

How This Underdog Toymaker Soared to \$150M in Annual Sales: ‘Didn’t Know This Thing Existed’

Key Takeaways

- Nex, a little-known Silicon Valley startup, has created a bestselling game console for kids called the Nex Playground.
- The console has become one of the hottest toys of the holiday season, selling out on Black Friday on Amazon.
- Parents are drawn to the Nex Playground because it encourages movement over sedentary play and includes popular games like “Bluey: Bust-a-Move” and “Fruit Ninja.”

The Nex Playground, a motion-tracking game console for kids, has unexpectedly become one of the hottest toys of the holiday season, despite being made by a little-known Silicon Valley startup called Nex instead of an established toy or gaming company.

According to a new report from *The Wall Street Journal*, Nex sold 5,000 units of the Playground two years ago and 150,000 last year. It’s projected to sell 600,000 units in 2025 and is on track to do more than \$150 million in sales this year.

The Nex Playground is a compact, cube-shaped console that connects to a TV and uses a camera and computer vision to track players’ body movements, turning full-body activity into game controls. Instead of using traditional controllers, users jump, duck and wave to interact with games, making the product

an “active play” system that incorporates physical activity into screen time.

Related: This Mom’s Side Hustle Selling a \$600 Children’s Toy Became a Business Making Over \$1 Million a Year

The Nex Playground is priced at \$249, which is cheaper than flagship consoles like the \$499 PlayStation 5 and \$449 Nintendo Switch 2. On Black Friday, the Playground sold out and was temporarily out of stock on Amazon, soaring to No. 1 in the Toys & Games category. It is currently the No. 1 bestseller in plug-and-play video games on Amazon.



The Nex Playground. Credit: Nex

Mat Piscatella, an analyst at market research firm Circana, expressed disbelief that the Nex Playground could become a bestselling product so quickly. “To be completely honest, I didn’t know this thing existed a month ago,” he told the *WSJ*.

The *WSJ* report highlighted that parents are drawn to the Nex Playground because it encourages movement over sedentary play. It holds appeal as a family-friendly, living room activity, which makes it attractive to households that might otherwise avoid purchasing a traditional console. Its pastel, toy-like design visually differentiates it from mainstream consoles, making it easier for parents to see it as a family toy.

Related: An Idea This Dad Developed at His Kitchen Table Is Now a Beloved Kids' Toy That Has Sold Over 3 Million Units

Playground sales grew due to word-of-mouth marketing, social media and parent group chats, per *WSJ*. The console already supported dozens of games like *Bowling: Strike!* and *Fruit Ninja*, but scored a major win by adding *Bluey: Bust-a-Move* this fall. *Bluey* was the most popular show on streaming television in 2024, with 55 billion minutes streamed, so adding the game significantly boosted awareness and demand for the console.

Nex began nearly a decade ago as a computer-vision startup that created HomeCourt, an iPhone app that tracked basketball shots and performance using AI. After briefly trying to create a gamified workout app called Active Arcade, the startup ultimately pivoted into home gaming.

Ready to explore everything on Entrepreneur.com? December is your free pass to Entrepreneur+. Enjoy complete access, no strings attached. Claim your free month

Key Takeaways

- Nex, a little-known Silicon Valley startup, has created a bestselling game console for kids called the Nex Playground.
- The console has become one of the hottest toys of the holiday season, selling out on Black Friday on Amazon.
- Parents are drawn to the Nex Playground because it encourages movement over sedentary play and includes popular games like “Bluey: Bust-a-Move” and “Fruit Ninja.”

The Nex Playground, a motion-tracking game console for kids, has unexpectedly become one of the hottest toys of the holiday season, despite being made by a little-known Silicon Valley

startup called Nex instead of an established toy or gaming company.

According to a new report from *The Wall Street Journal*, Nex sold 5,000 units of the Playground two years ago and 150,000 last year. It's projected to sell 600,000 units in 2025 and is on track to do more than \$150 million in sales this year.

The rest of this article is locked.

Join Entrepreneur+ today for access.

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/business-news/how-this-little-known-toymaker-sold-out-a-product-on-amazon/500867>