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SouthPeak Interactive

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GameWEEK EVERY WEEK

EA and MGM "Bond" Over Movie License

By Joel Easley

James Bond has proven to be the most successful movie license ever to cross over into the interactive arena. With the overwhelming consumer support Nintendo received from its *GoldenEye* title for the Nintendo 64, Electronic Arts and MGM are banking that the same level of enthusiasm will migrate to the company's *Tomorrow Never Dies* title. In conjunction with the release of the latest James Bond film, *The World is Not Enough*, MGM Interactive has signed an exclusive multi-year worldwide licensing agreement with Danjaq, LLC and United Artists to develop, publish and distribute a series of interactive titles based upon the James Bond characters and properties. EA will also have the ultimate gentleman spy appearing on different platforms including the PC as well as Bond's first appearance on the next generation consoles. The first titles to be produced under this deal will obviously be based upon *The World is Not Enough*, which debuted in theaters November 19, with a multiple system blitz being planned for 2000. "The same attributes that have contributed to making James Bond a movie legend will translate naturally into making him a valuable long-term videogame franchise," says Frank Gibeau, VP of marketing for EA. "We believe that the Bond character lends itself well to an array of gameplay elements, from intense story lines and characters to action-packed sequences and innovative gadgets. We are very excited about what the future holds in terms of building a successful series of games based on

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Sega of Japan Commits: Shenmue Will Ship in '99

By Jim Loftus

In a surprise statement released on November 19, Sega of Japan (SOJ) announced that—after a series of delays—its enormously hyped, much delayed Dreamcast game, *Shenmue*, was being re-routed and that it would go on

(continued on page 4)

Downloads Equal Big Business

By Joel Easley

One of the most popular ways to promote a new interactive product is through downloads. Whether it is a movie-style trailer or a playable version of a game, the Internet offers great new possibilities for marketing a new product. But the effectiveness of such efforts up until now have been hard to measure. However, V-Cast Inc. has developed a technology that launches demos and movies for game companies who want to get the most from their downloads. Using its Gigex technology, V-Cast can launch a product over the Internet and provide real-time download statistics, not just from the company's site, but from any site that is offering the download; allowing the publisher of the demo to fully grasp the demand (or lack thereof) for the upcoming product. Mark Friedler, CEO of V-Cast, explains: "We offer a couple of benefits. First of all, we provide the end user with a guaranteed download. As you know, most of these demos tend to be pretty big. In fact, the average playable demo is 50 megabytes...so when you have demos this size, you have a

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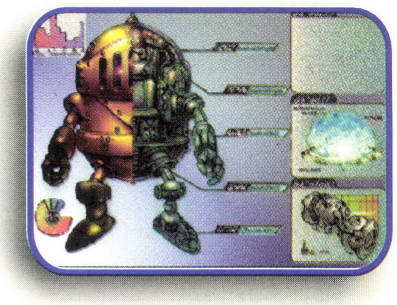

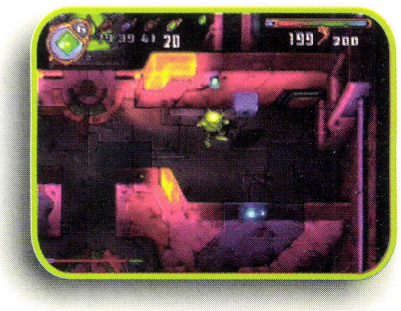

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Sega Dreamcast.

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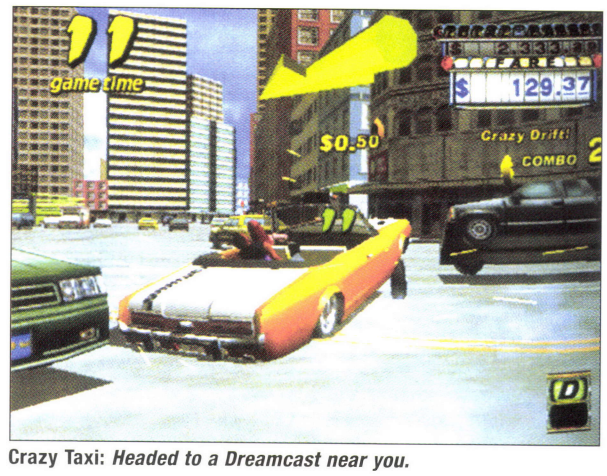
Driving El Taxi Loco

By Jim Loftus

Living the crazy life may make for a good time, but driving the crazy taxi is even better. Sega's insanely-paced, coin-operated driving game, *Crazy Taxi*, has caught on like wildfire, and is responsible for the formation of huge lines waiting at arcades all over the country and overseas since it was introduced in February of this year. After months of waiting, the arcade game—running on Sega's proprietary Naomi arcade board—is now pulling into the Dreamcast driveway. The DC edition of *Crazy Taxi* was shown for the first time in completed form during the recent Sega of Japan/Okawa Foundation press event held in San Francisco.

With regard to the Dreamcast edition of *Crazy Taxi*, there's good news and there's good news. Seriously. Not only is the home version a spitting image of the coin-op, graphically, the game will come packed with an unheard of number of extra features. Dreamcast-exclusive options include one additional course (the arcade version featured only one) and 16 mini-games. The mini-games are actually of the in-game type, not VMU-specific. These bonus games act as training sessions intended to test the driving skills of players. One such game which will no doubt put players' driving abilities to the test involves racing along the tops of buildings. The idea is to jump from rooftop to rooftop and finish the level in one piece. Another has players going at it against other vehicles in a game of "bumper cars." Yet another involves using a cab to strike at a set of giant-size bowling pins.



Crazy Taxi: ***Headed to a Dreamcast near you.***

The Dreamcast version of *Crazy Taxi* is due out in Japan in January and in the U.S. in early February. The game is expected to do extremely well at the retail level. Check the pages of *GameWEEK* for the full review. *GW*

On The Move...
INDUSTRY PERSONNEL CHANGES

Crave Entertainment
Crave has expanded its marketing team by three. New product manager Edward Camarillo comes from Rysher Entertainment where he worked as director of marketing. New marketing services coordinator Amy Stephenson comes from Simpson Gumpertz & Heger where she served as marketing coordinator. Ninfa Altadonna has accepted the position of marketing coordinator.

Crave also hired Alex Skillman as its new publicist. Skillman will be responsible for the creation and implementation of public relations campaigns for Crave's console and PC games.

Acclaim Entertainment
Barbara Shear has been hired to head up Acclaim's public relations department. In her new position, Shear will handle all aspects of Acclaim's product publicity for the company's console and PC-based games. Shear has extensive PR experience thanks to stints with Macmillan Publishing and IDG Books before that.

ING Barings Furman Selz
Financial analyst James Lin has left one research firm, Wedbush Morgan Securities, for another, ING Barings Furman Selz. Lin will continue to cover the entertainment software sector as well as Internet entertainment companies, for his new employer.

NewKidCo
Paul Samulski has been hired as the new vice president of product and creative development for NewKidCo. In this newly created position, Samulski will oversee the concept, design and execution of console videogame product. He will also assist NewKidCo with worldwide licensing activities.

10SIX Open for Business

By Ben Rinaldi

HEAT.NET believes it has the next big thing in multiplayer online gaming. *10SIX* is being hyped as "the world's first million-player action/strategy game" with a perpetually changing universe that lives, breaths and expands on a 24-hour basis, even when players are offline. After two years in development, HEAT is ready to publicly unveil *10SIX* by recruiting players to participate in a public beta test. Gamers will be given the opportunity to not only play *10SIX* early, they will also be encouraged to share their feedback directly with the development team. As an added incentive, participants will be automatically entered to win a Sega Dreamcast and other cool prizes. To learn more about the game go to www.10six.com. *GW*

10SIX: ***The first million man game.***

Continued from the Cover

Sega of Japan Commits: Shenmue Will Ship in '99

sale in Japan on December 29 of this year.

Sega's mammoth adventure/RPG has been in development for nearly five years at a cost totaling more than $40 million, making it one of the most ambitious, not to mention most expensive, videogame titles ever produced for any system—PC or console.

For many Dreamcast owners looking forward to *Shenmue*'s arrival, the wait has been a long and frustrating one. Originally scheduled to be released this summer in Japan, SOJ bumped the game's release to October 28, then to March 2000, then again to April 2000.

With the final date set at December 29, Sega's announcement fell exactly one day after Enix of Japan's announcement that the sequel to its long-awaited PlayStation game, *Dragon Quest VII*, was being delayed from December of this year to February 2000. Enix' *Dragon Quest* RPG series has consistently broken software sales records in Japan. With *Dragon Quest VII* out of the picture, Sega's *Shenmue* now stands a chance at grabbing the spotlight and could persuade Japanese game players to take a second look at Dreamcast as a viable gaming platform. Was Sega planning to release *Shenmue* on December 29 all along, or did the company seize a golden opportunity? Sega of America explained that *Shenmue*'s development was ahead of schedule—more so than previously thought—which allowed it to make its new ship date. The person we spoke with could not speculate on any possible correlation to the *Dragon Quest VII* delay. A separate unnamed source told *GameWEEK* that Sega completed *Shenmue* back in October—bug testing included—but the company decided to push the release of the game in order to fully expand its online features. The source added, "I believe the higher-ups at Sega of Japan took advantage of the *Dragon Quest* situation. I think that when they heard the Enix announcement, they decided to close the lid on further development of [*Shenmue*] to get it on the shelf for the holidays."

The world of* Shenmue *features 1,200 explorable areas, advanced lighting (day slowly turns to night), seasonal weather conditions, and a perpetual in-game clock, making it the most realistic videogame ever created.

Developed by Sega's *AM2* division and led by veteran game producer Yu Suzuki, *Shenmue* centers around the life and times of a man named Ryu Hazaki. Players will be in control of Ryu who is on a quest to uncover the truth about the death of his father. As the story unfolds, taking place in both China and Japan, *Shenmue Chapter One: Yokosuka* (full title) weaves several genres, or game types, throughout its framework. In addition to real-time exploration, players will be able to experience an unprecedented number of "real life" activities during the game. Shopping, gambling, holding conversations, riding vehicles, sleeping, eating, traveling, and doing battle with in-game characters; these are all things players can look forward to in *Shenmue*. Players will even be able to enjoy an array of mini-games, both on-screen and through the use of the Dreamcast's portable VMU and log onto the official *Shenmue* website to peruse message boards, visit chat areas, learn game secrets, download game data, and more.

According to Sega, *Shenmue*'s gameplay world—which is completely generated on the fly in real-time—is so vast and so complex it will be necessary to ship the game as a four GD-ROM (Giga Byte Disc) set. Three discs are said to be dedicated to the game itself, with a fourth web browser disc serving as the gateway to *Shenmue*'s online community.

Dreamcast has been available for more than a year in Japan and has been considered by many as a disappointment in that country, largely due to its sparse selection of "must have" game titles; however, if there is one game capable of selling hardware, this is it. Sega expects *Shenmue* to sell a minimum of one million units in Japan when it goes on sale later this month. But is it too late? Will *Shenmue* be enough to turn things around—especially in light of the impending launch of PlayStation2? No one knows for sure.

Shenmue is still targeted for release in the U.S. sometime during the fourth quarter of 2000. ***GW***

Sega Reveals Future Plans, Shocks Gaming Industry

By Jim Loftus

In a head-spinning revelation, Sega's president and chairman, Isao Okawa, recently made it clear that his company would be moving into new territory. During a Sega of Japan/Okawa Foundation ceremony in San Francisco on November 10, Okawa, the chairman of both Sega Enterprises and its parent company, CSK, answered questions served up by members of the press.

When asked where the company was headed, Okawa unexpectedly replied, "In the future, there is a possibility of Sega becoming a software-only company. Regardless of whether Dreamcast sells or does *not* sell, we intend to make that shift." Needless to say, an ominous hush fell over the crowd of media members in attendance.

In response to the eye-opening statement, representatives from Sega of America explained that Okawa is a man determined to focus on the online market and that his intention is to assemble a global network for gaming. Sega also suggested that the chairman's words were quite possibly mistranslated. Certainly, confusion caused by a simple mistranslation isn't out of the question; however, when we broke the news back in September (see 9/8/99 *GameWEEK* Dreamcast supplement), it was no secret that Okawa had intentions of changing Sega's future as a game company. During a presentation to coin-op distributors in late July, Okawa stated, "I have decided to correct the wrong factors and establish a new Sega. For this reason, I take the leadership of Sega. We are going to be re-born as sega.com and we are planning an IPO for this new company." This statement falls directly in line with the controversial comments recently made by the chairman.

When asked whether Okawa's statement inferred that Sega would be getting out of the hardware business once Dreamcast runs its course, a Sega representative stressed that the chairman "sometimes expresses his ideas spontaneously." The representative went on to explain that retailers, consumers, and members of the media should not rule out future iterations of Dreamcast or other Sega branded hardware, but at the same time—failed to deny that in the future, CSK could theoretically offer gaming content on hardware different than [Dreamcast]. The long and short of it all is that, while Sega will continue to support Dreamcast according to plan, the company sees tremendous growth opportunities in global network gaming (as Sony does with its upcoming PlayStation2) and is preparing accordingly.

Isao Okawa, Sega & CSK big boss

The Okawa Foundation was established in 1986 as a nonprofit organization that contributes to the growth and development of information and telecommunications technologies. The foundation offers financial aid to researchers and research institutions and awards grants to faculty researchers in their respective fields. ***GW***

NPD to Forecast New Records for Video & PC Games

By Steve Traiman

A record-breaking year for videogame hardware and software, computer leisure software is forecast by Ilene Haase, senior manager, and Eric Lampel, senior project director for NPD Interactive Entertainment Services which tracks computer and videogame sales at retail.

Based on 11-month figures through November, their comments will highlight a presentation on "The Approaching Multimedia Revolution in Videogames—The Next Age of Interactive Entertainment." It is a feature of the annual marketing summit themed to "Marketing Recording Media in a Multi-format World," sponsored by the International Recording Media Assn. (IRMA), Dec. 8 at the Hotel Roosevelt in New York.

"We are at the most critical point in the history of videogames since the introduction of *Pac-Man*," Haase says. "New platforms from Sega, Sony and Nintendo are about to provide new levels of interactive entertainment and consumer benefits. These will transform this software category from mere 'fun and games' to true convergence product categories, making use of all forms of multimedia, audio and video online entertainment. It will be here that the Internet meets packaged entertainment." Last year, NPD reported record sales of more than $6.2 billion in videogame hardware, software and accessories. Total software sales alone hit $3.3 billion from 93 million individual Sony PlayStation and other CD-ROMs, and Nintendo 64 and Game Boy cartridges. Leisure software, including kids' edutainment for the PC and Macintosh, topped $1.75 billion at retail, with 77 million units sold.

Earlier this year, NPD projected an overall increase of 13% for the total videogame hardware and software market, and a 15% to 20% increase in software units alone (see May 12 *GameWEEK*,). The leisure software market was projected for a 10% to 15% jump in units, based on a big 25% jump the first quarter.

Haase and Lampel are expected to provide update figures for 1999, and the first forecasts for 2000, when the new Sony PlayStation2 and Nintendo Dolphin platforms will come to market in the fourth quarter in the U.S.

Computer and videogame retailers also will benefit from a talk on "Recording Media in the New Retail Economy" by Carl Steidtmann, chief retail economist for accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers. "The revolutionary changes that are transforming the retail community have a direct and long-lasting impact on the future of recording media," he says.

He will investigate trends and developments that will change what recording media products are being sold, and how they are finding new ways into customers' hands.

"The profile of today's recording media community is a rapidly changing industry that is diversifying as quickly as the media mix itself," says Charles Van Horn, IRMA executive VP. "This is an opportunity for everyone in the recording industry to learn how we're offering a widening range of services, products and opportunities to prepare, produce, manufacture, package and deliver entertainment and information media products."

Other highlight presentations at the summit include:

• Martin Homlisch, president, Sony Electronics Media Solutions, "will offer insights and strategies for entertainment media suppliers who must balance the benefits of new technologies with the realities of market conditions, in his presentation on "Benefits Oriented Media Solutions."

• With Sega's Dreamcast being the first videogame platform with Internet connection capabilities, and both Sony and Nintendo moving to DVD-ROM-based Internet platforms next year, "we are facing the most significant period in the history of consumer electronics technologies," says Todd Thibodeaux, VP, senior economist, Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Assn. (CEMA). His presentation on "Consumer Technologies Change the Recording Media Mix" will highlight exclusive CEMA consumer market research. This will focus on the stages of acceptance of such new product categories as DVD, CD-Recordable, High Density TV and portable audio download players, as well as new gaming platforms, with projections on how soon they will reach "critical mass market" acceptance.

• With online gaming activity growing dramatically, "The Impact of Digital Transmissions on Packaged Media" will be reviewed by Martin Levine, editor/publisher, Digital Technology Report. He'll examine the impact of the Internet and other emerging technologies like MP3 on the recording media industry. He will examine where the technology is right now, and how it will affect the way marketing professionals will have to adapt with these emerging alternatives to traditional packaged media. *GW*

Continued from the Cover

EA and MGM "Bond" Over Movie License

Secret Agent 007, one of the entertainment industry's most enduring heroes." Bond's adventures first caught the eyes of moviegoers in 1962 when Danjaq and United Artists released the infamous *Dr. No*. Since that time, James Bond has become a cultural icon that has generated billions of dollars on a worldwide scale, which translates into the most valuable motion-picture franchise the world has ever seem. "Danjaq is excited to be collaborating with MGM Interactive and EA, in bringing James Bond video and PC games into the new millennium," said David Pope, COO of Danjaq. Nintendo and Rare both realize the value of what a Bond license can do for an interactive title. Now, with the multi-year agreement, Electronic Arts and MGM Interactive stand ready to bring Bond to a wider array of interactive entertainment consumers. "It is with great pleasure that we join forces with EA to build the Bond name into a leading game franchise," added David Bishop, president of MGM Interactive. "The Bond license is the longest running and most successful to date, and we are confident that combining the talent and passion between all parties will result in a line of top-quality interactive entertainment titles that stay true to the Bond world." With the combined efforts of both companies, each party is certain that it can succeed in turning the digital incarnation of James Bond into a franchise that lives up to its motion-picture heritage. So, expect plenty of action from EA and MGM Interactive as they place gamers in the thick of the action with car chases, gun battles, vodka martinis (shaken, not stirred) and everything else that has made James Bond an action phenomenon. *GW*

Didja Hear...?

RECENT GOINGS-ON IN THE WORLD OF GAME DEVELOPMENT

"Get Outta the Car! Get Outta the Car!"

