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NOVEMBER 1996
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The Interactive Gaming Industry Guide

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 11

The Video Game Yellow Pages©

Volume 1: The Interactive Edition

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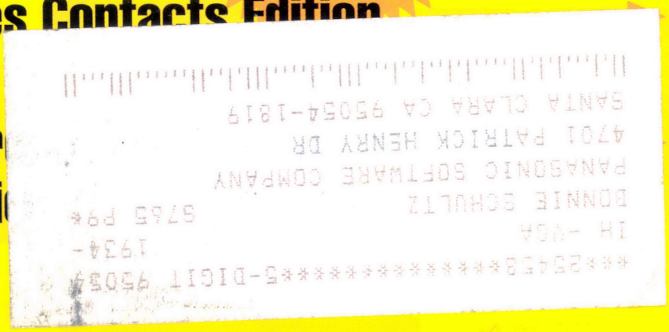
- Address Book Edition
- Technical Support Edition



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Silent Steel: First DVD Game Title?

By Chris McGowan

Tsunami Media is vying to be the first company to release a DVD-ROM title, having completed post-production on the DVD version of its game "Silent Steel," which debuted on CD-ROM a year ago. "We have cut a fully functional disc," says Tsunami spokesman John Jarrett, a distinction that he says puts "Silent Steel" ahead of Pro CD's "Select Phone" and Digital Directory Assistance's "Phone Disc PowerFinder" in the running to be the first DVD-ROM title out of the gate.

Jarrett adds that the release date of the DVD "Silent Steel" is "dependent on the hardware companies putting out the hardware. We hope to have it out before Christmas, but that's dependent on what they do." He adds that any final specification changes will be easy to implement, and that "Silent Steel" will not have copy protection (unlike upcoming DVD-Video releases from major studios). "We're working with Toshiba so that we will be compatible with their hardware. As far as our end goes, any changes will be simple to make. It won't be like we're going back to square one. We're ready to go.

The "Silent Steel" DVD-ROM will be released on four single-layer, single-side discs, and Jarrett says it is the same game as the CD-ROM, but the four hours of video "look like TV, with phenomenal quality." In addition, a version for DVD players "will follow almost immediately," says Jarrett.

The DVD "Silent Steel" relied on the technical know-how of LaserPacific Media Corporation, a renowned Hollywood-based post-production and digital media company. "While many talk of the delays and impediments to launching DVD, LaserPacific has been working diligently with its technology partners to make DVD a reality today," comments LaserPacific executive VP Leon Silverman. "We are very proud that Tsunami Media put so much faith in our ability to deliver, especially as the technology employed and the work necessary to bring this project to fruition is very leading edge."

Tsunami CEO Ed Heinbockel's goal was to make a DVD "Silent Steel" in time to be released with the first shipment of DVD-ROM drives, but he knew the task would not be an easy one. In regards to LaserPacific, Heinbockel comments, "They listened, understood the issues, responded and delivered. LaserPacific helped make it possible for Tsunami to earn the distinction of being the first interactive content provider on the planet to produce a DVD-ROM title."

LaserPacific - which opened Hollywood's first digital compression facility in 1992 - met the challenge with the help of C-Cube MicroSystems, Sonic Solutions and Optical Disc Corp., three firms with which it works closely. LaserPacific provides post-production services for Paramount, Warner Bros., Columbia, Viacom, Microsoft, IBM, Philips Interactive Media and many other firms. It has won three Emmy awards for Outstanding Achievement in Engineering Development. **VGA**

DLT Developers Wanted

By Chris McGowen

Nimbus Manufacturing wants to talk to developers working with DVD-Video or DVD-ROM authoring systems that can create a DLT (Digital Linear Tape) DVD Image. "We have V0.9 and V1.0 DVD players and would like to work with developers to produce and test discs and view the results on players," says John Town, Nimbus CD International director of R&D. Town's request came in an email sent to the IMA's DVD SIG.
Info: (804) 985-1100, or jtown@nimbuscd.com
VGA

For The Official VGA/NPD TRSTS Reports, See Page 78-79

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28 **The Video Game Yellow Pages**
Volume 1, Edition 1 is a listing of the electronic entertainment industry's players and their respective World Wide Web addresses. An invaluable tool for buyers, subsequent editions of Volume 1 will list other pertinent information such as direct contact information, snail-mail addresses and the like. We've owned the name for over 2 years... so, we thought we'd put it to good use. Enjoy!

ASCII ENTERTAINMENT

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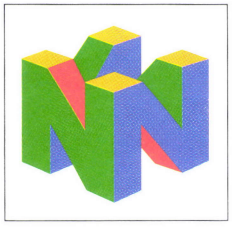
Eye On The Industry
All the trade news that's fit to print and you need to know.



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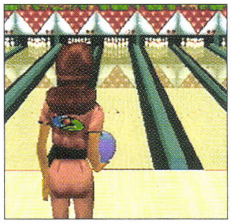

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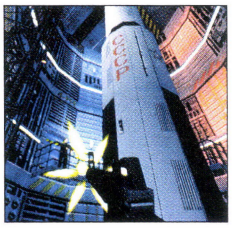

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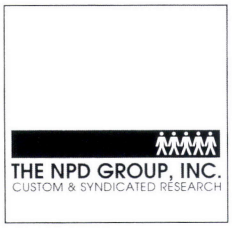

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TRSTS Reports
VGA and the NPD Group bring you the only official top 20 and the top 10 lists in the industry.

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Mike McGarvey Named CEO Of Eidos Interactive

By Claire Duffy

Eidos Interactive has recently announced that Mike McGarvey will succeed Dominic Wheatley as President and CEO of the Company's US operation. McGarvey will assume the role immediately following Wheatley's departure from the company for a semi-sabbatical. McGarvey has served as Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Eidos Interactive since 1993.

McGarvey commented, "Dominic's commitment to Domark and most recently Eidos over the last 12 years has produced an industry leading company with a solid past and a promising future. I'm excited about the opportunity to lead Eidos Interactive into the future with forthcoming titles like *Tomb Raider, The Incredible Hulk, Flying Nightmares 2*, and *Deathtrap Dungeon*. Eidos is poised to become a leader in both the PC and console markets."

Wheatley has been running Eidos Interactive's US operations since the mergers of Domark, Eidos and CentreGold. Mr. Wheatley plans to return to the UK and begin work on an Internet project following his sabbatical. **VGA**

Sales Soar For Saturn's NiGHTS

By Mark Benoit

Sega's new "flight action" game, *NiGHTS*, has broken all introductory sales records for a Saturn title. Three of the nation's top videogame retailers, Electronics Boutique, Babbages, and Software Etc., have reported complete sell-outs of the prosperous product. Sega has received re-orders on *NiGHTS* from 100 percent of its retailers nationwide.

"*NiGHTS* is the first true demonstration of the Sega Saturn's capabilities and [game sales] prove that it's the 'must have' title for Saturn owners, [and] a reason to buy the Sega Saturn for everyone who has waited until now to buy a next-generation system," Ted Hoff, executive vice president, Sega of America, said. "We're thrilled by the sheer volume of sales we're expecting now, particularly during this typically slow selling season."

Sega Saturn's fall lineup includes the eagerly anticipated "Sonic 3D Blast," Sonic's first 3D appearance on the Sega Saturn; Sega Saturn Net link, a peripheral for the Sega Saturn that allows access to the Internet for e-mail, on-line chats, and browsing; and "World Series Baseball II, Sega Sports '96 version of the award winning game. Also hitting the shelves this fall are *Fighting Vipers* and *Virtual On*, which have been best-selling arcade games in the US, and the sequel to the premier Saturn title, *Bug, Bug Too!*. **VGA**

8th Wonder Games Seeks Investors

By Mark Benoit

8th Wonder Games is looking for investors to raise development capital for high-end production products for the consumer and on-line markets. The expected expansion will allow the company to remain competitive by its diversification in the growing industries.

The target capital base is a necessary $1.3 million, spit between no more than four investing parties in equity and/or debt, with terms open to negotiation. The funds will develop 8th Wonder's on-line division and aid in general company growth. **VGA**

Jennie Evans Named Associate Publisher Of Five Publications

By Claire Duffy

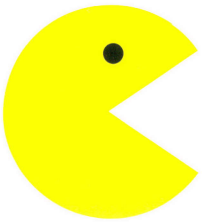
The Ziff-Davis Consumer Media Group recently announced the appointment of Jennie Evans as associate publisher of Electronic Gaming Monthly, EMG2, P.S.X., CyberSports, and Intelligent Gamer. Evans comes from ORIGIN, a wholly owned subsidiary of Electronic Arts, where she was Director of Marketing.

Evans began her career with her position in the publishing industry in 1986, working as office manager with South Western Newspapers, Ltd. in England. From there, Evans, an England native, moved to Future Publishing, first as an advertising sales executive and later as Advertising Manager.

Jonathan Lane, group publisher of the five Ziff-Davis videogames magazines' commented, "Jennie comes to us with a unique skill set. She not only has spent the last five years at ORIGIN, most recently as worldwide director of marketing, she is equally experienced in the computer gaming magazine business, having spent five years at Future Publishing in Great Britain. She brings a balanced perspective to her new position, and videogames advertisers will benefit from her knowledge of the industry." **VGA**

PAC-MAN Fever Returns

By Claire Duffy



Watch out for PAC-MAN fever as Virtuality Inc. releases PAC-MAN VR to entertainment centers around the world! Through a licensing agreement with NAMCO, the creators of the original PAC-MAN, Virtuality brings full immersive 3-D vision and sound to PAC-MAN VR, allowing players to be taken directly into the game environment.

Originally launched by NAMCO in 1980, both children and adults were afflicted by PAC-MAN fever. "We're very excited about bringing PAC-MAN to the VR medium," said Mike Adams, Vice President of Virtuality, Inc. "For the first time ever you'll be able to see the world through PAC-MAN's eyes, running around the maze, picking up pills and avoiding the ghosts. This product brings a whole new immersive dimension into the game that launched an industry."

Virtual engineers designed and created the game to maintain the simplicity and playability of the original while allowing players to explore the new dimension of immersive virtual reality. By putting on VR headsets, up to four players can be linked together, enabling them to see and talk to one another as they work for or against each other to outwit the ghosts.

Hideki Yoshimoto of Namco Holding Corp. stated, "PAC-MAN set the standards for arcade game play. We fully expect that Virtuality's new product will benefit from the characters' wide appeal and will bring virtual reality entertainment to a new high." **VGA**

Disney VP Departs For Unknown Venture

By Claire Duffy

Disney Interactive has announced that Vice President Marc Teren has decided to leave the company at the end of his current contract term. Teren will remain a consultant through early 1997 and will represent Disney Interactive in a soon-to-be announced interactive industry initiative.

Teren commented, "My years at Disney have been one of the finest experiences of my professional career. We have built an industry-leading interactive group, and I will miss them tremendously. The time was right for me to make a more significant contribution to the industry." Teren will continue to represent the company on the board of directors in the Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA).

Teren joined Disney in May, 1992 as director of business development for Disney Consumer Products, U.S.A. and Canada. In that capacity, he managed major new initiatives for the Consumer Products division and was integral in the development of the company's new media strategies and the expansion of Walt Disney Computer Software into Disney Interactive.

Steve McBeth, president of Disney Interactive stated, "Marc's tenure at Disney Interactive has yielded some of the top titles in the industry, notably video games based on our hit animated films *Aladdin*, *The Lion King* and *Toy Story*. We will miss his contribution to our efforts, but we are pleased that he will continue to represent us in the important works of the IDSA and other industry initiatives." **VGA**

New "Talking Modems" Enhance Network Gameplay

By Claire Duffy and Mark Benoit

Two companies, NewCom and Diamond Multimedia, have released a new concept in gaming modems into the consumer market. Both NewCom's NewTalk series modems and Diamond's Supra Express 336i Sp are equipped with SVD, or 'Simultaneous Voice-Data' capability.

NewCom's NewTalk digital modems (DSVD) are fitted with a digital signal processor architecture consisting of two CMOS VLSI, a high performance DSP, and an analog front end. The Supra Express 336i Sp (ASVD) lauds the new modem standard speed, 33.6Kbps and operates on an analog base. Both modems are fully functional over standard phone lines.

The SVD modems address network players' desire for real-time communication with comrades and opponents in a virtual environment. Diamond's president, James H. Cutburth, responded, "The gaming market is quickly evolving from single player to head-to-head gaming over a network or modem." Super-selling games such as Doom, Hexen and Marathon are ripe fields for real-time taunts, insults, and general ribbing.

DIAMOND MULTIMEDIA

The SupraExpress 336i Sp is available as an internal PC modem (MSRP $149) and external models for the PC and Macintosh (MSRP $169). The units will ship with a variety of software including Internet Explorer, NetCruiser, Netscape Navigator, and GNN's Global Network Navigator. The Supra series offers 5 year waranties for each of its products. The NewTalk series will be of-fered at an MSRP of $169. **VGA**

Hasbro Interactive Names James Adams VP - Sales

By Claire Duffy

Hasbro Interactive Worldwide recently announced that James A. Adams, former vice president and general manager, has been appointed vice president of sales for the company. It was also announced that Russell C. Serbagi, Jr., formerly director of Eastern Sales for Viacom/Simon and Schuster, and Jonathan H. Leach, most recently an executive with DeLorme Mapping, have joined the company as co-directors of sales.

Adams managed Navarre's Computer Products Division since 1991 and served as vice president of sales for four years. He spent one year as vice president of national accounts at Liebman Enterprises, Inc./Live Entertainment.

Thomas R. Dusenberry, president of Hasbro Interactive Worldwide, commented, "Jim Adams brings an extraordinary depth of management experience and computer software sales acumen to Hasbro Interactive Worldwide. We are very pleased that such a talented individual has taken the reins of sales organization, and we're fully confident he will lead us to new heights of distribution and revenues."

"Our two new directors of sales are both highly regarded software professionals who offer Hasbro Interactive Worldwide the regional breadth necessary to properly manage our already burgeoning sales and to position us for future growth," added Dusenberry. **VGA**

CD ROM Hits Top Ten Music Playlists

By Erin Blackwelder

Music directors across the country are betting that within months *Where Do We Go From Here?* will be among the top ten most popular adult contemporary songs in the nation. Virtual Image Productions features *Where Do We Go From Here?*, a beautifully written ballad by the same musicians who scored the award winning music to *Pocahontas* and *Beauty and the Beast*, in their soon-to-be hit multimedia title *Shadoan*.

Shadoan is a fantasy adventure game sequel to the 3DO title, *Kingdom: The Far Reaches*, that is available now on PC platforms through Interplay Inc., with plans to produce a November-timed Macintosh version. Canadian based ReadySoft Inc. will produce *Shadoan* versions for the PlayStation and Sega Saturn, both due in November, and Philips Media will produce a version for their Philips CD-i platform. *Shadoan* features more than 70,000 hand-painted cells of animation, an original musical score arranged by the *Where Do We Go From Here?* composers, and features a Parental Guidance Mode which enables parents to adjust the level of violence to what they believe to be appropriate for their children. **VGA**

Special Cash Back Offer From Interplay

By Claire Duffy

In celebration of the one-year anniversary of Windows '95, Interplay Productions has announced an expanded list of Win '95 native games scheduled for release for the holiday buying season, and special cash back offers to drive through sales. Consumers will receive cash back on some of Interplay's hottest evergreen titles during the Interplay Win '95 blowout. The promotion begins in October and runs through the end of December, 1996 at retailers nationwide.

Trish Wright, vice president of marketing for Interplay Productions, stated, "We have created this promotion to assist retailers

in selling through large numbers of software units on a platform that is expanding rapidly. This promotion, combined with our fall restocking plan, is the cornerstone of our Q4 sales efforts. Interplay's core evergreen catalog of titles such as *Virtual Pool, Beat the House, Solitaire Deluxe, Descent II, Pro Pinball* and *Tempest* also make perfect holiday gifts." **VGA**

Interplay Promotes Susan Ganz To Director

By Claire Duffy

Dick Lehrberg, Interplay Productions' executive vice president, has just announced the promotion of Susan Ganz to the newly created position of director of international sales for Asia and Latin America. In this capacity, Ganz will oversee the development of Interplay and it's products into the software markets in Asia and Latin America.

Lehrberg stated, "Sue has a very strong track record, "We have high goals set for our international division and Sue is the right choice to make certain those goals are realized. She has also built a great team to help take us to the next stage." Ganz joined Interplay in 1995 as sales manager for Asia/Latin America. In her fist year with the company, Ganz increased Asia/Latin America sales by 600% and was responsible for setting up relationships in more than ten Latin American and Asian countries, including Australia and New Zealand.

Prior to joining Interplay, Ganz was the international sales manager for HSC Software. She is a San Diego State University alumna, with a bachelor's degree in marketing. **VGA**

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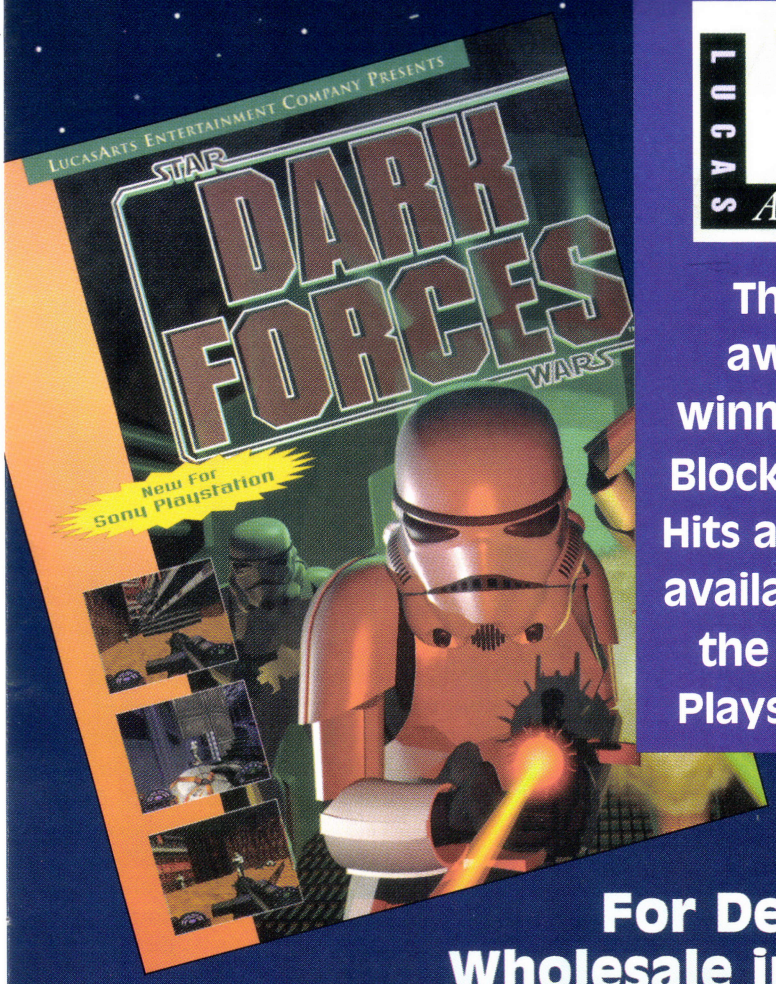

LUCAS Arts

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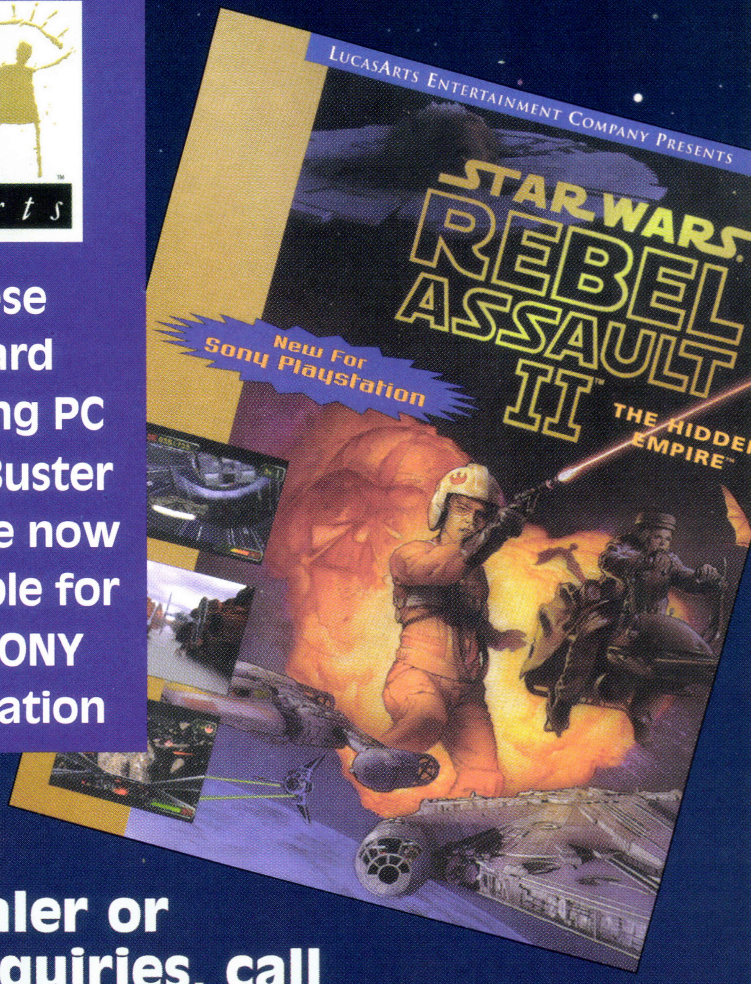

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N64 Exceeds Expectations

By Mark Benoit

Three days after its official launch, every N64 unit shipped to the U.S. has been sold. Of course half of all the 350,000 systems and accompanying software had already been pre-sold by gaming retailers. Based on these first sales figures, Nintendo of America now believes they will be able sell 1.5 million units by Christmas, a fifty percent increase over their initial projections. The one question remaining: can the company produce and ship that many units in time for the holidays?

