**Other Furbies**

Furby Babies

As with every successful toy there are always spin offs from the originals. The Furby franchise was no different. In 1999 a new line of electronic toys were released called the **Furby Babies**. These were basically baby versions of the Furby. They were smaller, had higher baby style voices and unlike the original models these could not dance.

They were designed to also speak Furbish but to also develop into English speaking mode a lot faster than the original. In addition to having some of the original capabilities the Furby Babies also had games built into them.

Furby Friends

Following the reasonable success of the Furby Babies new novel style versions were released. This new collection would focus on styling the Furby after famous characters from very popular movies. Here are some examples below:

Gizmo Furby – From the popular 80’s movie Gremlins.

Yoda Furby – From Star Wars.

ET Furby – From the movie The Extra Terrestrial.

Shelby

Part of the Furby Friends collection were also the Shelby range. These were another form of interactive toy that was similar to the Furbies but looked like a cute version of a sea clam.

These Shelbies had slight improvements in the memory department and all of them had their very own personalities. They were released in 2001 and were able to interact or communicate with both the original Furbies and the Furby Babies.

They had built-in sensors to detect loud sounds and also movement. These were the basically the official Furby pet. When you gave them a little pat on their head they would begin to purr like a cat. Not something you would expect from a clam but still very cute.

Shelbies have their own language called Shelbish but are also programmed to develop English later on. It seems that these little Furby style creatures are multi-lingual. The not only speak English and Shelbish but also a little bit of Furbish.

This little critter would be the ideal travel partner if you were ever going to Furby Island for vacation.

Emoto-Tronic Furbies

Four years went by and then there was another uprising of these toys. The Emoto-Tronic Furbies were released in 2005. This series was larger than the 1998 versions and were slightly more advanced with a voice recognition system that enabled them to communicate with humans.

These had an upgrade to their facial expressions and parents were also delighted to hear that these Emoto-Tronic toys also had an on and off switch. The classic Furbies did not have this feature and gained a reputation for driving parents mad because they just wouldn’t shut up!

There were no built-in light sensors or motion sensors and were at their best when they communicated with others from the series rather than any other Furby collection.

Emoto-Tronic Furbiy Babies

Of course you cannot have a series of hot selling toys without creating a “baby” series and so once again Furby Babies were released in Emoto-Tronic style.

In 2006 the Emoto-Tronic Babies showed their cute little baby faces to the world. They were basically baby versions of the original Emoto-Tronic toys.

They had fewer features than the bigger toy a limited vocabulary and less interactive abilities. They did have moveable legs though but I believe were an exclusive to Europe. Not sure why that would be so.

That same year saw the emergence of the Emoto-Tronic Funky Furbies. They were limited to a two color combination and were able to sing, dance and be taught new dance moves. These were only available outside the US.

**Furby – Here and Now**

Yes it is official! The new Furbies are here, rebooted, updated and ready to take the world by storm.

Fourteen years after the first release of the Furby toy Hasbro decided to surprise us with yet another blabbering interactive toy that kids will utterly adore.

It has actually been seven years since the last time we saw or heard anything regarding the Furby toy so the Hasbro toy creators have had plenty of time to test and re-test their latest product.

Let’s have a look see at what is new in these updated units.

What is New about Furby?

Furby Looks Good

Let’s begin with its aesthetics. If you were to put the classic Furby side by side with the newer version you will be able to see straight away which one is the 21st Century toy and which one is the 20th Century toy.

The new Furby uses more electronic digital style components whereas the original was more mechanical. I will go into this more later on.

Furby 2.0 is slightly larger and its fur seems to be a tad thicker. One thing that does stand out is that the color range for this series is much more vibrant and eye catching. There is no chance of you losing one of these in a dark room because the colors have a neon effect.

The ears are plastic as opposed to the furry versions of old. They fit perfectly around the overall design of the toy and are also moveable. Whenever the Furby expresses itself in some way the ears turn back and forward to emphasis the expression.

One of the more noticeable features has to be the upgrade to the eyes. The classic versions had these huge mechanical eyes that would move around to simulate expressions. They had pretty eyelashes and eyelids that would open up and down.

This was all very cute, and for some people very creepy, but due to its mechanical components whenever the eyes moved you could hear the robotic cogs and wheels and other parts moving around inside. For 1998 this wasn’t a major problem but for this day and age that would not be acceptable.

