

Press Release

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Blizzard Entertainment and NetEase Renew Agreement to Bring Beloved Titles Back to China; Microsoft Gaming, NetEase Enter Broader Collaboration

Blizzard titles to return to mainland China beginning summer 2024

Microsoft Gaming and NetEase deepen their relationship, with a strategic partnership based on their shared desire to bring new gaming experiences to players across platforms and markets

IRVINE, Calif., REDMOND, Wash., AND HANGZHOU, Zhejiang [April 9 PT, April 10 CT] / -- Beloved video game titles from Blizzard Entertainment that captivated millions of players in China will return to the market sequentially, beginning this summer, under a renewed publishing deal Blizzard Entertainment, Microsoft Gaming, and NetEase (NASDAQ: NTES and HKEX: 9999) announced today.

After continuing discussions over the past year, both Blizzard Entertainment and NetEase are thrilled to align on a path forward to once again support players in mainland China and are proud to reaffirm their commitment to delivering exceptional gaming experiences.

The renewed publishing agreement will encompass games Chinese players had access to under the previous agreement: *World of Warcraft*[®], *Hearthstone*[®], and other titles in the *Warcraft*[®], *Overwatch*[®], *Diablo*[®], and *StarCraft*[®] universes. Building upon more than 15 years of past collaboration, Blizzard and NetEase are working diligently on relaunch plans, with further details to be shared at a later date.

Separately, Microsoft Gaming and NetEase have also entered into an agreement to explore bringing new NetEase titles to Xbox consoles and other platforms.

“We at Blizzard are thrilled to reestablish our partnership with NetEase and to work together, with deep appreciation for the collaboration between our teams, to deliver legendary gaming experiences to players in China,” said Johanna Faries, President of Blizzard Entertainment. “We are immensely grateful for the passion the Chinese community has shown for Blizzard games throughout the years, and we are focused on bringing our universes back to players with excellence and dedication.”

“Celebrating our collaborations, we are thrilled to embark on the next chapter, built on trust and mutual respect, to serve our users in this unique community that we’ve built together.” said William Ding, Chief Executive Officer and Director, NetEase. “Our commitment to providing more exhilarating and creative entertainment experience remains unwavering, and we are excited to see positive synergies fostered to encourage and empower collaborations to bring the joy of gaming to a broad community.”

“Blizzard and NetEase have done incredible work to renew our commitment to players – Blizzard’s universes have been part of players’ lives in the region for many years. Returning Blizzard’s legendary games to players in China while exploring ways to bring more new titles to Xbox demonstrates our commitment to bringing more games to more players around the world,” said Phil Spencer, CEO of Microsoft Gaming.

About Blizzard Entertainment, Inc.

Best known for iconic video game universes including Warcraft®, Overwatch®, Diablo®, and StarCraft®, Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. (www.blizzard.com), a division of Activision Blizzard, which was acquired by Microsoft (NASDAQ: MSFT), is a premier developer and publisher of entertainment experiences. Blizzard Entertainment has created some of the industry’s most critically acclaimed and genre-defining games over the last 30 years, with a track record that includes multiple Game of the Year awards. Blizzard Entertainment engages tens of millions of players around the world with titles available on PC via Battle.net®, Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch, iOS, and Android.

About Microsoft

Microsoft (NASDAQ “MSFT” @microsoft) enables digital transformation for the era of an intelligent cloud and an intelligent edge. Its mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more.

About NetEase, Inc.

NetEase, Inc. (NASDAQ: NTES and HKEX: 9999, "NetEase") is a leading internet and game services provider centered around premium content. With extensive offerings across its expanding gaming ecosystem, the Company develops and operates some of the most popular and longest running mobile and PC games available in China and globally.

Powered by one of the largest in-house game R&D teams focused on mobile, PC and console, NetEase creates superior gaming experiences, inspires players, and passionately delivers value for its thriving community worldwide. By infusing play with culture, and education with technology, NetEase transforms gaming into a meaningful vehicle to build a more entertaining and enlightened world.

Beyond games, NetEase service offerings include its majority-controlled subsidiaries Youdao (NYSE: DAO), an intelligent learning company with industry-leading technology, and Cloud Music (HKEX: 9899), a well-known online music platform featuring a vibrant content community, as well as Yanxuan, NetEase's private label consumer lifestyle brand. For more information, please visit: <http://ir.netease.com/>.