-op mode offers up a four player experience that is entirely independent of the single player campaign. So much so, in fact, that it was developed by Ubisoft Massive. Features of co-op include a map editor

as well as standalone missions, with the emphasis being on having to play together as a cohesive team to get through the objectives. If none of that excites you then multiplayer is where you might just get hooked. The focus here is very much on team support with the introduction of TSP (Team Support Points) where you're rewarded for helping your teammates. To unlock mega insane perks you'll have to rack up your TSP first, so skilled players will only have access to perks by helping weaker players.



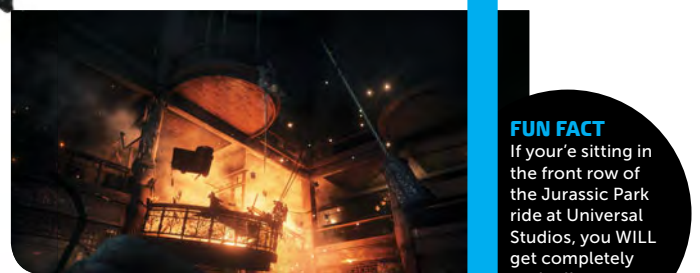
Medal of Honor: Warfighter

Developer: Danger Close / Publisher: EA / Genre: First-person shooter
 Release date: 23 October 2012 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

It's the 14th game in the Medal of Honor franchise and a direct sequel to 2010's Medal of Honor game, and based on our hands on demo of the game at E3, easily makes it onto our must-play list of games for this year.

The new Frostbite 2 engine and a new story based on real-life missions of Tier 1 Operators from all over the world set the scene for an unforgettable single player campaign. Where it's set to shine is in the multiplayer. You can choose from 12 different classes, each of which has its own support

ability, as well two perks which can be supportive or offensive. A new co-op feature called Fireteams will break teams into micro two-man teams where the two of you fight side-by-side in a multiplayer environment. If one of you dies you can respawn on the other person, or if the living teammate gets revenge the dead teammate's respawn will be instant. It's an interesting take in a multiplayer game where you're usually only focussed on keeping yourself alive, and now you're watching someone else's back as well.



FUN FACT

If you're sitting in the front row of the Jurassic Park ride at Universal Studios, you WILL get completely soaked!

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Battlefield 3: Armored Kill

Developer: Dice
 Publisher: EA
 Genre: First-person shooter
 Release date: September 2012
 Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Armored Kill will be the second of three themed expansion packs announced by EA at E3. The first one, *Close Quarters*, was released in June, and focussed on four tight indoor maps for infantry. *Armored Kill* will also feature four new maps but their focus will be on vehicle assault, so expect to see new drivable tanks, a new game mode called Tank Superiority, and the biggest map in Battlefield history, Bandar Desert. Five new vehicles will make their appearance in *Armored Kill*: two tank destroyers (M1128 Mobile Gun System for US and 2S25 Sprut for RU), two mobile artillery (M142 HIMARS for US and BM-21 for RU) and a quad bike. There will also be an AC-130 gunship with two gunner seats equipped with a 25mm autocannon and "a big cannon". ☞



Beyond: Two Souls

Developer: Quantic Dream
 Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment
 Genre: Adventure
 Release date: Q1 2013
 Platforms: PS3

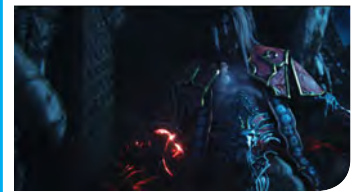
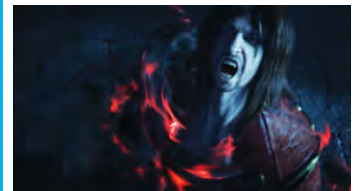
With *Fahrenheit* and *Heavy Rain*, Quantic Dream proved that they can make a compelling interactive film. They can tell a strong story with a combination of classic film techniques and cutting-edge technology, but many people, including the developers, felt that they often missed the mark when it came to making an actual game.

Beyond: Two Souls aims to keep that storytelling prowess but take the action and interactivity a step further. Players will take on the roles of Jodie Holmes through 15 years of her life, as well as a spirit bound to her which she has named Aiden. This ghost is loyal to Jodie, and players can use it to possess certain characters to cause murder and mayhem or physically shield Jodie from harm. Jodie will often find herself in trouble, and throughout the game players will need to find ways to get her out of that trouble and maybe even figure out why she has the ability to commune with this spirit. ☞

Call of Duty: Black Ops II

Developer: Treyarch
 Publisher: Activision
 Genre: First-person shooter
 Release date: 13 November 2012
 Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

We're in the future, soldier! Pay attention! Just because it says *Call of Duty* on your mission briefing doesn't mean it's the same drill as last year, or the one before that, or before that! We're talking branching storylines, gameplay choices and sandbox-style missions. You're going to need to do some advanced weapon training before we deploy. That sniper rifle with a scope that can heat-sense through metal and concrete kicks like a mother, so man up! Now, let's talk about Strike Force, soldier! You'll be assigned a series of Strike Force missions. Do not fail these! Bring all those RTS skills you've learnt playing *Command and Conquer* and put them to good use to complete these missions. BE the Commander, then BE the soldier, then BE the weapon. Go go go! Why are you still standing here, soldier! You want to know about zombies? I'll tell you about zombies, soldier! It's what you will be if you don't GET A MOVE ON AND CLEAR OUT! ☞



Castlevania: Lords of Shadow 2

Developer: MercurySteam
 Publisher: Konami
 Genre: Action adventure
 Release date: 2013
 Platforms: 360 / PS3

Castlevania's third-person action-adventure reboot, *Lords of Shadow*, did well enough to warrant a sequel. Revealed with a spectacular trailer that brings back main character Gabriel Belmont (now a vampire) and shows him fending off a horde of attacking medieval warriors. Also, a giant wooden mech thing. Glorious, sure, but we don't actually know much else about the game. Dave Cox, the game's producer and head of product planning and development at Konami Digital Entertainment GmbH, says this about the sequel:

"We are pleased to announce the development of the conclusion to the *Castlevania: Lords of Shadow* saga, giving players an all-new gameplay experience within the *Lords of Shadow* universe. [It's] the most successful *Castlevania* game to be released in the franchise's history, and we are looking to provide series fans yet another nail biter, complete with Dracula's resurrection and the Belmont clan's desire for his final destruction." ☞

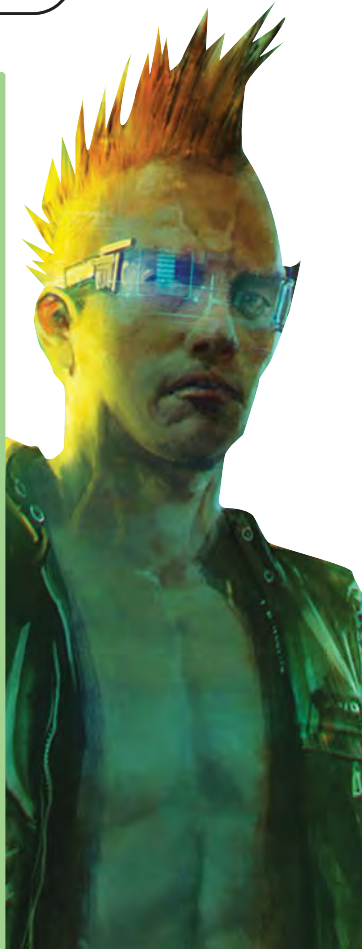
"How many times have you been watching an episode of South Park and thought 'I'd like to be able to watch this on my television, while hooked into my mobile device, which is being controlled by my tablet device, which is hooked into my oven all while sitting in the refrigerator?'"
 South Park co-creator Trey Parker

Company of Heroes 2

Developer: Relic Entertainment
 Publisher: THQ
 Genre: Real-time strategy
 Release date: 2013
 Platforms: PC

We're headed to the Eastern Front of World War II in the sequel to Relic's excellent RTS title, *Company of Heroes*. With its campaign beginning in 1941, *Company of Heroes 2* hopes to broaden its depiction of the Second World War, promising to tell previously untold stories of the conflict, all centred around the Eastern Front, where 11 million Soviet soldiers are believed to have been killed. Promising remarkable detail in its visuals, its gameplay and its narrative, this sequel promises to uphold all of the ideals of its predecessor (and its expansions).

The new True Sight system means that any in-game obstruction – be it the leaves of a fallen tree or smoke billowing from a burning building – will block your troops' line of sight (and by extension your own) accordingly. Soldiers are smart enough to dynamically react to any situation, but it'll still be your leadership that ultimately leads them to victory. The AI has been enhanced in numerous ways. It's a game that is set to be brutally authentic, and we're impossibly excited for it.



Cyberpunk

Developer: CD Projekt RED
 Publisher: CD Projekt RED
 Genre: Role-playing game
 Release date: 2013
 Platforms: PC

The developers of one of the greatest RPGs in gaming's history are moving beyond the confines of Geralt of Rivia's fantasy universe – and into a dystopian, cyberpunk future based on the pen-and-paper RPG system created by Mike Pondsmith and called – surprise surprise! – *Cyberpunk*.

It will boast all the hallmarks that make *The Witcher* such a renowned series, like a winding narrative filled with difficult choices to be made set within a rich and engaging narrative. It's designed for mature players, and your choices will have far-reaching consequences. Select your character class from a range of options like deadly mercenaries and crafty hackers, and then outfit them with a powerful arsenal of weaponry and a vast range of cybernetic enhancements. Given its developer's pedigree, this is an RPG that's not to be missed.



DmC: Devil May Cry

Developer: Ninja Theory
 Publisher: Capcom
 Genre: Action
 Release date: January 2013
 Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Under the helm of a new developer (Ninja Theory, they who developed underappreciated gem *Enslaved*), the initial controversy surrounding playable character Dante's physical transformation has finally died down and given way to genuine excitement for what's looking to be an excellent entry in the lauded action series. As teenaged Dante, you're under attack from a seemingly sentient town called Limbo City that happens to be filled with demons. This should be fun.

Swords and guns allow for a multitude of unique attacks and methods of stringing together combos, while Dante also has access to his angel and demon powers for extra oomph. It's all set in a parallel universe to the previous *DMC* games, but it will provide all the frenetic action sequences, excellent combat and twisted wackiness that the series has become known for. Throw in a healthy dollop of humour, and this game is definitely one to look forward to for series fans, and action fans in general.



Epic Mickey 2: The Power of Two

Developer: Junction Point Studios (Wii)
 Blitz Games (PS3/360)
 Publisher: Disney Interactive Studios
 Genre: Action adventure
 Release date: 18 November 2012
 Platforms: 360 / PS3 / Wii

Mickey is back, and this time he brought a friend. Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, Walt Disney's first cartoon star, joins Mickey Mouse as they adventure through Wasteland, an alternate world filled with 80 years of forgotten Disney characters and theme park attractions. The jump-in jump-out co-op play has a unique element to it in that Mickey and Oswald both have their own specialities that are needed to complete levels: Mickey's paint brush and Oswald's remote control. The game is filled with Disney references throughout – some of the 2D levels are based on classic Disney animations, while other areas make use of Disney music. The Nintendo 3DS will get its own adventure in *Disney Epic Mickey: Power of Illusion*.



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Need for Speed: Most Wanted

Developer: Criterion Games / Publisher: Electronic Arts / Genre: Racing
Release date: 30 October 2012 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3 / PSV

Burnout Paradise meets *Need for Speed* in an open-world racing game where evading the cops and getting to the top of the leaderboards by doing challenges are the order of the day. You're never just driving around looking for something to do - the minute one objective is complete you're given another and another and another. Be the first car to the starting line, jump the furthest over a bridge, take out as many signposts as you can in two minutes - the pace is intense and the driving is frantic. Takedown! Before you know it, beating your friend's

scores online, via the Autolog 2 data tracking system in the game, suddenly becomes more pressing than having lunch. Hit the nitro! Even when you totally suck at doing something, there's a reward to be had, even if it means breaking the rules and smashing dramatically into your opponents before an event is about to begin. Carnage! If you want a break from the action you can drive around searching for jack spots. Finding these secret areas within the game will see you driving off in an exotic car each time a new hidden location is found. There's something for everyone.



