

*A look at some of the most popular technology gifts this Christmas
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Day 3 - Hatchimals

The hottest gift of the holiday season is also the most difficult to find.



It wouldn't be Christmas without this year's "hottest gift of the holiday season." That one special toy or product so popular it sells out in stores, makes the news, breaks shoppers out in cold sweats at the thought of not being able to buy one, and starts the process of rain-checks and store credits at local retailers.

This year, the title belong to Hatchimals.

Hatchimals are an interactive stuffed animal toy originally created by Spin Master. The toy, which is most popular with the 3-12 age demographic, comes packaged in a multi-coloured speckled egg which then proceeds to hatch in real time. This is one of the main selling features of Hatchimals. The user is able to help the toy hatch by repeatedly rubbing, and tapping the egg.

Click the photo below for videos to see how Hatchimals hatch.



Simultaneously, the egg will respond to its owner by making sounds (ex. laughing, cooing, sneezing, tapping etc.), and emitting different colours depending on its mood.

The hatching process begins when visible cracks appear on the egg creating a top that can easily be removed by the user. It requires approximately 30-45 minutes of continuous game play for the egg to completely hatch.

Another one of the selling features of Hatchimals is that no one knows what the toy will look like until it hatches. Hatchimals come in 5 different varieties but users only see an egg when they are purchased. Finding out what the surprise is inside the egg creates both fun and suspense for the owner.

Once hatched, the user is able to play with the "Hatchimal" which is a furry stuffed animal.



Users can teach their Hatchimals to walk, talk, sing, play interactive games, etc. They are also able to raise their Hatchimals throughout 3 life cycle stages: Baby, Toddler, and Child.

While Hatchimals seem like a great gift for Christmas, you might run into problems acquiring one. As of December, demand has succeeded supply, with most retailers (ex. Toys R Us, Spin Master, Tesco, etc.) accepting orders for January 2017 as shipments will not be reaching their stores in time for the holidays.

Customers have also tried to purchase Hatchimals through social media and 3rd party sources but this is deemed unwise as pricing inflation is common.

Hatchimals costs anywhere between **\$59.99-\$89.99** (CDN) depending on the retailer but due to their popularity, customers have been known to pay double or triple that amount.



Despite the elusiveness of Hatchimals, the sophistication and technology behind the toy is impressive. Its ability to respond to the user using lights, sounds, and movement as well as simulate the hatching process makes it one of the first toys of its kind in the marketplace. It's no surprise that they are flying off the shelves.

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