"We obviously have a huge hit on our hands," said Howard Lincoln, Chairman of Nintendo of America. "We know it's on most kids' top ten list of 'wants' for the holidays, so we want to do everything we can to ensure kids won't be disappointed that they didn't get what they asked their parents for." Though its unlikely Nintendo will be able to provide 1.5 million units, Lincoln says he's sure the parent company will work feverishly to ship as much product as possible right through the holiday buying season.

In addition to the phenomenal sale of the units, *Super Mario 64* and *PilotWings 64* are flying off retail shelves. *Super Mario* is selling at a rate equal to that of units, one for one. *PilotWings* is selling at a rate of about one for every four units.

People are calling the N64 the "Cabbage Patch" syndrome of '96. Senior Vice President of Electronics Boutique had this to say "In all my years of experience in the retail industry, I've never seen this type of frenzied consumer demand for a home video game system." Nintendo 64 has sold more units in one day than any of their competitors' systems did in 32 weeks. **VGA**

ReadySoft Contracts Public Relations Firm

By Claire Duffy

ReadySoft has recently announced the hiring of S & S Public Relations, Inc., one of the leading public relations firms in the U.S. and Canada, to handle all product and company publicity.

According to the terms of the agreement, S & S will be responsible for editorial placement including announcements, reviews, and feature articles on current and new ReadySoft game and reference titles. **VGA**

Price Reductions A-Go-Go For Sega

By Claire Duffy

Sega Of America recently announced that it has brought its retail pricing of all new Sega Saturn games to five price points between $19.99 and $59.99 and eliminated the $69.99 price point for all new titles. In addition, Sega has increased retailer margins by up to 4 percent on software between $29.99 and $49.99, the most prevalent price points for new Sega Saturn Software.

Ted Hoff, executive vice president, Sega of America, said, "Sega Saturn now offers consumers the most diverse and affordable next-generation library of games in the industry. This value, combined with the upcoming exclusive arcade hits, best-selling character-based games, and Internet access with Net Link, makes Sega Saturn the best system of choice for consumers."

These price reductions are one part of Sega's integrated marketing strategy for the fall season. In addition, Sega will have a full lineup of highly anticipated Sega Saturn games for every type of video gamer. **VGA**

Acclaim And Ocean Partner In Publishing Agreement

By Mark Benoit

Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. and game development company Ocean have announced a one-year business agreement under which Acclaim will publish and market Ocean properties for distribution in North America. PC, Sony Playstation and Sega Saturn will be the partnerships' targeted platforms.

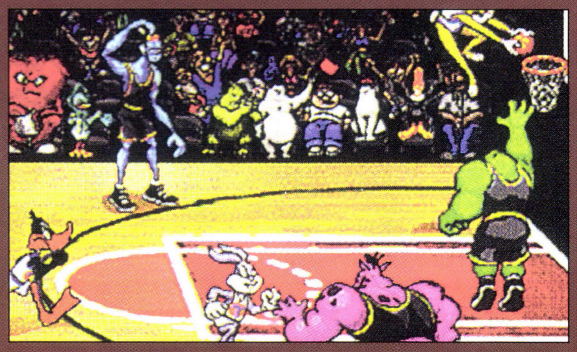
Ocean Chairman David Ward explains that the contract will allow Ocean to dedicate more resources to development, "We are very pleased to partner with Acclaim... This important strategic alliance will enable Ocean to remain concentrated on developing the best content both in Europe and at our U.S. company in San Jose." Ward expects, with the strength of Acclaim's distribution network, sales in the North American market to be maximized.

Acclaim is no less enthusiastic about the agreement, as Acclaim's Chief Operating Officer Jim DeRose indicates, "The teaming of Acclaim and Ocean brings some of Ocean's hottest titles to the North American market more quickly through Acclaim's extensive distribution network. Both companies also will benefit from the synergy of our combined marketing efforts... we look forward to a robust relationship." Acclaim is also looking forward to expanding their PC platform titles.

Their first joint title release is expected to be *Tunnel B1*. The game is a first-person "shooter" which has been described as "*Doom* meets *Wipeout* down a dark back-alley." *Tunnel B1* is expected to ship this month. **VGA**

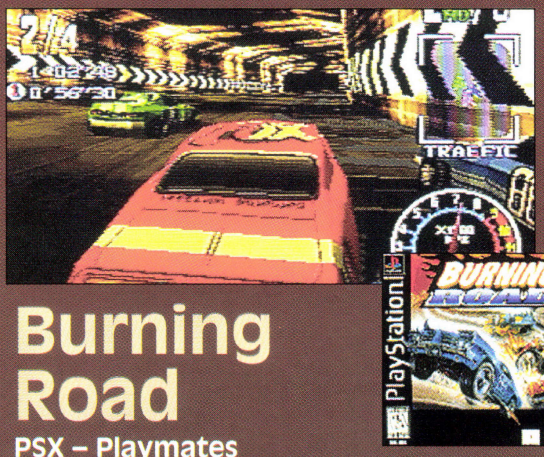
RETAILERS

1 Stop Videogame Shopping This Holiday Season



Space Jam
Saturn / PSX – Acclaim

Disrupter
PSX – Interplay



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MGM Launches Consumer Marketing Programs For Fall CD-ROM Titles

By Claire Duffy

MGM Interactive is preparing multi-faceted marketing campaigns designed to help drive sales of its fall CD-ROM titles to a more mainstream consumer audience. The company's sister division, MGM/UA Home Entertainment, will deliver a slate of innovative programs beginning in October for *Ultimate James Bond: An Interactive Dossier*; and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang's Adventure in Tinker Town*.

David Bishop, MGM/UA Home Entertainment's worldwide executive vice president, commented, "This year more than ever, interactive companies need to expand their traditional CD-ROM marketing programs to reach a broader base of home PC users. With the two titles we're launching this fall, MGM can utilize synergies between home video and interactive [entertainment] to create bigger, more dynamic marketing campaigns than you would typically see in our industry."

Some of MGM's marketing strategies for the two games will include Video Bundles, national TV advertising tags, video inserts and trailers, print advertising, internet marketing, POP merchandising, and public relations. **VGA**

Wnuk Joins Lifestyle

By Erin Blackwelder

Lifestyle Software Group is proud to announce the addition of Dick Wnuk as senior vice president of sales and business development. Wnuk is the former vice president of sales for Time Warner Interactive.

Wnuk's primary responsibilities are to cement Lifestyle as one of the premier hobby/special interest software publishers and establish partnerships with global multimedia companies.

Wnuk was instrumental in adding Sacis, the multimedia arm of Italy's communication's giant, RAI, to the Lifestyle client roster. Lifestyle doubled its product line in August when it became North America's sole distributor of Sacis's lifestyle-oriented CD ROM's focusing on European design, art, music, food & travel.

"Luring Dick our way is a real coup for us. Individuals with his strong background are few and far between," says Lifestyle President Craig Barzso. "Most new employees observe how a company operates and slowly get their feet wet. Dick began negotiations with Sacis during his first week on the job." **VGA**

Marvel Names Lester Greenman As SVP Software Publishing

By Reilly Brennan

Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. recently announced the appointment of Lester E. Greenman as Senior Vice President of Software Publishing. This new position will be part of the new Marvel Interactive unit which was launched earlier this year.

Greenman will be in charge of developing Marvel's line of multi-platform, interactive entertainment software as part of the Company's plan to begin publishing titles under its own label.

Greenman was previously Vice President of Product Development and Legal & Business Affairs at Sony Interactive Entertainment. At Sony, Greenman assembled the development group that produced software for the launch of the Sony Playstation. Greenman was also responsible for all licensing and negotiations at SIE. **VGA**

Ziff-Davis And SpotMedia Join To Launch New Site

By Mark Benoit

Ziff-Davis Publishing and SpotMedia Communications have signed a letter of intent to jointly create a gaming "mega-site" for the World Wide Web. The new site will combine elements of the award winning GameSpot site (property of SpotMedia), as well as editorial material from Ziff Davis's on-line properties. The yet unformed company will be majority owned by Ziff-Davis and managed by the existing SpotMedia management team.

Editorial material for the site will be supplied by the on-line content of Ziff-Davis publications, such as Computer Gaming World, Electronic Gaming Monthly, EGM2, P.S.X., Cybersports and Intelligent Gamer. In addition to the style and feel of the Gamespot site, elements of Ziff-Davis' Nuke.com site will be employed. The new site will be the official gaming area of ZD-Net.

Both companies say they are excited about the editorial, technical and financial resources that will be dedicated to the site. Since the agreement is not yet definitive, no launch dates have been released. **VGA**

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Acclaim Entertainment Names Jim DeRose President And COO

By Claire Duffy

Acclaim Entertainment has recently announced the appointment of Jim DeRose as president and chief operating officer of Acclaim's North American Operations. He will report directly to Gregory Fischbach, Acclaim's co-chairman of the board, president and chief executive officer.

"Acclaim is creating a more effective organization as part of our plan for the systematic and strategic revitalization of our business. As the industry evolves and our company matures, we are fortunate to have a strong management team led by business professionals like Jim. He has demonstrated entrepreneurial instincts, vision and corporate expertise," stated Fischbach. "We are working toward Acclaim's return to profitability and view this executive appointment as another important step in managing through a transitional period."

DeRose joined the company in 1995 as president of Acclaim Interactive and has directed the company's domestic interactive entertainment software projects for PCs and other video game systems. Prior to Acclaim, DeRose was with Mattel U.S.A., where as president he was responsible for Mattel's domestic operations. **VGA**

Interplay Signs Hoard As Edutainment Sales Manager

By Mark Benoit

Moving forward with their marketing strategy of increased school software involvement, Interplay Productions has appointed Moojan Hoard to the new position of National Education Sales Manager. The position has two facets; working with marketing and development to design software products and selling products to the educational market.

Hoard has done consulting work for Interplay over the past two years. She has also performed educational sales consulting for Microsoft and Addison Westley. In addition, Hoard has held sales positions at Claris/Apple and Ashton-Tate. She has been credited with developing the first student edition of dBase while at Ashton-Tate.

Interplay's desire is that Hoard will increase educational sales of both the Interplay entertainment products, and the new line of Brainstorm "edutainment" software. **VGA**

Nintendo Elves Stock Shelves For Christmas

By Claire Duffy

Nintendo of America has announced that with consumer and retailer demand for its new 64-bit video game system continuing at a record-setting pace, combined with widespread shortages, shipments to the U.S. will be increased.

Nintendo Co. Ltd. has confirmed that with a reallocation of product, they can partially meet the U.S. demand by shipping a total of 1.2 million units though the end of the calendar year. Since its debut in America on Sept. 29, Nintendo has sold 460,000 systems of the 555,000 shipped to date, making it by far the fastest selling of all next generation video game systems.

Peter Main, Nintendo of America executive vice president commented, "The demand keeps growing. It's clear from our retailers that they think they could sell between 1.5 and 2.0 million units this calendar year. This new figure will go a long way to meet demand, but shortages may continue in some areas of the country. We expect these additional units will be shipped in consistent allotments through year end."

According to third-party industry sales data, consumers continue to buy Nintendo 64's at more than four times the initial sales rates reported for last

year's launch of the Sony Playstation, and approximately 10 times that of the Sega Saturn.

"The sales and demand for the N64 has been a big boost to the health of the video game industry," says Sean McGowan, senior industry analyst with Gerard Klauer Mattison, New York, "The N64 seems to be on the 'must have' gift-giving shopping lists this year. If Nintendo can get the inventory into stores, there will be lots of happy parents and kids this holiday.

In total, eight Nintendo 64 games will be available by Christmas. Nintendo 64 is available at a suggested retail price of $199.95. **VGA**

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Total Entertainment Network Adds Quake To Line-up

By Reilly Brennan

To coincide with its commercial launch, Total Entertainment Network (TEN), the first Internet entertainment network that allows for true 'national play,' recently announced a non-exclusive agreement to bring the popular PC game, Quake, to its network.

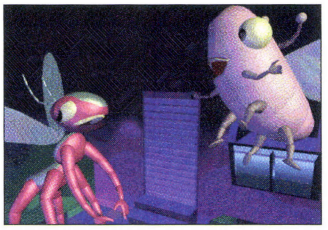
Developed by id Software, the makers of Doom and Wolfenstein 3D, Quake is recognized for its advanced graphics and technological creativity, with an engine specifically designed for multi-player gaming.

"Quake has been the most anticipated game of the year," said Jack Heistand, president and CEO of TEN. "It has all the components to make a successful multi-player [internet] gaming experience."

TEN's web site is located at http://www.ten.net. **VGA**

New CD-ROM Launch Dates For Grolier Interactive

By Claire Duffy



Grolier Interactive has recently announced they will postpone the release of three games originally scheduled for the fourth quarter: "Banzai Bug, "Battle of the Ironclads" and "Surf and Destroy." In order to assure "over the top" play, the company is proceeding with final product refinements and will then put all three titles through extensive testing.

John McIlvaine, vice president, marketing, Grolier Interactive stated, "The game category is extremely competitive and our participation strategy is to develop games using the latest technology. Although two of the titles are virtually finished, we are dedicated to taking the testing time needed to assure product quality. The decision to delay was difficult because it not only impacts fourth quarter sales, but also effects our retail partners. However, by using the time to refine the games and drive trial through demo disc programs, we all stand to win — Grolier Interactive, our retailers and our consumers." **VGA**

Sales Account Take-over Agreement Finalized

By Claire Duffy

SVG Distributors and Crystal Dynamics have entered into an account take-over agreement. Per the agreement, SVG Distributors has absorbed Crystal's existing accounts as related to sales and distribution services.

Hence forth, any customers with Crystal Dynamics accounts should submit payments, price adjustments, order adjustments and defective returns to SVG Distributors at:

SVG Distribution
8411 S. La Cienega Blvd.
Inglewood, CA. 90301
Phone: (310) 568-9800
Fax: (310) 568-2474

For questions and information regarding accounts, the following individuals may be contacted:

Orders and price adjustments contact: Nima Taghavi Defective products / RA's contact: Dirk Foster Accounts Payable contact: Shawn Keshmiri Shipment tracking and instructions contact Mike Caraway. **VGA**

David Cox Named Vice President Of Sales For Eidos Interactive

By Claire Duffy

Eidos Interactive recently announced that David Cox has been named Vice President of Sales. Cox will be responsible for Eidos Interactive's entire North American line of PC and console products. Cox will be replacing Mike McGarvey, who recently was appointed President and CEO of Eidos Interactive.

"We are very pleased to have David join our sales team. Not only will he prove to be a valuable asset to sales, but a great addition to our senior management team as well," commented McGarvey.

Prior to joining Eidos Interactive, Cox served five years as Director of North American Sales at Acclaim Entertainment. Cox will join the Eidos team at the launch of Tomb Raider, one of the industry's most anticipated Playstation, Saturn, and PC titles to be released this holiday season. "David joins Eidos at a very exciting time. His vast experience and leadership skills will have an immediate impact," added McGarvey. **VGA**

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Interview With Hide Irie President, ASCII Entertainment Software

By Geoff Wulf

VGA: ASCII Entertainment has been a recognized name in game hardware for some time. The enormous popularity of 32 bit games was an obvious reason for ASCII's foray into the software market. What was ASCII's initial stance on their position as a new top player in the 32 bit console game arena?

Irie: When ASCII Entertainment Software began publishing in the U.S. in 1989 and 1990, ASCII was only making software titles, producing titles for the eight bit Nintendo system. After this, we diversified into the peripheral business, which proved to be a very successful area for us. So that's why we've become well known throughout the industry as a top quality peripheral company. However, in actuality, our company didn't start off as a peripheral company, but as a software developer / publisher.

We view ourselves not as a peripheral or software company, but as an entertainment company. Back at our parent company's entertainment division, ASCII of Japan (AOJ), 80% of our business comes from software. So it is very natural for us to re-enter into the game software market. AOJ has over 20 development lines in-house and a full development team that develops titles for all platforms. AOJ is also one of the top game software publishers in the Japanese market, so we have earned a lot of brand equity with our strong quality name.

ASCII's stance has always been, and will continue to be, to bring out products that give the consumer the ultimate gaming experience. People who play our games should enjoy them and thus will associate a positive experience with the ASCII name. We always also try to bring out games that have meaning. King's Field was the first RPG for the PlayStation. We wanted to bring out something different, and we did. Consumers were very happy that there was a title of this genre on this system, and as a result sales have been phenomenal.

VGA: How does the company now envision itself as a player in the market after producing one of the top-selling hits for the PlayStation?