NintendoLand

Developer: Nintendo / Publisher: Nintendo / Genre: Mini-game collection
Release date: Q4 2012 / Platforms: WiiU

NintendoLand is a theme park-styled collection of mini-games that will be available for the Wii U console at launch. The twelve mini-games are based on some of your favourite Nintendo franchises and will make use of a combination of the Wii U GamePad and/or Wii remotes, with some of the games supporting up to five players (four Wii remotes plus one Wii U GamePad). Only five of the games were playable at E3, so we gave them all a quick whirl. *The Legend of Zelda: Battle Quest* is a three-player action game where two players are swordsmen and the third is an archer and you have to fight your way into the Forest Temple; *Animal Crossing: Sweet Day* is for

five players where four of you have to run around and eat 50 candies while the fifth player, who controls two guards, has to chase you down and stop you from getting those 50 candies; *Luigi's Ghost Mansion* has four players running around inside the mansion trying to expose the ghost using flashlights with the fifth player on the GamePad being the ghost who's trying to catch them; *Donkey Kong's Crash Course* is a single-player nostalgic Nintendo staple that uses the GamePads tilt control functionality to move your cart around the screen; *Takamaru's Ninja Castle* is a single player ninja adventure where you use the GamePad to take out your enemies using throwing stars.



FUN FACT

Venice Beach is known throughout the world as a setting for films such as "Speed" with Sandra Bullock, and the popular "Baywatch" television series.



"It's really cool to see how this works and how much detail goes into it... I really think the technology is amazing, to be able to track your entire body. I was really blown away. I had to be a part of this."
 Usher on Dance Central 3 for Xbox

Rayman Legends

Developer: Ubisoft Montpellier / Publisher: Ubisoft / Genre: Platformer
 Release date: TBA / Platforms: Wii U

It looks like the *Rayman Origins* visual and gameplay style struck a chord with gamers, so much so that Ubisoft has decided to keep it up with the next game in the long line of *Rayman* titles.

Legends will feature the same up-to-four-players antics of *Origins*, with Rayman, Globox and the two Teenies as playable characters. Since this is a Wii U exclusive release, however, Ubisoft is experimenting with an interesting use of the GamePad to open up the game to a fifth, "asymmetrical" player. Expect to see this term used a lot with multiplayer Wii U games – it means that the GamePad player will have access to unique gameplay mechanisms used either (in this case)

in conjunction with the other players or (in other games) against them.

The GamePad player in *Legends* will control a flying character called Murfy who can instantly teleport to any location on the screen (the scrolling of which is controlled by the main players) to deactivate traps and activate platforms, or lift or rotate objects around which the other players will run and jump. The result is seemingly simple for the most part but players looking to 100% each level will need someone with brains and lightning-fast reflexes in charge of Murfy.

Other than the addition of GamePad support, *Legends* looks to be just as rhythmic and twitchy as *Origins* before it. We can't wait.



FUN FACT
 Taking two melatonin tablets and also a sleeping tablet before a flight may lead to hallucinations.

ShootMania Storm

Developer: Nadeo / Publisher: Ubisoft / Genre: First-person shooter
 Release date: 2012 / Platforms: PC

ShootMania Storm is what you get when *TrackMania* developers Nadeo put their collective mind to work on a first-person shooter focused on competitive multiplayer. Like the puzzle/stunt racing game that serves as its foundation, *ShootMania Storm* will be driven by creation, and the creations of its players.

The idea is to make the gameplay simplistic, but fun. Every player starts with the same weapon: a gun that fires orbs. More weapons can be obtained from various zones throughout maps, but the number of different weapons on offer will be kept to a minimum, so as to keep players focused on combat rather than collection. Weapons don't run out of ammo either, instead only overheating when used a lot, further

enforcing the need to keep players fixated on the action at all times. Killstreaks and classes do not feature, and players are able to respawn at any time by hitting the Enter key – no respawn times here.

Meanwhile, the map-editing tools will allow for a range of different options to allow for maximum creativity: players are able to design structures, change the rules of elements within maps (like, say, making all the water on the map hazardous) and will even allow players to write their own code for certain aspects of the maps. The game will be part of ManiaPlanet, allowing you to share all manner of *ShootMania* stuff with other players, and it'll even allow you to create your own game modes.



FUN FACT
 E3 2012 generated 30,000 total hotel room bookings and nearly \$40 million in revenue for the city.

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FIFA Soccer 13

Developer: EA Sports
 Publisher: Electronic Arts
 Genre: Sports
 Release date: 28 September 2012
 Platforms: 360 / 3DS / PC / PS2
 PS3 / PSV / Wii

Fans of soccer have a greatly improved and more realistic gameplay experience to look forward to. EA Sports have added numerous innovations to this year's game – improved artificial intelligence, more precise dribbling with 360° mobility with the ball, ball control that eliminates near-perfect touch, physical play using a second-generation Player Impact Engine, tactical free kicks, and two new passing options. New features for the Football Club online network where fans connect, compete and share with their friends and others include an iPhone app that lets console players stay connected to the Football Club, as well as being able to earn rewards and extra content when certain milestones are reached. *FIFA Soccer 12* players will carry their Football Club Level and XP into *FIFA Soccer 13*.



Forza Horizon

Developer: Playground Games / Turn 10 Studios
 Publisher: Microsoft Studios
 Genre: Racing
 Release date: October 2012
 Platforms: 360

The core *Forza* series is taking a back seat for a bit while Playground Studios (formed from the ashes of *Blur* developers Bizarre Creations, as well as employees from Codemasters, Ubisoft Reflections and Criterion) takes the wheel under the guidance of Turn 10.