Rockstar Games has officially announced that *GTA2* is coming to Dreamcast in April 2000. Sam Houser, Rockstar's president, stated, "*GTA2* on the Sega Dreamcast is simply amazing. Players will be hard-pressed to find another game that provides the amount of action, adrenaline filled excitement, high-speed car chases and urban anarchy that *GTA2* offers." The original *Grand Theft Auto* sold 2.5 million copies worldwide.

Tecmo's PS2 Plans

Tecmo reported that it will release *Ninja Gaiden* for the PlayStation2 in the U.S. by the end of 2000. The company also stated that it currently has no plans to release the PS2 version of *Dead or Alive 2* in the U.S. In other news, Tecmo confirmed that *Deception 3* will come to the U.S. for the PlayStation early next year.

Stand by Your Dreamcast

According to a recent article by *Core* magazine (www.coremagazine.com), Capcom is dead serious about its dedication to Dreamcast, a console that continues to struggle at retail in Japan, a full year after it debuted there. In what must surely be considered one of the most eye-opening statements made by top-level management in recent memory, Capcom's Okamoto-san countered claims that the Dreamcast platform is destined for failure, saying, "We will make the Dreamcast survive, even if Capcom has to do it alone." Capcom has several DC projects in development, including *Bio Hazard: Code Veronica*, a Dreamcast exclusive; *GaiaMaster*, an online board game; *Spawn: In the Demon's Hand*, a Naomi-based arcade port; and *SNK vs. Capcom*, the highly-anticipated collaborative effort with SNK. Capcom has made it clear it will be aggressive with its continued Dreamcast development, with 11 games scheduled for release within a six to eight month time period. Special thanks to *Core* for this story.

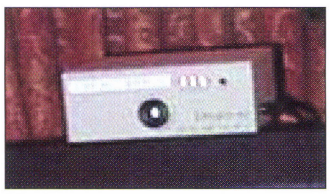
More Capcom News

Capcom announced that it is currently hard at work developing a follow-up to its highly popular fighting game *Marvel vs. Capcom*, powered by Sega's proprietary Naomi arcade architecture. Similar to the situation with *Power Stone* back in January, *Marvel vs. Capcom 2* is slated to appear in arcades two weeks prior to the Dreamcast version of the game. Both versions of the game will appear sometime in March 2000. In *Bio Hazard* news, Capcom has revealed some new details on *Code Veronica*. As the game is played, the VMU screen displays a continuous health condition readout, eliminating the player's need to pause the game and check their life status. In addition, Claire Redfield will be able to brandish a weapon in each hand, which will be useful for taking out multiple enemies at once. Capcom intends to ship *Bio Hazard Code: Veronica* in Japan on February 3, 2000.

Sega Unveils New Dreamcast Products

By Jim Loftus

During the formal grant presentation ceremony given by Sega of Japan and the Okawa Foundation in San Francisco, members of the media were on hand to get a sneak peek at several new Dreamcast-related products. In addition to showing off the latest Dreamcast versions of such games as *Crazy Taxi*, *Shenmue*, and *Space Channel 5*, Sega had several prototype peripherals on display; some of which were working, some non-working.



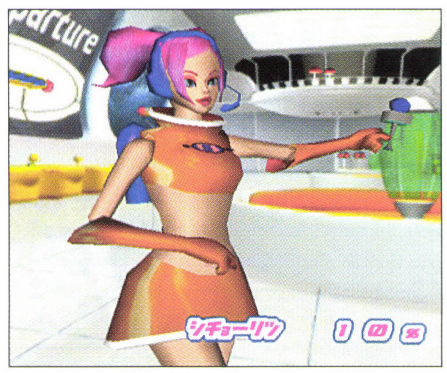
The Dreamcast camera (prototype)

Among those pieces classified as "non-working" was Sega's Dreamcast Zip drive data storage unit. The Dreamcast docks with the DC Zip drive, similar to Sega's Genesis/Sega CD configuration back in 1992. The Zip drive was on display but kept under glass as it was clearly a "gutless," unfinished prototype. Zip disks were also shown and each was emblazoned with that famous orange swirl. A placard indicated that in addition to being able to store 100MB of data, the Zip drive includes two USB ports. These ports will allow users to download games from the Internet and store electronic files such as pictures taken with the digital camera (more on that in a second.) The Zip drive will be particularly useful to Dreamcast web surfers since currently only a VMU can be used to store data, and small amounts at that (such as bookmarking websites.)

Sega's hardware piggybacks on the Zip drive

In the "working prototype" department, Sega's Dreamcast camera was on hand. The camera was connected to two Dreamcast units and allowed those in attendance to test out its functionality in conjunction with newly-developed Japanese web browser software. The camera, when connected to the Dreamcast system, will act as a video phone and allow Dreamcast Internet users to communicate over broadband networks via streaming video. "The camera will be vital in bringing people together online," a spokesperson explained. "Imagine a gaming community where you can visit a chat room, for instance, and actually see and speak to other players before going into battle with them. This will happen." When disconnected to Dreamcast, the camera doubles as a portable digital camera, powered by two AAA batteries. Digital photos can be attached to e-mail for others to see and saved to the Zip Drive for future reference. Sega explained that there are plans for the camera to be used to enhance online multiplayer gaming experiences through network supported games. If a DC edition of *Quake III: Arena* were to be developed, for example, players would be able to taunt opponents with streaming video before going into a deathmatch and possibly even during battle. Gamers will no longer be forced to play as "faceless bots" as they duke it out online; moving video could be relayed into a little window box on an opponent's screen during play. Synchronized real-time audio will be possible through use of the Dreamcast microphone, which was also being shown. Another digital camera scenario might involve a player taking a headshot of himself, then applying that image to a character's face in a game so that he could be identified online.

One possible camera application: in the online edition of Sega Rally 2, the race leader could be showcased in streaming video



Space Channel 5: The 60's and the future collide

Last but not least was Sega's Ethernet LAN Card, which will allow for fast data transfer on broadband networks. How fast? Ten to twenty times the speed of standard phone modems. An important feature of the card is that it provides smoother, higher quality streaming video images.

It should be noted that, while these peripherals have been developed and positioned to strengthen Sega's online presence, the company has yet to make a final decision regarding the pricing and availability of these devices. *GW*

Sega of Japan Under Investigation

By Jim Loftus

These have been trying times for Sega of Japan. First, its "revolutionary" new Dreamcast console is met with low enthusiasm in the marketplace. Then allegations of employee abuse at company headquarters. Now this.

In Tokyo, Sega Enterprises Ltd.'s offices were searched in early November by the country's Fair Trade Commission (FTC) on allegations that the company had used pressure tactics on retailers, telling them not to under-cut prices of its slow-selling Dreamcast console and software. The FTC searched Sega's offices for evidence that the company had violated anti-cartel regulations.

Recurring Dreamcast software delays have contributed to poor sales performance in Japan since the launch of Sega's system one year ago. Sega eventually reduced the price of its new console from ¥29,800 ($260US) to ¥19,900 ($170US) back in July of this year, hoping to re-ignite interest. As weeks progressed, Japanese game shop owners wanted to continue price drops to boost lagging sales. It was then that Sega allegedly instructed shop owners that in doing so, they would face potential consequences such as a halt in shipments of Sega products.

During the launch of Dreamcast in America, Sega had been under fire for allegedly advising online retailers not to reduce the MSRP of Dreamcast hardware, lest they face a stoppage in shipments of the hardware. It should be noted that those accusations have never been fully substantiated. *GW*

Continued from the Cover

Downloads Equal Big Business

tremendous problem of "how is a game company going to pump out a lot of bandwidth to be able to get these monster files to peoples' desktops?" That's a big problem because it costs game companies a lot of money to buy bandwidth. Another issue for game companies is "how can they collect usernames from not only their site but all across the Internet and build a list of people who are interested in their product. So, what we've done is put together a service—we call it our product launch service—and we contact game publishers to launch their demos all across the Internet. So, they give us their demo; we put it on our servers, which reside with the top-tier bandwidth providers; and we're providing them with a lot of high-quality bandwidth. We then distribute the URL for this download to several hundred major gaming sites as well as to their own site, so when they want to flip the switch, their product goes live at once to hundreds of sites all across the Internet." Friedler also went on to explain to *GameWEEK* that e-mail addresses, collected through the use of Gigex, provides clients with a 60% accurate e-mail database. So, if they were to accumulate 300,000 downloads of a particular product, 170,000 potential customers could easily be contacted through a follow up e-mail. Gigex has been used to launch 55 titles in the past year with clients that include the likes of THQ, GT Interactive, Rockstar Games and even Sega. This demo distribution model seems to be catching on. *GW*

a letter from the publisher...

Dear *GameWEEK* Reader,

It's astonishing to think that it has been six years this week—five full years ago, that *GameWEEK* was conceived in a conversation between a Wall Street Journal reporter and myself. We were discussing the state of a small segment of the consumer electronics industry, then called electronic entertainment, and how that segment looked to be a growth area in the coming years. We discussed the ramblings we had heard about a new dedicated trade show, and how much promise the gaming industry had to out-gross Hollywood in the year prior. And finally, we discussed a small retail newsletter I was publishing for a New England-based distribution company. He, very politely, compared it to the humble beginnings of other parallel industry trade publications *Billboard* and *Variety*, and I shuddered to think that an eight-page black and white newsletter for merchants could ever become an industry-leading magazine.

From its meager beginnings in November of 1994, to its present day prevalence of a $7 billion-dollar business, *GameWEEK* has evolved in an almost miraculous way. Every year, I look back upon the previous year's issues wondering how we ever could have produced anything like that. Our editors and production artists are more like magicians reinventing our look and feel year after year—enabling the magazine to become what it was always intended to be, the Bible of the business.

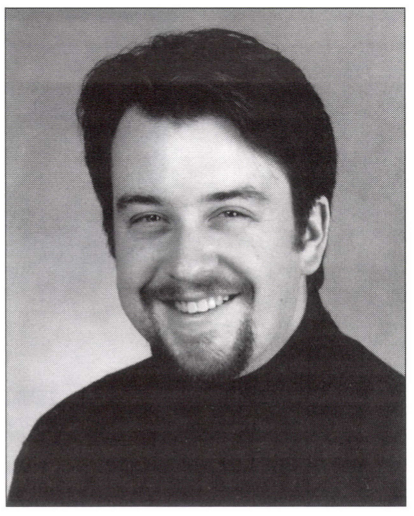
As a proud parent, I can tell you firsthand that *GameWEEK* is very much like a baby, and as such, has shocked me in its growth no differently than my own son—constantly evolving, growing, and improving... becoming. It's a great feeling.

But also like a child, a magazine's growth is often hindered or advanced by its influences. I realized early on that surrounding *GameWEEK* with the best and brightest would ultimately make it a better book. So, we employed a top-down strategy on the readership side—adding to our tightly controlled comp list only the most influential and dedicated retail professionals. I then did the same internally, building each department with the best professionals we could afford—thereby constantly improving upon the product. And with the regular advances of better and better quality professionals, we reached a saturation point where our readership list couldn't get much more honed—we had the best of the best in each level of the business reading and relying upon *GameWEEK*. We also had the best staff we could recruit—with industry veterans heading-up each and every department and division. And, I think you'll agree, the magazine took off.

But reaching the summit turned out to be just the summit of the first mountain—just five years into its growth, we became somewhat complacent for a brief period. Fortunately, we realized that the magazine wasn't finished growing after all; it was just the first in a long line of life cycles. And as our product continued to improve, it was doing so alongside the industry that it represents. We rededicated ourselves to consistently improving upon *GameWEEK*—adding new sections, hiring more and better talent, building upon our relationships with our readers, and taking just enough time to make sure that we remained the best.

I'm proud to say that a full year after we began this reflection process that *GameWEEK* remains the undisputed leader of its category in every measurable way (audited circulation, paid market share, editorial quality, timeliness, readership reach and influence, brand loyalty, and experienced staff). But getting to this point required one key ingredient that we never knew we needed: competition. Having serious competition for the first six months of the year really spurred us on, as did the highest form of flattery that our three competitors regularly paid us. Our production department—previously redesigning the magazine on an annual basis—began reinventing the look and feel on a regular basis, evolving it and maturing it every week. Our editors felt compelled to turn their good quality stories into compelling and investigative news reports. Our marketing department—often tempted to sling some of the mud that had been so regularly thrown—employed a sophisticated high-ground philosophy effectively. Our circulation department went through the ultimate test, a BPA audit, just to prove conclusively that we had the readership that we claimed. Our sales department—frustrated with the merchandising techniques and low brow efforts of others trying to create the temporary appearance of support—also kept their approach clean and elite, earning the industry's respect and paid advertising commitments. Indeed, we had been tested.

Walking victoriously away from what many had called "the trade wars" gave our staff (and in many cases our readers) the inspiration to continue growing our new charter. While our goal will always be to become the *Billboard* or *Variety* of this sector of the entertainment business, our charter has evolved into something much more special...to regularly excel, evolve, and...become.



Sincerely,

Hal Halpin

Hal Halpin, Group Publisher/Pres.
Cyberactive Media Group, Inc.

How to Get Your Games on Television...Without Really Trying, Part 1

The first of a two-part series on televised publicity

By Erica Kohnke
(With additional reporting by Adam Renner)

Have you ever seen a competitor's product on the evening news and thought...why wasn't that our game? Well, there is no reason for you to miss a great chance like that again. With the right pitch, at the right time and the perfect supporting materials, it's almost impossible to miss a television opportunity.

HERE'S WHY THE PRODUCER WON'T RETURN YOUR CALLS

In many cases, particularly for larger shows like *Today*, producers do not make the product decisions. In many cases, it's someone you may not have suspected—that freelancer whose requests you may have brushed off in favor of the "bigger fish." Whoops!

Larger shows invariably hire these independent consultants to guide their "gadget" and game segments. So rather than sending your sweet product marching into the maw of a New York City television studio—send it to the suburbs, where dozens of freelancers reside, quietly testing games, getting ready for their big Christmas round-ups on national TV.

One such individual, with credentials that include appearances on *The Today Show*, is James Oppenheim. "You're dealing with a much shorter attention span in television," he says. "When I talk to my producer I try to have everything as organized as possible so that I don't become a time drain." In other words—make sure you give consultants like Oppenheim the proper ammunition with which to approach a producer. "Thirty pages of review materials won't be as important as a zippy line that captures the essence of a product and which makes it likely that a viewer won't change channels in the middle of the b-roll."

Another freelancer with frequent televised appearances is Marc Saltzman. He advises that you only pitch games that offer a kind of "visual impact." "Some games really lend themselves to television, but others, such as smaller micro-management games, just don't work," he says. In addition, timely "cross-medium" games are ideal.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

"If it's location, location, location in real estate, then it's timing, timing, timing on TV....," so advises a producer from a major television talk show.

If your game somehow involves the latest craze, a current event or an appealing cross-medium (Saltzman mentions the newly announced *Blair Witch* game as a prime example), you have a finite window of time to feature your game on TV.

For example, when CBS announced that it had acquired the rights to broadcast the Daytona 500, a publicist quickly sent a NASCAR racing game to a freelancer working for *CBS News* at the time. The publicist and freelancer worked together to arrange an on-air interview via satellite with a driver from the big race, where he discussed the racing game. The segment aired repeatedly throughout the race week—it was appealing coverage, and the piece handily filled the boring time during rain delays.

"Trade shows are also a great venue to attract broadcast," Tore Dietrich, president of High Impact Television says. "The combination of an industry expert and the event itself heighten broadcasters' interest in covering the event and the products introduced there. We try to show them what's hot—mostly with live broadcasts geared toward the morning shows (which have more time for longer live shots)."

You must also deliver your supporting materials on time. "While we don't expect b-roll to come automatically with each game," Saltzman says, "when we ask for it, we always need it fairly soon. I've had to cancel product appearances because I haven't received the b-roll in time."

ROLL THE B-ROLL, FELLAS

The easiest way to get your b-roll played on television is to offer the producers high-quality footage. Both the picture and content you provide must be superior.

"A good VNR has gameplay and produces soundbites," Ron Jenkins, senior producer at WAGA-TV FOX5 Atlanta, says. "If the game is a brand game like *Michael Jordan's SlamJam*, then include sound and video of Michael Jordan. If the game is a technological wonder, send plenty of background material, motion capture stuff, behind the scenes b-roll and technological explanations in plain English."

Also, a good product or story won't make it to TV if it's not represented in an interesting or humorous way. "Broadcasters are looking for teasing hype and delivering video to support it," says Dietrich. "For example, when Nintendo came out with *Banjo-Kazooie*, the Golin-Harris PR team came up with having kids jump into the world's largest pool of honey, right at the Sue Bee Honey factory. That type of visual is compelling, and was picked-up and used nationwide."

"The b-roll should also include features that the publisher wants known," said Scot Rubin of the All Games Network. "For example, if your racing game has detailed visual damage modeling, make sure it's in the b-roll. The more interesting the footage is, the more excited the audience will get about the product. Ideally, it should be no less than 10 minutes in length. This allows the audience to see a variety of gameplay."

As Rubin advises, monotony will not garner much attention in a visual medium, so work hard to make your b-roll entertaining or exciting. For instance, someone explaining the attributes of a game while sitting in the dead-on center of the frame is much less interesting than a great screen shot of videogame action followed by a couple of kids giving each other a high-five.

Try different camera angles, show the subject in action (product or person) and use shot techniques such as placing your subject off-center, not too close to the camera or within an interesting setting.

Your best option may be to hire a professional video service, or a full-service organization such as Dietrich's High Impact Television. At a cost, a video service will produce and incorporate all of the elements that television news looks for in b-rolls. Full-service organizations will pitch and distribute them to the media with whom you want to connect.

PART II...

Next month, the PR Insider column will once again tackle the TV topic, this time focusing on how to bring a personality to light—how to pitch, prepare, and how to present your company spokesperson for maximum effect.

