

Notes for Presentation on the 2nd Generation of Consoles

Please edit and add new info, consoles, sections, etc.

Consoles

A Console

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Atari 2600

- Most successful console of the 2nd generation

ColecoVision

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Intellivision

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Vectrex

General facts

- Released in US 1982 at \$199, wasn't released until 1983 in Europe and Japan
- Originally made by General Consumer Electric then bought out by Milton Bradley
- Video Game Crash of 1983 shortly after release meant it wasn't around for long

Technology

- Unlike other consoles of the 2nd generation, it didn't connect to the TV but had its own built in vector CRT (and speakers)
- First and only home console to be based on vector graphics. Vector displays were already popular in arcade machines.
- Like the Magnavox Odyssey, the Vectrex used plastic overlays to display background images and add colour to its monochrome display
- Games were stored on cartridges, like many of the other consoles of its generation

Industry

Video Game Crash of 1983

- The video game industry crashed around 1983 due to too many consoles and games as well as the growing popularity of home computers
- High profile yet low quality games on the successful Atari 2600 such as a port of Pac-Man and the infamous E.T. The Extra Terrestrial contributed to triggering the crash due to the huge losses made and by losing the trust of retailers
- Small companies quickly went out of business as a result

Some Useful Sources

- [1] M. J. Wolf, *The medium of the video game*. University of Texas Press, 2001.
- [2] M. J. Wolf, *The video game explosion: a history from PONG to Playstation and beyond*. ABC-CLIO, 2008.
- [3] M. J. Wolf, *Before the crash: early video game history*. Wayne State University Press, 2012.
- [4] B. Perron and M. J. Wolf, *The video game theory reader 2*. Routledge, 2008.
- [5] M. Ernkvist, "Down many times, but still playing the game: Creative destruction and industry crashes in the early video game industry 1970-1986," in *XIV International Economic History Congress, Helsinki 2006, Session 45*, 2006.