Horizon will be an open-world game set in Colorado during the fictional "Horizon Festival". Players can cruise around the city and challenge AI opponents to instant races, and can even switch between day and night races at the press of a button. Despite these changes, the developers are adamant that the game isn't an arcade racer. It'll retain its simulation roots while attempting to open up the series to new players and give series veterans something fresh but still familiar with which to play.

Gears of War: Judgment

Developer: Epic Games / People Can Fly
 Publisher: Microsoft Studios
 Genre: Third-person shooter
 Release date: 2013
 Platforms: 360

You didn't really think that just because *Gears 3* was the end of the trilogy, *Gears* was done forever, did you? The fourth game in the series takes players back to the immediate aftermath of Emergence Day – the event that served as the basis for all these *Gears* shenanigans. The campaign centres on Kilo Squad, troops led by series regulars Damon Baird and Augustus Cole. Series newcomers Sofia Hendricks and Garron Paduck join Baird and Cole as they fight to save Halvo Bay from a menacing new foe.

Cooperative play for you and three friends via Xbox LIVE lets you fight the new Locust menace as the planet Sera teeters on the brink of total annihilation around you. Gameplay promises faster, more intense combat for both multiplayer and solo play. There'll also be a number of new multiplayer modes available – such as the new OverRun mode, which acts as a mix between the Horde and Beast modes from former *GoW* titles as five-player teams of COG soldiers and Locusts face off in class-based conflict.



Grand Theft Auto V

Developer: Rockstar North
 Publisher: Rockstar Games
 Genre: Action adventure
 Release date: 2012
 Platforms: 360 / PS3

In a world where almost everyone has seemingly heard of the *Grand Theft Auto* series, you don't need to be told that this one is huge. Set in the fictional city of Los Santos (*GTA's* version of Los Angeles and Southern California, which was previously one of the cities featured in *GTA: San Andreas*) and its "surrounding hills, countryside and beaches", the fifth game looks to be "the largest and the most ambitious game Rockstar has yet created." For a studio like Rockstar, that's a massive statement to make about a game that's been said to be a "radical reinvention of the *Grand Theft Auto* universe" and "a bold new direction in open-world freedom, storytelling, mission-based gameplay and online multiplayer." Hyperbolic shouting aside, there's not much else known about the game right now. But it's going to be huge. That is all.

"My character is like the Don King of that particular scene. I'm just in the background dancing. You gotta see it. It looks cool It's got my stage, my throne, my girls, low riders in the background, my sayings on the ground. It's like a party going on around a fight, because I am the life of the party."

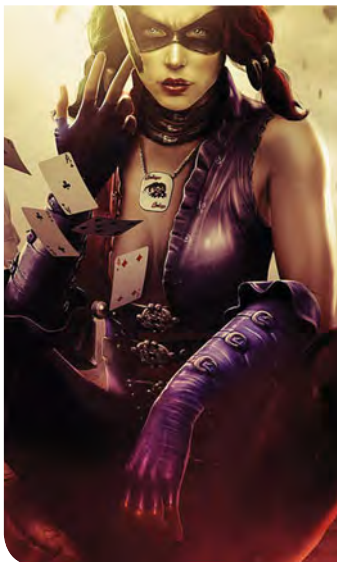
Snoop Dogg on Tekken Tag Tournament 2

Injustice: Gods Among Us

Developer: NetherRealm Studios
 Publisher: WB Games
 Genre: Fighting
 Release date: TBA 2013
 Platforms: 360 / PS3 / Wii U

Super heroes and villains tend to spend more time smacking each other in the face than adventuring, so what better way to concentrate that action than with a game entirely dedicated to them smacking each other in the face? And who better to take on the development of such a game than NetherRealm – creators of *Mortal Kombat* and, more recently, *MK vs DC*?

Injustice will be entirely focused on DC characters – both the common type (including Batman, Flash, Superman, Wonder Woman and Harley Quinn) and some of the lesser-known guys like the hulking Solomon Grundy. It'll feature all of the regular fighting game mechanics you'd expect: combos, super metres, counters and the like – as well as a few usually reserved for side-scrolling beat-'em-ups. The themed environments will be a big part of the action, and will allow characters to perform all manner of interactions like slamming nearby cars on their opponents, pressing dangerous looking big red buttons to unleash laser beams, and knocking their opponents into new combat areas.



Just Dance 4

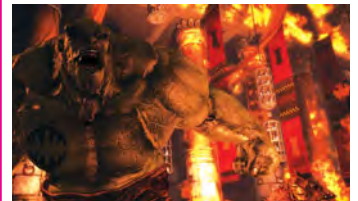
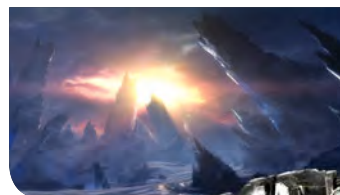
Developer: Ubisoft
 Publisher: Ubisoft
 Genre: Rhythm/music
 Release date: 2 October 2012
 Platforms: 360 / PS3 / Wii / Wii U

Get your groove on and just dance. It's your standard dance-fare sequel with a couple of fresh additions: Battle Mode, Alternate Choreographies, and Expanded Just Sweat Mode. In Battle Mode you go head-to-head in a six round dance off; Alternate Choreographies lets you unlock different dance routines of your favourite tracks; and Expanded Just Sweat Mode is an exercise and get fit workout that includes a calorie counter. There's a 40-track song list ranging from pop, rock, country and hip-hop. The Wii U has its own 5-player mode called Puppet Master where the player on the GamePad chooses the playlists and switches up the routines on the fly.

Lost Planet 3

Developer: Spark Unlimited
 Publisher: Capcom
 Genre: Third-person shooter
 Release date: TBA 2013
 Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Lost Planet 2 didn't exactly tickle our fancy, but after sitting through the demo of *LP3*, we're happy to say that we're tentatively intrigued. The third title in this series aims to have a greater focus on story and character development, with the player taking on the role of Jim, a colonist on the deadly but potentially lucrative planet known as EDN III. *LP3* is a prequel to the first game in the series, and will detail the early days of colonisation of the planet. As a result, players won't have access to the same level of military-grade hardware to deal with the alien menace that lives beneath the icy surface of EDN III, and will have to resort to more common engineering tools to keep themselves alive. All the while they'll attempt to learn the origins and secrets behind the organisation NEVEC during its rise to power and eventual rule over the planet.