Until then, remember—it isn't rocket science, but it's still a formula. *GW*

Erica Kohnke is the vice president of Linn Public Relations in San Francisco, an agency specializing in interactive entertainment. This column was written with additional reporting by Adam Renner, PR Manager, Linn Public Relations

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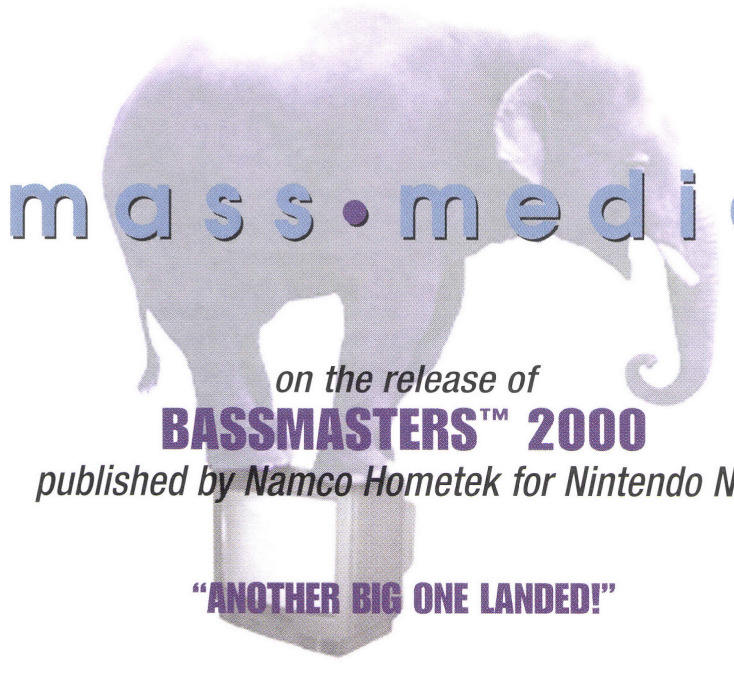

on the release of
BASSMASTERS™ 2000
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Shelf Talker:

What Do You Want Under Your Christmas Tree?

Rescuing store personnel from other people's presents

By Andy Eddy

'Tis the season to be jolly, right? Okay, but for the many retailers out there grinding away to satisfy the myriad of customers that come through the doors with extensive product requests, it's a selfless time. Sure, the sales are a plus, but on a different level, it's a good three-month period filled with sore feet, stock shortages and many, many questions from non-gaming gift givers, such as, "Oh, the kids really want me to buy the game with little green things and the explosions...oh, what do you call that?....it's on TV all the time...y'know which one I'm talking about, don'tcha?"

In an effort to rescue store personnel from endless dealings with other people's presents, *GameWEEK* has used its clout in the industry to help the beleaguered store personnel. We went right to the source and asked Santa to let us in on the Christmas lists of a few retailers around the country.

[Editor's note: In the spirit of trying to keep this on the subject of interactive entertainment, such requests as "a winning lottery ticket," "the new BMW Z8 that James Bond drives" and "a date with Sarah Michelle Gellar" were discarded. Lumps of coal have been ordered for those people, and though they're currently backordered, we expect that they will be delivered by Fed-Ex before December 25.]

Daniel Hutton, assistant manager, Babbage's Software, Tallahassee, Florida: "Anything dealing with Dreamcast. Dreamcast is probably the number-one seller in this store. It's a wild system, and had a better grand opening than probably any other system. It's really going to give PlayStation a run for its money—even though [PlayStation is] a workhorse. For graphic power, Dreamcast rivals PC. I'm wild over it. I've had all the systems, and console-wise, it's the best. I'm really looking forward to when Sega gets its networking for Dreamcast together."

Greg Figg, manager, Game World, Indianapolis, Indiana: "More than anything I'd like to see a universal Dreamcast system—that'd be great. Not only do we sell American games, but we sell import games, and we were selling the Japanese Dreamcast when it came out. I'd like to have that system so we could satisfy the customers who want to be able to play both [country's] games on one system."

Jeremy Schaffer, sales clerk, Best Buy, Southgate, Michigan: "Pokémon, Pokémon, Pokémon. We have about 400 rain checks of *Pokémon Yellow* that we still have to fill—and parents are getting antsy. I'm not a big fan of it, but it's a game that kids like, so parents are going to spend money on it. [*Pokémon Yellow* is] is getting a lot of attention because it's the only one where you get your own Pikachu."

Trent Stier, owner/manager, Game Player, Lincoln, Nebraska: "The nicest thing for me to get would be games released to us the same day as the 'big boys;' I'm tired of getting them two days later. Last year's *Zelda* and *NBA 2K* [for Sega Dreamcast] are two good examples of that. With *Zelda*, we didn't get gold cartridges on release day, and I pre-booked over 50 of them for my small retail store. I had people pay for them, and though I was promised 50 copies, I only got two.

"I'm two doors down from a Best Buy; they got [*NBA 2K*] on Wednesday and we got it on Friday. The phone was ringing off the hook, and that's a lot of times to say, 'Sorry we don't have it.'

"If I had a second choice, I'd have to say PlayStation2. I'm drooling all over that."

Raven Honeycutt, game advisor, Funcoland, Fort Worth, Texas: "Probably PlayStation2. I've been really looking forward to it since I heard about it six or seven months ago. The fact that the graphics are a whole lot better, and you can play new games as well as your old games is great. It has better memory capability too—it's using megs rather than [smaller] blocks. I'm looking forward to the DVD player, too."

Jordan Santos, sales associate, Toys & Joys, Honolulu, Hawaii: "The thing we really need is an adapter for the Dreamcast to play American games on a Japanese Dreamcast, and vice versa. A lot of people are asking for that, so they don't have to have to buy both systems. And we've sold a lot of import systems.

"We'd rather have an adapter than a chip—it's an easy accessory that plugs into the controller that people can use. We're waiting for one from [a company left unnamed]—hopefully it'll be here before the end of the year."

Larry Pelty, manager, Software Etc., Houston, Texas: "I think as a store, I'd like to see more Pokémon merchandise because that's the big thing this year. Parents are coming in looking for all this stuff. We've got all the toys and ornaments—we just sold a few of those. We've had the cards, though we haven't had them very much, and they don't last more than half a day. Recently, we got about 450 full decks and 720 packs of booster cards, and they were gone in less than two days. Anything Pokémon is hot. We sold the *Pokémon Yellow*s out again, and the bundle of the Game Boy and the game flies out of the store. Nintendo is really good about [special bundles], and the special *Donkey Kong 64* [N64 bundle] will be a big seller too.

"This is a good year for games. It's almost scary. We've sold out of all of our game systems—we have three N64s left—but no other hardware, and we're not expecting enough to come in for the holidays. Last week, I sold out of PlayStations, so I borrowed from another store and they sold out right away."

Bob Greene, manager, Electronics Boutique, Burlington, Massachusetts: "For PlayStation2, the interest of the public is already strong, and it would really drive my sales up. It can play DVD, which is very important—we have a small selection of DVD products in our store. The interest alone tells me that the system is going to do incredibly well. We've already taken pre-orders on it." ***GW***

Shelf Talker covers topics of interest to store owners and store-level staff/personnel. Comments and topic ideas are welcome, and should be sent by e-mail to andy@gameweek.com.

News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits...

Namco Files—Namco Ltd. and Namco America have filed suit against Two Bit Score Inc. charging the Texas-based company with trademark and copyright infringement for making and selling counterfeit copies of Namco's *Pac-Man*. The suit alleges that Two-Bit Score is selling counterfeit circuit boards of Namco coin-operated arcade games and copies of *Pac-Man, Ms. Pac-Man* and *Galaga* arcade games. Namco seeks an injunction, unspecified damages and attorney's fees and warns that the use of counterfeit games by arcade customers could subject arcade operators to liability as well.

Microsoft Files Software Piracy Suit—Microsoft Corp. has filed suit against Chinese company, Yado Technology Group, accusing the company of using pirated products including Microsoft Office and Windows on its office computers. Microsoft is seeking 1.5 million yuon or $181,200 and a public apology through the media. Yado told *China Daily* newspaper that some individuals, not the company as a whole, have been using the illegal software and that Microsoft has its company confused with a company of a similar name. The Beijing Number One Intermediate Court heard the case on Thursday and may rule before the end of the year.

The Zone Widens—Microsoft Corp. announced that member registration on the MSN Gaming Zone has reached 500,000 unique visitors a day, which more than doubles traffic on the site from a year ago. Membership at the zone has reached 10 million. Adam Waalkes, product unit manager for MSN Gaming Zone, stated, "We believe the Zone's remarkable growth is an indicator that online gaming is the future of Internet entertainment."

TIME Honors Dreamcast—Time Digital, *TIME Magazine*'s new technology publication, has named the Sega Dreamcast 1999 "Machine of the Year." The Dreamcast was cited for revolutionary design and technology advances, graphics capabilities, sound quality, portable gaming options and Internet functionality. *TIME Digital* will hit news-stands November 29.

Vagabond Offers Online Gaming Magazine—In Tokyo, Vagabond Co. has announced that it is developing operations in electronic magazines accessed using NTT Mobile Communications Network Inc. The company recently began issuing a gaming magazine for free, on a trial basis, but plans to switch to a fee-based service in December. The magazine, which comes out every Wednesday, includes game-related news, rankings of software sales and allows consumers to purchase software and other products. The fee for the service is expected to be 200 yen monthly.

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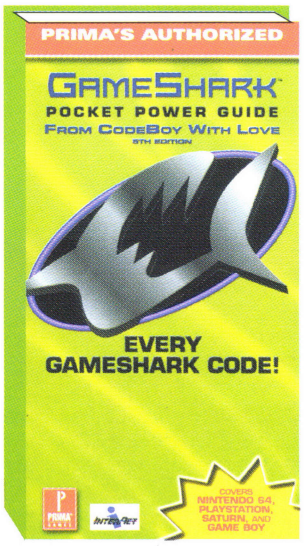
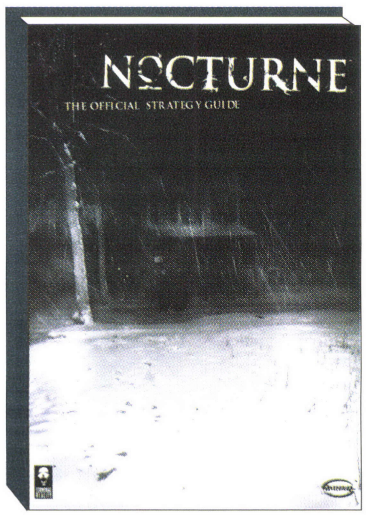


Prima's Authorized GameShark Pocket Power Guide: From CodeBoy With Love

Publisher: Prima Games
Platform(s) Covered: PlayStation, Nintendo 64, Saturn and Game Boy
Availability: Now
Author(s): CodeBoy
Price: $9.99 • ***ISBN:*** 0-7615-2184-4
Website: www.primagames.com

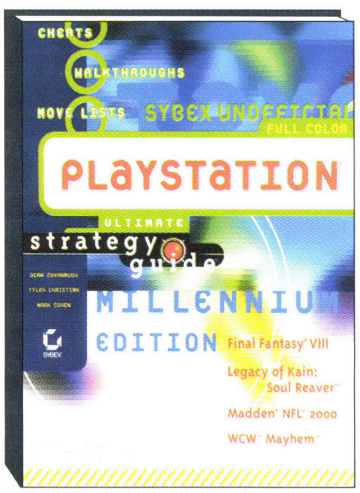
This book has more codes than will ever be necessary. According to the book jacket, it contains "every GameShark code!" Those consumers who feel the need to enhance their gaming pleasure with Interact's product should be anxious to get their mitts on this pocket-sized guide. Another upside is the coverage of multiple systems.



The Official Strategy Guide: Nocturne

Publisher: Gathering of Developers
Platform(s) Covered: PC
Availability: Now
Author(s): Mars Publishing
Price: $19.99 • ***ISBN:*** 1-892817-31-4
Website: www.godgames.com

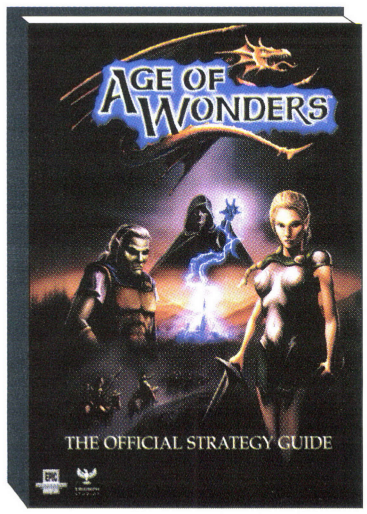
If the content in the Gathering's latest title didn't scare consumers, the level of difficulty just might. Mars Publishing crept into the darkness to uncover the secrets of the undead. The guide offers essential tips and strategies for all five acts, designed to keep consumers among the living. There's a complete listing of weapons and items along with an in-depth look into the strengths and weaknesses of monsters encountered. Sorry, but no night-light was included to ward off the nightmares.



Sybex's Unofficial Ultimate Strategy Guide: PlayStation Millennium Edition

Publisher: Sybex
Platform(s) Covered: PlayStation
Availability: Now
Author(s): Dean Cavanaugh, Tyler Christian and Mark Cohen
Price: $14.99 • ***ISBN:*** 0-7821-2687-1
Website: www.sybexgames.com

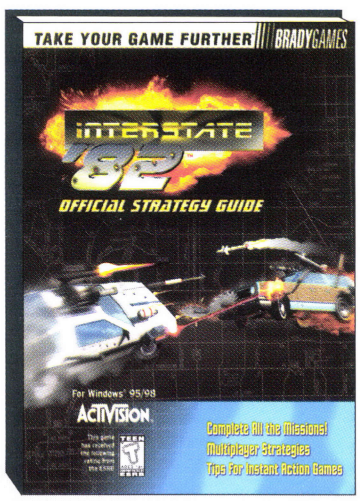
This guide from Sybex covers some of today's hottest games available, like *Dino Crisis* and *Soul Reaver*, in little bite-sized chunks of tips and tactics. What the book lacks in in-depth coverage, it makes up for with a considerable amount of information given on a broad range of genres. It's a nice starter guide for the casual gamer or those seeking more information regarding the titles that are covered.



The Official Strategy Guide: Age of Wonders

Publisher: Gathering of Developers
Platform(s) Covered: PC
Availability: Now
Author(s): Mars Publishing
Price: $19.99 • ***ISBN:*** 1-892817-30-6
Website: www.godgames.com

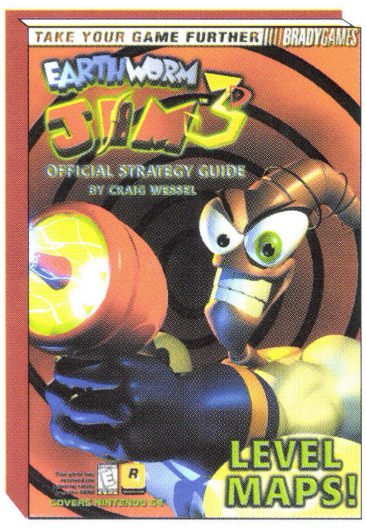
In a land filled with magic, mystery and pimply-faced teenagers, there lies a real-time strategy game by the name of *Age of Wonders*. This guide was also authored by Mars Publishing for the Gathering and explores the intricacies of the game. Consumers can stroll through campaigns by using the detailed information provided. Extensive strategies are included for battling against the 12 races that inhabit the game. Consumers also receive an extensive list of items, spells, unit and hero information.



Official Strategy Guide: Interstate '82

Publisher: BradyGAMES
Platform(s) Covered: PC
Availability: Now
Author(s): Brady Staff
Price: $19.99 • ***ISBN:*** 1-566868-879-3
Website: www.bradygames.com

Activision's sequel to *Interstate '76* places gamers in the midst of car combat with an updated setting…the 80s. Brady has taken all the secrets learned directly from Activision and used the info to create a road map to success. There are detailed listings of all the car types and upgrades that are available, along with advice for building the most lethal driving machine around. Tactics are divulged to the reader, enabling them to smoke the competition. And with action this fast and furious, the consumer is going to want the tips that can make them a champ.



Official Strategy Guide: Earthworm Jim 3D

Publisher: BradyGAMES
Platform(s) Covered: Nintendo 64
Availability: Now
Author(s): Craig Wessel
Price: $11.99 • ***ISBN:*** 1-56686-812-2
Website: www.bradygames.com

Everyone's favorite annelid (earthworm, for those of you who slept through biology) is back facing the scariest foes ever - all four of his brains! Brady helps consumers to "restore Jim's brainpower" in Rockstar Games hip 3D adventure title *Earthworm Jim 3D*. The guide dissects all four areas of the gray matter with walkthrough information and full maps. Tips for dealing with the creatures inhabiting Jim's subconscious will help players make quick work of whatever stands in their way. The book even contains a rundown of weaponry and items ranging from pistols to canned beans.

GameWEEK Print Report is an overview of game books that are written for the consumer. Print Report is meant to provide current information regarding the book and its potential at the time of its release. It also represents the status of the book's genre and current marketability. While Print Report might be critical, it is by no means final judgment on a book and should not be solely used by retailers to base buying decisions on, as the final outcome of a book already previewed here could be completely different at its time of release, if previously unavailable.

