



Video Games Pwn the Library

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Introduction

1. Convince your administration to collect video games.
2. Develop a collection development policy for video games.
3. How to catalog the video games.
4. How to circulate your collection with maximum efficiency.



Image via Flickr.com

Why should your library collect video games?

Outline of reasons to give to your administration for collecting video games.

- Video games are pervasive in our society, current estimates say that it is a \$12 billion dollar industry.
- These games are also useful in teaching complex learning theories and can help create a community for getting and playing them.
- Ideally the collection will support teaching, learning, and research by faculty, staff and students across many disciplines.
- The collection will also support the needs of students interested in gaming for class work and other activities, including any registered student organizations dedicated specifically to gaming.
- University departments such as human physiology, psychology, speech communications, computer and information science, literature, and others might find this collection useful for learning about the technology, game world structure, narratives, and social interactions generated by the current video game phenomenon.
- Increased circulation. The cost per circulation is relatively low. Most video games cost \$50 and under and will circulate multiple times per month or week.

Creation of a Collection Development Policy

Define the types of games the library will be collecting. Consider if the library will also be acquiring the consoles on which to play these games.

Options:

Contemporary games (Wii, Playstation 3, Xbox 360, Nintendo DS, PSP)
Vintage games (Atari 2600, Game Cube, Playstation 1 & 2, Xbox, Nintendo64, GameBoy and many others)

Multi-player vs. single player games
Online vs. Console only games
Best selling vs. educational only games
The rating of the game might also come into consideration (video games are given ratings from E (for everyone) to M (for mature audiences only)).

The University of Oregon has decided that the collection will include examples of games from currently popular platforms. Consoles, accessories and games were purchased for the Wii, Playstation 3, Xbox 360, and Nintendo DS. Consideration is currently underway on whether to continue to purchase a copy of a game for each platform as they are available or whether to only purchase a game for the console on which it is most popular.

Where to get information about video games:

Wikipedia offers good information about the games and game play, as well as which systems the games are available on.
Amazon.com usually offers a good selection of games and user reviews.

CNET (<http://reviews.cnet.com/games/>) and Game Spot (<http://www.gamespot.com/>) give information about individual games based on rating, platform, genre, price, etc.

This is an example of a purchased video game rack. This rack is located at the entrance of the Science Library at the University of Oregon. Each section holds the games for different consoles.



Cataloging

An example record:

```
LEADER 00000nmm 2200349Ka 4500
001 226398682
007 co cga|||||
008 080430s2008 wau g g eng d
024 1 045496735906
028 02 59695A|bNintendo
040 |ORU|cORU
049 |GAME|ORVN
099 GAME 00082 Wii
245 00 Mario kart Wii|h[electronic resource]
246 3 Mario kart Wii
260 Redmond, WA :|bNintendo of America,|cc2008
300 1 computer optical disc :|bsd., col. :|c4 3/4 in. +|e1
booklet
500 1-4 players
500 Title from container
520 In Mario Kart Wii, the player(s) can choose any one of up
to 24 unique characters to operate their kart, which are
separated into various classes of weight. The game
includes 32 different tracks, half of which are remakes of
tracks from previous Mario Kart games, and up to twelve
characters can participate in a race
521 ESRB rating: E for Everyone
538 System requirements: Nintendo Wii, Wii Wheel or Wii
remote and nunchuck or classic controller or Nintendo
GameCube controller
650 0 Karting|xComputer simulation
710 2 Nintendo of America Inc
753 Nintendo Wii
856 4 |uhttp://libweb.uoregon.edu/scilib/games-
info.html|zGame and Equipment policies
```

Important fields to watch out for

- 246 : most video games have either alternate spellings or variations on their proper names.
- 250 : most video games are available on multiple platforms.
- 520 : A brief description of the game will help guide players to games that they may have never tried before.
- 538 : Which controllers or other accessories that are needed is important for the player to know **before** leaving the library with the game
- A500 for the number of players that can play the particular game.

Decisions to make before starting

- Should you treat the game as a computer optical disc or as a CD-ROM.
- Is the file a g (game) or i (interactive multimedia) This can vary depending on the type of game and the platform on which it is played.
- LC call number or local accession number

Other Hints and tips

- Do you want to add a link to your libraries Game and Equipment policy.
- Pay close attention to the subject headings, make sure they express the content and topic of the game itself and not the fact that it is a game.
- Add a 753 field and have it indexed in your local catalog. This will be especially important if the library decides at some point to also collect Computer games.

Circulation

Video games are a popular item to check out. A short checkout time needs to be established. Many the games are long and involved and require game play over several days. A three day checkout period works well in most cases.

The checkout of the video game consoles can prove to be trying for the checkout staff. Each console comes with lots of pieces, wires and controllers. It is a good idea to have a checklist for the staff to go over when checking the consoles out and back in.

Various games also need specific controllers. Having this noted in the catalog record will help upon check out.

One game with accessories that has caused numerous problems is Rock Band. The game is incredibly popular, but it come with a lot of accessories, some of which are easily lost. In order to combat this problem the University of Oregon will only check Rock Band out to campus groups, and only with advanced notice. Problems such as this can be solved on a case by case basis.

Conclusions

Adding video games and consoles to our library's circulating collection has increased circulation and goodwill amongst the students and librarians.

At the University of Oregon our video game collection was added to one of our branch libraries on campus. After having circulated fewer than 75 video games for a year, the video games now account for slightly over 10% of the circulation for that branch. 100% of the collection has circulated, and approximately 78% of the collection circulates every month. Our best guess is that the games cost per use is about \$4.92

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For further information

Please contact Megan Dazey at the University of Oregon at: mdazey@uoregon.edu
Or
Visit the materials online at:
<https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/dspace/handle/1794/5456>

*Pwn is a slang term, derived from the word "own", that implies domination or humiliation of a rival, used primarily in the gaming culture to taunt an opponent who has just been soundly defeated.