

Nintendo Switch: Unavailable Near You



This is kind of a rant about Nintendo as a company and how it treats consumers. Under a different banner, it can also be an open ended question about why people still like and defend a company that treats its consumer base so poorly time and again.

A couple of weeks ago, I went to a large gaming industry week long event aptly called the “*Game Developers Conference*”, or GDC for short. There, I was surprised to see the company Nintendo teaming up with various developer platforms, primarily Unity3D, to demonstrate some of the Indie games running on their new Nintendo Switch console. I had a great time with some of their demonstrations and wished to learn more about the Switch console, but time is limited and they had many other people to demo for.

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So this brings us to today. I went all around town here in Kansas City looking for, not the actual console to purchase, but a demo. A small setup with the console and a television to play for fifteen or twenty minutes just to test the waters and feel out the console more thoroughly. Not only did I find out that such demo stations did not exist (as they do for every other major console), but new shipments of Switch consoles for purchasing isn’t expected until mid-April. Which is really awkward since Nintendo’s own website states that the system is “Available now at these retailers” and [every single clickable option returns “unavailable”](#). Something odd that I saw in every single store I visited was that retail store’s shelves had tons of extra controllers and accessories in stock, collecting dust on shelves... because nobody will buy an extra controller for a system they can’t even get.

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On one hand, we should always see this coming every time Nintendo does, well, anything in these modern times. They did this limited supply tactic with their game altering plastic figurines called [Amiibos](#). They did it again with a more recent venture, the super rare [NES Classic nostalgia system](#), and now here we are again with the Nintendo Switch.

This all runs into a theory that I like to call “Nintendo hates their customers and is allergic to money”. The availability crisis Nintendo seems to be refusing to learn from, let alone fix, isn’t a new tactic, but it seems to add to the overall outlook of the company when it comes to consumers. Even with some of the games that come out from Nintendo in the not too distant past seem to be

at odds with what players want.

I'm still burned on their ruination of *Star Fox*, a franchise that I hold dear to my early gaming days. Not because it broke with canon, but because it featured broken and impossible controls for no reason other than a vain attempt to **justify the Wii U's awkward tablet**. Or the unnecessary dumbing down of *Mario Party 10* for the Wii U because competitive board games are "too spoopy" for younger audiences. It's hard to not wonder if the gaming company just holds its player base in contempt or is some how self loathing.

There's just these little things Nintendo seems to do that add up to the company not actually wanting players to enjoy their games. For example, not making a new *Mario Kart* for the switch, but re-releasing the same version from the Wii U with an added map and a couple of extra cross-over promotional characters (Birdo is still missing, however). Even the new *Zelda* game has good chunks of fun buried under a mountain of uniquely **non-fun experiences**.

I think Jim Sterling from *The Jimquisition* sums up the whole ordeal quite accurately (caution strong language):

<https://youtu.be/cRicuKHmjZA>

There is a little bit of good news that comes from the time that we are all forced to wait for the next wave of shipments... Maybe in the next few months, Nintendo will acknowledge the **controller issues**, **dead pixel problems**, and **other problems** the early adopters are having... but I know those are tall orders that Nintendo may never feel the need to do anything about.

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