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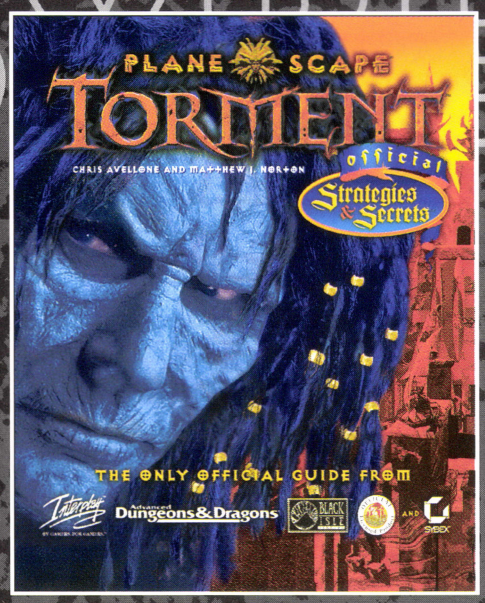

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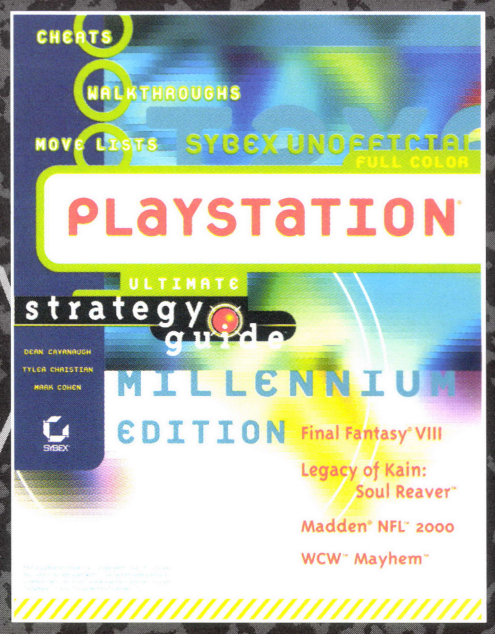

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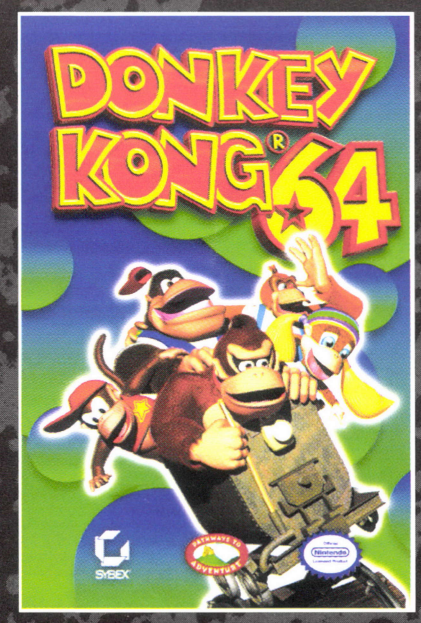

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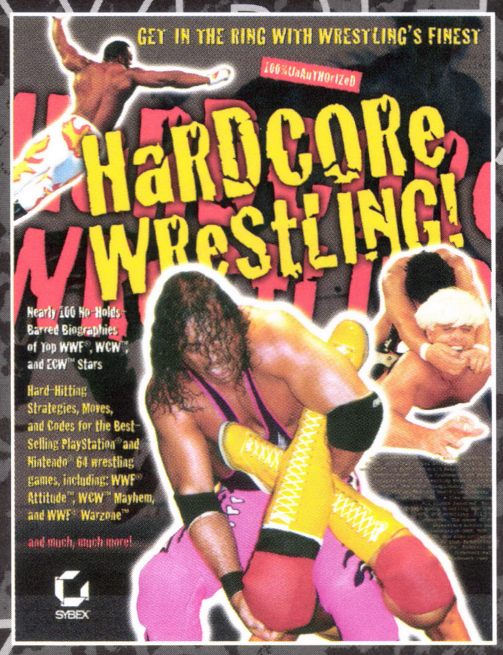

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Accessory Market

The retailers guide to game-related peripherals

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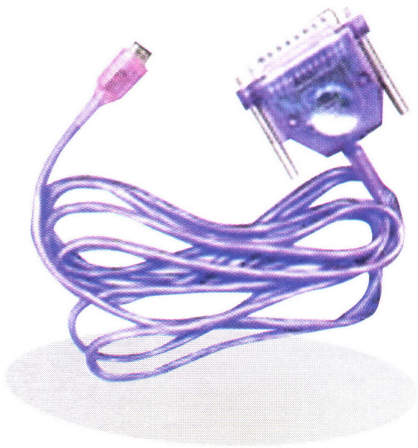
Game Boy Camera Link



Manufacturer: Mad Catz
Contact: 904.646.4226
www.madcatz.com
System(s): Game Boy
MSRP: $24.99
Availability: Now

Mad Catz's Camera Link for Game Boy/Game Boy Camera allows users to upload photos taken by the GB Camera onto a Windows 95-compatible PC. Once on your PC, the photos can be manipulated in a number of fun and creative ways. The photos can be drawn over, saved, e-mailed or printed. Pretty much anything that can be done with a regular PC image file can be done with a Game Boy Camera picture.

Screenbeat Sound Station

Manufacturer: SpectraVideo
Contact: 513.336.1370
www.spectravideo.com
System(s): PlayStation, Dreamcast, Nintendo 64, PC
MSRP: $69.99
Availability: Now

SpectraVideo wants gamers to play it loud with the Screenbeat Sound Station for PlayStation, Nintendo 64, PC and Dreamcast. This high-fidelity sound system adds a whole new dimension to the sound quality of videogames thanks to a 300-watt sub-woofer and twin satellite speakers. The Sound Station can also be used with Walkmans, Diskmans and MP3 Players. Available in two fruity colors, iMac Blueberry or classic Purple.

Games Station (PlayStation) DreamStation (Dreamcast)

Television and console not included

Manufacturer: SpectraVideo
Contact: 513.336.1370
www.spectravideo.com
System(s): PlayStation, Dreamcast
MSRP: $29.99
Availability: Now

The DreamStation/Games Station is a very clever little storage device that sits underneath a 14" television and holds the PlayStation or Dreamcast console, two controllers and eight games. The controllers and games are easily accessible thanks to a drop down, 2-stop drawer. It is made of durable high impact plastic that protects the console from harm while the design allows for maximum ventilation.

WingMan Extreme Digital 3D

Manufacturer: Logitech Inc.
Contact: 800.231.7717
www.logitech.com
System(s): PC
MSRP: $39.99
Availability: Now

The WingMan Extreme Digital 3D is an attractively priced joystick that offers performance and affordability in one package. On the base, you'll find two buttons and a slide throttle near the bottom of the stick. The contoured plastic stick features an eight-way hat switch, a trigger and four buttons. Logitech's user-friendly setup software makes installation and calibration simple. Logitech's WingMan Profiler software is also included, letting you update the joystick's drivers via the Internet.

HammerHead FX

Manufacturer: InterAct
Contact: 410.238.1427
www.interact-acc.com
System(s): PC
MSRP: $39.99
Availability: Now

InterAct's HammerHead FX gamepad for the PC is almost an identical clone of Sony's Dual Shock Controller for the PlayStation, which is not necessarily a bad thing when you really think about it. It's about time a PC gamepad matched the superior functionality and performance of a console controller. The HammerHead has several distinguishing features: a pair of well-positioned triggers on the underside; two analog mini-joysticks in the middle; and two small force-feedback motors, one in each handle.

WingMan Extreme Gamepad

Manufacturer: Logitech Inc.
Contact: 800.231.7717
www.logitech.com
System(s): PC
MSRP: $39.95
Availability: Now

Taking a page from Microsoft's motion-sensitive Freestyle Pro controller, Logitech's WingMan Extreme Gamepad incorporates many of the same great functions. The WingMan Extreme Gamepad has an accelerometer that can sense the gamepad's tilt position. The ergonomic shape and grip feel nice; the triggers are perfect; most of the thumb buttons are well placed, except for those closest to the center; and the D-pad, for the most part, is precise.

GameWEEK Accessory Department is an overview of game peripherals for the home videogame and PC market. Accessory Market is meant to provide current information regarding the product and its potential at the time of its release. It also represents the status of the product's current marketability. Accessory Market is by no means final judgment on a product and should not be solely used by retailers to base buying decisions on.

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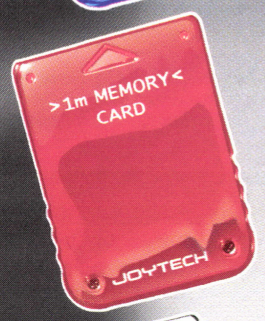

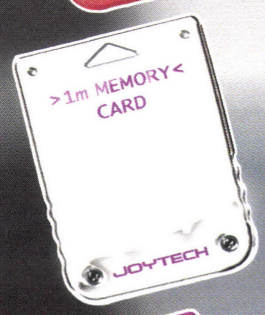

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Retail Buyer Guide

Picking the games that will bring in the profits

GameWEEK Reviews reflect the sales potential of a specific product. Each review is an evaluation of a product's potential performance at retail. They are designed to provide retail buyers and store managers with the most accurate, up to date information available regarding upcoming releases. GameWEEK Reviews do not attempt to evaluate products on their technical merits or gameplay the way an enthusiast magazine does, although these are factors in the overall grade. GameWEEK Reviews do not intend to help or hinder a product's overall success in any way.

GameWEEK Rating System

A *Will be one of the best selling products for that particular platform. Strong marketing and word of mouth complement superb gameplay and excellent design. This is a must-stock product for any retail/rental store.*

B *Great product that is just lacking in some areas. It will sell well and bring in the masses, but 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 product that will sell about "average" in sales, yet not worthy of a "B." A "C" game is still a solid seller especially within niche categories.*

D *A product that is unsupported in terms of marketing by the manufacturer, lacking in quality and should have stayed in development longer.*

F *A product that never should have been considered, much less released. A thoroughly unimpressive title that will only sell at drastically discounted prices.*

Software Reviews

ReVolt

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Acclaim Studios
Available: Now
MSRP: $49.99
Contact:
www.acclaim.net
516.656.5000

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

RATING **B**

Rundown	Hype & Marketing	Competition
After a moderate success on the PC and Playstation, Acclaim's *ReVolt* heads to Dreamcast. This unique racing simulation, which has players "driving" radio-controlled racers, is pretty much a straight port-over from the PC, and really shows off the power of Sega's new system. Visually, the game looks much better than it did on the PlayStation. Gameplay is addictive, although control is difficult to dial in. *ReVolt* is arriving for Dreamcast at just the right time, since only a few racing simulations have been released for the system. This is the kind of title that has massive cross marketing potential; serious R/C race fans will be all over it.	Acclaim is planning a strong focus toward Dreamcast-specific media, including the official and unofficial Dreamcast publications, running through the holidays, with some older demographic cross-platform spreads as well. This follows a strong print campaign in R/C books for the release of the N64, PSX and PC version.	There isn't much in the way of "toy racing" sims for the system, other than—to a certain extent—Sega's own *Toy Commander.* There seems to be a demographic for games that recreate the enjoyment of playing with childhood toys.

Bottom Line: *Consumers too old for toys under the tree can still hope for* ReVolt. *This could be the season when wishes for radio-controlled cars are answered with simulated versions.*

PC

Age of Wonders

Publisher: Gathering of Developers
Developer: Epic Megagames/Triumph
Available: Now
MSRP: $49.99
Contact:
www.godgames.com
877.GOD.GAMES

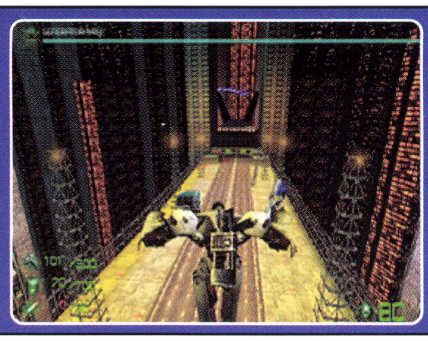
EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

RATING **C+**

This strategic fantasy title, with mythical creatures battling in an Elvish world, plays to a select audience in an extremely crowded market. The attention required to simultaneously manage diverse units on three maps while understanding magic and the complexities of different races may be more than most casual gamers like to handle, but this game could easily satisfy the hardcore fantasy gamer crowd. This title is seen as a close revival of a classic favorite, *Masters Of Magic* and that alone should support a modest number of sales. The downside is that *Age of Wonders* isn't exactly the most state-of-the-art title on the shelves; the somewhat dated graphics and gameplay may turn off gamers looking for a cutting-edge experience.	A large portion of the press reminisced on the resemblance to *Masters Of Magic*, which should have a positive effect. *Age of Wonders* will also be supported by print, online and radio advertising in hopes to attract both casual and hardcore gamers.	The most recent competitor, *Civilization: Test of Time*, featured fantasy worlds using multi-layered maps but with mixed results. The addition did not work as well as expected for the title and caused some confusion.

Bottom Line: *There will be a lot of closet* Masters Of Magic *fans that will welcome the title. Anyone else may want to stick with the master, Sid Meier, and the empire of* Civilization.

PC



Slave Zero

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Infogrames North America
Available: Now
MSRP: $39.99
Contact:
www.infogrames.com

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

RATING **C+**

The back-story is pretty typical: a tumultuous future where the world needs a hero in a moment of despair. Enter one lone warrior to save the day. It's a timeless tale that translates well to the interactive medium and it works perfectly in *Slave Zero*, the latest "giant robot" subgenre of action shooters. The standout elements in *Slave Zero* are the game's inner-city settings, which help showcase the awe-inspiring sense of scale and help prove just how dynamite a PC game can look. While it looks great and has balanced gameplay, the story feels too typical with a "been here, done that" feel to it, and the game just doesn't hold up past the first few levels. The plot tells of a revolution yet the game doesn't seem all that revolutionary.	TV ads have been running for the DC version of *Slave Zero* since the launch of the system, while print ads will run in *PC Gamer* and *Computer Gaming World* from Nov. '99 through Jan '00. Several Web promotions include e-cards and giveaways from the official *Slave Zero* site, which was recently revamped. Additional promotions with hardware partner sites are planned for the Dreamcast and PC versions.	The shooter market is crowded. *Slave Zero* also has to deal with *Mech Warrior 3* and *Heavy Gear 2*, plus the upcoming *Oni*. Other than Monolith's *Shogo, SZ* is the only mech game with an anime look to it.This title will have to fight for its life at retail.

Bottom Line: *It's a good-looking game with some unique settings, but there's only so much room for another giant robot smash-a-thon on the PC.*

PC

Wheel of Time

Publisher: GT Interactive
Developer: Legend Entertainment Company
Available: Now
MSRP: $49.99
Contact:
www.gtinteractive.com
800.610.4847

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

RATING **B**

Games based on novels have been hit or miss (mostly miss), and GT Interactive is facing a serious uphill battle with its action fantasy *Wheel of Time*. Positive word of mouth might be enough to turn this wheel around, though. Robert Jordan's fantasy series' have garnered a serious cult following, and that's a major plus for the title. There hasn't been one single decent fantasy shooter released. *WOT* makes good use of the Unreal engine, and right now, it's the only magic shooter in town. Last year, Eidos stole some thunder in the shooter market with *Thief: The Dark Project*. Fans who want to take part in a multiplayer experience in a similar setting may look to *Wheel of Time*.	*Wheel of Time* is going to have one of the largest print campaigns for a PC title that GT Interactive has ever done, but it's going to need help to stand out in a very crowded market. GT will be placing ads in major PC gaming mags, plus sci-fi and fantasy publications, as well as targeting major bookseller sites—but it still may not be enough.	Consumers looking for medieval action have everything from *Age of Empires II* to *Heroes III* to *Thief Gold* to fill the void. No matter; *Wheel* is something unique. The early ad campaign is just different enough to make this title stand out.

Bottom Line: *Robert Jordan's novels have sold fairly well and GT Interactive is sparing no expense to make sure that the timing is right for this* Wheel of Time.

Hardware Reviews

PC

SideWinder Precision Racing Wheel

Manufacturer: Microsoft
Available: Now
MSRP: $79.95
Contact:
www.microsoft.com
800.426.9400

RATING **A-**

Rundown	Hype & Marketing	Competition
The new SideWinder Precision Racing Wheel still offers the same high quality construction and sleek styling. In fact, both wheels look nearly identical. However, this baby requires the Windows 98 OS and employs simple USB connectivity, making installation a snap. Included on the device are eight programmable buttons (two in the form of shifters/triggers) and a separate set of foot pedals. Pre-built game profiles can be used and new profiles can be easily created. Plus, it's hard to fault the controller's trademark quick and easy clamping system, a feature other peripheral manufacturers would do well to emulate. For a non-force feedback racing wheel, it's hard to fault the latest SideWinder.	All Microsoft will divulge regarding its marketing of the Precision Racing Wheel is that it will be handled, for all practical purposes, the same as its other SideWinder offerings. So, look for ads to appear in consumer publications, store displays and via various promotional efforts. As with other SideWinder controllers, it's available at retail outlets and at Microsoft's online shop.microsoft.com store.	Mad Catz Andretti Racing Wheel, ThrustMaster NASCAR Pro Racing Wheel, Saitek R100, Act Labs' RS Racing System, and Logitech's WingMan Formula. Its strongest competition, however, is the super stylish WingMan Formula.

Bottom Line: *The SideWinder Precision Racing Wheel is another fine addition to the SideWinder family of controllers. It should prove to be a hot holiday purchase if prominently displayed.*

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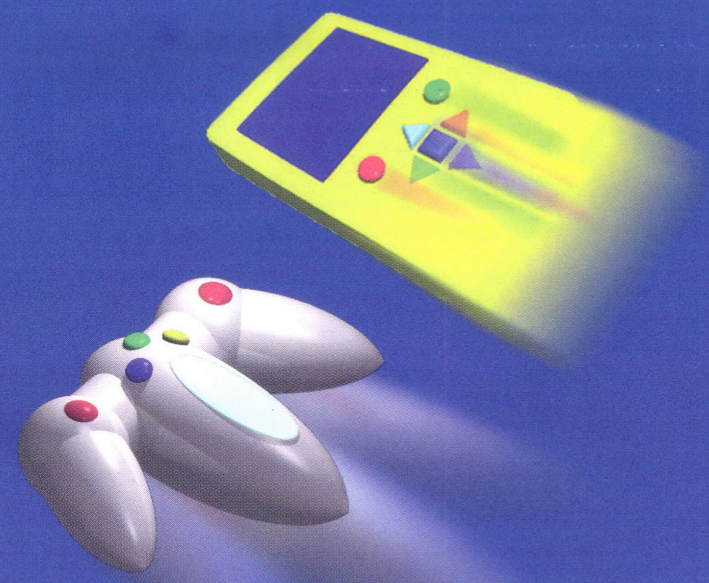

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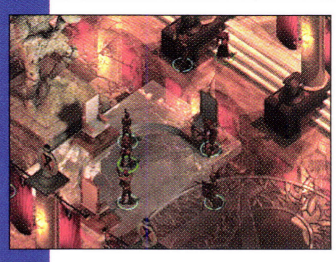
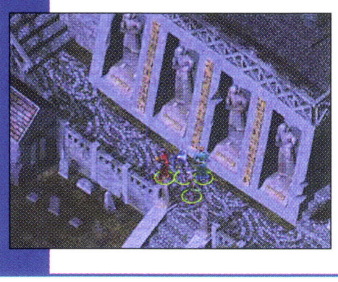
Previews

Sneak peeks at tomorrow's potential hits

GameWEEK Previews are early looks at products that are works in progress. Previews are meant to provide current information regarding the game and its potential at the time of its release. They also represent the status of the game's genre and current marketability. While previews might be critical, they are by no means final judgment on a game and should not be solely used by retailers to base buying decisions on, as the final outcome of a game previously previewed here could be completely different at its time of release.

PC





Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn

Publisher: Interplay/Black Isle Studios • ***Developer:*** BioWare Corp. • ***Available:*** Q2, 2000

It's no secret that role-playing games on console systems—particularly the PlayStation—have received consistently high sales numbers. Although the genre had a relatively slow start on the PC, most retailers would agree: RPGs on the PC have proven their worth tenfold. With hot titles such as *Diablo*, *Ultima* and *Everquest*, the role-playing genre has never looked better. Last year we saw how quickly *Baldur's Gate* took control of the PC role-playing game market. While everyone was trying to figure out whether *Diablo II* was ever coming out or not, *Baldur's Gate* drew a lot of attention and it paid off. Being awarded numerous "RPG of the Year" awards from top enthusiast pubs such as *Computer Gaming World* and *PC Gamer*, it is no wonder that *Baldur's Gate* sold over one million copies.