Furby has new eyes that are created with two LCD screens. Its eyes have gone digital. This is a huge improvement and really does make this interactive toy what it is.

With digital screens as eyes Furby is able to simulate a number of expressions and eye movements without that distracting mechanical sound.

These unique expressions and emotions make the interaction that much more believable with some examples being, sleepy, sad, happy, angry, innocent and many more. The eyelids are still there and still open and close but the eyelashes have been removed this time round.

Furby Colors

For the first launch in mid-September there will be 6 colors available to choose from. Just so you know, whatever color you choose will not make any difference to the personality of the Furby. All Furbies are the exact same straight from the box and need your interaction to change its character. More on this later.

The colors released in September are Teal, Yellow, White, Black, Red with Orange and Pink with Purple.

Just before Christmas four more colors will be released and they are Light Blue, Purple, Dark with Light Blue and Pink.

Furby Personality

Now this is something that is sure to be the selling point for these toys. Furbies can develop their own personalities and all this depends on the way you interact with it. As mentioned above, when you first get your Furby it will be the same as all the others but as soon as you start playing with it you are actually shaping its personality to match the way you treat it.

For example, you could decide that you want to be a little rough with the critter. Maybe you chuck it around a lot, turn it upside down and even talk to it in a rough tone. If you do this for long enough you may find that your Furby will respond by being arrogant, angry and rude.

On the other hand, you may think that treating your Furby is the best way to go. In which case it is likely that your Furby will have a happy personality.

The other great thing about this is that the personalities can change. So you are not just stuck with the one character. You could try an experiment to have your Furby change into all the personalities and then you could pick one to see which is your favorite.

Change the way you behave with your fur ball friend and it will adjust to fit that type of play.

Furby Language

Right out of the box your Furby 2.0 will speak Furbish. In order to communicate with it you will have to learn to use the Furbish language with the use of a Furbish dictionary that comes with the Furby App, (more later).

You will need to communicate in Furbish and in English. Over a period of time the creature will gradually develop the English language and will soon be talking to you in English. Furby just wants to learn and so the more you interact with it the more it will learn.

Furby App

Come on! You can’t have a toy these days without it being compatible with some external device. With the Furby the external devices are the iPad, iPhone, Smartphones and Tablets and soon to be the Android.

Download the free Furby App onto any one of these devices and you will have instant access to the Furby dictionary and the Furby food menu.

I have to admit that using the apps for this toy will greatly enhance the entertainment value of this toy. The dictionary will allow you to communicate fully with your Furby until it develops the English language.

The app also plays a big part in feeding your Furby. Yes, you have to feed it or it will get cranky.

Feeding your Furby

There are two ways to feed it. The first way is the basic option used with the classic Furby. Just put your finger in its mouth and push down on its tongue. Its beak will then move up and down and you will hear a simulated crunching and chewing sound as though it was actually eating. When it’s done eating you may be graced with a burp.

The second, and more fun, way for feeding is to use your external device. With the downloaded application you will have the food menu available on the screen. All you have to do is pick the type of food you want to feed your Furby with.

You then point your device towards the creature and then with your finger on the food slide it across the screen and into the Furby’s mouth.

If all goes well, then you will hear the munching sound and possibly a burp. If your Furby 2.0 doesn’t like what you have fed it then it will spit the food back out.

Yep, you will actually see the food being spat out on your screen. I think that is hilarious. There is a whole array of foods to choose from and you can even make up your own sandwiches. This is a great addition to this electronic toy.

Furby Interaction

If you really want to have a fun time with these toys then you should consider purchasing more than one. These guys interact with each other in such an entertaining way that you could sit for hours and just watch them do their thing.

Play some music and your Furby will hum the tune and dance to the beat. There are also sensors placed in different areas within its body making it ultra-sensitive to touch and movement. If you touch it in a certain way, such as to tickle it, it will react. If you move it in a certain way, such as tip it upside down, it will react.

Summary

It is too early to see what the negatives will be as I am sure there will be some. Right now this interactive toy screams Christmas Hot Toy. It has everything a child needs to keep them entertained and out of your shoes for quite some time.

Hasbro have created yet another winner that will blow the roof off toy sales this year. These are going to sell fast which is why stores are pre-selling them so parents can avoid the madness that occurred during the Furby’s first release back in 1998.

If you plan on getting one of these then get it now or you may regret it.

I see another series of these being released maybe next year to cash in on the Christmas success. Who knows what else Hasbro has planned.