Xbox One minus two: Microsoft kills console versions before Series X launch

Enlarge / Xbox One X, we hardly knew ye.

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Ahead of this holiday season's new Xbox Series X console launch, Microsoft has confirmed a surprising change on the production side: the discontinuation of two existing Xbox One console versions.

Following a report from The Verge, Xbox representatives confirmed directly to Ars Technica that the company will no longer produce either 2017's Xbox One X or 2019's Xbox S All-Digital Edition. The company described this discontinuation as "the natural step of stopping production" due to "ramp[ing] into the future with Xbox Series X," only to then confirm that an *older* version of the console, 2016's Xbox One S, will still be produced worldwide.

"Gamers can check with their local retailers for more details on Xbox One hardware availability," an Xbox rep said to Ars Technica. So if you're interested in the Xbox One X, now might be the time to snap one up.

This news follows recent rumors that retailers had seen discontinuation notices for the Xbox One X, which firmed up as early as this morning with notices going out to Australian

retailers.

Did better than Wii U, at least

Depending on the console or era in question, the question of when a console "generation" is put to rest is wildly variable. In recent memory, the woeful Wii U saw its production lines shut down before its successor appeared, while PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 production continued well into their successors' lifespans. (PlayStation 2 may have lasted longest of all, at 13 years.)

But the case of Xbox One is curious, thanks to Microsoft's bullish "cross-generation" sales pitch. The idea being, so long as you have an Xbox One, you can expect to play Microsoft's first-party fare for the foreseeable future, with more features and power available depending on how much you want to spend on the console itself. Xbox One X could have been positioned for the foreseeable future as a "mid-grade" option for those who want to play upcoming first-party games, particularly *Halo Infinite*, with perks like 4K resolution but fewer high-end features like SSD seek speeds or higher frame rates.

Does today's news mean Microsoft leaves new Xbox console buyers without an option between the dated Xbox One S and the monstrous, assumedly expensive Xbox Series X? The answer may lie in the rumors of an "Xbox Series S," codenamed Lockhart. This rumored console version is allegedly positioned to offer next-gen benefits like a new CPU and the "Velocity" architecture, while also downgrading those perks from 4K resolution to 1080p—which may very well be a more future-proofed "mid-grade" option once Xbox Series X exists.

Slow down a second

But before Microsoft goes so far as to confirm over a year of

Lockhart-related rumors, we’re still waiting to hear firm details about this holiday season’s Xbox Series X console launch, particularly the date and price tag. Today, we learned that next week’s Xbox game-reveal event (dated Thursday, July 23) will not include “business, devices, or similar news,” so we’re not likely to get any more Series X or Lockhart answers by then.

There’s also the matter of that Xbox One S All-Digital Edition vanishing. This might point to Lockhart arriving as a discless option to reduce its price (similar to the upcoming PS5’s discless model), or it might simply point to customers and retailers not embracing that discless Xbox One S in the first place.

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