Of Orcs and Men

Developer: Cyanide Studios
 Publisher: Focus Home Interactive
 Genre: Role-playing game
 Release date: September 2012
 Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

It's not every day that you come across an RPG that requires you to play as the greenskins. They're usually there as token options, to give you the chance to play as the "bad guys", but that's not the case here. *Of Orcs and Men* is a game focused on the other side of the fence. Players will take on the role of two characters – a burly orc and a wily goblin – who set off together to slay the human emperor whose species has been culling and enslaving the orcs and goblins of the land.

We'll admit that it's a pretty heavy setting, but, despite its humour potential, *Of Orcs and Men* is a pretty heavy RPG. It'll have everything you'd expect from such a game, including deep conversation options and plenty of moral choices. Players can switch between the two in and out of combat to leverage their unique abilities against their enemies and other NPCs. It's one heck of an interesting idea and we can't wait to see if it pans out.

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SimCity

Developer: Maxis / Publisher: Electronic Arts / Genre: Management simulation
Release date: 2013 / Platforms: PC

Not having seen a new release in almost ten years (we don't count *SimCity Societies*, because, well... gross), it's about damn time for the *SimCity* series to make a real comeback in the form of this ambitious-looking reboot. For those who've somehow never seen or heard of *SimCity*, it's a management sim that tasks players with planning and building a city, taking into account everything from smart road layout (and non-linear, curved roads will now feature) to building power plants that provide electricity for the Sims living in your burgeoning metropolis. And with the GlassBox simulation engine that this new *SimCity* is being built in, it might be the richest, most believable city building game yet.

"We try to build what you would

expect to see, and that's the game," says system architect Andrew Willmott, explaining how visual effects like pollution, traffic and even economic breakdowns will be made more obvious within the engine. Zoom in on your city, and you'll be able to see individual Sims (your city's inhabitants) going about their choice of daily tasks. Individual buildings can be upgraded and modified, such as by adding smokestacks and more to a power plant to improve its power output.

Finite resources demand even more careful city planning, as you don't want your entire economy to depend on a single, non-replenishing resource. Multiplayer features allow regions to sustain many cities from different players, and players' cities will influence each other. ☹



The Elder Scrolls Online

Developer: ZeniMax Online Studios / Publisher: Bethesda Softworks
Genre: MMORPG / Release date: 2013 / Platforms: PC

Much-loved RPG series *The Elder Scrolls* has traditionally allowed solo players to adventure through each individual title's cordoned-off chunk of the continent of Tamriel on their lonesome, with no other pesky players to deal with along the way. *The Elder Scrolls Online* aims to change all that, offering up the whole of Tamriel as the playground for a great many players to adventure through together. So you're able to travel from Morrowind to Daggerfall and then off to Skyrim for a spot of cold. And while MMOs may not be everyone's cup of meaty broth, it's a pretty big deal.

Described as having *World of Warcraft*-style mechanics (we can hear you groaning from here), the story is set in the Second Era of Tamriel, around 1,000 years before

the events of *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*. Three factions struggle for dominance and control of the Imperial City, while the obligatory "dark forces" conspire to obliterate the world. The three alliances (the Ebonheart Pact, the Aldmeri Dominion and the Daggerfall Covenant) make up the game's PvP component, in a huge three-way struggle for territorial control across all of Tamriel.

You'll still be able to create your character from the nine classic races, choosing from different classes as you do. There'll be opportunities for both solo and group questing. Points of interest will pop up on your map as you explore, which you can choose to investigate or not. If you expect more *World of Warcraft* than *Elder Scrolls*, you won't be disappointed. ☹



FUN FACT

The LAX airport was originally named Mines Field and was a general aviation base during World War II.

Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Blacklist

Developer: Ubisoft Toronto / Publisher: Ubisoft / Genre: Third-person shooter / stealth / Release date: 2013 / Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Splinter Cell returns with a few new features and a lot less Michael Ironside. The game follows on from *Splinter Cell: Conviction*, after US President Patricia Caldwell pulls the plug on Third Echelon and orders all ongoing operations terminated. The corrupt agency is replaced by newly formed Fourth Echelon (see what they did there?) that officially doesn't exist. So, Third Echelon 2.0 really.

The team is founded and led by Sam Fisher, and the agency's primary mission is to ensure the complete termination of Third Echelon. While doing this, a group of 12 terrorists (who've had enough of the US' military presence across the world) reveals a terror initiative known as "The Blacklist" – a deadly countdown of escalating terrorist attacks on

United States assets. It's up to Sam (and you) to stop the Blacklist countdown.

To aid in this, there's a new gameplay mechanic called "Killing in Motion" – similar to Mark and Execute – which allows you to highlight multiple targets and eliminate them fluidly in quick succession. Kinect integration for Xbox 360 allows you to use voice commands to call in air strikes, or to audibly distract enemies to slip past them. The action will be intense, but it's been highlighted that stealth is still a huge part of the gameplay. Sam Fisher's staple voice actor, Michael Ironside, has been replaced by Eric Johnson – who will provide his voice and also perform motion capture work for Sam. Sad face, because we love Michael Ironside. ☹



FUN FACT

On average, Americans eat three burgers a week. We ate one every day.

PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale

Developer: SuperBot Entertainment
 Bluepoint Games
 CE Santa Monica Studio
 Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment
 Genre: Fighting
 Release date: Q4 2012
 Platforms: PS3 / PS Vita

Nintendo's *Super Smash Bros.* proved that gamers enjoy taking popular characters and bashing the hell out of each other. It's a great idea, actually – so great that Sony has decided that they'd like to take the idea for themselves with *Battle Royale*. Players will choose their character from a pool of PS3 exclusive franchises (and a few others, like the Big Daddy from *BioShock*) including Kratos, Sly Cooper, Sweet Tooth, PaRappa the Rapper and Nathan Drake. Once done, you'll jump into a four-player battle for domination in which players attempt to eliminate their opponents – each time they do so, they'll gain a point and the slain opponent will respawn a few seconds later.

