

TABLE A-18

Case study: Wii U

(Innovation failure summary)

Variable	Description
Innovation	A redevelopment of Nintendo's landmark Wii gaming system, including a new GamePad tablet that allowed players to play in the same game but on different screens, launched 18 November 2012
Radical or incremental	Incremental
Category	Product
Sector	Consumer electronics
Failure timing	Growth stage, failure in November 2017
Failure root cause	<p>Insufficient complementary assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GamePad made it difficult for game publishers to develop content that could be played on the Wii U as well as other consoles, so most publishers either refrained from making Wii U games or they made Wii U games that did not make use of the GamePad • Weak consumer demand disincentivized publishers from developing Wii U content, leading to vicious cycle • The GamePad was the signature component of the Wii U, but it was heavy and difficult to use and had to be very close to the console to work
Failure root cause timing	Product development
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wii U production was halted after only 4 years on the market, which is a relatively short life span for a game console (e.g., Microsoft's Xbox One was released in 2013 and continues to be the company's flagship gaming device; the original Wii was launched in November 2006 and continued production until late 2012)
Business insight into the innovation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New technological approaches need to provide value proposition improvement over existing products and incentivize consumers to purchase the newer product
Pivot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The core concept of the GamePad (e.g., a larger handheld screen than most portable gaming device) laid the foundation for the launch of the Nintendo Switch, which has been immensely successful
Pivot enabler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nintendo used the experience to understand what users wanted from GamePad-like devices

Source(s):

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics and SRI International, special research (2020) of 2010–20 open-access articles, including *MIT Technology Review*, *New York Times*, *Fast Company*, U.S. General Accountability Office, and *Defense News*.