

# Bulky 64DD Shocker

Article scanné dans le magazine 64 Extreme n°1 (Avril 1997)

Sujet de l'article : Nintendo 64DD Starter Pak

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# NINTENDO SLASHES JAP PRICE!



**N**intendo of Japan have cut the price of the N64 from 25,000 yen (\$203) to

16,800 yen (\$137) in a surprise move that is bound to get the competition running scared. Although the price drop is due to the manufacturing costs, many industry insiders feel that it may be a direct move to reduce Sony's market share in Japan.

Spokesperson for Nintendo of Japan, Yasuhiro Minagawa, explained that they are able to drop the price because of the reduced production costs which are directly related to the volume of machines that they are now producing.

He also mentioned that a fall in the price of semiconductors was a factor in the new price.

It's good to see that Nintendo are thinking of the punter and not just profits. However, the murky undertones

in Japan? Unlike Nintendo's previous machines, the N64 has not been an outstanding success and the PlayStation still reigns supreme in the East.

The price drop will not be implemented in America and the reduced

## PRICE DROP DUE IN JAPAN ALREADY

in the move are likely to cause a stir. Sony may well be running scared but was the price drop a desperate move to counter the rather poor sales of the N64

manufacturing costs will not benefit the UK for a long time so don't hold your breath waiting for a cut price N64 over here.

# BULKY 64DD SHOCKER

**N**ews of the new Nintendo 64 disk drive has arrived on

our shores. Not to be confused with one of Dolly Parton's bras, the 64DD is in fact an add-on upgrade for the N64. It's due to be released in the summer to an eager market in Japan but some industry

## The new N64 add-on confirmed for summer release



sources are not as excited as the consumers. The add-on is going to sell at \$100-\$199. Fears are abound that the 64DD may well go the same way as the ill-fated Sega 32X or Mega CD. Nintendo, however, are pushing the upgrade with all the usual force of a company at the pinnacle of the video game industry.

The disk drive will use 64mb magnetic cartridges and is not compatible with any third party disks (surprise, surprise). The selling point of this format is that up to half of the disk can be made rewritable giving a huge amount of space over to game saves and statistics. It's up to the coders of the game to decide how much space on the disk is to be made rewritable but huge amounts of memory will be needed for some of the massive RPG's that are planned for the N64.

The advantage of the Nintendo 64DD over the Sony or Sega CD's is in the loading times. The Nintendo disk can transfer information at 790K per second whilst the competitors' CD drives can only transfer at 300K per second. Couple this with the unique system Nintendo have devised to get the information from the disk and onto the main game cartridge and it seems that

they are onto yet another winner.

No games have officially been announced for the 64DD yet but there are conflicting rumours that Zelda 64 will appear on cartridge and disk or disk alone. Of course, the new system won't be an advantage to many of the shoot-em-ups or racing games on the way but there are a number of genres that it will suit perfectly. As mentioned, RPG's will be the perfect companion for the new system. Sports games will also figure highly in the equation as it should be possible to buy disks with updated stats and leagues. This should save the punter on buying annual versions such as the Fifa's of this world. Strategy games will also benefit from the new format and an N64 version of Sim City is said to be on its way. Nintendo are also looking at the possibility of using the system to allow

the user to download playable game demos from the internet which is an extremely exciting prospect. Let's hope that they follow through with it.

To us, looking at the possibilities, the idea of an N64 upgrade is an enticing thought but whether it can hold its own in a market that has traditionally been very unfair on upgrades is a question that will have to wait to be answered. More information and a full specification guide (if you're interested in numbers) can be found in the next issue's complete N64 hardware guide.