Irie: ASCII had received the final report from Sony for King's Field II, and Sony's comments were 'We've heard raving reviews on King's Field II from both our Q & A group and our evaluating group." They've said, "This game is awesome; it is kicking some butt. Big thumbs up! You guys should all pat yourself on the back for this game!" We will continue to only bring out products of the highest quality and also products that have meaning. We don't want to bring out another 'me-too' fighting game; we want our products to be unique. We will continue to ask ourselves if a potential product has meaning when evaluating new titles and peripherals.

VGA: What is ASCII's positioning for the coming year in game development?

Irie: We are currently developing three strong titles for the U.S. market, evaluating several titles from the Japanese market, and analyzing about 15 titles from AOJ. We want to make sure any game we bring out is really good, and we are hoping to find several gems among these titles. Also, we plan to announce shortly several completely new and innovative controllers that we are developing that will revolutionize the industry.

VGA: Will software successes divert ASCII's development from hardware to software or will the company focus on expansion into multiple markets?

Irie: If you look at AES's recent history, you might think that our success is because of software. However, our peripheral sales has also been a major factor in contributing to our bottom line since 1992. Our peripheral sales have increased substantially each year, and our products are becoming of better quality each year. From the beginning, our goal has been to be an entertainment company, and therefore we will continue diversification in both hardware and software.

VGA: As one of the only third party hardware and software developers, do you see ASCII testing the relationship between hit games and custom peripherals in the future?

Irie: ASCII plans to not only test the relationship, but we also plan to 'test the limits' of producing the highest quality products. We really believe it can be done. We have a very strong relationship with our consumers, who have valued ASCII's name since the early days.

Any company can make a peripheral, but, in order to make a really good controller, a company has to understand the industry. ASCII understands the game market. We listen to our consumers and to the retail market. We receive letters, feedback from our website, monitor game newsgroups — all in an effort to find out exactly what the consumer wants.

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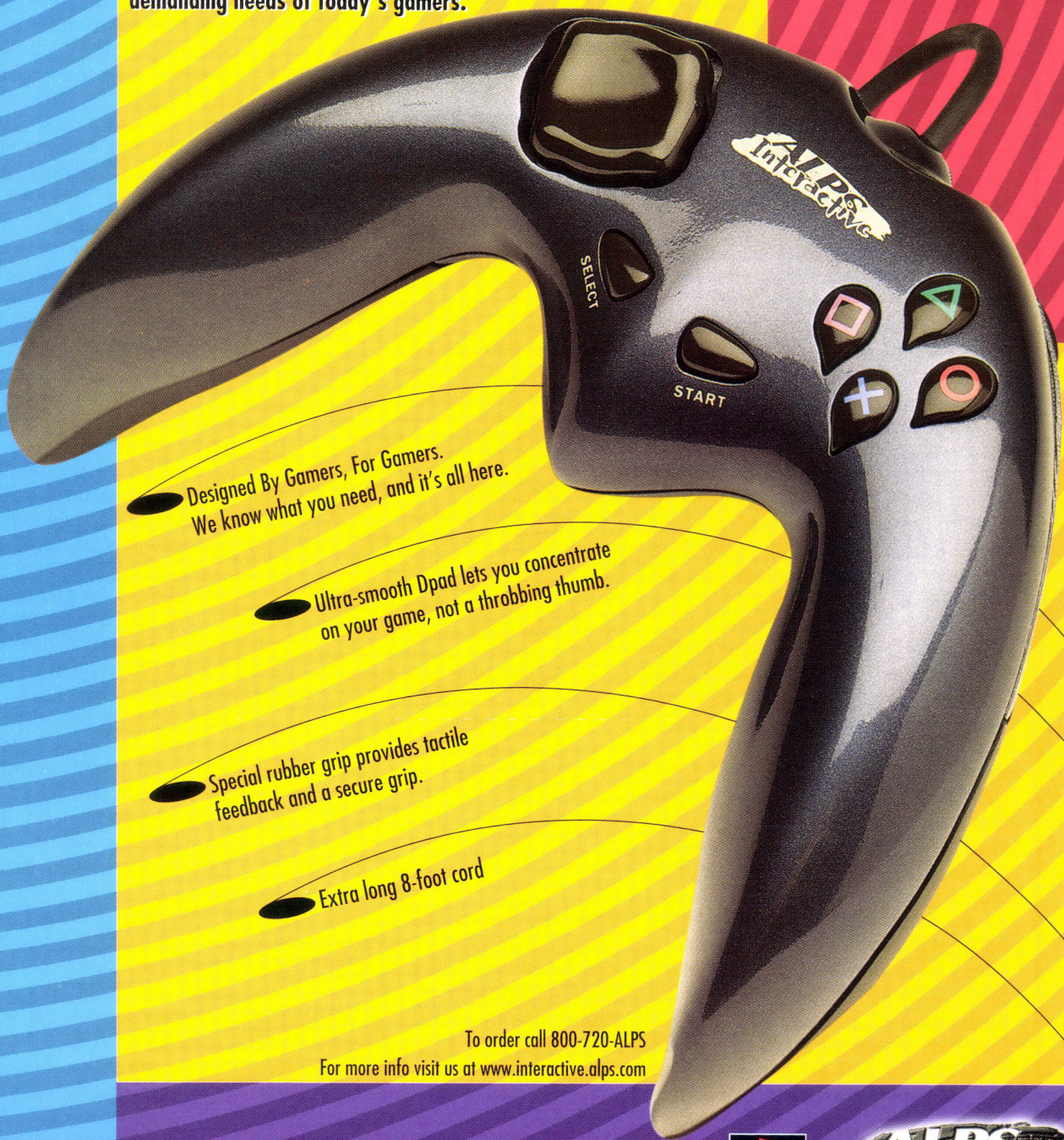

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VGA: ASCII's successes in hardware have spanned all console formats as well as home computers. What are the company's goals for software development outside the console market (PC and Macintosh)?

Irie: AOJ has always been involved in software development outside the console market, so this would be an easy market for ASCII to enter. Many of AOJ's divisions cover business, entertainment, and edutainment applications as well as peripherals for all consoles and for the PC. We are looking at not only entertainment software for the PC market but also at business applications.

VGA: New in everyone's mind is the recent success of the N64 console. What are your thoughts on the only cartridge based system in the new market, and where will ASCII stand in regards to third party development for the highly successful unit?

Irie: For the cartridge business to be successful, all depends on the quality of the software. Nintendo undoubtedly had good reason to choose the cartridge system in order to bring out high quality software with superb graphical capabilities.

If we have software that fits a particular platform, it doesn't matter if that platform is cartridge or CD-ROM bases. We've been working very closely with Nintendo from the NES and SNES days, and we will continue to keep working with Nintendo for the Nintendo 64.

VGA: How is ASCII dealing with the huge number of platforms in both its game and hardware development? Where will your focus be in the coming months?

Irie: We don't go by platform but by our customers' needs, giving them what they want. We constantly survey our customers, and we hope to continue to give them the gaming experiences that they demand.

Our focus in the upcoming months will be on King's Field II, the other three titles we're developing, our Saturn Stick Arcade peripheral, our PlayStation peripherals (ASCII Carrybag, Enhanced AsciiPad, and the AsciiPad), as well as our new innovative controllers that we will announce shortly.

VGA: King's Field II is generating a great deal of anticipation. Most of us freshly remember the sell-outs of its predecessor, as well as the difficulty of replacing stock. Do you foresee similar difficulties with the sequel?

Irie: One of the reasons for the shortage of King's Field was because the sell through was much greater than the retailers' expectations. We knew it would be a big hit; the consumer's knew it (thousands had reserved the game well in advance); and the industry press knew it (writing over 60 pages of positive reviews in all of the top gaming magazines).

Because of the success of King's Field, our sales force has quadrupled our initial orders. Therefore we do not think that the King's Field II will encounter any supply problems.

ASCII ENTERTAINMENT

We don't go by platform but by our customers' needs, giving them what they want. We constantly survey our customers, and we hope to continue to give them the gaming experiences that they demand.

VGA: Are there any current plans for a follow-up? Can we expect to see other new titles from ASCII for the holiday season?

Irie: Currently we are analyzing our consumers' needs. We are thinking of bringing out similar types of next generation games, perhaps though with a different storyline. For this holiday season, we are focusing our efforts on our current software titles and controllers for the Saturn and the PlayStation.

VGA: Everyone knows what competition ASCII faces in the software markets, yet the vast number of game developers have done little to stem the success of ASCII's hits. What is ASCII's chief competition in hardware development, and how is ASCII responding to remain one of the top names in peripherals?

Irie: ASCII Entertainment Software is an entertainment company. We've gained market share by providing the consumers with what they want, not by having a full line of 'me too' software titles and peripherals.

Our customer service department is very responsive and listens to not only what the consumers' concerns are, but also to what they would like to see in the future. Our sales force, our gamers, and our customer service team are the genesis for most of our new products. Each division in our company has at least 50% gamers on the staff, (our production team is 100% gamers, our research division has 100% gamers, and our marketing team has 75% gamers) except for our accounting department. However, our Accounting Manager has been bugging me lately to let her take home a PlayStation so she can learn to play the games.

Since our employees are so enthusiastic about the industry, they are constantly bombarding me with new ideas, new ways to do things, and new product proposals. We are a consumer oriented company, because our consumers work here at ASCII! We don't just pay lip service to the slogan 'For gamers, by gamers'....We live it!

We also have strong connections to the Japanese market because of our parent company, AOJ. AOJ publishes Famitsu, which is the largest publication in the entertainment market (700,000 copies printed weekly). We have solid knowledge of the Japanese market as well as access to gamers (who work for us on our editorial staff), so we have the benefit of getting information from all of these sources.

We try to bring the market new, innovative, different products. We will shortly announce a highly innovative peripheral that will revolutionize controllers and set the ASCII name in stone as synonymous with quality and technological innovation. This product is exactly what the consumer wants.

We will continue to follow this successful strategy of 'for gamers, by gamers' in creating all our future next generation software and hardware products. **VGA**

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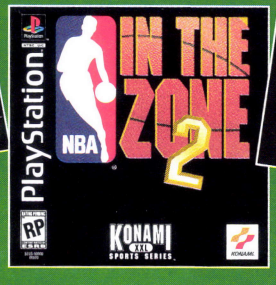

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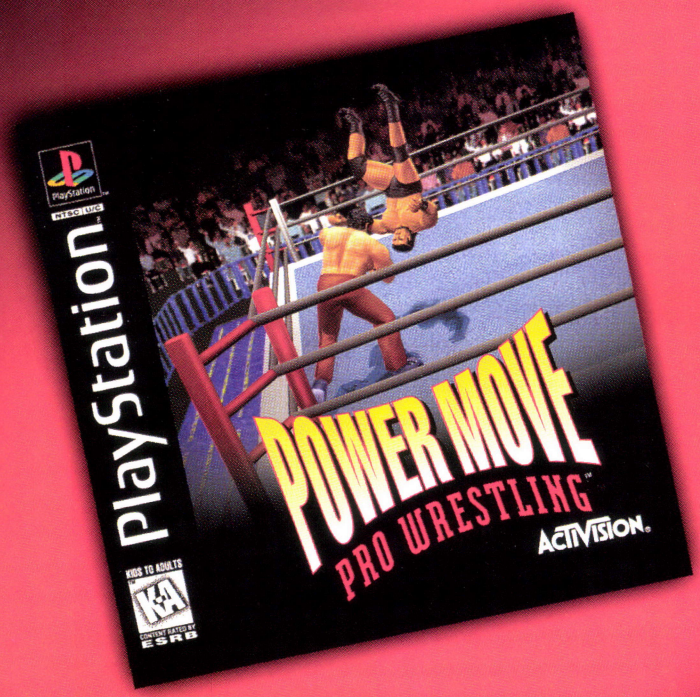

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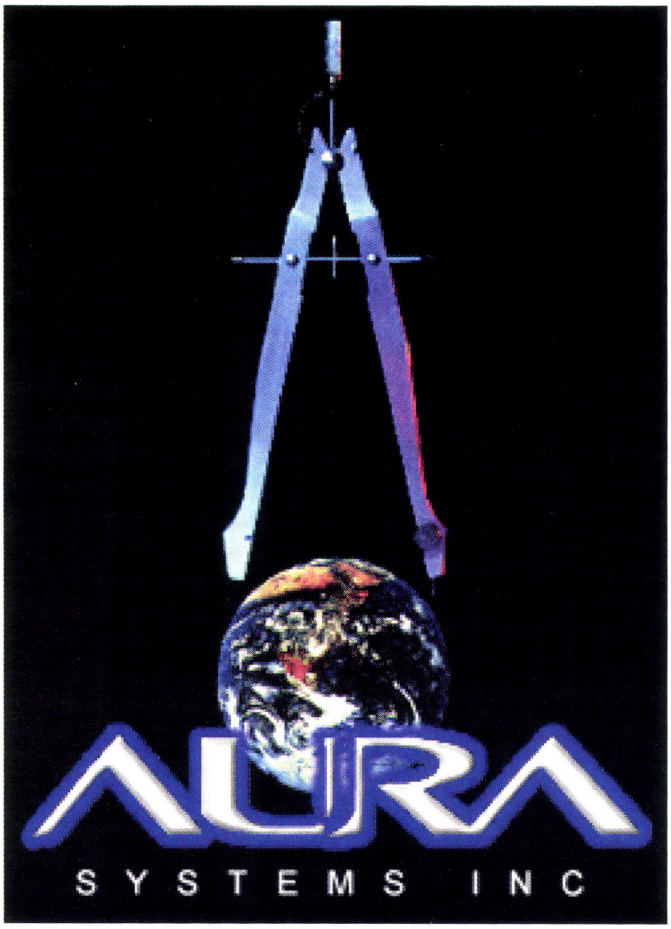
Purchasing On The Periphery

The VGA Multimedia Review

By Geoff Wulf



AURA SYSTEMS

Last month, Aura Systems, a speaker manufacturer for home and car audio systems, introduced a new line of multimedia speaker to the market, just missing VGA's September Review. The innovation in their design and performance merited an inclusion, however; so, a little late but not forgotten, is the Aspect Series Multimedia Speaker Systems VGA Review.

The Aspect series claims to "redefine the state-of-the-art for compact sound" with Aura's new woofers (low-range speakers). The cinch is the trademarked Neo-Radial Technology that beefs up bass output through relatively small drivers. The cutting-edge technology supports more low-range sound without the annoying distortion present in your average boom-box.

The speakers' housing was upgraded to handle the intensified bass by using fiberboard (a low-density wood that dampens vibration, like a room lined with cork for soundproofing). The exterior design goes past materials, however. The odd-shaped speakers, looking as if they're not quite sure which way they should be facing, are angled directly toward the user's ears when mounted either on the included brackets, or just set alongside the monitor.

"[The] Neo-Radial™ Technology consists of a ring of high temperature neodynium encased in a low carbon steel return structure." Yeah, sure. I got to "polyamide diaphragm assembly," tossed the spec. sheet over my shoulder, and just plugged it in.

The line consists of four units: the Aspect 10, Aspect 20, Aspect 30, and the Aspect 40. The differences are a little vague and wordy, but I'll try to keep it short. The 10 includes a 3-inch full-range New-Radial driver and a 20 watt amplifier with sound contouring equalization (a little like 'surround sound'). The 20 adds a beefed-up tweeter for crisper sound in the high-ranges. The 30 bumps the amplifier to 30 watts, adds a woofer, and configures them for maximum "sound imaging." Lastly is the 40, a subwoofer that can be used in conjunction with any of the above, sporting a 5 1/4 inch woofer and 30 watts with the ever-popular 'sound contouring.'

I had the chance to test-drive the Aspect 30, and here are my real-world findings.

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Aspect 30 Multimedia Speaker System
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MSRP: $99.95

The system looks great straight out of the box, and my anticipation of its performance was high from the start. I'll tell you now that it did little to disappoint me.

The first thing I did was to turn the volume up as far as it would go and test out the new bass technology. Keeping in mind the last stereo speaker I abused in this fashion is now a lovely doorstop, I held my breath and clicked a sound byte. No distortion. Nice. I gave my eardrums a chance to rest up then popped in a classical music CD. The bass performed as advertised, but, at full volume, I noticed a tiny little rattle during the kettle drums and similar intense bass. This shouldn't be a concern unless you're actively attempting to become legally deaf.

On the down side, the mounts were a source of frustration. They're adhered to vel-cro pads which are more or less permanently fastened to the top of your monitor. This probably works for most, but I'm a stickler for tidy equipment and don't want something attached that I can't easily remove. Still, they look nice and work well on the desktop, so it's not a major problem.

All in all, the speakers should perform reasonably well at retail. Lack of comprehensive promotional programs will find these computers wanting in an initial boost through retail channels, but their modest price point, sleek appearance, and solid performance go a long way to make up for it. If you're still debating the hardware issue, you may want to kick off with a brand of speaker a little more well known, but large stores with established markets can only improve their reputation by adding this top-notch line to their inventory. **VGA**

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http://www.team17.com/

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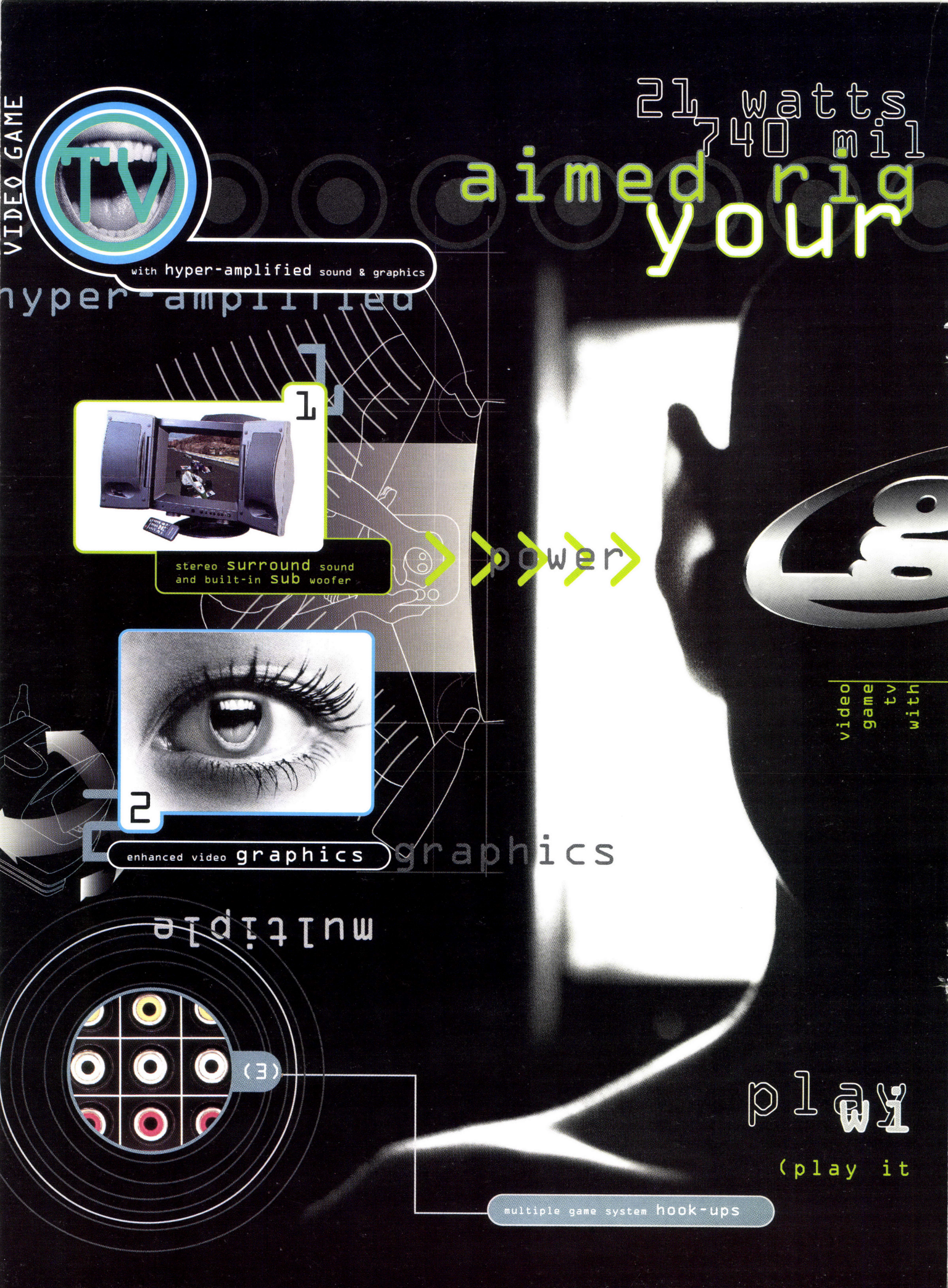
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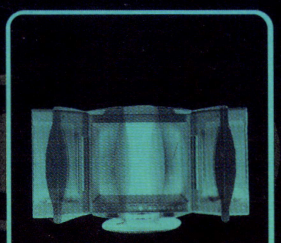