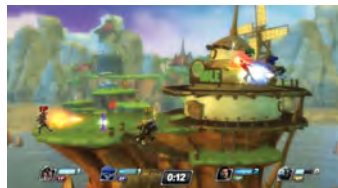
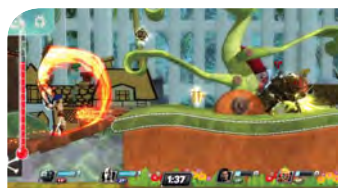
Expect lots of big, over-the-top action and ridiculous happenings. This is definitely one for a couch full of friends. ☹



Skylanders Giants

Developer: Toys for Bob / n-Space (3DS)
 Publisher: Activision
 Genre: Action adventure
 Release date: October 2012
 Platforms: 360 / 3DS / PC / PS3 / Wii

Skylanders: *Giants*, the sequel to last year's innovative *Skylanders: Spyro's Adventure* portal toy game, is shaping up to be a super fun romp through the Skylanders world. This time though, they're adding Giants: eight collectible figures twice the size of the main Skylanders, both in-game and in their toy form. Each Giant will represent one of the eight elements, and will be able to pick up scenery from the world and use it as weapons. All of your Spyro's figures, along with their upgrades and powers, will work in *Giants* up to level 15, and all your Series 2 figures will work in *Spyro's Adventure*. Cross platform play will be available since your XP and character stats are saved on your toy. In addition, players can look forward to eight new Skylanders launching with *Giants*, four of which will be LightCore Skylanders that have special powers and light up when you get close to the portal. ☹



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Sleeping Dogs

Developer: United Front Games
Publisher: Square Enix London Studios
Genre: Action adventure
Release date: September 2012
Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Initially conceptualised as *Black Lotus*, and then bought out by Activision and turned into a new *True Crime* title, the (hopefully for the last time) renamed *Sleeping Dogs* is once again free of any existing IP and sits happily with its new owners at Square Enix.

This is an open-world, free-roaming action game set in Hong Kong, with many similarities to the *GTA* series, but with an emphasis on hand-to-hand combat (similar to that of the *Batman: Arkham* series) as well as a solid cover/shooting system, and to tie it all together, the team has a few designers who've previously worked on the *Need for Speed* series, so expect a few similarities in the game's driving sequences. To top off all of those neat features, expect a ton of side activities to keep you occupied, such as stealing cars, singing karaoke, joining a fight club and even engaging in a little bit of illegal gambling at the local den. ☹



Star Wars: 1313

Developer: LucasArts
Publisher: LucasArts
Genre: Action adventure
Release date: TBA
Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Star Wars: 1313 is set during the original trilogy of movies and is being brought to life by the whole LucasArts gang including Industrial Light & Magic (ILM), Lucasfilm Animation and Skywalker Sound. Level 1313, the most dangerous part of *Star Wars* city-planet Coruscant, is where *Star Wars: 1313* takes place. You're a bounty hunter in a criminal underworld, so expect to see lots of bounty hunter weapons and gizmos. The gameplay is a combination of cover-based shooting and platforming all set in a gritty and darker side of the *Star Wars* universe than we're accustomed to. The entire game is rendered in real-time so it's hard to identify exactly when cut scenes end and gameplay begins. LucasArts are using motion capture as well as recording detailed facial expressions, so each of the actors in the game will be modelled off their real likeness along with their natural face, body and eye movement. ☹

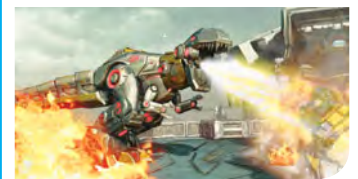
The Last of Us

Developer: Naughty Dog Interactive
Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment
Genre: Action adventure
Release date: TBA 2013
Platforms: PS3

We had seen snippets from *The Last of Us* before E3, but during the show, Sony gave us a better glimpse into the desolate and almost nauseatingly violent game world. Video game violence is nothing new, but *The Last of Us* uses it almost tastefully, to make a point: this is a desperate world. The game's playable protagonist, Joel, will do anything to protect himself and Ellie, the young lady who's taken to his side for safety, including hand-to-hand confrontation with some of the many bandits who prowl the post-apocalyptic cities of the game in search of easy prey.

There's more than just human enemies to worry about, however; the cause of all of this destruction stems from the zombie-like infected that now run rampant through the crumbling city streets.

Coming off the back of the undeniably tamer *Uncharted* series, Naughty Dog seems to be out to prove that they can craft a heavy and punchy survival game as well as anyone else. We can't wait. ☹



Transformers: Fall of Cybertron

Developer: High Moon Studios
Publisher: Activision
Genre: Third-person shooter
Release date: 28/08/2012
Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3

Giant robots, massive weapons, and a new character called Grimlock. Also, Dinobots and a city-sized Autobot called Metroplex. Oh, and you get to play as both the Autobots and the Decepticons in the campaign. It's the biggest Transformers game yet where everything has been super-sized to the max – the battles, the characters, the environment. The new guy on the block, Grimlock, transforms into a dinosaur but needs to earn this transformation by building up rage. You also get to play the gigantically huge Metroplex in one of the sections where he helps Optimus Prime fight against the Decepticons. If multiplayer is more your thing, you'll be able to jump into Escalation Mode, which is essentially a horde mode four-player co-op where each player will pick one of the four preset classes available: Scientist, Infiltrator, Destroyer and Titan. Die hard fans will be thrilled to know that the original voices of Optimus Prime and Grimlock from the Transformers animated television series, Peter Cullen and Gregg Berger, will be voice-acting their respective characters in *Transformers: Fall of Cybertron*. ☹