Now, the game that redefined a genre has a sequel in the works. Black Isle Studios—a division of Interplay Productions, and developer BioWare—are working on *Baldur's Gate II: Shadow of Amn*. *Shadow of Amn* will be a mythic saga continuing the storyline of the original *Baldur's Gate*. The *Forgotten Realms* story line begins along the southernmost portion of the Sword Coast in the merchant kingdom known as Amn. The borders of the region will include diverse environments such as the Elven forests of Tethir, the Cloudpeak Mountains, the Cities of Underdark and the Capital City of Amn, Athkatla. Being extremely passionate about the content of *Baldur's Gate*, BioWare shows us just how incredible a storyteller it really is.

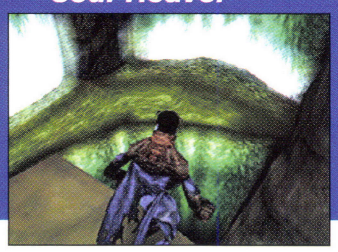
Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn is going to concentrate more on story development, exploration and character interaction than in the original game. In addition, along with hundreds of new monsters and enemies, there will be over fifteen new NPC characters. The spells in *Shadows of Amn* will include the full array of spells available in the *AD&D* Player's Handbook. In addition to spells such as the meteor swarm and energy drain, players will be able to summon elementals and demons. There will be 130 new spells, bringing the total number of spells in *Baldur's Gate II* to 300. Players will be able to choose from fifteen different character classes in *Baldur's Gate II: Shadow of Amn*. Higher-level characters will also be able to develop an exceptionally diverse combat proficiency system. Players will not only be able to master dual wielding weapons but single weapon mastery as well. A new addition to *Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn* is the inclusion of class "kits." Class kits are subclasses of the traditional classes available in *AD&D*. There are over 20 new kits and classes in *Shadows of Amn*, which makes *Baldur's Gate's* class list the most all-inclusive *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons Second Edition* CRPG ever created.

In addition to the new character classes and spells, the interface and graphics of the game have been tweaked as well. Although at first glance the game looks identical to the first *Baldur's Gate*, there are some subtle changes. The most significant is that the game will now display in 800X600 instead of 640X480. What this means to the player is a bigger playing area and incredibly detailed environments and wickedly cool spell effects. Another key point to mention is that *Baldur's Gate II: Shadow of Amn* is going to support 3D acceleration via the popular Open GL API. Even though the characters are smaller than in the original game, this puts everything into perspective in terms of size. For example, when your character is standing next to a monster, it's interesting to note the size difference. It really adds to the game to know that the monster you're facing and about to fight is three times the size of your character.

The graphics in the original *Baldur's Gate* were downright gorgeous, and it's great to see that *Baldur's Gate II: Shadow of Amn* is continuing this trend. BioWare's artists give boring 2D environments incredible life with lush textures and ambient effects that are truly brilliant. Each character is drawn with incredible detail, and the various spell effects are wonderful eye-candy. The higher resolution really does make a difference.

Without a doubt, it's going to be an interesting year 2000. With the much anticipated *Diablo II* coming out in early spring and then *Baldur's Gate II:Shadow of Amn*, who knows which role-playing game will be the top-seller? One thing's for certain: the genre has never looked so good.

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver



Publisher: EIDOS Interactive
Developer: Crystal Dynamics

When *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* was released this year, it really took everyone by surprise. Who would have thought Crystal Dynamics could develop such a jaw-dropping great game? With the world sick of Lara Croft, consumers have been begging for a new action hero, and they got it in the form of Raziel. Both the PC and PlayStation versions of the game have received high praise for everything from graphics to gameplay.

It comes as no surprise then that the announcement of a Dreamcast version would bring about many a smile. *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* is an action/adventure game set in a netherworld ruled by vampires. Since the game's release in August, the PlayStation and PC versions of the game have sold over one million units worldwide.

So what is the Dreamcast version of *Soul Reaver* going to offer? First off, you should know that the story line and gameplay in the Dreamcast edition will remain identical to the two previous iterations. Graphically, however, Eidos has informed *GameWEEK* that the DC version will not simply be a quick and easy PC port; the visuals will be enhanced in a big way. Not only is the Dreamcast edition up and running at 60 frames per second (at least 95% of the time), the depth of field is also being broadened, meaning players will be able to see more of the environment at all times. Thanks to Sega's advanced hardware, this *Soul Reaver* will run at a higher resolution, too. Textures, character animation and environmental shading are going to be extremely detailed. As if all that wasn't enough, the DC edition will also contain an improved intro movie (from what we've heard, the developers are attempting to assemble a movie-quality intro). There are even plans for VMU support.

4 Wheel Thunder

Publisher: Midway Games
Developer: Kalisto

Formula 1 racing games for Dreamcast have been taking up more than their fair share of shelf space since the console made its debut. It's a sight for sore eyes, then, to see a game like *4 Wheel Thunder* come down the pike. Combining top-notch visuals with addictive gameplay, this game is turning out to be one racing game worth checking out.

4 Wheel Thunder is the second title in Midway's ongoing "Thunder" series of racing games (the first being the arcade-borne *Hydro Thunder*.)

Developed by Kalisto (of *Nightmare Creatures* fame), *4WT* is an arcade-style racing game unlike any other. Players will be able to race off-road on 12 tracks in eight real-world locations. There will also be eight indoor tracks, which will serve as qualifying courses to prepare players for outdoor hijinks. The final version is slated to contain eight different vehicles: buggies, jeeps and quads with four-wheel independent suspension, all possessing authentically replicated physics. Players will also be able to adjust the control schemes for their vehicles. Vehicles can be upgraded with power-ups found throughout the game. *4 Wheel Thunder* will also showcase various weather conditions, including rain, fog, and snow. Even at this early stage of development, the graphics already surpass those in *Sega Rally 2*—or any other DC racer (with the possible exception of *Hydro Thunder*.)

Combined with graphical touches such as flying mud, leaves and spark effects, *4 Wheel Thunder* may be the best looking racing game so far. Game modes include Practice, Arcade Outdoor, Arcade Indoor and Championship. There will also be a two-player spilt-screen option included.

Dragon Valor

Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Available: Q1, 2000

Back in 1984, Namco released a popular arcade game called *Dragon Buster*. Several years later, the game appeared on the Super NES and was met with a lukewarm reception. More recently, *Dragon Buster* found its way into Namco's Museum series for the PlayStation (Volume #2.)

Dragon Valor is the official follow-up to *Dragon Buster*. Combining a mixed variety of action, fighting, and racing elements, *Dragon Valor* is definitely one of the more unique RPGs to make it to the PlayStation. Players take on the role of Clovis, a dragon slayer out to kill Rage, the dragon that killed his sister.

Given a magical sword, Clovis embarks on an epic journey of revenge. The emphasis is placed on fighting; the player will perform various cut and slash moves against enemies to take them out. The player can also execute special attacks and perform magic spells, in addition to executing Mario-esque platform maneuvers (not terribly unlike Square's *Brave Fencer Musashi*.) Throughout the adventure, players will interact with characters, fight monsters and solve puzzles. The player will also be able to develop relationships with women. This is a key point in the game because the type of woman the player chooses as a wife affects how the rest of the game plays out. When a player marries and has a child, that child will be the one who stars in the next chapter of the game.

The basic premise of *Dragon Valor* is relatively simple. The player must explore different locations, defeat the dragon at the end of each stage, and then move on. What's unique is that this action/adventure/RPG is played in complete 3D, meaning all attacks and defensive moves occur in three-dimensional space.

Battlezone: Rise of the Black Dogs

Publisher: Crave/Activision
Developer: Crave
Available: Q1, 2000

Combining action with real-time strategy is *Battlezone: Rise of the Black Dogs* for the Nintendo 64. Based on the critically acclaimed PC title, *Battlezone*, the N64 version features brand new plot twists and exclusive levels.

The year is 1962. Americans and Soviets are harvesting alien remnants from the Moon. These remnants are composed of bio-metal and if used correctly, can be transformed into new structures and vehicles. Both the Americans and the Soviets are using this bio-metal to construct advanced weapons. Players can control either side, racing to build powerful weaponry from secret alien technology, or be a Black Dog renegade, an option exclusive to the Nintendo 64 edition.

Battlezone: Rise of the Black Dogs will feature three modes of play: Arcade mode puts players in the cockpit of a hovertank and lets them compete for top scores by destroying the most enemies; Pilot Mode requires players to follow specific mission directives from their commander; and Commander Mode, which closely resembles the PC version. Here, players direct everything from resource management to deploying forces against the enemy. Utilizing a radar screen, players will be able to scout out enemies, switch from vehicle to vehicle and plan out their attacks. *Black Dogs* will have over 14 distinct tank types and over 30 different weapons along with a hearty selection of power-ups. Players will have to cover seven different planets. The game will also include multiplayer support for up to four players. Split-screen multiplayer games include deathmatch, capture the flag and arena battle. Crave is currently mulling over a possible option which would let two players pick two AI allies and stage a war against each other.

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TV or NOT TV

Game publishers find they're getting less bang for their TV buck this holiday season

By David Ward

As *Austin Powers*' Doctor Evil will attest, $1 million isn't what it used to be. Just ask videogame marketing executives this holiday season as they're finding that their seven-figure TV ad budgets aren't going quite as far as they used to.

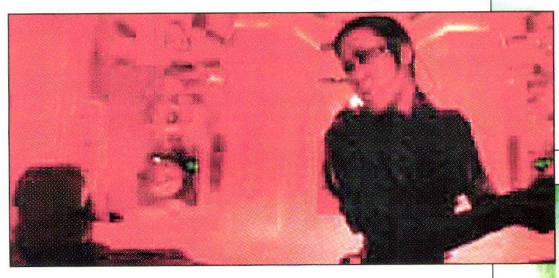
This fourth quarter will likely see a record number of games being advertised on TV. The large installed base for Sony PlayStation and Nintendo 64 and the surprisingly strong launch of the Sega Dreamcast have boosted publishers' confidence about using the ultimate mass medium as a way to drive sales of their latest and greatest games. Another reason for the increase in TV ads is that retail now often demands it before they'll take a huge order on a game.

But multi-million ad budgets aren't buying nearly as many spots on popular TV shows as they did in the past. Rates for cable TV advertising are up 60% over a year ago, one source told *GameWEEK*. A recent *Time* magazine article noted that rates on the traditional networks have risen 10-20%.

Sega of America's Peter Moore

Some reasons for this rise can be attributed to the booming economy and, to a lesser extent, the hype over the millennium. But by and large, the major culprit for this year's huge run-up in rates is the Internet. "It's more the impact of the dot.coms and the VC money being poured into them," noted Sega of America's Senior VP Peter Moore.

While few of these Internet start-ups are making money, all feel the need to build their brand among consumers with massive marketing campaigns—and mind-share doesn't come cheap. It's estimated that an average dot.com company will spend about $40 million to build brand awareness while many will spend double that or more.



Sega's "It's Thinking" Dreamcast TV ads featured super fast-action footage to capture a potential buyer's attention.

The reality for game publishers is that there is only a finite amount of TV programming that consistently reaches their core audience. "We have a very specialized market, and, as a general rule, it tends to be male 12-34," explained Namco Marketing VP Mike Fischer. "Because cable has so many great programs that pinpoint that audience, whether it's wrestling, MTV or the Sci-Fi channel, cable offers a lot of really valuable outlets. So, the tight cable market makes it tougher for videogame companies than it does for other products, because we don't have that many choices."

Already the tight ad market has forced some game publishers to alter their TV strategy. One source told us Titus was unable to find space for TV ads for the PlayStation version of Superman until days after Christmas. A peripheral manufacturer spoke privately of having to push back its planned ad campaign on MTV for several weeks after Coca-Cola came in and bought up all the available spots.

Even in the best of times, most marketing executives will tell you television advertising is not for the feint of heart. Publishers pay anywhere from a few thousand dollars for 30 seconds on a niche cable show to hundreds of thousands of dollars or more for a half-minute on more popular series or special events.

For example, the new NBC crime drama, *Third Watch*, is charging $240,000 for a half-minute of advertising time. And that doesn't include the expense of creating the ad itself or any of the agency fees that get tacked on.

On average, publishers will spend a minimum of $1 million on a TV campaign, with many AAA titles being backed by $5 million TV budgets. Nintendo is spending $22 million on *Donkey Kong 64*, the bulk of that on TV ads. Sony Computer Entertainment America is spending $150 million on marketing in fiscal year 2000, including $6 million-dollar TV pushes for four key first party holiday releases: *Gran Turismo 2*, *Spyro 2*, *Crash Team Racing* and *NFL GameDay 2000*.

For that money, the advertiser is promised a certain number of viewers. "The thing to remember when you are buying TV is they are guaranteeing ratings," said Fischer. "So whether you buy a popular TV show or whether you buy an unpopular TV show, if they do not deliver the ratings they promised you, they will give you the difference."

Of course, that doesn't help if your game is collecting dust on shelves because nobody watched your TV ads.

And that's assuming you can get ads on the show you want. Many game publishers, especially if their name is not Sony, Nintendo, Sega or Electronic Arts, are often shut out of popular shows on the major networks. Most of those spots are sold to leading consumer brands in what's known as the "upfront market." SOA's Moore said that ad time is sold two quarters in advance, which, for the fourth quarter, means June or July.

"The big issue for us is that some of the programming that we wanted was sold out and the specific example was *The Simpsons*," lamented one publishing executive. "We couldn't advertise on *The Simpsons* because the big advertisers like Butterfinger and Sony had snapped it all up."

Know Your Advertiser!

Questions for retailers when evaluating TV ad campaigns:

1—Does the ad content match the game's demographic?

2—Do the TV shows on which the ads will appear match the game's demographic?

3—Is the ad campaign extensive enough to drive sales?

4—How do the ad and ad buys compare with what other publishers are doing with their games?

5—Is the campaign aimed at driving pre-sell or does it kick off when the game is on shelves?

6—Is the game aimed at the hardcore or the mass-market gamer?

7—Is the game good enough so that a TV campaign will make a difference?

The result is that third party game makers all find themselves gravitating toward the remaining programming that reaches their core demographic. During the holiday selling season, TV shows such as Comedy Central's *South Park*, wrestling (on any network), extreme sports shows and the Fox Network's sensationalized reality shows are packed with game ads. "It used to be that programmers would guarantee a publisher that their ad would be the only game ad during a certain flight or tier of ads," said Sam Goldberg, a former Acclaim and Take 2 executive now working as a consultant. "The networks don't do that anymore, so now, there's the chance that your game ad may be followed by a spot from your competitor."

Fisher said that's not that big of an issue for him. "You know going in that if you're advertising on something like *South Park*, there's going to be a lot of other videogame ads on there. Maybe for Sony and Nintendo that's a big issue. Maybe Sony doesn't want to have their ad followed by a Nintendo ad. To me, it's like having three or four restaurants on the same street; they can still all do well."

The other issue for publishers to consider is the level of viewer interest, which is an intangible that can't be measured by rating points. "Sure you're getting the points, but are consumers really watching?" asked one executive. "You know if you're getting on *The Simpsons* or *Seinfeld*, you can be reasonably sure that people are paying attention."

Even as publishers scramble for slots on the most popular shows, they still must create the content that goes into those slots. Decisions as to whether to make ads very edgy or humorous, hi-tech or kitchy, or even 15-, 30- or 60-seconds, all can be crucial in driving consumers into stores.

One ongoing dilemma is how much game footage to include in an ad. "There isn't a set formula," explained 3DO's Joey Jodar, the man behind the successful *BattleTanx* and *Army Men* campaigns. "I think some of the best ads we've done have shown no more than 10 seconds of game footage. In general, we're looking at about 7-10 seconds of game footage for a 30-second creative, but we don't rule out doing more or less in the future."

Namco's Fischer says the inclusion of game footage means you automatically have to go for at least a 30-second spot. "*Pac-Man World* is a great example," he said. "You tell your story with Mini-me and Mr. T. and then you show the game footage. That means, in essence, your 30-second game commercial is like two 15-second spots bumped up against each other. And so a 15-second spot is virtually impossible to do."

That isn't necessarily an issue when you're simply trying to sell an attitude. Moore said Sega began teasing the potential Dreamcast audience back in July by putting three different 15-second spots in heavy rotation on MTV. They followed those up with lengthier 60-second spots.

Top TV Programming for Videogame Ads

- MTV
- *South Park* (Comedy Central)
- *The Simpsons* (Fox)
- *WWF Smackdown!* (UPN)
- *"World's Wildest or Scariest"* reality shows (Fox)
- *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (WB)
- *Dawson's Creek* (WB)

The launch campaign culminated with a "*Black Rain* meets *Mission Impossible*" style 90-second spot done by Foote, Cone and Belding-San Francisco that ran on MTV's Video Music Awards on September 9, the day of the Dreamcast launch. Moore said the edgy tone of the launch ads was aimed squarely at the 12-24 year old hardcore gamer, but was also entertaining enough to keep older and younger viewers happy.

But of course, the real question for many mid-size publishers is whether they have the game or the marketing budget to justify a TV buy. Knowing your potential audience, as well as what portion of the console life-cycle the market is in, plays an important role in this decision. "If your product is aimed at the mass market, then TV is critical," Jodar explained. 'If your target is the hardcore, then it's the game books and, increasingly, the enthusiast websites. The problem that some companies have is that they take the same ads from print to TV with the same themes and messages. A hardcore message simply carried over to mass medium may not resonate."

Top Game Ads of 1999

1. *"Striptease"*
   Sony PlayStation (Chiat/Day)
2. *"Apocalypse"*
   Sega Dreamcast (Foote, Cone & Belding) art available at AccessPR FTP site
3. *"The $6 million Bear"*
   BattleTanx Global Assault (3DO developed in-house)
4. *"4 Your Love"*
   3Xtreme-989 Studios

Not all games benefit from TV ads. "There's a good argument to be made that many games can do just as well without TV," said Steve Kleckner, Senior VP with distributor Electrosource. "Unless you have a huge amount of money, it's not worth it. Little bits of TV advertising don't work well."

"The most important thing to keep in mind is not just to say, 'Is this a big game? And if it's a big game I go on TV,'" adds Fisher. "The real question is, 'Is this the right type of game whose marketability will be improved with a TV campaign?'"

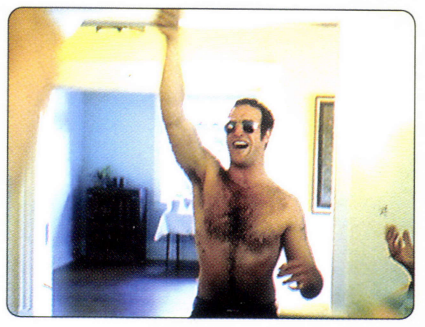
That may work well in theory, but it's not easy for a marketing executive to forgo a TV campaign when their sales staff is screaming about the need for television. Capcom Entertainment President. Bill Gardner says that retail buyers are becoming increasingly reluctant to fully commit to a title if it's not backed by some level of television support. "Will they take a game without TV? Sure," he said, "but they may only take one whereas if you say you're on TV, and they'll take 10."