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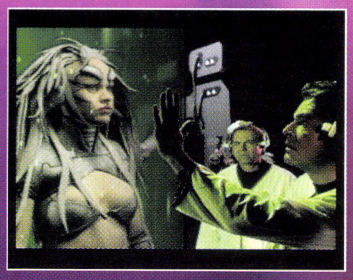

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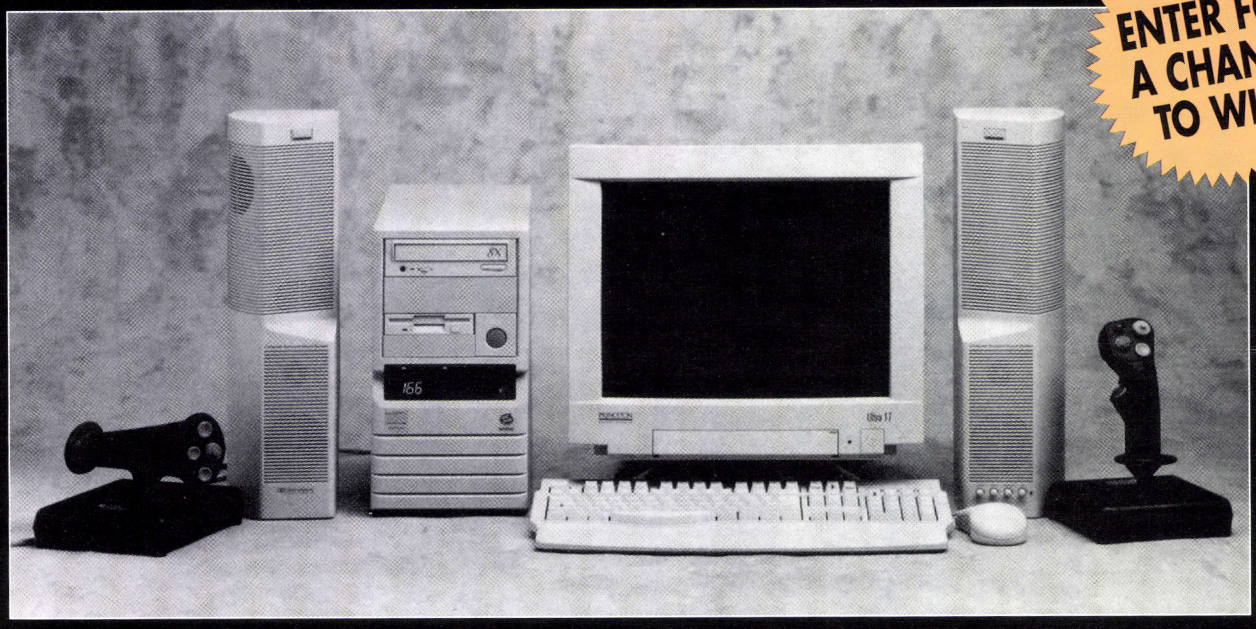

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VIDEOGAME ADVISOR RATINGS SYSTEM

A One of the best selling games for that particular platform. Great sound, graphics, playability, etc. This title will grow wings and fly off the shelves of any retail/rental store.

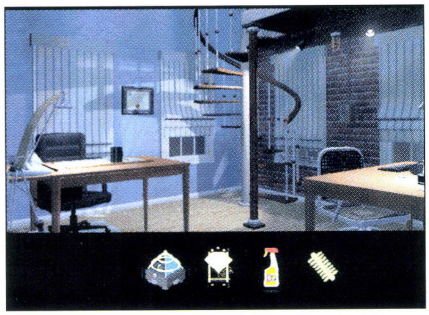
B A great game that is just lacking in some areas. It will sell well and bring in the masses, but just not to the extent of an "A" title. Retailers should make sure to buy this product deep enough to satisfy their individual store demands with some to spare.

C A good game that will sell about "average" in terms of sales. It is lacking in a few departments, therefore not worthy of a "B" rating. However, this is still a quality product.

D A game that is unsupported by the manufacturer, lacking in quality and generally should have stayed in development longer. This category may rent occasionally but will not sell well to anyone other than a "platform fan." Poor gameplay, bad plot and just better than an "F" rating.

F A product that never should have been considered, much less released. This is a thoroughly unimpressive title that will only become an inventory nightmare. Only at drastically discounted prices could this category sell.

FYI As a courtesy to those readers who use our magazine as a guide in making purchasing decisions for their stores, we have made our review section as up-front and honest as possible. However, one should be aware that once products are reviewed and rated, we also extend a similar level of courtesy to the manufacturers. Titles which receive a rating in the D or F categories are faxed/e-mailed to the respective publisher, who is then given the opportunity to "pull" the reviews. As a good rule of thumb, one may consider avoiding products not reviewed in any current issues of Videogame Advisor.



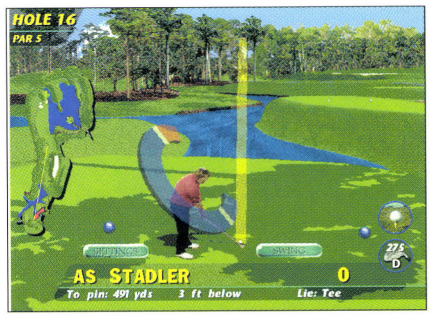
Title: AMBER: Journeys Bey.
Platform: Windows
Genre: 95/Macintosh
Size: Adventure
Publisher: CD-ROM
Developer: Graphic Simulations
Available: HueForest Ent.
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: B+

AMBER: Journeys Beyond opens with an email transmission asking you, the player, to drive up to the house of your boss, Roxanne. 'Roxy' has been working on the AMBER device, an 'Astral Mobility Bio-Electrical magnetic Resonance' headgear setup that allows the wearer to 'cross over' into the supernatural realm of the 'beyond'. You arrive at the house to find the power is out and Roxy lying prone in the garage. In order to save Roxy you'll need to get the power up, activate the AMBER device and then solve the mysteries of the two ghostly spirits who haunt the North Carolina house.

Similar in execution to MYST, AMBER: Journeys beyond is a graphic adventure featuring incredibly detailed environments and fantastic digital sound. You travel through the house via the intuitive point-and-click interface, examining rooms and the objects contained within. Quicktime movies provide animation routines that overlay the still images, which, when combined with the haunting music, create a chilling atmosphere.

Bottom Line: *AMBER: Journeys Beyond is an engaging adventure/mystery filled with interesting play mechanics and stunning graphics. The multiple storylines will keep players entranced, but sales success will depend on a strong marketing campaign if AMBER is to achieve MYST-like sell-through results.*

– Jeffrey Tschiltsch



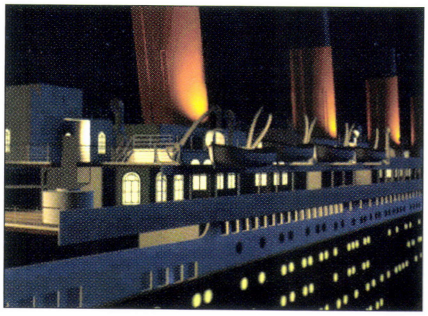
Title: PGA Tour 96
Platform: Windows 95
Genre: Sports
Size: CD-ROM
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer:
Available: November
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: B

EA Sports' PGA Tour 96 for Windows 95 is basically the same game as the DOS version, running in a resolution of 640 x 480 and 256 colors. The obvious appeal for Win 95 users is the ease of installation and ability to run native within the operating system, eliminating the need to drop to MS-DOS mode.

The game includes two courses, Spyglass Hill and TPC at Avenel, and is compatible with all of the championship course add-on disks that have come out for the PGA Tour series. There is a full compliment of real PGA golfers whom you can either play as or against, and audio interviews and video clips give you their insights on the game. New features include the implementation of EA's 'Sports Net', which allows multiple players via local area networks or modems. Players can even send voice messages to their opponents if their system is equipped with a microphone.

Bottom Line: *PGA Tour 96 brings the solid gameplay of the DOS version to the Windows 95 environment. It's 8-bit color mode doesn't make it the flashiest game around, especially when compared to the latest version of Links, and some might expect more from a game with such heavy hardware requirements.*

– Jeffrey Tschiltsch



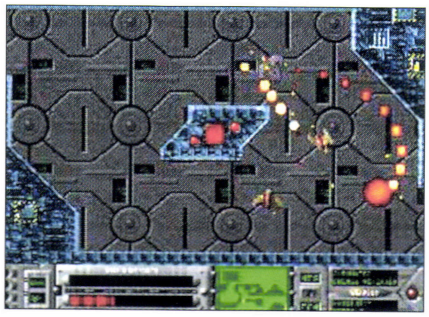
Title: Titanic
Platform: WIN 95/Mac Hybrid
Genre: Simulation/Adventure
Size: CD
Publisher: GTE Interactive
Developer: Cyberflix
Available: November 96
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: C

Following the bootprints of its Western ancestor Dust, Titanic allows players to freely roam the doomed SS Titanic, which is populated by some 30+ speaking period characters, from ship personnel to wealthy aristocrats to shadowy strangers of unknown origin. Carefully modeled and researched, the Titanic is reproduced in remarkable detail, constructed from the ship's original floor plans. While the spy/thriller intrigue aboardship is fictional,

Cyberflix has employed an historical researcher as part of the production team, and some of the story elements are derived from actual events of the time. Titanic offers the incidental interaction of Dust, with characters holding and following their own agendas. Once the star-crossed liner makes her date with destiny (the iceberg), players have a very real 2 1/2 hour race against the clock in which to solve the remainder of the onboard mystery....and just maybe change the course of history.

Bottom Line: *Dust, hailed by game magazines, did not sell very well, but GTE interactive has pursued a more aggressive ad campaign; this and the sheer reputation of Dust just might make Titanic a healthy, if unspectacular, seller.*

– Chris Hudak



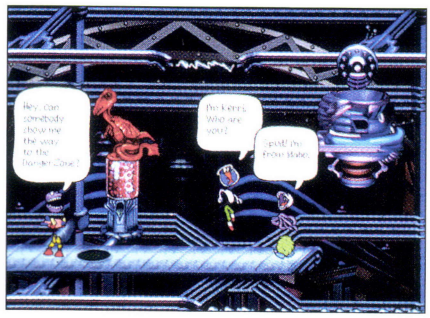
Title: Souls in the System
Platform: Mac
Genre: Shooter
Size: CD
Publisher: StarPlay Productions
Developer: StarPlay Productions
Available: TBA
Wholesale: TBA
MSRP: TBA
VGA Rating: B-

The Mac platform has, historically, hurt (or at the very best tragically lagged) for good action games. StarPlay's first release, ShadowWraith, is one of the happy exceptions; a single-player, top-down action shooter with fluid control, terrific sound effects, and a pleasantly manic mix of sober tactical planning and high-intensity, real-time, screen-to-screen combat inside an absolutely mindless but attractive cyberspace motif.

Souls in the System, the sequel to ShadowWraith, might as well have been titled Even More ShadowWraith, because even the hard-core fan would be hard pressed to detect any radical differences in the single-player action between the two....not that this is a bad thing. The better news is that Souls in the System adds one feature which takes the original noticeably lacked: Multiplayer interaction. It is unclear whether StarPlay has learned their marketing lesson; whether they will devote more effort to promotion of this second fine product than the half hearted marketing allocated to the first.

Bottom Line: *As an overhead shooter, it may recieve only a fraction of the attention it deserves in a market swamped with hi-resolution, 3D rendered, superintelegent fighter-strategy-simulations. Expect moderate sales at worst, and feel free to recommend it as a solid action title.*

– Chris Hudak



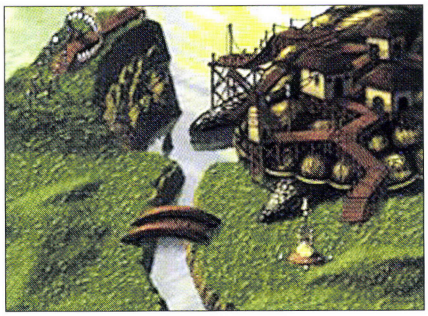
Title: Castle Infinity
Platform: WIN 95
Genre: Multi-User Dimension
Size: CD
Publisher: Starwave
Developer: Starwave
Available: Oct
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: A

Simply put, Castle Infinity is an Internet MUD for children. Aparently, the dinosaurs knew that some sort of planetwide badness was coming down, so they built the extra-dimensional Castle Infinity and protected themselves. Problem is, some badness got in there with them, and now the dinos need the help of the world's children (everyone knows that kids identify with dinosaurs and recognize a Monster when they see one) to deal with the threat. They've contacted the kids via their computers (never mind how, they just have, okay?) and implore, like the box says, "Get IN HERE!"

Participants can select and customize the avatars that represent them in the virtual world, and the chat feature creates real-time speech balloons over the avatars as kids type their conversations. The ongoing battle against the monsters encourages cooperative efforts between participants, and an online security force is available to resolve uncomfortable situations. Absolutely non-insulting and admirably hip, the "DooDoo Meter" tells kids just how much of it they might be in at any given time,

Bottom Line: *Backed by a public launch from several science centers across the country and a robust ad campaign, Castle Infinity has the potential for high popularity and sales, Stock copies and watch their sales activity closely.*

– Chris Hudak

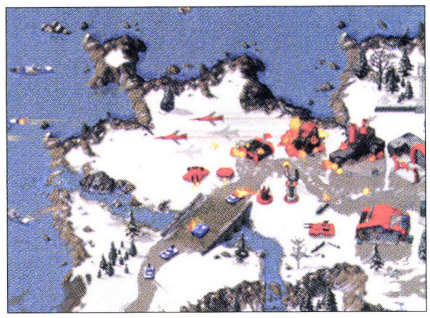


Title: Dragon Dice
Platform: WIN 95
Genre: Strategy
Size: CD
Publisher: Interplay Productions
Developer:
Available: December
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: A-

Dragon Dice will be the networkable software version of the popular TSR fantasy/strategy dice game which has garnered for itself a following almost as cliquish as that for Magic: The Gathering. The original Dragon Dice came as a boxed set including 18 assorted polyhedral dice, and while each copy of Interplay's product does include one randomly-selected die, its function in the game has been replaced by very tight, pretty, graphics and number-generation routines. The object of Dragon Dice is to conquer and hold, mainly hold, territories via the construction and organization of 'armies' whose particular abilities, combat effectiveness, magical attacks and lucky breaks are determined by rounds of die-rolling. Dragon Dice is abstract in nature, with its profuse graphics of terrain and townships serving more as ambient environmental-eye-candy than anything else.

Bottom Line: *I can say with relative certainty that no person not already familiar with the physical version stands even the remotest chance of understanding this game until he/she plays it, but a large number of reviewers, computer gamers and fantasy-geeks of every imaginable type have anxiously awaited its release. Expect this title to be a decent mover, but keep in mind that it's appeal is firmly grounded in a niche market.*

– Chris Hudak

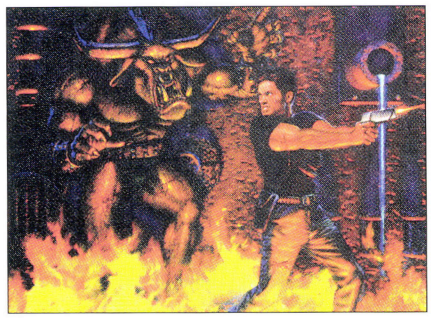


Title: C & C Red Alert
Platform: WIN/DOS
Genre:
Size: CD
Publisher: Westwood Studios
Developer: Westwood Studios
Available: November
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: A+

It's just as well I don't have a real job, because I'd lose it (probably taking a few of my co-workers down with me) for tying up the office network as soon as Red Alert hit the shelves. This bizarre, improved sequel–actually a prequel–to the hit Command & Conquer takes place during the strange, retro-tech WWII which never saw Hitler or Operation Barbarossa. Instead, the 'European Allies' are fighting a Stalinist Soviet Empire out to control all of Europe. Strange new technologies have flourished in this era-mangled conflict: Tesla Coils hurl deadly blasts of arcing electric death across the battlefield; 'Gap Generators' impose artificial tactical blackouts on areas of the battle map which have already been explored; and Chronospheres do really unpleasant things to the local space-time continuum itself, effectively allowing groups of tanks to instantly warp clean out of thin air to places, and at moments, unexpected and unwanted. In addition, the select-and-send scheme of maneuvering has been improved by a waypoint protocol, allowing players to designate routes rather than straight-line or simple obsticale evasion.

Bottom Line: *The original C&C drew a vast following, good press and robust sales, and Command & Conquer: Red Alert will be one of the hot tickets. This is one of the "hits" of the season for PC gamers, and should perform well for you at any retail level.*

– Chris Hudak



Title: Hunter Hunted
Platform: WIN/DOS
Genre: Side Scroller
Size: CD
Publisher: Sierra
Developer: Sierra
Available: November
Wholesale:
MSRP: 54.00
VGA Rating: B-

The gasping side-scroller genre will, hopefully, get something of a breath of fresh air with Hunter Hunted. Detailed, SGI-rendered and motion-captured characters (a minotaur-oid monster and a human street fighter), prowl and fight in a warren of dark, industrial-looking corridors.

The touted new hook is that the mazes and the motions of the characters extend into the screen. When passing a usable tunnel in the Z direction, players see multiply-scrolling levels of background graphics creating the illusion of navigable depth, and moving 'into' the screen puts the character in a new zone, allowing for double-back tactics in the two player mode. It remains to be seen just how much the artificially intelegent enemies can engage the player's attention while stalking his/her alien prey (not to mention how Hunter Hunted will do in the face of the recent release of Abuse), It's nice to see some attempt at revamping the 2-D action game in these days of mega-rip-off first-person shooters.