"E3 2012 focused and harnessed the passion, energy, and excitement for video games and propelled our industry into the global spotlight."
 Michael D. Gallagher, president and CEO of the ESA

Title	Platform/s	Genre
007 Legends	360 / PC / PS3	FPS
A Game of Dwarves	PC / PS3	Simulation/strategy
Adventure Time: Hey Ice King! Why'd You Steal Our Garbage?!		
Agni's Philosophy	3DS / DS	Adventure
Alien Spidy 3	360 / PS3	Tech demo
Angry Birds	60 / PC / PS3	Platformer
Arctic Combat	3DS	Puzzle
ArmA II	PC	FPS
ArmA III	360	FPS
Ascend: New Gods	PC	FPS
Assassin's Creed III: Liberation	TBS	TBS
Avatar Motocross Madness	360	Action adventure
BandFuse: Rock Legends	360	Racing
Batman: Arkham City - Armored Edition	360	Rhythm/music
Battlefield 3: Close Quarters	Wii U	Action adventure
Battlefield 3: End Game	360 / PC / PS3	FPS
Bellator: MMA Onslaught	360 / PS3	FPS
Ben 10: Omniverse	360 / 3DS / DS / PS3 / Wii / Wii U	Fighting
Brick-Force	360	Action
Bubble Guppies	PC	Shooter
Bullet Run	DS	Shooter
Call of Duty: Black Ops Declassified	PC	Adventure
Carrier Command: Gaea Mission	DS	Adventure
Cartoon Universe	PC	FPS
CastleStorm	PC	FPS
Castlevania: Lords of Shadow - Mirror of Fate	360 / PC / PS3	Strategy
Chasing Aurora	3DS	Action
Code of Princess	Wii U	Action
Continent of the Ninth Seal	3DS	Action
Copernicus (working title)	PC	MMORPG
Core Blaze	PC	MMORPG
Counter-Strike: Global Offensive	PC	MMORPG
Dance Central 3	360 / PC / PS3	FPS
DanceStar Party 2	360	Rhythm/music
DanceStar Party Hits	PS3	Rhythm/music
Dark	PS3	Rhythm/music
Dark Souls: Prepare to Die Edition	360	Stealth RPG
DC Universe Online: The Last Laugh	360	Stealth RPG
Dead Island: Riptide	PC	RPG
Dead or Alive 5	PC / PS3	RPG
Deadlight	360 / PC / PS3	FPS/RPG
Defiance	360	Fighting
Disney Princess: My Fairytale Adventure	360	Action
Divinity: Dragon Commander	360 / PC / PS3	MMOG
Divinity: Original Sin	PC	MMOG
Dogfight 1942	360 / PC / PS3 / Wii	Adventure
Dollar Dash	360 / PC / PS3	RPG
Doom 3 BFG Edition	360 / PC / PS3	RPG
Dora & Team Umizoomi's Fantastic Flight	360 / PC / PS3	Flight
Dragon Ball Z for Kinect	360	Action
Dungeon Fighter LIVE!	360	Action
Fall of Hendon Myre	360	Action
Dungeonland	360	Action
Dungeons & Dragons Online: Menace of the Underdark	PC	MMORPG
Dungeons & Dragons: Neverwinter	PC	MMORPG
DUST 514	PC	MMORPG

Title	Platform/s	Genre
Dust: An Elysian Tail	360	Action RPG
Dyad	PS3	Racing
Dynasty Warriors 7 Empires	PS3	Action
End of Nations	PC	MMORTS
Enemy Front	360 / PC / PS3	FPS
Epic Mickey: The Power of Illusion	3DS	Platformer
Ether Vapor Remaster	PC	Action
F1 2012	360 / PC / PS3	Racing
Fable: The Journey	360	Action
Family Guy: Back to the Multiverse	360 / PS3	Action adventure
Final Fantasy XIV Online	PS3	MMORPG
Fire Emblem: Awakening	3DS	Strategy/RPG
Firefall	PC	MMOFPS
Fist of the North Star: Ken's Rage 2	360 / PS3	Action
Foosball 2012	PS3 / PSV	Sports
Game & Wario (working title)	Wii U	Mini-game collection
God of War: Ascension	PS3	Action
Grimlands	PC	MMORPG
Guacamelee!	PSV	Platformer
Guardians of Middle-Earth	360 / PS3	MOBA
Guns of Icarus Online	PC	MMOG
Halo 4	360	FPS
Happy Wars	360	Multiplayer action
Harvest Moon 3D: A New Beginning	3DS	Strategy/adventure
Hawken	PC	Action
Hearts of Iron III: Their Finest Hour	PC	Strategy
Hell Yeah! Wrath of the Dead Rabbit	360 / PC / PS3	Platformer
Hybrid	360	TPS
Jet Set Radio	360 / PC / PS3 / PSV	Action
Joe Danger: The Movie	360	Racing
Just Dance: Disney Party	360 / Wii	Rhythm/music
Karaoke Joysound Wii	Wii	Rhythm/music
Kinect Nat Geo TV	360	Puzzle
Kinect Sesame Street TV	360	Puzzle
Knights of the Round Cable	PC	Puzzle
Legends of Pegasus	PC	Strategy
LEGO City Undercover	3DS / Wii U	Action adventure
LEGO The Lord of the Rings	360 / 3DS / DS	Action adventure
Lifeless Planet	PC / PS3 / PSV / Wii	Action adventure
LittleBigPlanet	PC	Action adventure
LittleBigPlanet Karting	PSV	Action adventure
LocoCycle	PS3	Racing
Luigi's Mansion: Dark Moon	360	Action
Madden NFL 13	3DS	Action adventure
Magna Mundi	360 / PS3 / PSV / Wii	Sports
Mark of the Ninja	PC	Strategy
Marvel Avengers: Battle for Earth	360	Action
Marvel Pinball 3D	360 / Wii U	Action
Mass Effect 3	3DS	Action
Matter	360 / PS3 / PSV / Wii	Sports
MechWarrior Online	PC	Strategy
Miner Wars 2081	360 / PC / PS3	Action
Mistborn: Birthright	360	Adventure
Mugen Souls	360 / PC / PS3	Adventure
Napoleon's Campaigns II	PC	Action
Narco Terror	360 / PC / PS3	Action
NBA 2K13	360 / PC / PS3	Sports
NBA Baller Beats	360	Sports
NBA Live 13	360 / PS3	Sports
NCAA Football 13	360 / PS3	Sports
New Little King's Story	PSV	RPG
New Super Mario Bros. 2	3DS / Wii U	Platformer



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UFC President, Dana White

"Well I actually got involved through my record company. Just having a big record such as "Good Feeling" makes the job much easier, so I mean, I'm definitely a video game, you know, fanatic."