Virtually all the executives we spoke to urged the retail community to learn all they could about a game's TV marketing. That includes not just how much is being spent on ads, but how it is being spent, whether it is being used to drive pre-sell or shelf sales, and the publisher's reputation for delivering product on time.

Goldberg noted that during his time at Acclaim, the company booked ads on a Miami Dolphin Monday Night Football game to promote a Dan Marino-licensed football title. When the Monday night came around, the title wasn't ready, and Acclaim was forced to run an ad for another game. A holiday TV ad campaign does little good if the game isn't going to be on shelves when it airs.

Jodar said he works closely with 3DO's sales organization to provide them with everything they need to successfully sell the product, including all information about the media buy and story boards or rough cuts of the ads themselves. "History has proven that TV ads have a great impact on the amount of traffic in stores and if a retailer can have some input or influence on that process, then absolutely they should get involved," he said. "We're all in this together."

One executive noted that retail buyers are now far more savvy about the intricacies of advertising. "A lot now ask for our specific schedules down to the rating point," he said. "They don't care how much money we're spending. They want to know how many points we're spinning." The general rule he said, "is that you need to do a minimum of a hundred rating points in a week to three weeks. And if it's a new title, you need to reach 65-75% of your audience for a minimum of three times or more."



Above: The Sony PlayStation "Striptease" television ad campaign was produced by Chiat/Day for SCEA.

Moore said Sega's effort to get the retail community involved in the Dreamcast marketing campaign was one of the keys to the platform's strong launch. "We brought in every major retailer in April and laid out the entire campaign in minute detail; rough cuts, story boards, media buys," he said. "If you ask any retailer, they will tell you that this was the time they realized that Dreamcast had a chance to succeed.

Moore offered this blunt tip for retailers: "it's too late when the first time you see an ad is with your feet up watching it on TV. As a retailer, you need to be part and parcel with the makers of games and their marketing. If not, you might as well take your open-to-buy money and take it to Vegas. *GW*

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Release Schedule

Macintosh

Product Title	Manuf./ Publisher	Pre-Book Date	EST Ship Date
Alien vs. Predator	Fox Interactive	TBA	Q4
Alpha Centauri	EA	11/99	12/99
Asteroids '98	MacSoft/GT	TBA	Q4
Battlezone	Logicware	TBA	Q4
Caesar 3	Sierra	TBA	Q4
Civ: Call to Power	MacSoft	TBA	Q4
Deer Avenger II	Simon & Schuster	TBA	Q4
Diablo II	Blizzard	TBA	Q2/00
Half Life	Sierra Studios	TBA	Q4
Heart of Darkness	Infogrames	TBA	Q4
Heavy Metal FAKK^2	G.O.D	TBA	Q4
Heretic II	Logicware	TBA	Q4
Hoyle Casino 2000	Sierra	TBA	Q4
Interstate '76	Logicware	TBA	Q1/00
Madden NFL 2000	Aspyr	TBA	Q4
Neverwinter Nights	Bioware	TBA	Q1/00
Nocturne	G.O.D.	TBA	Q1/00
Oni	Bungie	TBA	Q4
Putt-Putt's Funshop	Humongous	11/99	12/99
Quake III: Arena	id Software	TBA	Q4
Shadowbane	Wolfpack Studios	TBA	Q2 00
Silver	Infogrames	TBA	Q3 00
Starsiege: Tribes 2	Dynamix	TBA	Q2 00
Unreal Tournament	GT Interactive	TBA	Q4

PlayStation

Product Title	Manuf./ Publisher	Pre-Book Date	EST Ship Date
Ace Combat 3	Namco	TBA	Q4
Action Man	Hasbro	TBA	Q2 00
All-Star Tennis	Ubi Soft	12/99	1/00
Alone in the Dark 4	Accolade	TBA	Q4 00
Alundra II	Activision	TBA	Q2 00
Barbie Super Sports	Mattel	12/99	1/22
Bass Masters: Tourn Edit.	THQ	TBA	Q4
Batman: New Adventures	Ubi Soft	TBA	Q2 00
BattleTax: Global Assault	3DO	TBA	Q4
Beavis and Butthead	GT Interactive	TBA	Q4
Blaster Master Again	Electro Source	11/99	12/99
Boombots	SouthPeak	10/99	11/99
Broken Sword 2	Crave	11/99	12/99
Brunswick Bowling 2	THQ	TBA	Q4
Caesars Palace 2000	Interplay	11/99	12/29
Carmageddon 2	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Carnivale	Vatical	TBA	Q1 00
Chocobo Dungeon 2	Square EA	TBA	Q1 00
Countdown Vampires	Bandai	TBA	TBA
Crusaders of M & M	3DO	TBA	Q4
Danger Girl	THQ	12/99	1/00
Die Hard Trilogy 2	Fox Interactive	12/99	1/00
Dukes of Hazzard	SouthPeak	11/99	12/16
Eagle One	Infogrames	TBA	Q1/00
Elmo in Grouchland	Mindscape	12/99	1/00
ESPN NBA Tonight	Konami	12/99	1/19
Evil Dead	THQ	TBA	Q3 00
Family Game Pack 2	3DO	12/99	1/00
Fear Effect	Eidos	12/99	1/00
Fighting Force 2	Eidos	TBA	Q4
Flinstones B. Bowling	SouthPeak	11/99	12/99
Galerians	Crave	TBA	Q1 00
Glover	Hasbro	11/99	12/99
Gran Turismo 2	Sony	11/99	12/99
Iron Soldier 3	Kemco	1/00	2/00
J. McGrath 2000	Acclaim	12/99	1/00
Jackie Chan's Stunt.	Midway	1/00	2/00
Jugular Street Luge	Activision	TBA	Q1 00
Knights of Carnage	THQ	TBA	Q4
Knockout Kings 2000	EA Sports	TBA	Q4
Leggit	Psygnosis	TBA	Q4
LEGO Rock Raiders	LEGO Media	11/99	12/99
Lufia III	Natsume	TBA	Q4
Lunar 2	Working Designs	1/00	2/00
Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	8/00	9/00
Major League Soccer	Konami	2/00	3/00
Marvel's X-Men	Activision	TBA	Q4
Messiah	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Missile Command 3D	Hasbro	10/99	11/99
Mission: Impossible	Infogrames	11/99	12/99
MK: Special Forces	Midway	TBA	Q2 00
Moppet Monster	Sunsoft	11/99	12/99
Motocross Madness	Psygnosis	TBA	Q4
NBA Live 2001	EA Sports	TBA	Q4 00
NFL GameDay 2001	989 Sports	8/00	9/00
Nickelodeon CatDog	Hasbro	11/99	12/99
Nightmare Creatures 2	Activision	TBA	Q4
Panzer General Assault	Mindscape	11/99	12/99
PGA European Golf	Infogrames	1/00	2/00
Planet of the Apes	Fox Interactive	TBA	Q4
Polaris Snocross 2000	Vatical	TBA	Q1 '00
Prince of Persia 3D	Mindscape	TBA	Q2 '00
Q*Bert 3D	Hasbro	11/99	12/12
Railroad Tycoon II	Take 2	TBA	Q4
Rainbow Six	Red Storm	TBA	Q1 '00
Renagade Racing	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Road Rash Jailbreak	EA	TBA	Q1 '00
Rugrats Studio Tour	THQ	TBA	Q4
SaGa Frontier II	Square EA	TBA	Q4
Shadow Tower	Agetec	TBA	Q4
Silent Bomber	Bandai	TBA	Q2 00
South Park Rally	Acclaim	11/99	12/99
Spec Ops	Take 2	TBA	Q4
Spider-Man	Activision	TBA	Q1 00
Striker Pro 2000	Infogrames	1/00	2/00
Superbike 2000	EA	12/99	1/26
Superman	Titus	12/99	1/00
Syphon Filter 2	989 Studios	TBA	Q2 00
Tanktics	Interplay	12/99	1/00
Team Buddies	Activision	TBA	Q1/00
Test Drive Cycles	Infogrames	TBA	Q1 00
Test Drive Le Mans	Infogrames	TBA	Q1/00
Test Drive Rally	Infogrames	TBA	Q1/00
Tiger Woods & PGA Tour	EA Sports	12/99	1/00
Tips and Treasures	Psygnosis	TBA	Q4
Too Human	EA	TBA	Q1 00
Vagrant Story	Square EA	11/99	12/99
Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense	Activision	TBA	Q4
Wai-Wai Tennis 2	Sunsoft	TBA	1/00
Wild, Wild West	SouthPeak	TBA	Q2 00
Wu-Tang Clan	Activision	TBA	Q4
WWF Smackdown	THQ	TBA	Q2 00

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PC

Product Title	Manuf./ Publisher	Pre-Book Date	EST Ship Date
1602 A.D.	GT Interactive	12/99	1/00
100 Years/Field & Str.	Sierra	TBA	Q4
Allegiance	Microsoft	TBA	Q4
Alone in the Dark 4	Infogrames	TBA	Q4 00
Armorines	Acclaim	TBA	Q4
B-17 Flying Fortress	Hasbro	TBA	Q1 00
Baldur's Gate II	Interplay	TBA	Q2 00
Barbie Digital Makeover	Mattel	11/99	12/21
Best of Smart Games	Hasbro	12/99	1/25
Black & White	Electronic Arts	TBA	Q1 00
Blade	Infogrames	10/99	11/99
Blaze and Blade	SouthPeak	TBA	Q4
Boarder Zone	Infogrames	TBA	Q2 00
Breakneck	SouthPeak	TBA	Q1/00
Brunswick F.S. Bowling	THQ	TBA	Q4
Cabela's Outdoor Trivia	Head Games	11/99	12/99
Caesars Palace 2000	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Carnivores II	GT Value	TBA	Q4
Code Name Eagle	Talonsoft	12/99	1/00
C & C: Firestorm	Westwood Studios	12/99	1/00
Chess 2000 W5C	Interplay	11/99	12/99
Crusaders of M & M	3DO	11/99	12/99
Daikatana	Eidos	TBA	Q4
Dark Reign	Activision	TBA	Q4
Dawn of War	SouthPeak	12/99	1/00
Desert Fighters	Sierra	11/99	12/99
Deus Ex	Eidos	11/99	12/99
Diablo II	Blizzard	11/99	12/99
Die Hard Trilogy 2	Fox Interactive	12/99	1/00
Dragon	Microsoft	TBA	Q4
Dragon's Lair 3D	Blue Byte	TBA	Q4 00
Duke Nukem Forever	GT Interactive	TBA	Q4
Dukes of Hazzard	SouthPeak	TBA	Q2 00
Earthworm Jim 3D	Interplay	11/99	12/99
Elysium	GT Interactive	TBA	Q4
Extreme Paintbrawl 2	Head Games	11/99	12/00
F-18 Super Hornet	Titus	1/00	2/00
Felony Pursuit	THQ	TBA	Q4
Final Fantasy VIII	Square EA	12/99	1/26
Flinstones Bowling	SouthPeak	TBA	Q1 00
FLY! 2	G.O.D.	TBA	Q3 00
Freestyle XS Motocross	Sierra	12/99	1/00
Full Auto	Microsoft	TBA	Q4
Giants	Interplay	12/99	1/00
GP 500	Hasbro	11/99	12/99
Ground Control	Sierra	TBA	Q1 00
Gulf War Operation	3DO	TBA	Q1 00
Gunship 3	MicroProse	TBA	Q1 00
Half-Life Adrenalin Pack	Sierra	11/99	12/99
Half-Life Team Fortress	Sierra	12/99	1/00
Heavy Gear 2 Linux	LOKI	11/99	12/99
Heavy Metal: FAKK^2	G.O.D.	TBA	Q1 00
Hidden&Dangerous: D.B.	Talonsoft	11/99	12/99
Hoyle Board 2000	Sierra	TBA	Q4
Hoyle Casino 2000	Sierra	TBA	Q4
IHRA Drag Racing	Bethesda	12/99	1/00
Indiana Jones & I.M.	LucasArts	TBA	Q4
Inertia	Microsoft	TBA	Q4
Imperial Conquest	Talonsoft	1/00	2/00
Imperium Galactica II	GT Interactive	11/99	12/99
Interplay 15th Anthology	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Interstate 82	Activision	TBA	Q4
Intl. Rally Championship	THQ	TBA	Q4
Invictus	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Jane's USAF	EA	TBA	Q4
Jumbo Jack	Sierra	TBA	Q4
Kids Tetris	Hasbro Inter.	10/99	11/99
KISS: Psycho Circus	G.O.D.	TBA	Q1 00
LEGO Land	LEGO Media	10/99	11/99
LEGO Rock Raiders	LEGO Media	10/99	11/99
Liath	Project 2	TBA	Q1 00
Logication	Brain Block Inter.	10/99	11/99
Mad Traxx	Project 2	TBA	Q1 00
Magic: The Gathering	MicroProse	TBA	Q1 00
Majesty	Hasbro/MicroProse	TBA	Q2 00
Max Payne	G.O.D.	TBA	Q2 00
MechWarrior Exp. Pack	Hasbro Inter.	11/99	12/99
MDK 2	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Messiah	Interplay	11/99	12/15
Metal Fatigue	Psygnosis	1/00	2/00
Microsoft Soccer 2000	Microsoft	11/99	12/99
Mig Alley	Interplay	11/99	12/99
Might & Magic VIII	3DO	TBA	Q2 00
Mission: Impossible	Infogrames	TBA	Q1 00
Monopolization	Ubi Soft	1/00	2/00
Mortyr	I-Magic	TBA	Q2 00
Motocross Madness 2	Microsoft	TBA	Q2 00
Navy SEALS	Sierra	TBA	Q4
NASCAR Legends	Sierra	TBA	Q4
NASCAR Trucks 2000	Sierra Sports	TBA	Q4
Nerf Jr. Foam	Hasbro Inter.	11/99	12/99
Neverwinter Nights	Interplay	TBA	Q1 00
No One Lives Forever	Monolith	TBA	Q4
Nox	Electronic Arts	TBA	Q4
Odium	Monolith	TBA	Q4
Oni	Bungie	TBA	Q4
Operational Art of War	Talonsoft	11/99	12/99
Operational Art of War 2	Talonsoft	11/99	12/99
O.R.B.	Strategy First	TBA	Q2 00
Pajama Sam's Funshop	Humongous	TBA	Q4
Panzer General Assault	Mindscape	12/99	1/00
Panzer Elite	Psygnosis	TBA	Q4
Police Quest: SWAT 3D	Sierra	TBA	Q4
Poker Night w/David S.	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Pro Flight 2000	A.E.T.I.	11/99	12/99
Putt-Putt's Funshop	Humongous	11/99	12/99
Quake III: Arena Elite Ed.	Activision	11/99	12/24
Quake III: Arena	Activision	11/99	12/24
Rainbow Six 2	RedStorm	11/99	12/99
Rally Masters	Infogrames	TBA	Q4
Reach for the Stars	Mindscape	11/99	12/28
Renegade Racing	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Rent-A-Hero	SouthPeak	TBA	Q2 00
Risk II	Hasbro	TBA	Q1 00
Rising Sun	Talonsoft	12/99	1/00
Rune	G.O.D.	TBA	Q2 00
Sanity	Monolith	TBA	Q4
Seven Kingdoms II	Interactive Magic	TBA	Q4
Shadow Company 2	Ubi Soft	TBA	Q3 00
Shadowpact	Blue Byte	TBA	Q4
Shanghai 2nd Dynasty	Activision	TBA	Q4
Skip Barber Racing	Bethesda	12/99	1/00
Soldier of Fortune	Activision	TBA	Q1 00
South Park Rally	Acclaim	11/99	12/99
South Park: Chef's L.S.	Acclaim	11/99	12/99
Slave Zero	Infogrames	11/99	12/99
Spec Ops II: Green Berets	Ripcord	TBA	Q4
Starlancer	Microsoft	TBA	Q1 00

PC

Product Title	Manuf./ Publisher	Pre-Book Date	EST Ship Date
Star Trek Dominion Wars	Simon & Schuster	TBA	Q4 '00
Star Trek Insurrection	Activision	TBA	Q4
Star Trek: Klingon Acad.	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Star Trek New Worlds	Interplay	TBA	Q2 00
Star Wars Obi-Wan	LucasArts	TBA	Q4
S.W.: Force Commander	LucasArts	TBA	Q2 00
Stephen King's F-13	Blue Byte	11/99	12/99
SU-25	MIndscape Ent.	10/99	11/99
Tachyon	NovaLogic	1/00	2/00
Team Alligator	GT Interactive	11/99	12/99
Test Drive Cycles	Infogrames	TBA	Q1 00
Test Drive Le Mans	Infogrames	TBA	Q1 00
Test Drive Rally	Infogrames	TBA	Q1 00
The Dead Planet	Active Productions	TBA	Q2 00
The Settlers IV	Blue Byte	TBA	Q4 00
The Sims	EA	TBA	Q4
Tribes Extreme	Sierra	11/99	12/99
Tribes II	Sierra	TBA	Q2 00
Trophy Bass 4	Sierra	TBA	Q2/00
Ultra RC Racing	Sierra	11/99	12/99
Unreal Mega Pack	GT Interactive	11/99	12/99
Unreal Tournament	GT Interactive	TBA	Q4
Urban Chaos	Eidos	11/99	12/99
Vampire: Masquerade	Activision	TBA	Q4
Virtual Pool Hall	Interplay	11/99	12/99
Warcraft III	Blizzard	TBA	Q4 00
Warlords Battlecry	Broderbund	1/00	2/00
Werewolf: The Apoc.	ASC Games	TBA	Q2 00
Wheel of Time	GT Interactive	11/99	12/99
Wild Metal	Take 2	TBA	Q4
Wild,Wild West	SouthPeak	TBA	Q4
X: Beyond the Frontier	SouthPeak	TBA	TBA
Yomega: Ready, Set, Yo!	Simon & Schuster	10/99	11/99
Y2K	Interplay	TBA	Q4