Bottom Line: *Side-scrollers take hard criticism from gamers who are fast becoming used to the third dimension. Even games like Crash Bandicoot, in the "side-scroller" levels, had a measure of depth. But gamers are also more aware of gameplay, and this title has it. It will sell with help and word of mouth. Follow the game's marketing and factor it into your buying decisions.*

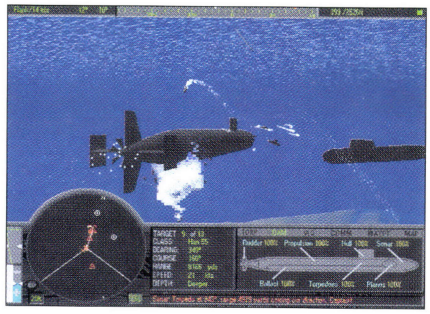
– Chris Hudak

Title: Deathdrome
Platform: WIN 95
Genre: 3D Combat
Size: CD
Publisher: Viacom New Media
Developer:
Available:
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: B-

DeathDrome is a third-person vehicular combat game designed for intensive single- or multi-player action. Players select varying vehicle capabilities such as speed, armament, toughness and handling, and then launch out into interconnected arenas consisting of ramps, doors, mines and an assortment combatants, either computer controlled or human or a combination of the two. Each contest begins in a chase-cam combat between six cycles of various capabilities which move away from each other at the center of a combat arena. Control couldn't be simpler; forward, left, right, reverse and jump. The arena branches off into various different chambers, and as the combat progresses, you are required to locate keys and other items to access additional chambers. One weapon which gets instant and universal recognition is the 'barrier' function, which lays behind the cycle a crackling, electric barrier which is a Tron-esque, but very playable feature.

Bottom Line: *Once again, keep your eyes on the pre-release marketing before making any final decisions regarding this one. It should do alright with a push at retail, as it eagerly jumps on the multi-player bandwagon, and satisfies the requirements for gratuitous violence, but as a stand-alone franchize, it just doesn't have the oomph to make the grade.*

– Chris Hudak



Title: SNN
Platform: Win95
Genre: Simulation/Strategy
Size: CD
Publisher: Simon & Schuster
Developer:
Available:
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: C+

Developed by author Tom Clancy, with the input of former British Navy submarine commander, Douglas Littlejohns, SSN attempts to fuse the realism of a sim with the gameplay of an action game and the drama of an FMV-intensive storyline. In other words, SSN isn't a typical, dry submarine sim consisting of blips, dots, vectors and the occasional animation of some unlucky surface cruiser getting trashed. The player commands a rendered submarine in chase view, and actual control of the sub is much more in the vein of an arcade game; friendly/enemy subs, torpedoes and the like can be visually identified in the murky, shifting undersea environments.

Simon & Schuster is attempting to reach both the mass audience already familiar with Clancy's books and film adaptations as well as the huge base of strategy gamers out there. The 2-CD set includes a 30-minute video dialogue with Clancy, Littlejohns, and James Adams, Bureau Chief of the Sunday London Times Washington office, on the questions and issues raised by SSN's storyline.

Bottom Line: *Because Clancy's rather well-known name is attached to this product, he is presumably taking his usual care to help develop what may well be a hallmark Simon & Schuster Interactive title.*

– Chris Hudak

Title: ProFighter 8
Platform: Playstation
Genre: Controller
Size: N/A
Publisher: Naki
Developer: Naki
Available: Now
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP:
VGA Rating: B-

Wireless controllers have been available since the original Nintendo Entertainment System, but few have really struck it big with the consumer.

The Naki ProFighter8 is a decent controller overall. Naki has a reputation for inexpensive gaming equipment that gets the job done and this wireless joystick is no exception; however, the stigma attached to all wireless controllers applies. 4 "AA" batteries provide 40 hours of play, and an automatic shut-off feature helps to conserve it, but dealing with the frustration of a control pad that "runs out of juice" every few weeks turns many gamers off.

The turbo controls are useful, as any hard-core player will tell you, but this isn't a feature you won't find in most other third party controllers. The design is a little reminiscent of the 8-bit years but having the coolest-looking controller won't win you the game. The range extends more than twice the distance of a standard cord at worst, provided that there are no obstacles between you and the console.

Bottom Line: *Price point is the biggest seller here, with just about the most bang you can get for your buck, and that fact has kept Naki in the forefront of hardware peripheral sales for a long time. This is a great controller to stock as a support product, but I do not recommend it as part of your primary line.*

– Jeff High

Title: NBA Live '97
Platform: Super Nintendo
Genre: Sports
Size: 16 bit
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer:
Available: November
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: $69.95
VGA Rating: A-

The EA sports titles have been solid performers since the beginning, and the '97 series will be no exception. NBA Live includes everything you've come to expect from EA Sports, such as player updates; improved graphics, soundbites, and animation; and a few new features over last years model.

NBA Live gives you a ton of options for play: anything from two on two to a full season with a pre-set team, or with a fantasy five-some you assemble yourself. Stat tracking for players and teams are all in place.

The one big question this year will be regarding how well these 16 bit titles stand up to their counterparts on the 32 bit machines. While 16 bit hardware still dominates the installed base, many of the reliable, hardcore gamers have already upgraded, and the impact will be solidly felt in cartridge sales.

Bottom Line: *You can expect this one to do well for a format that is in decline. Both EA and Nintendo are strong supporters for their products, so you know there will be no slack in hyping what is already a good title. You will inevitably see a decline in performance over last year's versions, however. Buy a few units short from previous years. 16 bit will continue to move for some time and you shouldn't be worried about moving overstock, especially on a strong seller like this, but but holiday space is limited, and you'll want to dedicate it to the most powerful movers, and 16 bit has past its glory in that category.*

– Jeff High

Title: FIFA Soccer 97 Gold
Platform: Genesis
Genre: Sports
Size: 16 bit
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: NuFx
Available: November
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: $59.95
VGA Rating: A-

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world, and this year EA Sports is bringing you FIFA Soccer '97 Gold Edition. This year's version features improved gameplay and lots of new options. New motion capture technology incorporates a process known as "motion blending" used to create smooth movement of animation. FIFA 97 has also added an indoor mode where you can square off in 6-on-6 fashion.

Players from 12 International Leagues are represented here with all the ratings and stats you need. Select from a friendly, league, playoff or tournament match. Choose your own strategy and player formations. FIFA 97 features six on-screen language options including: Spanish, French, German, Swedish, Italian, and English.

Bottom Line: *Electronic Arts is a name that can be relied on at retail, and no more so than with their sports series. With realistic gameplay, improved graphics, and new play modes, FIFA Soccer 97 Gold Edition will be the premier 16 bit soccer title of this year. The cartridge offers the best soccer a sports fan can ask for and is able to reach a culturally diverse crowd.*

– Reilly Brennan

Title: Descent to Undermtn.
Platform: WIN 95
Genre: Role-Play
Size: CD
Publisher: Interplay Productions
Developer:
Available:
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: B+

Descent to Undermountain takes the popular true-3D movement/combat scheme of Descent and Descent 2 – hence the title–into the cactacomb-crawling realm of the Dungeons and Dragons universe. Undermountain will fuse the adventure challenge of a role-playing game with real-time action and combat. Dungeons, caverns and other settings are 3D environments, from which any number of creatures living or dead can come charging out at you.

Undermountain's melee combat features one long-overdue aspect: combat with swords and other such implements is governed by mouse movement, allowing for real-time strikes, parries and lunges independent of the adventurer's compass movement. The resulting swordplay is true to the spirit of the genre, while adding that little something extra which the more impatient of us need to enjoy what is otherwise a solid RPG title.

Undermountain is fantasy role-playing with an action edge and some genuinely unnerving, kinetic moments which give the RPG experience that critical first-person tension that so many of us live for.

Bottom Line: *This is a good solid title, appealing to the fans of Descent, Hexen, and Dungeons & Dragons all at once. It should recieve recognition as such, and sell reasonably well even without a great deal of marketing support. This will be a must-have title, but not in great quantity.*

– Chris Hudak

Title: Super Puzzle Fighter IIX
Platform: Playstation
Genre: Puzzle
Size: CD
Publisher: Capcom Entertainment
Developer: Capcom Entertainment
Available: December
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: N/A
VGA Rating: A-

It's the best idea since combining cookie dough and ice cream: taking the gameplay of Tetris, jazzing it up, and blending it with the beloved characters of Capcom's Street Fighter II and lesser-known Darkstalkers fighting-game series. The result: Super Puzzle Fighter IIX, a competitive puzzle game that's been tearing up the arcades and should be just as successful on the home systems.

The gameplay has you dropping small colored gems into place to create large gems, then smashing them, sending small gems to your opponent's side of the screen. You can also break a multitude of gems in a row to execute a 'combo,' which tends to leave your foe in a world of hurt. As the battle progresses, two kiddie versions of the characters duke it out, exchanging blows and high-pitched sound bites. There are enough play modes to keep single and multiple players happy, and the back-and-forth nature of the game is incredibly addictive.

Bottom Line: *Super Puzzle Fighter IIX is a guaranteed seller. It has great gameplay, great graphics and sound, and a huge fan base of the arcade original that'll buy it up faster than I can scarf a bowl of Honeycomb cereal (my current breakfast of champions). With top-of-the-line stuff like this and Resident Evil, Capcom is becoming the retailers' best friend.*

– Zach Meston

Title: Starwinder
Platform: Playstation
Genre: Racing/Shooter
Size: CD
Publisher: Mindscape
Developer:
Available: Now
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: B-

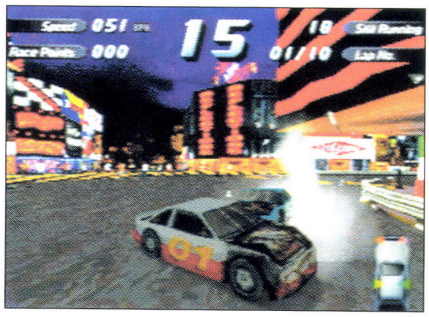
At first glance Starwinder seems, at best, a wannabe racing game. You're set in a multi-species competition among 45 alien races, coursing along the ancient and mysterious "Rails" constructed eons ago for some unknown purpose. It's a cockpit view with a very limited heads-up-display that makes navigating and targeting a little frustrating.

However, and it's a big 'however', after playing for more than a few minutes, you're caught up in the story; especially after you've passed the time trials and the aliens begin to taunt you mercilessly.

The game play begins to grow on you as you become proficient with the controls. Your vehicle is in space, so gravity doesn't come into play. And the track is defined by one simple rune: the closer you stay to the rail, the faster your ship goes. This brings a whole new dimension to racing, as you need pilot as close to the Rail as possible without running into it. This becomes a challenge when the Rail spirals, forcing you to yaw left or right, and sometimes fly upside-down to stay on track.

Bottom Line: This is a game that takes some getting used to, and will probably not see too much return business in rental. If it does well, it will be in later sell-through as a sleeper title, when consumers realize its potential.

– Jeff High



Title: Destruction Derby 2
Platform: PC
Genre: Racing
Size: CD
Publisher: Psygnosis
Developer: Reflections
Available: November
Wholesale:
MSRP:
VGA Rating: A-

Destruction Derby, the first one, was one off the first available titles for hte Playstation in its American Debut, and as such, was met with a great deal of success.

With 7racing tracks and 4 bash-em-up "destruction bowls", DD2 offers more backdrops for anihilating your friends, and the new graphics and animation give it heart-stopping punch with incredible vehicle reactions to the frequent impacts. Cars actually leave the ground, doing flips, rolls, and cartwheels, spitting smoke, sparks, and parts all the way from collision to bone-jarring landing.

The cars handle a great deal like a real one might, placed under the same circumstances... not necessicarily a good thing when your suspension is shot and your right front fender is sitting in your passenger seat.

The replay feature has also returned from DD1, an element that has become an expected addition to sports titles. The difference is the editability; the ability to adjust camera position and behavior, and highlight all your mistakes in a full color 3D mini-movie.

Bottom Line: *DD1 did a good job pf paving the way for the franchise, and consumer expectations will not be let down with DD2. Heavy ad campaigning and celebrity endorsements, namely Howard Stern, should make this title one of the better performers of the season.*

– Jeff High

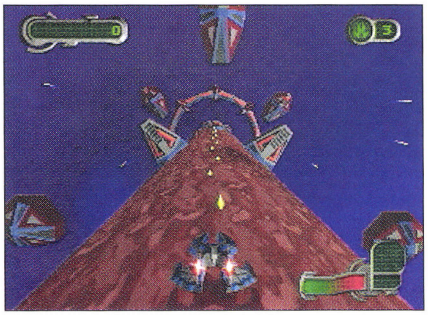
Title: Disruptor
Platform: Playstation
Genre: First Person Shooter
Size: CD
Publisher: Interplay
Developer: Universal Interactive
Available: Late November
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: $49.00
VGA Rating: B+

I whole-heartedly applaud Universal for releasing this product. It's an overused concept, but Disruptor uses captivating and quality FMV sequences to lay out your story as a new recruit in the Solar System's 'Stormers, psionic soldiers that combat using cybernetic implants and good old fashioned tail-kicking weaponry. Each level supplies you with new cybernetics accompanied by a few vague clues to the uses of each, and vastly differing playfields and enemies. The levels themselves are mercifully short in the beginning, growing in complexity and size as you advance, laying to rest the Doom/Marathon tendency to cast you adrift in a maze of corridors and rooms from the word go.

Universal has had a few successes in the market, but I believe this title will set new standards of expectation for the relatively new software publisher. Playability is exceptional, graphics are nothing less than incredible, and the violence factor, though bloodless, is gratuitously satisfying. Great music and a powerful storyline set this title up as one of the best productions of this year.

Bottom Line: *This product will probably recieve marks far below its due from avid Doom fans. The result is that it may perform exceptionally in rental, but sell through like a B although it's quality easily rates an A+.*

– Jeff High



Title: Nanotek Warrior
Platform: Playstation
Genre: Shooter
Size: CD
Publisher: Virgin Interactive
Developer: Tetragon
Available: December
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: N/A
VGA Rating: A-

If I were ever to create a list of game developers ranked in order of quality product, I would place Tetragon around #632. Their credits include two 3DO products: the high-concept, low-fun puzzle game Gridders, and a bug-ridden conversion of Take 2's 'Hell: A Cyberpunk Adventure'. But after playing Nanotek Warrior, Tetragon would move up several hundred notches. It's a derivative-but-fun shooter with a nice visual hook: the entire game has you spinning on the outside or inside edge of 'tunnels' a la Atari's Tempest 2000 or Mindscape's recent Cyberspeed. You can slow down and speed up your craft, and you can jump over obstacles in your path, but you're otherwise locked into a roller-coaster course of straight-aways and sharp turns.

Bottom Line: *Nanotek Warrior excels at two of the most crucial categories of a shooter: slick, smooth graphics (with simplistic but psychedelic backgrounds), and bass-rumbling techno music that keeps your head bobbing and your fingers twitching. The categories in which it's not quite as strong: loud, flashy explosions and visually appealing weaponry. I also feel that there's not enough graphic variety; that the earlier and later levels are too similar. Still, Nanotek Warrior is definitely one of Virgin's stronger B titles this year, and a solid entry into the not-yet-crowded Playstation shooter category.*

– Zach Meston

Title: Ten Pin Alley
Platform: PC CD, Playstation
Genre: Sports
Size: CD
Publisher: American Softworks
Developer: American Softworks
Available: December
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: N/A
VGA Rating: B

You may be questioning why I'm taking up a third-page of VGA's always-precious editorial space to review genre of sports title that tends not to move even when found in the $5 discount bin at game stores.Ten Pin Alley is the Virtual Pool of bowling games. It's so far beyond previous entries in the genre that it makes every other bowling sim immediately obsolete.

The first reason for Ten Pin Alley's huge fun factor is the pleasantly challenging difficulty and variety of the gameplay. In every other bowling game I've played, the 'power meter' system is easily mastered, and the pins break in easily predictable ways. Ten Pin Alley has a golf-game-interface, but with 'sweet spots' that are rather tough to hit; and the pins NEVER break exactly the same. ASC says that there over five million possibilities, and I believe 'em; the pin physics are astoundingly realistic.

The second reason I love Ten Pin Alley is its sense of humor. Each of the game's characters has hilarious reactions to strikes and gutters, and gut-busting slapstick animations when you screw up on the power meter.

Bottom Line: *Ten Pin Alley is going to be a sleeper hit: the magazine reviews will be surprisingly strong, and the word-of-mouth will be overwhelmingly positive. The only question is how much marketing force ASC wants to, or can, put behind it*

– Zach Meston

Title: Dare Devil Derby
Platform: Playstation
Genre: Racing
Size: CD
Publisher: Mindscape
Developer: Supersonic
Available: November
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: N/A
VGA Rating: B

The first thing that crosses your mind after popping this title in is "Micro Machines revisited." The 3/4 view in either chase or stationary cam, and multiple cars in varying environments strongly resembles GameTek's hit title.

Because of this, DDD will probably recieve playability points in the eyes of your average gamer, but certain quirks may detract from it's otherwise pleasantly imitative style.

You begin the game by selecting one of several drivers with no idea of what your vehicle will look like, much less how it will perform. Strike one. Next, you notice that no mater who you choose, the other cars start ahead of you and all seem to smoke past you on the straightaways. Strike two. I hesitate to give it a strike-three-you're-out, because I can't qualify this as a bad game, but I'll call my third point a 'foul' and say that the title seems to try for the chucklebone cuteness of titles like the upcoming 'Motor Toon' and doesn't quite make it.

All in all, it has great playability, with vehicles themed after a fair assortment of cliche' characters, and entertaining setting changes with appropriate vehicular modifications (such as blimps in an air race, and boats in the water)

Bottom Line: *It's hard to call this game an also-ran, but I don't see it as one of the memorable titles for 1996. Stock it, but keep the numbers light until it proves itself.*

– Jeff High

Title: The Fazor
Platform: Playstation/Saturn
Genre: Controller
Size: N/A
Publisher: Mad Catz
Developer: Mad Catz
Available: Now
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: N/A
VGA Rating: C

No light gun has ever done exceptionally well at retail, but they keep trying. The latest member of this species throws in a feature that just might save it as a viable product, or even make history for this type of console interface.

The Fazor's great selling point is that it's the only cross-platform light-gun. Ever. As of production, it works with some of the 32 bit medium's hottest titles, like Virtua Cop 1 and 2, Area 51, Die Hard Trillogy, and Lethal Enforcer. In performance, it's nothing spectacular, except that, contrary to a few of its predecessors, it works as advertized, i.e. you generally hit what you point the gun at.

It has a 10' cord which should be plenty for most. I myself try to back no farther away than 5 feet; 2 if no one's looking. The side buttons work as they're supposed to, though I ran into a little trouble with the tendancy to pass my off-hand in front of the gun's light beam to reach them, resulting in a few spectacular, if messy, deaths.

Bottom Line: *The Fazor's biggest advantage is the fact that it's the first light-gun for the 32 bit systems – enhanced by the fact that it will work with either the Saturn or the Playstation. Its bigest drawback: it's a light-gun. Use discretion, but with a wide assortment of imediate support titles, it's worth stocking in moderation.*

– Jeff High

Title: Wave Race 64
Platform: N64
Genre: Racing
Size: 64 bit
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Available: November 4
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: $69.95
VGA Rating: A+

I'm tempted to just plop an A rating on this title and leave the rest of the space blank. Perhaps throw in a crossword.

Any N64 title will sell through and sell out now, so descriptions and recommendations are essentially moot. The N64, whatever the projections for its future, is leaving scorch marks on the shelves from the friction of stocking and restocking titles.

