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Not a good year
Activision

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[Activision Might Have a Bad Year](#)

Says analyst

[Activision Blizzard](#) is competing with Electronic Arts for the spot of biggest videogame publisher in the world and the fall release line up is a key battle in this wide commercial war.

And now Mike Hickey, who is an analyst with Janco Partners, is saying that Activision Blizzard might have some problems, generated mostly by a possible delay of Starcraft II and the performance of some new properties. The good news is that Hickey forecasts price cuts for all the major home gaming consoles before the end of the year.

The big problem could be coming from Blizzard. The lead designer on [Starcraft II](#) recently stated openly that there were plans for a beta of the game that would take from "four to six months."

Given the fact that no date for the beginning of the beta period was given, this could mean that the long awaited sequel, which is now basically three different games with the Terran campaign coming first, will only be arriving in 2010, thus reducing the revenue that Activision Blizzard will get in the final quarter of 2009.

There are concerns related to the performance of titles like DJ Hero and Tony Hawk Ride. Both of them are sold bundled with peripherals and are more expensive than a typical console release, which might put consumers off given the current economic downturn and the amount of AAA titles that are being released in the run up to Christmas. The same issue might affect Guitar Hero 5 and the Van Halen release.

Hickey is also pointing out to the fact that some Activision Blizzard insiders are selling their shares, which could be a sign of a tough period to come and the company is also likely to face some challenges in the MMO field as competitors, like Aion from NCsoft, are launched, and as World of Warcraft switches operators in China, one of the biggest markets.