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What is this year's must-have toy?

Local toy stores say the top sellers will range from new novelties to old favorites **BY KRIS HAINS**

Almost every parent has a war story of holiday shopping battles waged in the name of landing the "must-have" toy. Whether the Cabbage Patch Doll of the '80s or the Tickle Me Elmo doll of the new millennium, each year toy makers attempt to out-do themselves with holiday toys.

Whether there is a front runner in the pack of toys for the holiday 2005 season still remains to be seen, but local toy vendors are well-prepared for the holiday season.

At Toys R Us in Traverse City, there may not be one anticipated "big seller" for the holiday 2005 season, but Wheel World

Supervisor Scott Umsted is predicting a couple of items that will vie for holiday spending dollars.

One item that he is predicting to be a huge seller, in spite of its high price, is the XBOX 360. The item is being touted by its makers as "The future of gaming and digital entertainment arrives with mind-blowing graphics and full surround sound."

Consumers may also find the price to be a bit mind-blowing.

Umsted says there are two different versions, one will retail around \$300 and the other at \$400. Even with the higher price tag, he said Toys R Us is already

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SANTA FACTS

Top toys for the season

Here's what the kids want this year, according to Toy Wishes magazine:

- 1 **American Idol Barbie and American Idol Show Stage Playset**
Mattel/Ages 5 & up/\$19.99 each
- 2 **Batman Begins Deluxe Batmobile**
Mattel/Ages 4 & up/\$31.99
- 3 **Bounce 'Round Wet 'n Dry Slide**
Spin Master/Ages 3-8/\$349.99
- 4 **EA Sports TV Games**
JAKKS Pacific/Ages 5 & up/\$24.99
- 5 **Fantastic Four Electronic Thing Hands**
Toy Biz/Ages 6 & up/\$19.99
- 6 **Flash Flood Super Soaker**
Hasbro/Ages 7 & up/\$19.99
- 7 **Fly Wheels**
JAKKS Pacific/Ages 8 & up/\$4.99 and up
- 8 **Nintendo DS**
Nintendo/Ages 8 & up/\$149.99
- 9 **Sony PSP**
Sony/Ages 8 & up/\$249.99
- 10 **Spokey Dokes**
Maui Toys/Ages 5 & up/up to \$19.99
- 11 **Star Wars Lightsaber Battle Game**
Hasbro Games/Ages 8 & up/\$49.99
- 12 **Trivial Pursuit DVD Star Wars Saga Edition Game**
Hasbro/aimed for adults/\$49.99

SOURCE: Toy Wishes magazine

Copley News Service / Paul Horn