Be that as it may, Wave Race 64 is a good title on its own. The 'physics', a term you'll hear more and more as games technology advances, are excellent, giving the player the feel of actually being on a jet-ski, jumping waves, plowing through surf, and the occasional wipe-out or header into floating debris. Wave Race is also the first two player game to be released in the US, and the first game to use the N64's controller memory pack.

The graphics are nothing spectacular on their own, being easily overshadowed by lesser-powered systems with titles like Resident Evil, but the bright colors, realistic movements, and true-to-life handling of your watercraft will leave few wanting in any department.

Bottom Line: *Buy it. Stock it. Sell it. It won't perform as well as some of the other N64 titles, but you won't have any problem moving product.*

-Jeff High

Title: PowerPlayer 2010
Platform: PC
Genre: System
Size: N/A
Publisher: NEC
Developer: NEC
Available: Now
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: $2899/$3299
VGA Rating: A-

Sometimes the 'Good Thing' does happen in life. In this case, NEC asked a team of game-savvy engineers what absolutely fanatic gamers want...and listened to them. No compromises. So market-targeted that NEC formed an entire new gamer-dedicated division around it, the PowerPlayer system is, in technical terms, 'The End of the World', and has been created for the express purpose of turning any gamer who doesn't have green with envy.

Intel 160 or 200 Processor; 32 megs of EDO RAM; Diamond 3D game accelerator with 3Dfx; ATI 3D Rage graphics accelerator; 6 megs of Video DRAM; 2.0 or 3.2 gig drive; Multispin 6x4 CD ROM and changer; Advent stereo speakers with sub-woofer (50 watts); Thrustmaster joystick; Gravis Multiport with two pads; 33.6 Kbps modem; Win 95 preloaded; and, of course, the NEC PowerPack Games Bundle. he greediest, most RAM-hungry, processor-killing games don't even make this thing blink, and the very best PC and console-style accouterments are assembled in one ready-to-rip package.

The Bottom Line: *Yes, it's excessive. Yes, it's expensive. And yes, the combination of NEC's active marketing efforts, 24/7 tech support and PowerPlayer's complete by-gamers-for-gamers package make the system the ultimate for the serious game enthusiast.*

– Chris Hudak

Title: Turok Dinosaur Hunter
Platform: N64
Genre: 3D Action/Adventure
Size: 64 bit
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Iguana
Available: March 97
Wholesale: TBA
MSRP: TBA
VGA Rating: A+

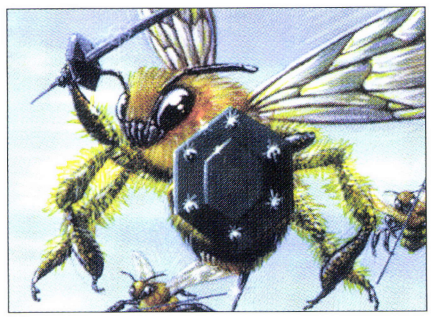
No Nintendo-ish bright eyed and bushy tailed characters bopping around the screen, and no more holding back on the violence factor. Turok is a down and dirty, comic book action, all out shoot em up with plenty of blood and big guns for everyone. The animation and dimension of this first person perspective action game doesn't compare with anything in our experience. The graphics and color are nothing less than phenomenal, and the enemies' intelligence is a real challenge, not simply something that will become a cakewalk once you figure their strategy.

You are the legendary Turok, loaded to the teeth with an awesome assortment of weaponry. You begin with a dagger, which doesn't become obsolete as you pick up more advanced tools of carnage; even when you get what's arguably the biggest, most powerful k.a. weapon ever seen in a videogame.

Turok promises to set a standard for the N64 that will be difficult to meet. This is quite possibly the one product that will convince other third party developers who've been holding back on the N64 to join in.

The Bottom Line: *No question on this one. Buy as much as you can as soon as you can. With the N64 installed hardware predicted to reach a million by Christmas, there will be no shortage of eager customers just dying to get their hands on this amazing title.*

– Jeff High



Title: M:TG- Battlemage
Platform: PC, Playstation, Saturn
Genre: Strategy
Size: CD
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Real Time Assoc
Available: November
Wholesale: N/A
MSRP: N/A
VGA Rating: A

Everyone who has lived in America in the last two years knows about the Magic: The Gathering card game that's turned a generation of gamers into deck-weilding role-play/strategy zombies. Recently, Microplay released a computer version nearly identical to the card game.

Now, Acclaim is releasing a version of the popular title in real-time. They've gotten rid of the turn-based system, and the cards themselves are gone, leaving the effects to be cast as spells based on available magic. The head-to-head theme is still there, and it captures the feel for what the card game represents: two wizards duking it out using spells, summoned critters, and artifacts to pummel their opponent into submission.

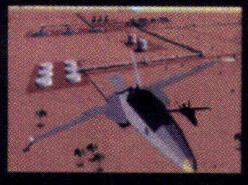
This is a product that will capture the attention of every Magic: The Gathering fan, as well as PC strategy gamers, and hold it with future versions, upgrades containing new spells and critters, and internet play. Wizards of the Coast, the makers of the M: TG card game are excited about this product as well and give it their full support.

The Bottom Line: *This title has a great deal going for it, and with the support of the popular card game and licenses to all of the original names and art, you can expect a steady demand for this one. Buy as your budget will allow, as you won't end up sitting on any overstock for long.*

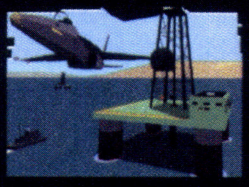
– Jeff High

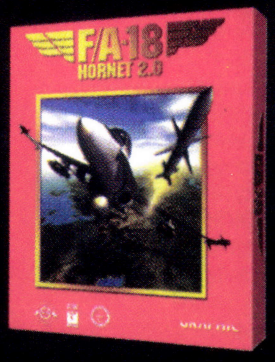
REACH OUT AND TORCH SOMEONE.

F/A-18 HORNET



The Hottest flight simulator game is now torching up your Windows® 95 PC. It is F/A-18 Hornet. With incredible 3-D graphics and realistic instrumentation, it'll push you to the outer limits then bring you screaming back to earth. In fact, F/A-18 Hornet closely simulates the Navy's own attack-fighter aircraft. There's 28 different Persian Gulf combat missions to test your skills – where you can blow up everything from ammunition depots using the M61 Vulcan cannon to MiG fighters with an AIM9 Sidewinder. So pick up the award winning F/A-18 Hornet today. It's the best way to really get close to someone.





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RELEASE SCHEDULE

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Product Title	Manufacturer/ Publisher	Genre	VGA Rating	EST Ship Date	SRP
GENESIS					
Adventures Of Dizzy	Gametek	Side-scroller	C-	TBD	
Cosmic Spacehead	Gametek	Action	C-	TBD	
Flintstones	Ocean	Side-scroller		TBD	
Madden 97	EA	Football	A-	November	
Man Overboard	Gametek	Action		TBD	
Micro Machine 1	Gametek	Racing		TBD	
Micro Machine 2	Gametek	Racing		TBD	
NBA Hangtime	Midway Home Ent.	Basketball		November 5	
NBA Live 97	EA	Basketball	A-	November	
Psycho Pinball	Gametek	Pinball		TBD	
Sonic 3D Blast	Sega	Side-scroller		November 7	
Vectorman 2	Sega	Side-scroller		November 7	
Virtua Fighter	Sega	2-D Fighting		November 21	
X-Woman The Sinister Virus	Sega	Fighting		March 31, 1997	
Mac					
Caesar II	Sierra	Gambling		Fall 1996	
Chess Wars: A Medieval Fantasy	Art Data Interactive	Strategy	P	November 1	
Conquest Of The New World	Interplay	Strategy		November 6	
Dark Vengence	Reality Bytes	Fantasy/Action		September 1997	
Dragon's Lair II	ReadySoft	Adventure	P	November 15	
Jeopardy! Plantinum Edition	Gametek	Family Entertainment		January	
Maximum Surge	Acclaim	Interactive Movie		TBD	
Police Quest SWAT	Sierra	Action		Fall 1996	
Primal Rage	WEA	Fighting	P	TBD	
Prize Fighter	Acclaim	Fighting		TBD	
Rise of the Robots II	Acclaim	Fighting		TBD	
Shadoan	Interplay	Adventure		December 1	
Shattered Steel	Interplay	Mech Action		February 1997	
StarTrek Starfleet Academy	Interplay	Action/Flight Sim		May 1997	
Warcraft 2	Blizzard	Strategy	A-	November	
Wheel Of Fortune Plantinum	Gametek	Family Entertainment		January	
Where's Waldo	WEA	Edutainment		TBD	
30th StarTrek Anniversary	Interplay	Adventure		December 1	
N64					
Blast Corps	Nintendo	Action/Adventure		December 2	
Blast Dozer	Nintendo	Action/Adventure		TBD	
Body Harvest	Nintendo	Strategy		TBD	
Buggie-Boogie	Nintendo	3D Shooter		TBD	
Creator	Nintendo	Strategy/"God" game		TBD	
Crusin' USA	Nintendo	Racing	P	November 18	
Doom 64	Midway Home Ent.	3D Shooter	P	April 1997	
Freak Boy	Virgin	3D Shooter		May 1997	
Golden Eye 007	Nintendo	Adventure	P	TBD	
Gretzky II	Midway Home Ent.	3D Hockey		November 14	
Ken Griffey Jr. Baseball	Nintendo	Baseball		TBD	
Killer Instinct Gold	Nintendo	Fighting		November 25	
Legend of Zelda 64	Nintendo	Role-playing game		TBD	
Mission Impossible	Ocean	3D Adventure	P	November	
MK Trilogy	Midway Home Ent.	Fighting	A-	November 12	
NBA Hangtime	Midway Home Ent.	Basketball		December 10	
Robotech: Crystal Dreams	Gametek	Flying/Adventure		December/January	
Star Fox 64	Nintendo	Flying/Strategy		TBD	
Star Wars: Shadows	Nintendo	Action/Adventure	P	December 2	
Super Mario Kart 64	Nintendo	Racing		TBD	
Tetrisphere	Nintendo	Puzzle		December 2	
Top Gear Rally	Kemco	Driving		Spring 1997	
Turok: Dinosaur Hunter	Acclaim	3D Adventure	A	March 19978	
Ultimate MK3	Midway Home Ent.	Fighting		December	

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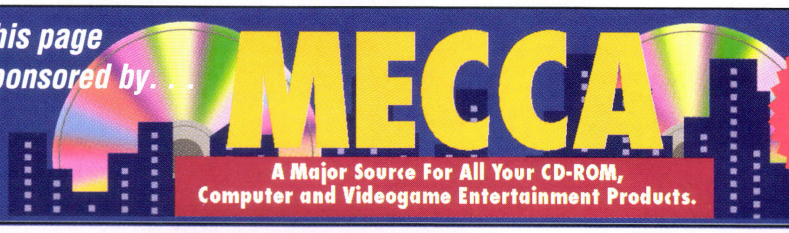

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Product Title	Manufacturer/ Publisher	Genre	VGA Rating	EST Ship Date	SRP
War Gods	Midway Home Ent.	Fighting		February 15, 1997	
Waverace 64	Nintendo	Racing	A+	November 4	
Wayne Gretzky	Midway Home Ent.	Hockey		April	
PC					
ABC's Monday Night Football	OT Sports	Football	C-	November	
Abduction	Gametek	Adventure		November	
Albion	Blue Byte	Role Playing	B-	September	
Alien Trilogy	Acclaim	3D Shooter		TBD	
Apocalypse	Sierra	Adventure		Early 1997	
Ark Of Time	KOEI	Adventure		November 18	
Art Of Fly Fishing (US Rivers)	Gametek	Fishing		January	
AYSO Soccer 97: World Challenge	Gametek	Soccer		November	
Battleship	Hasbro	Strategy		November	
Betrayal In Antara	Sierra	Action		Fall 1996	
Birthright	Sierra	Adventure		November	
Bug Too!	Sega	Action		January 7, 1997	
Captives	Sierra	Adventure		Early 1997	
Classic Sonic Collection	Sega	Action		January 7, 1997	
Cloak	Sierra	Adventure		Fall 1996	
Corpse Killer	Acclaim	Shooter		TBD	
Creature Crunch	Class 6	Quest		Available	
Customhome	Sierra	Simulation		November	
Cyber Gladiators	Sierra	Fighting		November	
Deadly Skies	JVC	Flying/Shooter		January 1997	
Destruction Derby 2	Psygnosis	Racing		November	
Discworld II: Mortality Bytes	Psygnosis	Adventure		December	
Drowned God	Inscape	Puzzle/FMV	P	November	
Ecstatica Value Pak	Psygnosis	Compilation		November 8	
Emperor Of The Fading Sun	Sega	Strategy		December 10	
Flight Simulator for Windows 95	Microsoft	Simulations		November 7	
Fragile Alliance	Interplay	Strategy	P	December	
Front Page Sports: Football Pro 97	Sierra	Football		November	
Front Page Sports: Golf	Sierra	Golf		November	
Full Tilt! 2 Pinball	Maxis	Arcade		Nov./Dec.	
Garfield	Sega	Action/Adventure		January 1, 1997	
GEX	Microsoft	Arcade		November	
Golf 3.0	Microsoft	Golf		November	
Hoyle Bridge	Sierra	Adventure		Early 1997	
Hunter Hunted	Sierra	Adventure		FNovember	
Jedi Knight: Dark Forces 2	LucasArts	Shooter		TBD	
Jeopardy! Platinum	Gametek	Family Entertainment		TBD	
Krazy Ivan	Psygnosis	Shooter		November	
Leisure Suit Larry: Love For Sail	Sierra	Adult Quest		Winter 1996	
Lighthouse	Sierra	Action		Fall 1996	
Lords Of The Realm II	Sierra	Adventure		Winter 1996	
Magellan	V-Tech	Edutainment		October	
Marty In Where's Morgan	Maxis	Adventure		Nov./Dec.	
Mass Destruction	BMG	3d Shooter		April 1997	
Medalworks	Sega	N/A		November	
Metropolis	Sierra	Adventure		Early 1997	
MDK	Playmates	3D Shooter	P	December	
MotoX	WEA	Racing		TBD	
Nascar Racing II	Sierra	Racing		November	
Net Zone	Gametek	Adventure		November	
Outlaws	LucasArts	3D Action		TBD	
Outpost 2.0	Sierra	Action		Early 1997	
Phantasmagoria 2	Sierra	FMV		November	
Pie Jackers	Simon & Schuster	N/A		November	
Power Chess	Sierra	Chess Sim.		November	
Primortals	Sierra	Action		Winter 1996	

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Product Title	Manufacturer/ Publisher	Genre	VGA Rating	EST Ship Date	SRP
Prize Fighter	Acclaim	Fighting		TBD	
Pro Pinball	Acclaim	Pinball		TBD	
Quake	GT Ineractive	3D Shooter		TBD	
Rama	Sierra	Action		November	
Realms Of The Haunting	Interplay	3D	P	December	
Red Baron 2	Sierra	Simulation		February 1997	
Risk	Hasbro	Strategy		November	
Sacred Pools	Sega	Adventure		February 2, 1997	
Sega Rally	Sega	Racing	P	December 17	
Serpents Kiss	Working Designs	RPG		December 6	
Sierra Pro Pilot	Sierra	Simulation		April 1997	
Sierrahome	Sierra	Simulation		November	
Sign Of The Sun	KOEI	RPG		February 1997	
Simon the Sorcerer 2	Psygnosis	Adventure		TBD	
Sim Tunes	Maxis	Simulation		Nov./Dec.	
Snow Crash	Viacom	3D Quest	P	November	
Soccer	Microsoft	Soccer		November	
Soul Hunt	Gametek	Action/Adventure		January	
SSN	Simon & Schuster	Strategy	P	November	
Star Control 3	Accolade	Role Playing	B	November	
Star Trek: Borg	Simon & Schuster	Interactive Movie		November	
Strange Place	Simon & Schuster	N/A		November	
Surface Tension	Gametek	Fight/Combat		November	
The City Of Lost Children	Psygnosis	3D Adventure	P	November	
The Force In The Tale	Any River	Interactive Movie	P	February 1997	
The Neverhood	Dream Works	Puzzle/Quest	B-	November	
The Time Warp Of Dr. Brain	Sierra	Adventure		November	
Trophy Bass II	Sierra	Fishing		Fall 1996	
Urban Runner	Sierra	Interactive Movie	B-	Available	
VirtuaPark: The Fish	KOEI	Adventure		September 23	
Whats My Story	Acclaim	N/A		TBD	
X-Men: Children of the Atom	Acclaim	Fighting		TBD	
X-Wing vs Tie Fighter	Lucas Arts	Flying/Combat	P	November	
PLAYSTATION					
Aeon Flux	Viacom	3D Shooter	P	November	
Arcade's Greatest Vol. 2	Midway Home Ent.	Compilation		December 16	
Area 51	Midway Home Ent.	Shooter		November 20	
Ark Of Time	KOEI	RPG		November 18	
Armed	Interplay	Strategy/"God" Game		December 15	
Athanor	Psygnosis	N/A		November 15	
Ball Blazer Champions	LucasArts	Action		November	
Batman Forever Arcade	Acclaim	Fighting		November 15	
BattleSport	Acclaim	Shooting/Fighting		TBD	
Breath of Fire III	Capcom	Fighting	P	TBD	
Broken Helix	Konami	Action/Adventure		December	
Bubsy 3D	WEA	3D Adventure		November 19	
Buster Brothers Collection	Capcom	Puzzle		November 20	
Burning Road	Playmates	Action		November 4	
Carnage Heart	Sony	Action		TBD	
Castlevania: The Bloodletting	Konami	Action/Adventure		Spring 1997	
Chaos Control	THQ	Shooter		TBD	
Chronicles Of The Sword	Psygnosis	Adventure		November 12	
Clandestiny	Virgin	Mystery Adventure		TBD	
Command & Conquer	Virgin	Action Arcade Shooter		January 1997	
Contra: Legacy Of War	Konami	Action		November 24	
Crow: City of Angels	Acclaim	3D Adventure		December 5	
Crypt Killer	Konami	Gun		Winter 1997	
Cybersled	Namco	3D Shooter		November	
Dare Devil Derby	Mindscape	Racing	B	November	
Dark Forces	LucasArts	Doom Clone		November	

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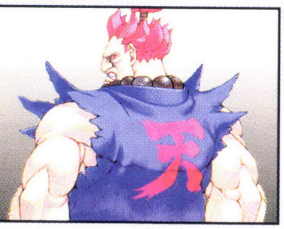

