



Planetary Zerg Alert

StarCraft® II: Heart of the Swarm™ global launch party details announced

Day-long launch broadcast to feature "King of the Beta" matches between top pro gamers, community-created content, & live event coverage

IRVINE, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Tune in or turn out and be absorbed into the hive mind at the global *StarCraft® II: Heart of the Swarm™* launch party! Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. today shared its plans for the official *Heart of the Swarm* launch events taking place in the US, France, Australia, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Russia, Brazil, and Mexico starting in the evening of March 11. At each of these events, Blizzard developers and key retail partners will host gamers from around the world who want to be among the first to join Kerrigan, the Queen of Blades, in her quest to reunite the zerg Swarm.

In addition to the nine official launch events, thousands of stores worldwide will be open at midnight to welcome players and help roll out the next chapter in the epic saga of *StarCraft II*. (Check with local retailers for hours and availability.)

To kick things off and follow the celebration as it spreads across the planet, Blizzard will be cohosting a special 21-hour launch broadcast with noted eSports personality and commentator Sean "Day[9]" Plott, in conjunction with Twitch.tv, at <http://www.StarCraft2.com/SwarmLaunch>. Starting at 3:00 a.m. PDT on March 11, the stream will give viewers around the world the opportunity to watch the Australia, South Korea, France, and US launch events live. Viewers will also be treated to additional exclusive content, including community-created videos and "King of the Beta" tournament matches between top pro gamers, hosted by Day[9], who'll be transmitting from a bunker deep inside Blizzard's Irvine HQ.

"The *StarCraft* community has been anticipating *Heart of the Swarm* for a long time," said Mike Morhaime, CEO and cofounder of Blizzard Entertainment. "I believe you will find it was worth the wait. We're looking forward to celebrating the release by hosting an awesome global launch party in two weeks and delivering our best *StarCraft* content to date."

In the US, the official launch event will be hosted by Blizzard and retail partner GameStop at:

The Great Wheel Court of the Irvine Spectrum Mall
71 Fortune Drive
Irvine, CA 92618

Local festivities will start at 9:00 p.m. PDT on March 11, and will feature special guest hosts from the *StarCraft II* and eSports community, including commentators Day[9] and Mike "Husky" Lamond. Live eSports show matches will be played by top pro gamers from the US and South Korea, and demonstrations will introduce the crowd to some of the powerful new features included in *StarCraft II: Heart of the Swarm*. A series of epic prize giveaways will round out the celebration, and when the clock strikes midnight, gamers will be able to pick up their copies of the expansion as well as have them autographed by members of the *StarCraft II* development team.

Attendees at the official *StarCraft II: Heart of the Swarm* launch events will have the opportunity to purchase[†] the standard edition of the game (suggested retail price \$39.99) as well as the retail-exclusive Collector's Edition (suggested retail price \$79.99), which contains the following bonus items in addition to the game disc:

- **Behind-the-Scenes DVD and Blu-ray:** Immerse yourself in the *StarCraft* universe with developer commentary, interviews with voice actors, and an in-depth historical retrospective on *StarCraft's* eSports legacy narrated by key members of the community.
- **Collector's Edition Soundtrack CD:** Enhance your *Heart of the Swarm* musical experience with this collection of 11 tracks from the game.
- **Heart of the Swarm Hardcover Art Book:** This 144-page tome features never-before-seen art from the expansion, including early concept sketches and meticulous 3D renderings.
- **Zerg Rush Mousepad:** This Collector's Edition mousepad depicts the Terran Dominion holding out desperately under the onslaught of the Swarm.

- **StarCraft II Torrasque:** Crush the enemies of the Swarm with the indomitable Torrasque, a fearsome new look for your zerg Ultralisks.
- **StarCraft II Portraits and Decals:** New Swarm-infested portraits and decals help you customize the look of your online profile and in-game army.
- **World of Warcraft® In-Game Pet:** The Baneling companion pet is bursting with enthusiasm and ready to explode onto the Pet Battles scene.
- **Diablo® III Blade Wings and Banner Sigil:** Grow zerg-like wings in honor of the Queen of Blades, and unfurl an exclusive banner sigil to mark your allegiance to the Swarm in Sanctuary.

Heart of the Swarm picks up the story of *StarCraft II* where *Wings of Liberty*® left off, focusing on Kerrigan's quest to reunite the Swarm and exact revenge on Arcturus Mengsk. Over the course of **20 campaign missions**, players will follow Kerrigan as she sweeps across the galaxy, incorporating a variety of distinctive zerg species into her brood. Kerrigan will grow in strength from mission to mission, and players will be able to customize her with **powerful new abilities**, as well as **evolve various zerg strains** into fearsome new subspecies to suit their play style.

New weapons of war also debut in *Heart of the Swarm's* multiplayer, including new units such as Terran Hellbats, Zerg Swarm Hosts, and Protoss Tempests, while certain existing units from *Wings of Liberty* will be updated with new capabilities. New features will enhance the game experience, including **group and clan systems; unranked matchmaking; Global Play**, enabling players to battle others in different regions around the world; **additional stat tracking; user interface improvements; an enhanced physics system**, for more visceral looking battles; **multiplayer replays**, to watch replays with friends; a **leveling system** that gives *Heart of the Swarm* players a new way to earn customization options for their online profiles; and much more.

Learn more about *StarCraft II: Heart of the Swarm* at <http://www.StarCraft2.com>, and for further details on the global launch events and the 21-hour broadcast, visit <http://www.StarCraft2.com/SwarmLaunch>. With multiple games in development, Blizzard Entertainment has numerous positions currently open—visit <http://jobs.blizzard.com> for more information and to learn how to apply.

For press inquiries, please contact Rob Hilburger in Blizzard Entertainment public relations at rhilburger@blizzard.com or (949) 242-8404.

† Limited to supplies on hand.

About Blizzard Entertainment, Inc.

Best known for blockbuster hits including *World of Warcraft*® and the *Warcraft*®, *StarCraft*®, and *Diablo*® franchises, Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. (www.blizzard.com), a division of Activision Blizzard (NASDAQ: ATVI), is a premier developer and publisher of entertainment software renowned for creating some of the industry's most critically acclaimed games. Blizzard Entertainment's track record includes fifteen #1-selling games and multiple Game of the Year awards. The company's online-gaming service, Battle.net®, is one of the largest in the world, with millions of active players.

Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-looking Statements: Information in this press release that involves Blizzard Entertainment's expectations, plans, intentions or strategies regarding the future, including statements about the expected release date of *StarCraft II: Heart of the Swarm*, are forward-looking statements that are not facts and involve a number of risks and uncertainties. Factors that could cause Blizzard Entertainment's actual future results to differ materially from those expressed in the forward-looking statements set forth in this release include unanticipated product delays and other factors identified in the risk factors sections of Activision Blizzard's most recent annual report on Form 10-K and any subsequent quarterly reports on Form 10-Q. The forward-looking statements in this release are based upon information available to Blizzard Entertainment and Activision Blizzard as of the date of this release, and neither Blizzard Entertainment nor Activision Blizzard assumes any obligation to update any such forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements believed to be true when made may ultimately prove to be incorrect. These statements are not guarantees of the future performance of Blizzard Entertainment or Activision Blizzard and are subject to risks, uncertainties and other factors, some of which are beyond its control and may cause actual results to differ materially from current expectations.

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