Flo Rida on Just Dance 4

Title	Platform/s	Genre
NHL 13	360 / PS3	Sports
Ni no Kuni: Wrath of the White Witch	PS3	RPG
Nickelodeon Dance 2	360 / Wii	Rhythm/music
Nike+ Kinect Training	360	Fitness
Ninja Gaiden 3: Razor's Edge	Wii U	Action
Omerta - City of Gangsters	PC	Management sim
One Piece: Pirate Warriors	PS3	Action
Otherland	PC	RPG
Painkiller: Hell & Damnation	PC	FPS
Paper Mario: Sticker Star	3DS	RPG/platformer
Papo & Yo	PS3	Action adventure
Penny Arcade's On the Rain-Slick Precipice of Darkness 3	360 / PC	RPG
Persona 4 Arena	360 / PS3	Fighting
Persona 4: Golden	PSV	RPG
Phineas and Ferb: Across the 2nd Dimension	PSV	Action adventure
Pid	360 / PC / PS3	Platformer
Pikmin 3	Wii U	Puzzle/adventure
PlanetSide 2	PC	MMOFPS
Pokemon Black Version 2	DS	RPG
Pokemon White Version 2	DS	RPG
Port Royale 3: Pirates and Merchants	PC	Management sim
Pro Cycling Manager	PC	Management sim
Season 2012: Le Tour de France	PC	Management sim
Pro Evolution Soccer 2013	360 / 3DS / PC PS2 / PS3 / Wii	Sports
Project Happiness (working title)	PC	Puzzle
Project P-100 (working title)	Wii U	Action
Quantum Conundrum	360 / PC / PS3	FPP
R.A.W.	360 / PC / PS3	Action RPG
Rabbids Rumble	3DS	Mini-game collection
RaiderZ	PC	MMORPG
Resident Evil 6	360 / PC / PS3	Survival horror
Retro City Rampage	360 / PC / PS3 PSV / Wii	Action adventure
Rift: Storm Legion	PC	MMORPG
Rise of the Guardians	360 / 3DS / PS3 Wii / Wii U	Action adventure
Risen 2: Dark Waters	360 / PS3	RPG
Rock Band Blitz	360 / PS3	Rhythm/music
Sacrilegium	PC	Survival horror
Salem: The Crafting MMO	PC	MMOG
Scribblenauts Unlimited	3DS / Wii U	Action adventure
Silent Hill: Book of Memories	PSV	Survival horror
SiNG (working title)	Wii U	Rhythm/music
Skulls of the Shogun	360	TBS
Sly Cooper: Thieves in Time	PS3 / PSV	Action adventure
Smart As	PSV	Puzzle/educational
Sniper: Ghost Warrior 2	360 / PC / PS3	FPS
Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed	360 / 3DS / PS3 PSV / Wii U	Racing
Soul Sacrifice	PSV	RPG
Sound Shapes	PS3 / PSV	Platformer
Spec Ops: The Line	360 / PC / PS3	TPS
Sports Champions 2	PS3	Sports
Sports Connection	Wii U	Sports
Spy Hunter	3DS / PSV	Racing
Star Trek: The Game	360 / PC / PS3	TPS
Starvoid	PC	RTS
Street Fighter X Tekken	PSV	Fighting
Super Monkey Ball: Banana Splitz	PSV	Puzzle
Tank! Tank! Tank!	Wii U	Action
Tekken Tag Tournament 2	360 / PS3 / Wii U	Fighting
The Dark Eye: Demonicon	360 / PC / PS3	RPG

Title	Platform/s	Genre
The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim - Dawnguard	360 / PC / PS3	RPG
The Last Guardian	PS3	Action adventure
The Last Story	Wii	RPG
The Lord of the Rings Online: Riders of Rohan	PC	MMORPG
The Secret World	PC	MMORPG
The Showdown Effect	PC	Action
The Unfinished Swan	PS3	Adventure
The Walking Dead: Episode 2 - Starved for Help	360 / PC / PS3	Adventure
Theatrhythm Final Fantasy	3DS	Rhythm/music
Thundercats	DS	Action
Titan Siege	PC	RPG
Tokyo Jungle	PS3	Action
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater HD	360	Sports
Transformers Prime	3DS	Action
Trine 2: Director's Cut	Wii U	Puzzle platformer
War of the Roses	PC	Action
Warface	PC	FPS
Warhammer Online: Wrath of Heroes	PC	MOBA
When Vikings Attack	PSV	Action
Wii Fit U	Wii U	Fitness
Wizardry Online	PC	MMORPG
World of Battleships	PC	MMOG
World of Warplanes	PC	MMOG
WWE '13	360 / PS3 / Wii	Sports
XCOM: Enemy Unknown	360 / PC / PS3	TBS
Young Justice: Legacy	360 / DS / PS3 / Wii	Action
Your Shape: Fitness Evolved 2013	Wii U	Fitness
Zeno Clash II	360 / PC / PS3	FPS/action
Zone of the Enders HD Collection	360 / PS3 / PSV	Action
Zumba Fitness Core	360 / Wii	Fitness



FUN FACT
All our photos that we took of booth babes at E3 are on the DVD this month in the "E3 2012 Booth Babes" folder.

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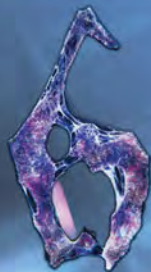
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