Product Title	Manufacturer/ Publisher	Genre	VGA Rating	EST Ship Date	SRP
Deadly Skies	JVC	Flying/Combat		January 1997	
Death Crusader	Gametek	N/A		TBD	
Death Drome	Viacom	Action		January 1997	
Death Trap Dungeon	EIDOS	Adventure		December 15	
Destruction Derby 2	Psygnosis	Racing	P	November 5	
Discworld II: Morality Bytes	Psygnosis	Adventure		December	
Disruptor	Interplay	3D Action	B+	November 19	
Doom	Midway Home Ent.	3D Adventure	A	November	
Dream Knight	Jaleco	N/A		November	
Duckman: The Legend Of The Fall	Playmates	Quest		January 1997	
Enforcer	Konami	Shooting		TBD	
Fatal Fury	Sony	Fighting		December 5	
Final Fantasy	Sony	RPG		January 31, 1997	
Formula 1	Sony	Racing	P	December 5	
Formula 1: Post Season	Sony	Racing		February 15, 1997	
Golden Nugget	Virgin	Gambling		January 1997	
Golf - The Final Round	Konami	Golf		August	
Grand Slam '97	Virgin	Baseball		April 1, 1997	
Grid Runner	Virgin	Action/Arade		November 5	
Herc's Adventures	LucasArts	Action Adventure		November	
High Velocity	Atlus	Racing	C+	September	
Impact Racing	Acclaim	Racing	C	March 1997	
Incredible Hulk	EIDOS	3D Adventure		November 25	
Island of Dr. Moreau	Sony	Interactive Movie		January 15, 1997	
Jet Moto	Sony	Racing		November 15	
Jupiter Strike	Acclaim	Shooter		December	
Killing Time	Acclaim	Adventure		TBD 1997	
King's Field 2	ASCII Entertainment	Role Playing	B+	November	
Kumite: The Fighters Edge	Konami	Adventure		December	
Lands of Lore: Guardians of Destiny	Virgin	Adventure/Role-play		January 1997	
Legends Football 97	WEA	Football		November 29	
Lemmings	Sony	Puzzle		November	
Lethal Enforcers 1 & 2	Konami	Gun		December	
Lost Vikings II	Interplay	Adventure		November 23	
Madden '97	EA	Football	A	November	
Magic: The Gathering	Acclaim	Puzzle	A	December 1	
Magzone	Trimark	N/A		TBD	
Major Damage	Capcom	Action Adventure		TBD	
Marvel Super Heroes	Capcom	Fighting		TBD	
Mega Man 8	Capcom	Side-scroller	P	TBD 1997	
Megami Tensei	Atlus	Action/RPG		December	
Mortal Kombat II	Acclaim	Fighting		TBD	
Nanotek Warrior	Virgin	Action Arcade/Shooter	B+	January 1997	
NBA Hangtime	Midway Home Ent.	Basketball		November 5	
NBA In The Zone 2	Konami	Basketball		December 4	
NBA Jam Extreme	Acclaim	Basketball		November 1	
NFL Full Contat Football	Konami	Football		TBD	
NFL GameDay 97	Sony	Football		November 15	
NHL Face Off 97	Sony	Hockey		November 10	
NHL Open Ice	Midway Home Ent.	Hockey		December 3	
Oblivion	EIDOS	N/A		December 15	
Obsidian	Rocket Science	N/A		TBD	
Open Ice Hockey	Midway Home Ent.	Hockey		November 15	
Powerslave	Playmates	Action/Adventure		December 17	
Prime Cuts Sampler	Interplay	Multi-game Sampler		TBD	
Pro Pinball	Acclaim	Pinball		TBD	
PsychoPad Jr.	Act Labs	Peripheral	A-	Available	
PsychoPad K.O.	Act Labs	Peripheral	B+	Available	
Quarantine	Gametek	3D Shooter		TBD	
Rally Cross	Sony	Racing		December 5	
Raw Pursuit	JVC	N/A		February 1997	

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Product Title	Manufacturer/ Publisher	Genre	VGA Rating	EST Ship Date	SRP
Real Bout Fatal Fury	Sony	Fighting		December 15	
Rebel Assault II	LucasArts	Action/Adventure		November	
Red Asphalt	Interplay	Racing		February 15, 1997	
Reloaded	Interplay	Shooter		December 12	
Road Rage	Konami	Driving		January 1997	
Robotron X	Midway Home Ent.	3d Shooter	P	December	
Rodney Matthews	Sony	N/A		January 15, 1997	
Shadoan	ReadySoft	N/A		November 1	
Sign Of The Sun	KOEI	RPG		February 1997	
Spawn	Sony	Fighting/Side-scroller		November 15	
Spider	BMG	Action/Adventure		February 1997	
StarTrek Starfleet Academy	Interplay	Action/Fight Sim		May 1997	
Suikoden	Konami	RPG		Winter 1997	
Super Motocross	Acclaim	Sports/Racing		TBD	
Super Puzzle Fighter	Capcom	Puzzle	P	January 15, 1997	
Swagman	EIDOS	N/A		February 15, 1997	
Syndicate Wars	Electronic Arts	Strategy/Shooter		TBD	
Tempest X	Interplay	Shooter		November 19	
Tenka	Sony	3D Shooter		March 15, 1997	
Ten Pin Alley	ASC Games	Bowling	B-	December	
Tetris Plus	Jaleco	Puzzle	C	November	
The Divide: Enemies Within	Viacom	Action/Adventure		November 19	
The Fallen	Sony	N/A		January 15, 1997	
The Frazor	Mad Catz	Peripheral	C	Available	
The Hive	Trimark	Adventure		TBD	
The 11th Hour	Virgin	Interactive Drama		TBD	
The Space Bar	Rocket Science	N/A		TBD	
Time Commando	Activision	Action/Quest	B	Available	
Tobal No. 1	Sony	N/A		November 15	
Tomb Raider	EIDOS	3D Shooter		November 5	
Virtual Pool	Interplay	Pool		February 1997	
VMX Racing	Playmates	Racing		December 17	
VR Baseball	Interplay	Baseball		May 1997	
VR Pool	Interplay	Pool	P	February 15, 1997	
War Gods	Midway Home Ent.	Fighting		February 1997	
WC Racing: Track Attack PS	Spectrum Holobyte	Racing		TBD	
WC Racing: Vette	Spectrum Holobyte	Racing		TBD	
Werewolf: The Apocalypse	Capcom	RPG		March 15, 1997	
WipeOut XL	Sony	Racing		November 15	
Wing Commander 3	Electronic Arts	Interactive Movie/Flying	B-	March 1997	
WWF Arcade	Acclaim	Wrestling		November 15	
WWF: In Your House	Acclaim	Wrestling		November 21	
X-Men: Children/Atom	Acclaim	Fighting		December 15	
3-Decathlon	Virgin	Sports/Arcade		November	
SATURN					
Albert Odyssey	Working Designs	RPG		February 1, 1997	
Amok	Sega	Adventure		December 3	
Arcades Greatest Hits	Midway Home Ent.	Compilation		December 10	
Area 51	Midway Home Ent.	Shooter		November 6	
Armed	Interplay	Adventure		December 15	
Assault Rigs	Sega	Combat/Driving		TBD	
Batman Forever Arcade	Acclaim	Fighting		November 15	
BattleSport	Acclaim	Shooting		TBD	
BioHazard Five	Acclaim	N/A		TBD	
Black Dawn	Virgin	Helicopter Combat/Arcade		November 19	
Brutal 2210	Gametek	Action		TBD	
Bubsy 3D	WEA	3D Adventure		December 16	
Bug Too!	Sega	3D Adventure		November 21	
Buster Brothers	Capcom	Puzzle		TBD 1997	
Command & Conquer	Virgin	Combat Strategy		December 4	

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Product Title	Manufacturer/ Publisher	Genre	VGA Rating	EST Ship Date	SRP
Contra: Legacy Of War	Konami	Action/Adventure		December	
Crime Wave	EIDOS	Action		November 10	
Crow: City Of Angels	Acclaim	3D Adventure		December 5	
Crypt Killer	Konami	Gun		Winter 1997	
Cyberbots	Capcom	Fighting		January 15, 1997	
Cybersled	Namco	3D Shooter		TBD	
Dark Savior	Sega	N/A		December 3	
Daytona Champ Edition	Sega	Racing		November 26	
Deadly Skies	JVC	Flying/Shooter		March 1997	
Decathlete	Sega	Various Sports		July	
Descent	Interplay	3D Shooter	B+	TBD	
Destruction Derby	Psygnosis	Driving/Racing		TBD	
Die Hard The Arcade	Sega	Action/Adventure		March 15, 1997	
Discworld	Psygnosis	Quest		TBD	
Dream Knight	Jaleco	N/A		November	
Frankenstein	Interplay	Adventure`		January 1997	
F1 Challenge	Virgin	Racing Arcade		Shipped	
Ganymed	Rocket Science	Action		TBD	
Grand Slam '97	Virgin	Baseball		April 1, 1997	
Grid Runner	Virgin	Action/Arcade		November 5	
GT Basketball	Gametek	Basketball		November 15	
Heart Of Darkness	Sega	Side-scroller	P	November	
Herc's Adventures	Sega	N/A		November	
Hyper 3D Pinball	Virgin	Pinball		November 12	
Impact Racing	Acclaim	Racing/Shooter	C	March 1997	
Incredible Hulk 2	EIDOS	3D Adventure		November 25	
Iron Rain	Sega	N/A		Delayed	
Iron Storm	Working Designs			In Stock	
Killing Time	Acclaim	Action		TBD 1997	
Krazy Ivan	Sega	Shooter/3D Adventure		TBD	
Kumite: The Fighter Edge	Konami	Fighting		January 1997	
Legends Football '97	WEA	Football		November 29	
Lemmings 3D	Psygnosis	Puzzle		TBD	
Lost Vikings II	Interplay	Adventure		January 1997	
LUNAR: Director's Cut	Working Designs	RPG		April/May 1997	
Magic Knight Rayearth	Working Designs	RPG		February 28, 1997	
Magic: The Gathering	Acclaim	Strategy		December 1	
Major Damage	Capcom	Side-scroller	P	TBD	
Marvel Super Heroes	Capcom	Fighting		November 20	
Mass Destruction	BMG	3D Shooter		April 1997	
Mega Man 8	Capcom	Side-scroller		TBD 1997	
MK Trilogy	Midway Home Ent.	Fighting		December 3	
Micropose Football	Sega	Football		TBD	
NBA Jam Extreme	Acclaim	Basketball		November 1	
NFL '97	Sega	Football		November 19	
NFL Full Contact Football	Konami	Football		TBD	
Obsidian	Rocket Science	Adventure		TBD	
Powerslave	Playmates	3D Shooter		December 17	
Prize Fighter	Acclaim	Fighting		TBD	
Project Overkill	Konami	Action/Adventure		January 1997	
Pro Pinball	Acclaim	Pinball		TBD	
Pro Pinball	Interplay	Pinball		November 15	
PsychoPad K.O.	Act Labs	Peripheral	B+	Available	
PTO	KOEI	Shooting/Action		December	
Quake	Sega	3D Adventure/Shooter		January 28, 1997	
Raw Pursuit	JVC	N/A		February 1997	
Rocket Jockey	Rocket Science	Action			
Sacred Pools	Sega	Interactive Movie		November	
Scorcher	Sega	Action		December 17	
Shadoan	ReadySoft	Adventure		November 1	
Shining Wisdom	Working Designs	RPG		In Stock	

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Sonic X-Treme	Sega	3D Adventure		November 7	
Sonic 3D Blast	Sega	3D Adventure		November 19	
Soviet Strike	EA	Action/Combat Sim	B+	Available	
Spike	Sega	N/A		January 1997	
SPOT Goes To Hollywood	Virgin	Action		November 19	
Super Motocross	Acclaim	Racing		TBD	
Super Puzzle Fighter	Capcom	Puzzle		January 15, 1997	
Supreme Warrior	Acclaim	Fighting		TBD	
Swagman	EIDOS	N/A		February 15, 1997	
Tempest 2000	Interplay	Shooter		November 25	
Tempest X	Interplay	Shoter		November 19	
The Space Bar	Rocket Science	Action/Mystery	P	TBD	
Tomb Raider	EIDOS	3D Adventure	A	November 5	
Toshinden URA	Sega	Fighting		November 12	
Varuna's Forces	JVC	N/A		February 1997	
Virtua Cop 2	Sega	Shooting		November 21	
Virtua Cop 2 w/ Stunner	Sega	Shooting		November 21	
Virtua Fighter 2	Sega	3D Fighting		November 21	
Virtual On	Sega	3D Shooter		November 14	
VR Baseball	Interplay	Baseball		May 1997	
VR Golf	Interplay	Golf		December 17	
VR Pool	Interplay	Pool		February 15, 1997	
VR Soccer	Interplay	Soccer		November 26	
Werewolf: The Apocalypse	Capcom	Fighting		March 15, 1997	
WWF: In Your House	Acclaim	Fighting		November 21	
3-Decathalon	Virgin	Sports		November	
SNES					
Brunswick: Tournament Of Champs	THQ	Bowling		May 1997	
College Football USA 97	THQ	Football		November 15	
Donkey Kong Country 3	Nintendo	Adventure		November 18	
Maui Mallard	Nintendo	Side-scroller		November 11	
MSH War of Gems	Capcom	N/A		November 20	
MS PAC-MAN	Midway Home Ent.	Action		November 11	
NBA Hangtime	Midway Home Ent.	Basketball		November 5	
Pinocchio	Nintendo	Side-scroller		November 11	
PsychoPad K.O.	Act Labs	Peripheral	B+	Available	
Star Wars	Nintendo	Shooter		November 11	

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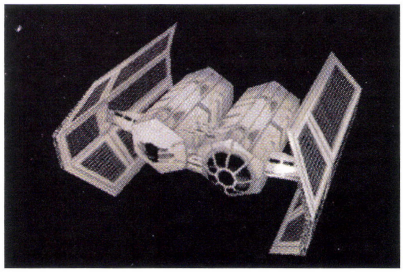
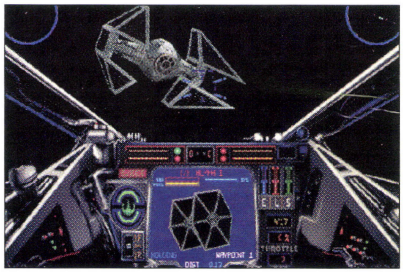
PREVIEWS

X-Wing Vs. Tie Fighter

Platform: Playstation
Genre: Space Shooter
Size: CD
Publisher: Lucas Arts
Developer: Totally Games
Available: Late December

Written by: Jeff High





This blockbuster PC title will be moving its non-stop action to the Playstation as the holiday season draws to a close, squeeking itself in just in time for last minute shoppers. And it's a good thing.

X-Wing vs Tie Fighter went over huge in the PC market, and fans will be flocking to this, just one of the Lucas Arts Playstation 'ports to be released this year and early '97.

You can play as a pilot in any of several vehicles, including, of course, a rebel X-Wing or one of the Empire's Tie Fighters, and this will be one of the first two player titles from Lucas Arts for the system. Co-operative or vs. play gives the player a wide range of choices as well, to expand the title's replay value.

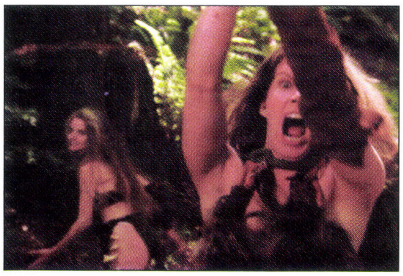
In battle, the player can assume the controls of a single craft, or, if they choose, command a squadron of starfighters. Squadrons are controlled by issuing tactical commands through the game's real-time 3D map.

This among several new Playstation games arriving in the early months of 97 should help to set the pace for the system in the coming season. Quality titles like this one will easily keep the Playstation afloat in the face of steep competition from the N64, Saturn, and PC.

A Fork In The Tale

Platform: PC
Genre: Interactive Movie
Size: CD
Publisher: Any River Entertainment
Developer: Any River Entertainment
Available: First Quarter 97

Written by: Jeff High



Coming to the PC early next year is Any River Entertainment's A Fork In The Tale, an interactive first person FMV game featuring Saturday Night Live's and Men Behaving Badly's Rob Schneider.

Schneider will be the voice of the main character a "happenstance hero who ends up playing a pivotal role in a parallel world, the Island of Eseverson." Some of the interactive sequences in the game are reminiscent of the watch-wait-and-click style of ReadySoft's BrainDead 13, where you have things happening to you, and have to make a fast decision from a number of choices in a simulated "real time." The game boasts more than 50,000 lines of scripted dialogue, and Schneider is being given the opportunity to ad-lib lines throughout the game.

Gameplay is involving, with puzzles, action, adventure, chase sequences, and a simulated interactive fist fight. Several branches in the storyline provide the player with real influence on the game-movie's outcome, hence the title.

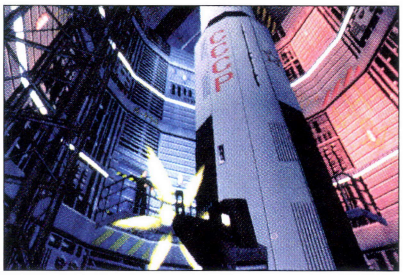
This is an innovative product, so much so that it will be difficult to determine the public's reaction. I'm certain you'll hear much more as time passes about A Fork In The Tale, so perk up when it happens. This title should be worth watching out for.

PREVIEWS

Goldeneye 007

Platform: N64
Genre: 3D shooter
Size: 64 bit
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo/Rare
Available: First Quarter 97

Written by: Reilly Brennan



Over the years, the character of James Bond has been played by several different actors including Sean Connery, Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton, and now Pierce Brosnan. Now for the first time this famous secret agent will be played by gamers on the Nintendo 64 platform in GoldenEye 007.

Based on the 1995 movie of the same name, 007's mission is to stop a stolen Russian satellite capable of destroying all electrically powered machinery on the earth. With numerous levels and a large selection of weapons, this will be the first Doom-style game to be released for the Nintendo 64.

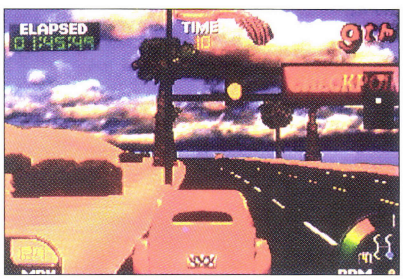
This first-person perspective 3D shooter was developed in conjunction by Nintendo and Rare and features a game layout based on the actual blueprints for the movie set. This title will appeal to fans of the shooting genre as well as fans of the Bond franchise.

The average consumer will identify with Rare as well, co-developers of the immensely popular Donky Kong Country series. With strong talent and support, this title is sure to be one of the best quality productions of the new year. Expect heavy marketing campaigns from Nintendo across the board on this one.

Cruisin' USA

Platform: Nintendo 64
Genre: Driving
Size: 64 Bit
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Available: November

Written by: Reilly Brennan



Now that the Nintendo 64 system is finally out on the market, the company is ready to start shelling out the games they've been promissing eager customers for many moons. In keeping with Nintendo's original plans, they will be releasing the arcade smash racing title Cruisin' USA to their home system this fall.

The game takes players on a cross-country trek in their choice of four different automobiles. The wild race carries them through the unique road system of each city and players can even drive through California's redwood forest, dodging monster trees as well as the other participants. They can choose from several different driving perspectives, such as the termed "chase" and "cockpit" views. In head to head mode, Cruis'n USA features the standard vertical split screen for the best two player gameplay.

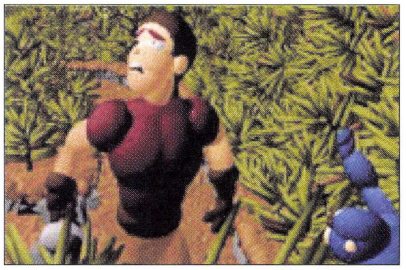
With all the hype surrounding the actual Nintendo 64 system a lot of buyers have been worried about the lack of software. Cruis'n USA will fill one of these holes by being the first driving-racing game for the platform. Fans of the genre, as well as quarter slinging arcade gamers, will be happy to know that this product is on it's way. As with almost all N64 product, you can feel safe stocking generously through these first few months.

