

# Nintendo's Wii pushes giddy limits

Emma Connors

Retailers are running short of Nintendo's new games console, the Wii, as strong demand confirms forecasts that games sales will top \$1 billion this year.

Myer attributed a spike in sales last week to the launch of Wii and has stopped marketing the product after being overwhelmed by demand.

Some 32,900 units were sold across the country in the four days ending last Sunday, making the Wii the fastest selling console to date. Its nearest rival, Microsoft's Xbox 360, sold 30,421 units in its first four days of sales earlier this year, according to market researcher GfK.

Sony will launch its new console, the PlayStation 3, in March.

The Wii has had similar success worldwide. In Europe, 325,000 units were sold in the first two days. In the Americas, 600,000 Wii units sold in eight days, and 400,000 were sold in just one day in Japan.

Many retailers report stock shortages.

"We sold out faster than we



Going, going . . . shoppers are advised to pre-order the fastest-selling games console so far.

Photo: AFP

expected," said Dick Smith Group's communications and music merchandise manager, Alex Cochran.

The retailer is banking on new stocks arriving on Wednesday, but Mr Cochran has no doubt these supplies will be exhausted before Christmas.

"Games console stocks are always very tight," he said.

"There is limited production for global launches and Australia is a relatively small market. There is

exceeded supply," he said. "Normally we would have continued TV or press marketing but we had to stop those activities because of limited stock. I was involved in the Xbox 360 launch, but this has taken the market to another level."

Myer attributes the appeal of the Wii to its price — \$399.95, cheaper than the Xbox 360.

Mr Merola said: "Games are a very big gift category, where half the year's business is done in December."