

New 3DS, Old Nintendo

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Nintendo is not bringing the non-XL new 3DS to America. This bothers me heavily, but the main reasoning behind this strategy can be credited to Nintendo thinking that we are already spoiled with the XL and that putting the regular version on store shelves will result in wasted shelf space. This is nothing other than a classic case of Nintendo of America taking their feedback to incomprehensible levels.

Nintendo has a track record of evaluating feedback and going to absolute extremes in response. The 2DS is essentially a release based on criticisms that the 3DS is too expensive for your “average person,” even though that same person is still fond of the titles released on the system. Nintendo was (and is) already losing money on the creation of their consoles, so they can’t slash prices again. Instead, they made a cheap device assembled with cheap hardware in order to allow people to both buy the device, enjoy the games, and get their feet wet with Nintendo’s ever-growing number of titles. This is Nintendo taking feedback to support the consumer, but the new 3DS being held hostage in every water surrounding the US is a different story.

During the Nintendo 3DS XL launch, Americans hyped the XL to a level that has yet to be seen elsewhere for any neighboring console. People scoffed at the idea of someone buying a regular 3DS with such crass it seemed as if Nintendo planned to rerelease the Virtual Boy. We kept this up for years until Nintendo finally flooded the market with XLs and only put out a few regular 3DS units on shelves. This tactic is fine, in theory, since Americans were exclusively buying the XL console at the time. However, it resulted in the eventual downfall of the regular 3DS.

As Nintendo of America would put it:

Different territories make their own business decisions regarding individual products and timing. We think New Nintendo 3DS XL makes the most sense for our market. Nintendo makes different systems at different price points for a whole range of consumers, and New Nintendo 3DS XL simply expands those choices even further.

This, in essence, means that because enthusiasm for the regular 3DS has dwindled in America, Nintendo believes that the 3DS XL opens up options as far as sales go. They think consumers across the board enjoy the XL more, so there’s no reason to give shelf space to the regular 3DS. It’s a very Nintendo way of acting when it comes to business decisions, but you can’t throw a rock in any direction and expect it to land without hitting at least three people who are upset that the regular-sized handheld isn’t coming to the US.

The regular new 3DS is regarded as one of the most attractive consoles Nintendo has ever released. The slim, sleek form of it, the usage of classically colored buttons to pay homage to the original Super Nintendo/Famicom, and, most of all, the interchangeable faceplates. All of these design decisions come together to give consumers a sense of the charm that Nintendo is known for. Nintendo, across all platforms, above all other consoles, is known for its games being pure fun and its charm being unparalleled.

With the US launch of the new 3DS XL, Nintendo of America is showing, once again, that it still has a seemingly skewed view of its Western audience. Throughout the years, Nintendo has always seen Americans as tough, hardcore, vigorous people. It’s not hard to imagine why Nintendo is essentially limiting us to such behavior and no longer allowing us to get things that we, as consumers, know we want. Even looking at the options as far as the XL goes, we are getting red and black, and two dark-colored limited edition consoles – no blue.

The main problem with the reasoning behind Nintendo’s decision to not release the new regular 3DS in America is that it’s factoring in the number of people who chose the 3DS XL, but it sidelines the reasons as to *why* people chose the XL. During its debut, the XL was seen as a superior console because of its hardware design, enhanced screens, and longer lasting battery. For those unaware, the standard 3DS has a battery life of approximately 5 hours with 3D on – aka horrible. With the new 3DS, you get one of the best hardware revisions, you get a bigger screen over the standard 3DS, and, on top of that, you get decent battery life to boot. With all of these things coupled into one system, the new 3DS can be seen as the original 3DS perfected. With the new 3DS XL, we get more of the same, albeit with more processing power. In shorter terms, the XL is essentially going from a 5 to a 5S, while the regular 3DS (in other ways) is going from a 4 to a 5. It’s Nintendo blindsiding the reasoning but going directly to what charts show and what money says.

Still, Nintendo is one of my favorite companies. They’ve released games that I still play today, get frustrated at, and play some more. They’ve made consoles that I’ve waited in the rain to get my hands on because I couldn’t wait to hear Mario’s “wa-hoo!” or save Princess Peach once again. I’ve been a Nintendo fan for eons and have no plans on stopping, but unfortunately, this is the first time in recent years that I can genuinely say I feel dissappointed in Nintendo. They’ve always been behind in terms of what they do with their Internet infrastructure, but I’ve always felt safe to say that Nintendo delivers products that I want and knows exactly how to make a perfect game. Sadly, I do not want the new 3DS XL. I would never be able to buy it without a lingering hint of guilt or dismay. That said, I’d like to see Nintendo somewhere down the line choose to release the new 3DS, but honestly, I don’t know if Nintendo is listening to feedback or cares that much about the words we say as opposed to the money we spend.



About Shawn Wilkins

An enthusiastic writer who values quality over quantity. The abundance of posts shouldn’t make the site, but rather, the quality of them. Aiming for perfection is the goal and anything less isn’t acceptable. Long walks on the beach are accepted, however.

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