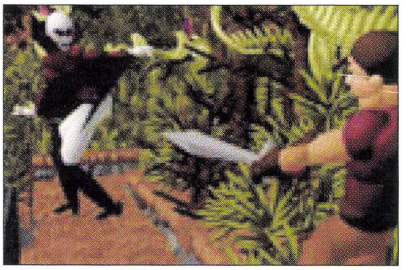
PREVIEWS

Ecstatica 2

Platform: PC
Genre: Adventure
Size: CD
Publisher: Psygnosis
Developer: Psygnosis
Available: First Quarter 97

Written by: Written by: Reilly Brennan





The original Ecstatica, released in 1994, was the brainchild of developer Andrew Spencer. The story was set in a medieval village overrun by the demonic manifestations of a possessed young girl's dreams. Ecstatica was renowned for its particularly brutal combat scenes and distinctive graphics.

Ecstatica 2 refines the original title with several new enhancements, including a considerably larger playing area, almost ten times as many camera views, and a main character with a whole new repertoire of moves and fighting techniques.

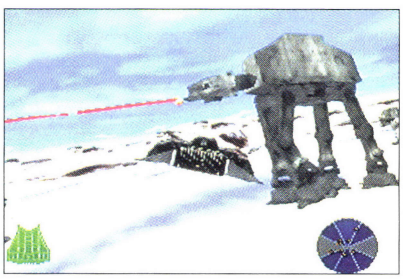
In anticipation of of its 1997 release, Psygnosis is releasing a special bundle in November featuring the original Ecstatica along with an Ecstatica 2 demo. The special release will allow the original title to be played in both DOS and Windows 95, while allowing gamers to get a glimpse of Ecstatica 2.

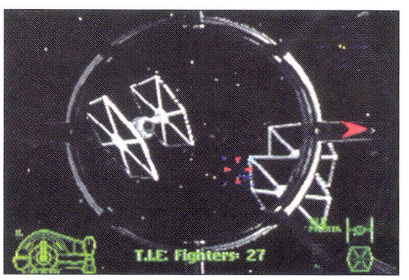
Psygnosis' reputation will also give this title a boost to players new the the Ecstatica title. As the well known publishers of the Lemmings series and several new holiday products, including The Adventures Of Lomax (another Lemmings spin-off), their label will attract more than a passing glance from ambient shoppers.

Shadow of the Empire

Platform: N64
Genre: 3D Action/Adventure
Size: 64 Bit
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: LucasArts
Available: December

Written by: Reilly Brennan





Developed exclusively for the Nintendo 64 by LucasArts, this title puts a new spin on the on the story behind the Star Wars saga. The adventure falls into the timeframe between The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi. Players take on the role of a new character, Dash Rendar, a protector of Luke Skywalker. The game includes plenty of famous characters from the original stories including Darth Vader, Boba Fett, Jabba the Hutt and the Emperor, as well as some new forces of evil from the Black Sun.

Shadows of the Empire is a 3D action/adventure style game crossed with a flying simulation. first person gameplay is similar to the successful LucasArts title, Dark Forces, while the flying sequences add a new dimension to the action. The product includes four modes of play in either arcade or campaign mode.

Familiar scenes from the Star Wars movies add a nice hook as well. For example, you get the chance to re-enact the snow-speeder vs the walkers scene from the Empire Strike's Back.

The highly successful Star Wars series should continue to roll with this product. The combination of LucasArts development and the powerful marketing force of Nintendo should make this title a hit come December.

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3DO	THDO	6.00	5.38	13.75	5.00
Acclaim	AKLM	7.56	7.13	25.75	6.81
Activision	ATVI	14.00	13.25	19.00	8.00
Apple Computer	AAPL	23.75	25.63	42.50	16.00
Creative Prog. & Tech. Ventures	CPTV	0.63	0.69	1.43	0.18
Disney	DIS	64.13	64.13	69.87	52.62
Electronic Arts	ERTS	37.13	35.25	39.87	21.12
Game Tek	GAME	1.88	1.75	3.75	0.88
GT Interactive	GTIS	21.25	20.25	26.75	8.87
Matsushita	MC	165.00	168.75	188.00	140.00
Microsoft	MSFT	135.75	138.62	138.75	79.87
Sony Corp.	SNE	63.88	63.50	66.62	45.50
Spectrum Holobyte	SBYT	7.00	5.75	13.12	3.75
Symantec	SYMC	11.00	12.13	30.37	8.75
T-HQ	TOYH	8.50	9.13	9.50	2.62
Time Warner	TWX	40.50	41.13	45.25	29.75
ThrustMaster	TMSR	6.75	6.63	8.62	3.50
Viacom	VIA	36.88	35.25	50.62	29.62
Ames Stores	AMES	4.13	3.88	5.18	1.12
Best Buy	BB	18.50	19.13	20.62	17.87
Bradlees	BLE	1.00	1.00	2.50	1.00
Circuit City	CC	34.75	36.00	38.75	25.00
Egg Head	EGGS	5.88	6.13	13.87	5.00
Good Guys	GGUY	8.00	7.88	11.62	7.25
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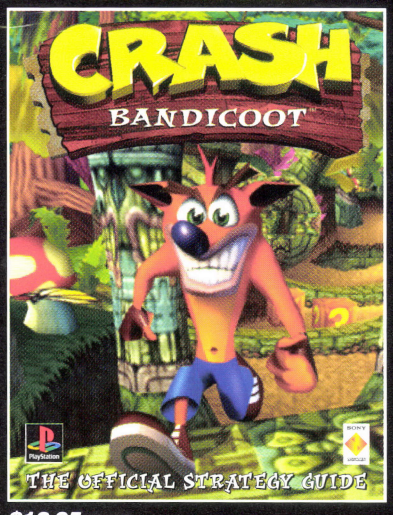

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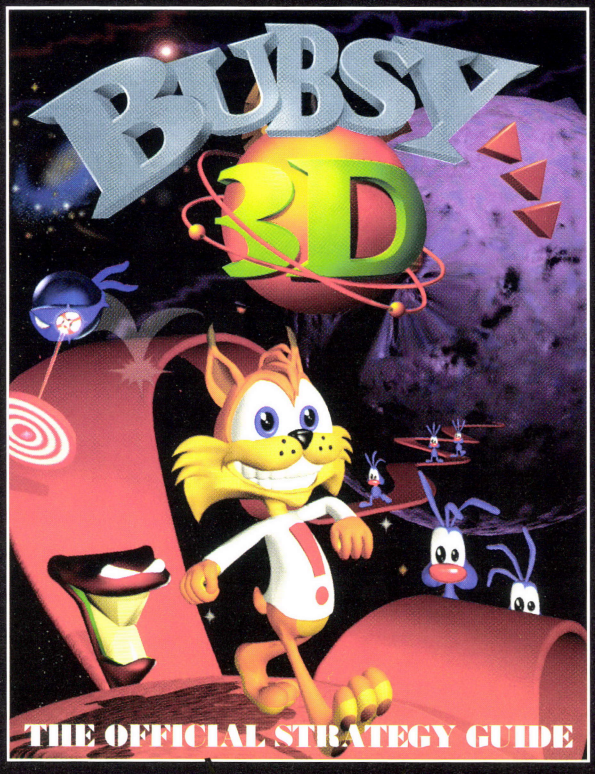

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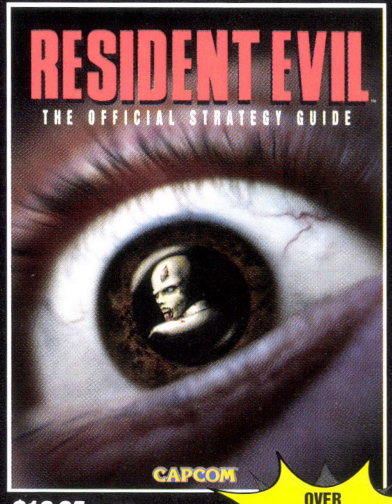

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- ❑ Media
- ❑ Finance/Investments
- ❑ Research/Analyst
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- ❑ Consultant
- ❑ Other _____

2. Which title best describes your job function?
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- ❑ Marketing/PR/Advertising
- ❑ Research & Development
- ❑ Sales
- ❑ Merchandising
- ❑ Store/Department Manager
- ❑ Assistant Manager
- ❑ Other _____

3. Which best describes your business location?
- ❑ Corporate Headquarters
- ❑ Regional/District Site/Office Chain
- ❑ Local Retail Site
- ❑ Other _____

4. Total number of retail locations:
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- ❑ 1
- ❑ 2-4
- ❑ 5-9
- ❑ 10-24
- ❑ 25-49
- ❑ 50-99
- ❑ 100 or more

5. Number of employees:
- ❑ 1-9
- ❑ 10-19
- ❑ 20-49
- ❑ 50-54
- ❑ 55-99
- ❑ 100-249
- ❑ 250-499
- ❑ 500 or more

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- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

7. If yes, what do you base your decision on?
- ❑ Advertising (Trade/Consumer)
- ❑ Advice from Reps/Distributors
- ❑ Trade/Consumer Magazine Articles
- ❑ Sales Person Requests
- ❑ Other _____

8. Which of the following does your company offer?

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❑ Nintendo 64	❑ Nintendo 64
❑ Genesis	❑ Genesis
❑ Sega CD	❑ Sega CD
❑ 32X	❑ 32X
❑ Saturn	❑ Saturn
❑ PlayStation	❑ PlayStation
❑ Jaguar/Jag CD	❑ Jaguar/Jag CD
❑ 3DO	❑ 3DO
❑ M2	❑ M2
❑ Neo Geo (NG-CD)	❑ Neo Geo (NG-CD)
❑ CD-I	❑ CD-I
❑ Mac-CD	❑ Mac-CD
❑ PC-CD	❑ PC-CD
❑ Imported	❑ Imported
❑ Other _____	❑ Other _____

C. Other
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- ❑ Laser Discs
- ❑ DVD
- ❑ Audio CD's/ Records
- ❑ Candy
- ❑ Magazines/Comics
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- ❑ Other _____

9. Please indicate your company's annual gross sales volume:
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- ❑ $100,000 - $249,999
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- ❑ $1,000,000 - $4,999,999
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- ❑ T-3

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- ❑ E-World
- ❑ Genie
- ❑ Other _____
- ❑ Prodigy
- ❑ Delphi
- ❑ Netcom
- ❑ Microsoft Network

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❑ Computer Retail News	❑ Computer Player
❑ Computer Retail Wkly.	❑ Edge
❑ Computer Trade Wkly.	❑ EGM/EGM2
❑ Daily Variety	❑ Flux
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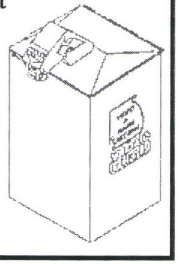

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18-22 COMDEX/FALL '96
Las Vegas, Nevada
617.433.1552

20-23 International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions (IAAPA)
New Orleans, LA
703.836.4800

December

Jan28-Dec 1 Fall VR World
Boston, MA
203.226.6967

Dec 8-10 Home & Family Computing Supershow
Dallas Convention Center

Dec 15-17 Moscon Center
San Francisco
713.974.5252

January

5-8 Winter Consumer Electronics Show (Winter CES)
Las Vegas, Nevada
703.907.7624

9-12 Internet World Canada '96
Toronto, Canada
800.632.5537

To have your show or conference listed in VGA's calendar send information to: Videogame Advisor • Claire Duffy • 64 Danbury Road, Suite 500 • Wilton, CT 06897

CONSUMER PUBLICATIONS

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Product Title	Manufacturer	Platform	Magazine	Issue	Rating
Star Gladiator	Capcom	PlayStation	GamePro	November	B+
Three Dirty Dwarves	Sega	Saturn	GamePro	November	B
Micro Machines 2	GameTek	PC	Computer Player	November	C
Tecmo Superbowl	Tecmo	PlayStation	PS Extreme	November	C-
Namco Museum V2	Namco	Playstation	PS Extreme	November	B-
Striker '96	Acclaim	PC	PC Games	November	D
Back To Baghdad	Military Sim.	PC	PC Games	November	C-
Mind Grind	Microforum	PC	PC Gamer	November	F
Virtua Fighter PC	Sega Ent.	PC	PC Gamer	November	A-

Products and magazines featured are selected by the Publisher.

OFFICIAL VGA/NPD TRSTS REPORT

Top 25 Best Selling Video Game Titles

Ranked On Units Sold "September, 1996"

Last Month	Rank	Title	Platform	Publisher	Average Retail Price
**	1	Super Mario 64	Nintendo 64	Nintendo	$62
**	2	Madden '97	Sony Playstation	Electronic Arts	$55
1	3	Tekken 2	Sony Playstation	Namco	$46
**	4	Pilot Wings 64	Nintendo 64	Nintendo	$62
**	5	Crash Bandicoot	Sony Playstation	Sony Computer Ent.	$53
**	6	Beyond the Beyond	Sony Playstation	Sony Computer Ent.	$56
12	7	Tetris Attack	Super Nintendo	Nintendo	$32
**	8	Andretti Racing '97	Sony Playstation	Electronic Arts	$52
**	9	NFL Quarterback Club '97	Sony Playstation	Acclaim Entertainment	$54
2	10	Super Mario RPG: Legend of the 7 Stars	Super Nintendo	Nintendo	$65
7	11	Donkey Kong Country 2	Super Nintendo	Nintendo	$58
3	12	Super Mario Kart	Super Nintendo	Nintendo	$31
**	13	Madden '97	Saturn	Electronic Arts	$56
**	14	NCAA Football GameBreaker	Sony Playstation	Sony Computer Ent.	$56
10	15	Nights with 3D Control Pad	Saturn	Sega of America	$63
8	16	Killer Instinct	Super Nintendo	Nintendo	$31
6	17	Resident Evil	Sony Playstation	Capcom	$55
**	18	College Football USA '97	Genesis	Electronic Arts	$58
**	19	Diehard Trilogy	Sony Playstation	Fox Interactive	$56
**	20	Kirby SuperStar	Super Nintendo	Nintendo	$61
5	21	Ken Griffey Junior's Winning Run	Super Nintendo	Nintendo	$63
13	22	Need for Speed	Sony Playstation	Electronic Arts	$50
11	23	Ms. Pacman	Genesis	Midway Home Ent.	$19
4	24	Triple Play '97	Sony Playstation	Electronic Arts	$51
**	25	NHL Hockey '97	Genesis	Electronic Arts	$60

**Not in Top 25 Last Month

Source: The NPD TRSTS Video Game Tracking Service - 9,388 outlets across the U.S.
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THE NPD GROUP, INC.
CUSTOM & SYNDICATED RESEARCH

Top 20 Entertainment Titles

Ranked On Unit Sales, "August, 1996"

Rank	Last Month	Title	Platform	Publisher	Average Retail Price
1	1	Duke Nukem 3D	(CD DOS)	Formgen	$43
2	2	Warcraft 2	(CD DOS)	Davidson	$48
3	12	Links LS	(CD DOS/WIN)	Access Software	$45
4	3	Civilization 2	(CD WIN)	Microprose (Spectrum Holobyte)	$45
5	41	Warcraft	(CD DOS)	Davidson	$35
6	6	Command & Conquer	(CD DOS)	Virgin Interactive	$46
7	5	Warcraft 2 Exp Pak	(Cd W95)	Davidson	$29
8	*	The Pandora Directive	(CD DOS)	Access Software	$48
9	7	Return Of Arcade	(W95 3.5)	Microsoft	$30
10	18	Star Wars Rebel Assault 2	(CD DOS)	Lucasarts Entertainment	$31
11	9	Duke Nukem 3d Shareware	(CD DOS)	Formgen	$12
12	4	Final Doom	(CD DOS)	Gt Interactive	$47
13	11	Myst	(CD WIN)	Broderbund	$45
14	8	Ah-64d Longbow	(CD DOS)	Electronic Arts	$46
15	*	3d Total Meltdown	(CD DOS/WIN)	Sierra On-Line	$20
16	36	Encyclopedia Of Games	(CD WIN)	Gt Interactive	$13
17	26	Wheel Of Fortune	(CD WIN)	Imagesoft	$21
18	*	Chessmaster 5000 10th Anniv. Ed	(CD W95)	Mindscape	$37
19	22	Grand Prix Ii	(CD DOS)	Microprose (Spectrum Holobyte)	$43
20	15	Need For Speed SE	(CD DOS)	Electronic Arts	$47

* Not in Top 100 Last Month

Source: The NPD SofTrends Service - From Over 8,823 Stores

Top 10 Best Selling Video Game Titles

Based On Items Introduced In 1996 Only

Ranked On Units "September, 1996"

Rank	Title	Platform	Publisher	Average Retail Price
1	Super Mario 64	Nintendo 64	Nintendo	$62
2	Madden '97	Sony Playstation	Electronic Arts	$55
3	Tekken 2	Sony Playstation	Namco	$46
4	Pilot Wings 64	Nintendo 64	Nintendo	$62
5	Crash Bandicoot	Sony Playstation	Sony Computer Ent.	$53
6	Beyond the Beyond	Sony Playstation	Sony Computer Ent.	$56
7	Tetris Attack	Super Nintendo	Nintendo	$32
8	Andretti Racing '97	Sony Playstation	Electronic Arts	$52
9	NFL Quarterback Club '97	Sony Playstation	Acclaim Entertainment	$54
10	Super Mario RPG: Legend of the 7 Stars	Super Nintendo	Nintendo	$65

Source: The NPD TRSTS Video Game Tracking Service - 9,388 outlets across the U.S.
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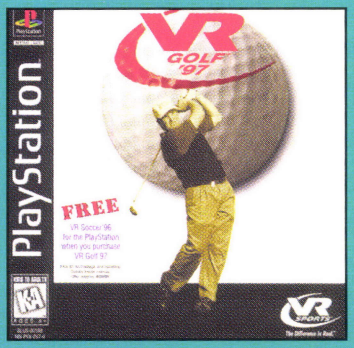

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  –Los Angeles Times

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  "It's a masterpiece!"
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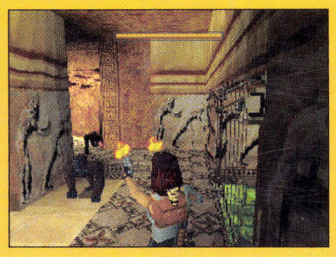
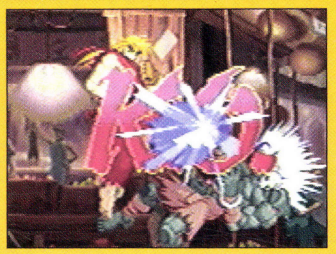


Tomb Raider
PlayStation
Eidos

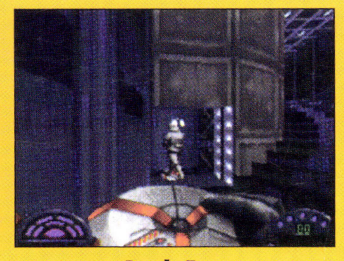
Disrupter
PlayStation
Interplay



Street Fighter Alpha II
PlayStation/Saturn
Capcom

Star Gladiator
PlayStation
Capcom

Rebel Assault II
Playstation
Lucas Arts



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