Nintendo 64

Product Title	Manuf./ Publisher	Pre-Book Date	EST Ship Date
40 Winks	GT Interactive	TBA	Q4
Airboardin' USA	Agetec	TBA	Q4
Armorines	Acclaim	TBA	Q4
Asteroids Hyper 64	Crave	TBA	Q4
Bassmasters 2000	THQ	TBA	Q4
Battlezone 64	Crave	TBA	Q1 00
Blues Brothers 2000	Titus	TBA	Q4
Big Mountain 2000	SothPeak	TBA	Q1 00
Brunswick Pro Bowling	THQ	TBA	Q4
Caesar's Palace	Crave	TBA	Q4
Carmageddon 2	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Carnivale 64	Vatical	11/99	12/99
Chef's Luv Shack	Acclaim	TBA	Q4
Daikatana 64	Kemco	TBA	Q1 00
Die Hard 64	Fox Interactive	TBA	Q4
Donald Duck	Ubi Soft	TBA	Q2 00
Duck Dodgers	Infogrames	TBA	Q2 00
Eternal Darkness	Nintendo	TBA	Q1 00
Excitebike 64	Nintendo	TBA	Q4
F1 World Grand Prix 2	Video System	12/99	1/00
Grand Theft Auto	Rockstar	TBA	Q1 00
Harrier 2001	Video System	TBA	Q1 00
Harvest Moon 64	Natsume	TBA	Q4
Hercules	Titus	TBA	Q4
Hydro Thunder	Midway	TBA	Q1 00
J. McGrath 2000	Acclaim	TBA	Q1 00
Kirby's Dreamland 64	Nintendo	TBA	Q2 00
Mario Artist	Nintendo	TBA	Q4
Mario Party 2	Nintendo	TBA	Q2 00
Marvel's X-Men	Activision	TBA	Q4
Mickey Speedway USA	Nintendo	TBA	Q4 00
Monopoly 64	Hasbro	TBA	Q4
Mortal Kombat: S.F.	Midway	TBA	TBA
Mini Racers	Nintendo	TBA	Q2 00
Namco Museum 64	Namco	11/99	12/99
NBA In the Zone 2000	Konami	TBA	Q4
NBA Jam 2000	Acclaim	10/99	11/99
NBA Showtime	Midway	TBA	Q4
NHL Blades of Steel	Konmai	TBA	Q4
Nightmare Creatures 2	Activision	TBA	Q1 00
Nomenquest	THQ	TBA	Q4
Ogre Battle 3	Atlus	TBA	Q1 00
Perfect Dark	Nintendo/Rare	3/00	4/00
PGA European Tour Golf	Infogrames	1/00	2/00
Pokémon Stadium	Nintendo	TBA	Q1 00
Polaris SnoCross 2000	Vatical	TBA	Q2 '00
Rainbow Six	Red Storm	TBA	Q4
Resident Evil 2	Capcom	TBA	Q4
Ridge Racer 64	Nintendo	1/00	2/00
Roadsters 2000	Titus	TBA	Q4
Shadowgate Rising	Kemco	TBA	Q4
Sim City 64	Nintendo	TBA	TBA
South Park Rally	Acclaim	TBA	Q4
Space Invaders	Activision	TBA	Q4
Spider-Man	Activision	TBA	Q4
StarCraft	Nintendo	11/99	12/99
Star Wars: Episode 1	Nintendo	TBA	Q1 00
SuperCross Circuit 2K	EA Sports	TBA	Q4
Super Mario Adventure	Nintendo	TBA	Q1 00
Tarzan	Activision	12/99	1/00
Taz Express	Infogrames	TBA	Q4
Test Drive Rally	Infogrames	TBA	Q1 00
Tiny Tank	Crave	11/99	12/99
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Activision	TBA	Q4
Top Gear Hyper Bike	Vatical	10/99	11/99
Top Gear Rally 2	Kemco	11/99	12/99
Toy Story 2	Activision	TBA	Q4
Turok: Rage Wars	Acclaim	TBA	Q4
Twelve Tales: Conker 64	Rare	TBA	Q3 00
Vigilant 8: 2nd Offense	Activision	11/99	12/99
Wildwaters	Ubi Soft	TBA	Q4
World League Soccer 2K	SouthPeak	TBA	Q1 00
Worms: Armageddon	Infogrames	TBA	Q1 00
WWF Wrestlemania 2K	THQ	10/99	11/99
Xena: Talisman of Fate	Titus	TBA	Q4
Young Olympians	Sapphire	TBA	Q2 00
Zelda: Gaiden	Nintendo	TBA	Q2 00

Release Schedule

Strategy and Game Guides

Product Title	Publisher	EST Ship Date
Alien Resurrection	Prima Publishing	1/2000
Armorines Official SG	Acclaim Publishing	12/99
Baldur's Gate Guide	Sybex	12/99
Battlezone 2 Official SG	BradyGAMES	12/99
Castlevania Resurrection	Prima Publishing	2/2000
Castlevania Special Edition	Prima Publishing	1/2000
Conkers Quest SG	Prima Publishing	11/99
Crash Team Racing	Dimension Pub.	10/99
Diablo II Official SG	BradyGAMES	12/99
Die Hard 64 Official Guide	Prima Publishing	12/99
Grandia	Dimension Pub.	12/99
Gran Turismo 2 Guide	BradyGAMES	12/99
Gran Turismo 2 Guide	Prima Publishing	12/99
Indiana Jones/Infer. Machine	Prima Publishing	11/99
Interstate '82 Official SG	BradyGAMES	12/99
Medal of Honor Official SG	BradyGAMES	11/99
Metal Gear VR Missions	Prima Publishing	11/99
NBA Jam 2000 Official SG	Acclaim Publishing	11/99
NBA Live 2000	Prima Publishing	11/99
Nightmare Creatures 2 HB	BradyGAMES	2/00
Rayman 2	Prima Publishing	11/99
Road Rash Official Guide	Prima Publishing	1/2000
Perfect Dark Player's Guide	Nintendo Power	4/00
Perfect Dark Official SG	BradyGAMES	4/00
Perfect Dark Official Guide	Prima Publishing	4/00
Planet of the Apes	Prima Publishing	1/2000

Product Title	Publisher	EST Ship Date
Pokémon Collectors Guide	Checkerbee Publishing	12/99
Pokémon Stadium Guide	Nintendo Power	3/2000
Pokémon Stadium Official	Prima Publishing	3/2000
Quake 3 Arena	Prima Publishing	12/99
Resident Evil 2 N64 Official	BradyGAMES	11/99
Resident Evil 3 HB Guide	Prima Publishing	11/99
Resident Evil 3 Official SG	BradyGAMES	11/99
Road Rash Official Guide	Prima Publishing	1/00
Secret Codes for Dreamcast	BradyGAMES	12/99
Shanghai: Second Dynasty	BradyGAMES	12/99
Soldier of Fortune Official	BradyGAMES	12/99
Spyro 2 Official SG	Prima Publishing	11/99
Spyro 2 Official SG	Dimension Publishing	11/99
Star Trek Hidden Evil	BradyGAMES	11/99
Street Fighter Alpha 3	BradyGAMES	11/99
Tomb Raider 4	Dimension Publishing	12/99
Tomorrow Never Dies	Prima Publishing	12/99
Tron Bonne HB Guide	Prima Publishing	2/2000
Turok: Rage Wars	Acclaim Publishing	12/99
Urban Chaos	Prima Publishing	12/99
V8: Second Offense	BradyGAMES	12/99
Vandal Heart 2 HB Guide	Prima Publishing	12/99
Warpath: Jurassic Park	BradyGAMES	10/99
Wu-Tang Official Guide	BradyGAMES	12/99
X-Files Official Guide	Prima Publishing	12/99

Dreamcast

Product Title	Manuf./ Publisher	Pre-Book Date	EST Ship Date
Alone in the Dark 4	Accolade	TBA	Q4 00
Berserk	Agetec	TBA	Q1 00
Baldur's Gate	Sega	TBA	Q4 00
Boarder Zone	Infogrames	TBA	Q2 00
Carrier	Jaleco	TBA	Q4
Castlevania: Resurrection	Konami	TBA	Q2 00
Chef's Luv Shack	Acclaim	TBA	Q4
Chu Chu Rocket	Sega	TBA	Q2 00
Climax Landers	Sega	TBA	Q1 00
Crazy Taxi	Sega	TBA	Q1 00
D2	Sega	TBA	Q3 00
Dark Angel: Vampire Apclyps	Metro3D	11/99	12/99
Draconus: Cult of the Wyrm	Crave	TBA	Q1 00
Ecco the Dolphin	Sega	TBA	Q4
F1 World Grand Prix	Video Systems	11/99	12/99
Felony Pursuit	THQ	TBA	Q2 00
Floigan Brothers	Sega	TBA	Q1 00
Frame Gride	Sega	TBA	Q4
Frontier	Sega	TBA	Q2 00
Furballs	Bizarre Creations	TBA	Q1 00
Galleon	Interplay	TBA	Q1 00
Gauntlet Legends	Midway	TBA	Q2 00
Grand Theft Auto 2	Rockstar	TBA	Q4
Grandia 2	Sega	TBA	Q3 00
Hidden & Dangerous	Take Two	TBA	Q1 00
Incoming	Interplay	TBA	Q1 00
J. McGrath Supercross 2000	Acclaim	TBA	Q1 00
Maken X	Sega	TBA	Q4
MDK 2	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Metropolis Street Racer	Sega	TBA	Q4
Microsoft Combat Flight	Konami	11/99	12/99
NBA 2K1	Sega	TBA	Q4 00
NFL 2K1	Sega	TBA	Q4 00
NFL QB Club 2000	Acclaim	11/99	12/99

Product Title	Manuf./ Publisher	Pre-Book Date	EST Ship Date
NHL 2K	Sega	TBA	Q1 00
Phantasy Star Online	Sega	TBA	Q4 00
Rainbow Six	Majesco	1/00	2/00
Rayman 2	Ubi Soft	TBA	Q1 00
Renegade Racing	Interplay	TBA	Q2 00
Resident Evil: Code Veronica	Capcom	TBA	Q1 00
Re-Volt	Acclaim	TBA	Q4
Roadsters 2000	Titus	11/99	12/99
Seaman	Sega	TBA	Q1 00
Sega GT	Sega	TBA	Q2 00
Sega Rally 2	Sega	TBA	Q4
Seven Mansions	Koei	TBA	Q4 00
Shadow Man	Acclaim	11/99	12/99
Shenmue Chapter 1	Sega	TBA	Q2 00
Silver	Infogrames	TBA	Q3 00
Slave Zero	Infogrames	12/99	1/00
Sonic Adventure 2	Sega	TBA	TBA
Soul Fighter	Mindscape	11/99	12/99
Space Channel 5	Sega	TBA	Q3 00
Spawn	Capcom	TBA	Q2 00
Star Gladiator 2	Capcom	TBA	Q4
Star Trek: New Worlds	Interplay	TBA	Q2 00
Striker Pro 2000	Infogrames	1/00	2/00
Test Drive 6	Infogrames	10/99	11/99
Toy Commander	Sega	TBA	Q4
Toy Fighter	Sega	TBA	Q3
Toy Story 2	Activision	TBA	Q1 00
Vigilante 8: Second Offense	Activision	TBA	Q4
Virtual On: Oratorio Tangram	Sega	TBA	Q4
Wild Metal	Rockstar	TBA	Q4
Wild Water World Chmp.	Interplay	TBA	Q4
World Series Baseball	Sega	TBA	Q2 00
Zombie Revenge	Sega	TBA	Q4

Game Boy Color

Product Title	Manuf./ Publisher	Pre-Book Date	EST Ship Date
2000-1 Tunes	Infogrames	1/00	2/00
1942	Capcom	TBA	Q4
All-Star Tennis 99	Ubi Soft	11/99	12/99
Armorines	Acclaim	11/99	12/99
Army Men	3DO	11/99	12/99
Azure Dreams	Konami	10/99	11/99
Babe	Crave	10/99	11/99
Bassmasters 2000	THQ	10/99	11/99
BattleTanx	3DO	11/99	12/99
Bionic Commando	Nintendo	12/99	1/00
Blaster Master 2	Sunsoft	11/99	12/99
Boarder Zone	Infogrames	TBA	Q1 00
Bomberman Quest	Electro Brain	TBA	Q4
Casper	Interplay	TBA	Q4
Catwoman	Vatical	11/99	12/99
Castlevania II	Konami	TBA	Q4
Croc	Fox Inter.	TBA	Q4
Crystalis	Nintendo	2/99	3/99
Daffy Duck: Fowl Play	Sunsoft	10/99	11/99
Daikatana	Kemco	TBA	Q4
Dogz	Mindscape	11/99	12/99
Earthworm Jim	Crave	11/99	12/99
Evel Knievel	Rockstar	11/99	12/99
F1 World Grand Prix	Nintendo	TBA	Q4
FIFA 2000	THQ	11/99	12/99
G & W Gallary 3	Nintendo	11/99	12/99
Gex 3	Eidos	TBA	Q4
Golf King	Crave	10/99	11/99
Grand Theft Auto	Rockstar	10/99	12/99
Harvest Moon	Crave	11/99	12/99
Hercules	Titus	TBA	Q4
Hot Wheels Stunt Drvr	Mattel	TBA	Q4
Inter. Track and Field	Konami	11/99	12/99
Jimmy Whit's Cue Ball	Vatical	2/00	3/00
Junkbots: Sun & Star	Electro Brain	TBA	Q4
Knockout Kings	EA	11/99	12/99
Legend of Sea King	Natsume	TBA	Q4
Magical Mickey Tetris	Capcom	11/99	12/99
Marble Madness	Midway	10/99	11/99
Matchbox C.C. Zone	Mattel	TBA	Q1 00
Metal Gear Solid	Konami	TBA	Q4
Mickey Racing	Nintendo	10/99	11/99
Micro Machines V3	THQ	10/99	11/99
Mission: Impossible	Infogrames	11/99	12/99
Mr. Nutz	Infogrames	10/99	11/99
Moomin	Sunsoft	11/99	12/99
NASCAR Challenge	Majesco	11/99	12/99
NBA Courtside 3 on 3	Nintendo	11/99	12/99

Product Title	Manuf./ Publisher	Pre-Book Date	EST Ship Date
NBA In the Zone 2K	Konami	11/99	12/99
NBA Showtime	Midway	10/99	11/99
NBA Live 2000	THQ	10/99	11/99
NHL Blades/Steel 2k	Konami	10/99	11/99
NHL Hockey 2000	THQ	10/99	11/99
Ninja	Metro 3D	10/99	11/99
Oddworld Advent. 2	GT Inter.	TBA	Q4
Paperboy	Midway	TBA	Q4
Pokémon Card	Nintendo	1/00	2/00
Pokemon Gold/Silver	Nintendo	TBA	Q4 00
Polaris SnoCross 2K	Vatical	12/99	1/00
Pong	Majesco	11/99	12/15
Puma Street Soccer 2	Sunsoft	TBA	Q1 00
Puzzle Master	Metro3D	11/99	12/99
Quest RPG	Sunsoft	TBA	Q1 00
Rainbow Six	SouthPeak	12/99	1/00
Rally Racing	Konami	1/00	2/00
Rampage Univer. Tour	Midway	TBA	Q4
Rayman	Ubi Soft	1/00	2/00
Resident Evil	Capcom	12/99	1/00
Road Runner	Sunsoft	11/99	12/99
Roadsters '99	Titus	TBA	Q4
San Francisco Rush	Midway	TBA	Q2 00
Shadow Man	Acclaim	11/99	12/99
Shamus	Telegames	11/99	12/99
South Park	Acclaim	11/99	12/99
Snocross 2000	Vatical	TBA	Q1 '00
Street Fighter Alpha	Capcom	10/99	12/99
SW Episode 1 Racer	Nintendo	11/99	12/99
Test Drive 6	Infogrames	TBA	Q4
Test Drive Off-Road 3	Infogrames	TBA	Q4
The Cage	Metro 3D	10/99	11/99
Thrasher: S & Destroy	Take 2	10/99	11/99
Tiger Woods Golf	THQ	TBA	Q4
TOCA Touring Cars	SouthPeak	TBA	Q4
Tonka Raceway	Majesco		
TNN Fishing Champ.	ASC Games	11/99	12/99
UNO	Mattel	11/99	12/99
Urban Chaos	Eidos	11/99	12/99
Vegas Games	3DO	11/99	12/99
VR Powerboat	Vatical	3/00	4/00
Wicked Surfing	Interplay	11/99	12/99
Wings of Fury	Mindscape	11/99	12/99
Worms Armageddon	Infogrames	11/99	12/99
WWF Wrestlemania 2K	THQ	11/99	12/99
Yoda Stories	THQ	11/99	12/99
Zelda: Fruit/M.T.	Nintendo	TBA	Q3 00

Manufacturers: If you have found that your company's products are improperly listed, are not listed, or are in need of updating, please ask your sales or PR department to send all relevant information to CyberActive Media Group, Inc., GameWEEK, 64 Danbury Road, Wilton, CT. 06897-4406 USA or fax your weekly updates to 203.761.6184. Questions regarding this section may be directed to Ben Rinaldi at 203.761.6158, ben@gameweek.com. Media: Permission to reprint GameWEEK Release Schedule in consumer-oriented enthusiast publications or mass media not dealing primarily in the interactive entertainment industry is granted provided appropriate credit is given.

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Check out all the latest lists in the December 8th issue of GameWEEK

TOP GAMES LIST

NPD THE NPD GROUP, INC.
Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment Service 516.625.2345

Top 20 Best Selling Interactive Software Titles

Ranked on Units Sold • November 7-November 13, 1999

LAST WEEK'S RANK	RANK	TITLE/PLATFORM	PUBLISHER	DATE	AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE
1	1	Pokémon Yellow/Game Boy	Nintendo of America	Oct. '99	$27
**	2	Resident Evil 3: Nemesis/PSX	Capcom	Nov. '99	$50
**	3	NBA 2K/DC	Sega of America	Nov. '99	$50
2	4	Pokémon Red/Game Boy	Nintendo of America	Sep. '98	$26
3	5	Pokémon Blue/Game Boy	Nintendo of America	Sep. '98	$26
4	6	Pokémon Pinball/Game Boy Color	Nintendo of America	Jun. '99	$30
6	7	Pokémon Snap/N64	Nintendo of America	Jul. '99	$49
7	8	Knockout Kings 2000/PSX	Electronic Arts	Nov. '99	$41
**	9	Spyro the Dragon 2: Rage/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Nov. '99	$40
9	10	Crash Team Racing/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Oct. '99	$40
10	11	Tony Hawks Pro Skater/PSX	Activision	Sep. '99	$42
15	12	Spyro the Dragon/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Sep. '98	$20
12	13	Driver/PSX	GT Interactive	Jun. '99	$40
18	14	Army Men Sarge's Heroes/N64	The 3DO Company	Sep. '99	$50
17	15	Madden NFL 2000/PSX	Electronic Arts	Aug. '99	$40
13	16	Super Mario Bros. DLX/Game Boy Color	Nintendo of America	May '99	$29
16	17	Gran Turismo Racing/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	May '98	$20
**	18	Roller Coaster Tycoon/(CD W95/W98)	Hasbro Interactive	Mar. '99	$30
**	19	Pac-Man World/PSX	Namco	Oct. '99	$40
**	20	Medal of Honor/PSX	Electronic Arts	Nov. '99	$44

**= Not in top 20 last week. Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment Service • 516.625.2345 The above top games information may not be reprinted or reproduced without written permission from GameWEEK, CyberActive Media Group and The NPD Group, Inc.

