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Microsoft reveals Project Natal for Xbox 360

"No controller required" for Microsoft's motion-sensing gaming solution

by Amy-Mae Elliott published on 1 June 2009

"You are the controller", Microsoft has announced during its E3 2009 keynote speech.

Rather than offer a Nintendo Wii-rivalling motion-sensing controller, Microsoft has revealed "Project Natal", a way of controlling video games using only your body movements or your voice, with keyword recognition.

However, Project Natal is still only at concept stage. It consists of an RGB camera, a depth sensor, a multi-array microphone and a custom processor running proprietary software, but Natal-compatible games are a while off yet.

With the boast the system will recognise you instantly - with no need to sign in - the company has demonstrated the prototype gaming solution, describing it as "a revolutionary way to play, a new era of interactive entertainment".

The claim is that a gamer will have full control of their avatar just by moving their body, with no restrictions set by the game.

Offering a "breakthrough" sensor that tracks full body movement - as well as recognising individual voices - "the only experience needed is life experience", is the boast from Microsoft.

Microsoft says Project Natal will work with all Xbox 360s and development kits are arriving with Microsoft's developer partners now.

"It's not about inventing the wheel, it's about no wheel at all", said Xbox 360 special guest film director Stephen Spielberg during the Microsoft keynote.