IN-STORE DISPLAY

FOR BEST RESULTS, CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

IN-STORE DISPLAY

Market Tracking Reports

NPD
THE NPD GROUP, INC.

Top 10 Portable Software Titles

Ranked on Units Sold — *November 7-November 13*

LAST WEEK'S RANK	RANK	TITLE/PLATFORM	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE	AVG. RETAIL PRICE
1	1	Pokémon Yellow/GBoy	Nintendo of America	Oct. '99	$27
2	2	Pokémon Red/GBoy	Nintendo of America	Sep. '98	$29
3	3	Pokémon Blue/GBoy	Nintendo of America	Sep. '98	$26
4	4	Pokémon Pinball/GBC	Nintendo of America	Jun. '99	$30
5	5	Super Mario Bros. Dlx./GBC	Nintendo of America	May '99	$29
8	6	Mario Golf/GBC	Nintendo of America	Oct. '99	$29
**	7	Rugrats: Time Traveler/GBC	THQ	Oct. '99	$30
6	8	Pac-Man/GBC	Namco	Aug. '99	$30
7	9	A Bug's Life/GBC	THQ	Dec. '98	$20
9	10	Frogger/GBC	Hasbro Interactive	Dec. '98	$27

***Not In Top 10 Last Week*

Source: NPD TRSTS Videogames Service • Mary Ann Porreca 516.625.2345

Top 10 PlayStation Titles

Ranked on Units Sold — *November 7-November 13, 1999*

LAST WEEK'S RANK	RANK	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE	AVG. RETAIL PRICE
**	1	Resident Evil 3: Nemesis	Capcom	Nov. '99	$50
1	2	Knockout Kings 2000	Electronic Arts	Nov. '99	$41
**	3	Spyro the Dragon 2	Sony Computer Ent.	Nov. '99	$40
3	4	Crash Team Racing	Sony Computer Ent.	Oct. '99	$40
4	5	Tony Hawks Pro Skater	Activision	Sep. '99	$42
6	6	Spyro the Dragon	Sony Computer Ent.	Sep. '98	$20
5	7	Driver	GT Interactive	Jun. '99	$40
8	8	Madden NFL 2000	Electronic Arts	Aug. '99	$40
7	9	Gran Turismo Racing	Sony Computer Ent.	May. '98	$20
9	10	Pac-Man World	Namco	Oct. '99	$40

***Not In Top 10 Last Week*

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service • Mary Ann Porreca 516.625.2345

Top 10 Best Selling TV Video Game Accessories

Ranked on Units Sold — *November 7-November 13, 1999*

LAST WEEK'S RANK	RANK	TITLE/PLATFORM	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE	AVG. RETAIL PRICE
1	1	Visual Memory Unit/DC	Sega of America	Sep. '99	$25
2	2	Controller/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Sep. '95	$10
5	3	RF Adaptor 2/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	May '97	$16
3	4	RFU Adaptor/PSX	Interact Accessories	Jun. '97	$13
4	5	Memory Card Value PK/PSX	Interact Accessories	Dec. '95	$10
6	6	RFU Adaptor/N64	Interact Accessories	Sep. '96	$11
9	7	Astro Pad/DC	Interact Accessories	Sep. '99	$21
7	8	Memory Card Blue/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Jun. '98	$15
8	9	Memory Card 15X/PSX	Mad Catz	Aug. '96	$10
**	10	Controller Memory Pal/N64	Nintendo of America	Nov. '96	$11

***Not In Top 10 Last Week*

Source: NPD TRSTS Videogames Service • Mary Ann Porreca 516.625.2345

Top 10 Nintendo 64 Titles

Ranked on Units Sold — *November 7-November 13, 1999*

LAST WEEK'S RANK	RANK	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE	AVG. RETAIL PRICE
1	1	Pokémon Snap	Nintendo of America	Jul. '99	$49
2	2	Army Men Sarge's Heroes	The 3DO Company	Sep. '99	$50
**	3	WCW/nWo Revenge	THQ	Oct. '98	$13
4	4	Super Smash Brothers	Nintendo of America	Apr. '99	$50
3	5	Jet Force Gemini	Nintendo of America	Oct. '99	$50
6	6	NFL Blitz 2000	Midway Home Ent.	Aug. '99	$52
7	7	Knockout Kings 2000	Electronic Arts	Oct. '99	$50
5	8	Gauntlet Legends	Midway Home Ent.	Sep. '99	$51
10	9	Mario Kart 64	Nintendo of America	Feb '97	$40
**	10	GoldenEye 007	Nintendo of America	Aug. '97	$40

***Not In Top 10 Last Week*

Source: NPD TRSTS Videogames Service • Mary Ann Porreca 516.625.2345

Top 10 Best Selling TV Video Game Accessories

Ranked on Dollars Sold — *November 7-November 13, 1999*

LAST WEEK'S RANK	RANK	TITLE/PLATFORM	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE	AVG. RETAIL PRICE
1	1	Visual Memory Unit/DC	Sega of America	Sep. '99	$25
2	2	Blue Dual Sh. Cont./PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Mar. '99	$30
6	3	Astro Pad/DC	Interact Accessories	Sep. '99	$21
4	4	RF Adaptor 2/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	May '97	$16
5	5	Dual Shock Controller/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Apr. '98	$29
3	6	RFU Adaptor/PSX	Interact Accessories	Jun. '97	$13
7	7	Game Shark/PSX	Interact Accessories	Jan. '96	$41
**	8	Memory Exp. Pack/N64	Nintendo of America	Nov. '98	$29
8	9	Controller/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Sep. '95	$10
**	10	Memory Card Blue/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Jun. '98	$15

***Not In Top 10 Last Week*

Source: NPD TRSTS Videogames Service • Mary Ann Porreca 516.625.2345

Top 10 Dreamcast Titles

Ranked on Units Sold — *November 7-November 13, 1999*

LAST WEEK'S RANK	RANK	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE	AVG. RETAIL PRICE
**	1	NBA 2K	Sega of America	Nov. '99	$50
1	2	NFL 2K	Sega of America	Sep. '99	$50
**	3	WWF Attitude	Acclaim Entertainment	Nov. '99	$50
2	4	Sonic Adventure	Sega of America	Sep. '99	$50
3	5	Ready 2 Rumble Boxing	Midway Home Ent.	Sep. '99	$48
4	6	Soul Ccalibur	Namco	Sep. '99	$45
8	7	Toy Commander	Sega of America	Nov. '99	$50
7	8	Sega Bass Fishing	Sega of America	Oct. '99	$40
9	9	House of the Dead 2	Sega of America	Sep. '99	$50
6	10	Dynamite Cop	Sega of America	Nov. '99	$50

***Not In Top 10 Last Week*

Source: NPD TRSTS Videogames Service • Mary Ann Porreca 516.625.2345

Top 30 Interactive Entertainment Software Publishers

Ranked on Units Sold — *November 7-November 13, 1999*

LAST WEEK'S	THIS WEEK	MANUFACTURER
1	1	Nintendo of America
2	2	Electronic Arts
3	3	Sony
4	4	Hasbro
12	5	Sega of America
5	6	Havas
6	7	Activision
9	8	Midway Home Entertainment
20	9	Capcom
19	10	Majesco
7	11	GT Interactive
13	12	THQ
14	13	Mattel
11	14	Acclaim
10	15	Namco
8	16	Microsoft
16	17	The 3DO Company
15	18	Eidos
17	19	Konami
21	20	Fox Interactive
23	21	Infogrames
24	22	LucasArts Entertainment
22	23	Interplay
25	24	Square EA
27	25	Take 2
26	26	UBI Soft
29	27	Viacom
30	28	eGames
28	29	Red Storm
**	30	ASC Games

***Not In Top 30 Last Week*
Source: NPD TRSTS Videogames Service • Mary Ann Porreca 516.625.2345

Top 20 Best Selling Computer Entertainment Titles

Ranked on Units Sold — *November 7-November 13, 1999*

LAST WEEK'S RANK	RANK	TITLE/PLATFORM	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE	AVG. RETAIL PRICE
7	1	Roller Coaster Tycoon/(CD W95/W98)	Hasbro Interactive	Mar. '99	$30
5	2	Delta Force 2/(CD W95/WNT/W98)	Electronic Arts	Nov. '99	$34
2	3	Age of Empires II/(CD W95/W98)	Microsoft	Sep. '99	$45
4	4	Deer Hunter 3/(CD W95/WNT)	WizardWorks	Sep. '99	$19
13	5	Roller Coaster Tycoon: Cork/(CD W95/W98)	MicroProse	Nov. '99	$20
20	6	Sim Theme Park World/(CD W95/W98)	Electronic Arts	Nov. '99	$32
**	7	Pokémon Studio Blue/(CD WIN)	Creative Wonders	Nov. '99	$24
6	8	Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear/(CD W95/W98)	Red Storm	Sep. '99	$41
8	9	Cabela's Big Game Hunter 3/(CD W95/W98)	HeadGames	Sep. '99	$19
**	10	Pokémon Studio Red/(CD WIN)	Creative Wonders	Nov. '99	$24
10	11	C&C: Tiberian Sun/(CD W95/W98)	Westwood Studios	Aug. '99	$48
**	12	Barbie Gotta Groove/(CD W95)	Mattel	Sep. '99	$32
11	13	Flight Simulator 2000/(CD W95/W98)	Microsoft	Oct. '99	$46
**	14	Rainbow Six Gold Pack Bndl./(CD W95/W98)	Red Storm	Jun. '99	$29
**	15	Barbie Detective 2/(CD W95)	Mattel	Sep. '99	$30
9	16	Flight Simulator 2000 PRO/(CD W95/W98)	Microsoft	Oct. '99	$68
3	17	Asheron's Call/(CD W95/WNT)	Microsoft	Oct. '99	$47
**	18	Monopoly 2/(CD W95/W98)	Hasbro Interactive	Oct. '99	$22
12	19	NBA Live 2000/(CD W95/W98)	Electronic Arts	Oct. '99	$38
**	20	SimCity 3000/(CD W95/W98)	Maxis	Jan. '99	$44

***Not In Top 20 Last Month*
Source: NPD TRSTS Videogames Service • Mary Ann Porreca 516.625.2345

Top 25 Best Selling Videogames

Ranked on Units Sold — *November 7-November 13, 1999*

LAST WEEK'S RANK	RANK	TITLE/PLATFORM	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE	AVG. RETAIL PRICE
1	1	Pokémon Yellow/GBoy	Nintendo of America	Oct. '99	$27
**	2	Resident Evil 3: Nemesis/PSX	Capcom	Nov. '99	$50
**	3	NBA 2K/DC	Sega of America	Nov. '99	$50
2	4	Pokémon Red/GBoy	Nintendo of America	Sep. '98	$26
3	5	Pokémon Blue/GBoy	Nintendo of America	Sep. '98	$26
4	6	Pokémon Pinball/GBC	Nintendo of America	Jun. '99	$30
5	7	Pokémon Snap/N64	Nintendo of America	Jul. '99	$49
6	8	Knockout Kings 2000/PSX	Electronic Arts	Nov. '99	$41
20	9	Spyro the Dragon 2: Rage/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Nov. '99	$40
8	10	Crash Team Racing/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Oct. '99	$40
9	11	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater/PSX	Activision	Sep. '99	$42
12	12	Spyro the Dragon/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Sep. '98	$20
10	13	Driver/PSX	GT Interactive	Jun. '99	$40
11	14	Super Mario Bros. Dlx./GBC	Nintendo of America	May '99	$29
15	15	Army Men Sarge's Heroes/N64	The 3DO Company	Sep. '99	$50
14	16	Madden NFL 2000/PSX	Electronic Arts	Aug. '99	$40
13	17	Gran Turismo Racing/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	May '98	$20
16	18	Pac-Man World/PSX	Namco	Oct. '99	$40
**	19	Medal of Honor/PSX	Electronic Arts	Nov. '99	$44
23	20	Crash Bandicoot Warp/PSX	Sony Computer Ent.	Nov. '98	$20
**	21	WCW/nWo Revenge/N64	THQ	Oct. '98	$13
17	22	Final Fantasy VIII/PSX	Square EA	Sep. '99	$50
19	23	NFL 2K/DC	Sega of America	Sep. '99	$50
22	24	Super Smash Brothers/N64	Nintendo of America	Apr. '99	$50
**	25	Frogger/PSX	Hasbro Interactive	Oct. '97	$20

***Not In Top 25 Last Month*
Source: NPD TRSTS Videogames Service • Mary Ann Porreca 516.625.2345

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Stock Index

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Publishers/Manufacturers

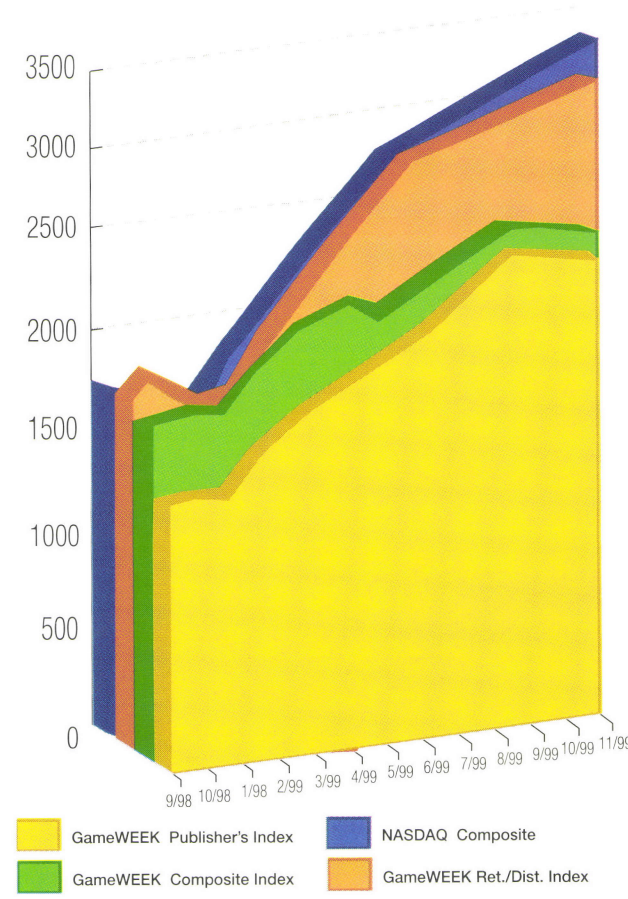
EXCH	TICKER	COMPANY	52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	P/E RATIO	11/12/99 CLOSE	11/19/99 CLOSE	% CHANGE IN PERIOD	% CHANGE IN YEAR
NASD	TDDD	3D Labs Inc Ltd	7.25	2.75	-	3.31	4.56	37.74%	30.36%
NASD	TDFX	3Dfx	23.00	7.50	-	9.75	9.06	-7.05%	-28.22%
NASD	THDO	3DO	11.43	2.75	-	10.56	9.69	-8.28%	101.30%
NASD	AKLM	Acclaim	13.00	5.00	13.2	6.38	7.50	17.65%	-38.78%
NASD	ATVI	Activision	17.75	9.37	18.2	14.06	14.00	-0.44%	25.84%
NASD	ADRN	Adrenalin Interactive Inc New	9.25	0.50	-	3.44	3.63	5.45%	75.76%
NYSE	AMD	Advanced Micro Devices Inc	33.00	14.56	-	26.56	27.13	2.12%	-6.47%
NASD	AAPL	Apple Computer	97.71	31.62	25.6	90.63	92.44	2.00%	125.80%
NYSE	BDE	Brilliant Digital Enmt Inc	7.93	1.37	-	2.69	2.88	6.98%	64.29%
NYSE	CRUS	Cirrus Logic	16.50	6.00	-	13.94	14.38	3.14%	46.50%
NYSE	CPQ	Compaq Comp.	51.25	18.00	40.4	21.75	26.25	20.69%	-37.50%
NASD	CREAF	Creative Labs	18.62	8.87	13.4	14.31	15.44	7.86%	2.92%
NASD	DELL	Dell	55.00	29.87	67.7	41.75	41.31	-1.05%	12.89%
NYSE	DIS	Disney	38.68	22.75	43.1	25.06	26.75	6.73%	-10.83%
NASD	EIDSY	Eidos Interactive†††	95.00	13.50	75.9	86.50	77.38	-10.55%	381.71%
NASD	ERTS	Electronic Arts	92.00	38.00	50.3	89.06	92.00	3.30%	63.92%
NASD	GTIS	GT Interactive	6.75	1.87	-	3.00	2.03	-32.29%	-59.38%
AMEX	HAS	Hasbro	37.00	17.87	17.8	22.00	22.94	4.26%	-36.51%
NYSE	HWP	Hewlett Packard	118.43	57.68	28.2	76.69	94.09	22.70%	37.74%
NYSE	IBM	IBM	139.18	78.81	24.9	95.75	105.00	9.66%	13.90%
NASD	INTC	Intel	89.50	50.12	38.2	76.19	79.88	4.84%	34.74%
NASD	IENTC	Interactive Magic	7.75	0.50	-	1.91	2.00	4.92%	-53.28%
NASD	INGR	Intergraph	10.25	3.18	-	4.25	4.66	9.56%	-19.02%
NASD	IPLY	Interplay	3.62	1.56	-	1.97	1.78	-9.52%	0.00%
NASD	LOGIY	Logitech	23.87	10.75	-	18.00	22.75	26.39%	100.00%
NASD	MVSN	Macrovision	57.50	14.00	164.1	45.50	50.88	11.81%	140.83%
NYSE	MAT	Mattel Inc	39.00	11.68	21.3	13.06	14.06	7.66%	-40.16%
NASD	MSFT	Microsoft	100.75	54.56	57.0	89.19	86.00	-3.57%	24.02%
NYSE	MWY	Midway	22.25	7.62	107.9	20.06	20.50	2.18%	86.36%
NASD	RCOT	Recoton	21.75	5.43	-	5.94	6.50	9.47%	-63.76%
NASD	EGAM	eGames Inc.	6.15	1.25	36.6	2.44	2.56	5.13%	54.72%
NYSE	SIII	S3 Inc	12.87	4.18	-	9.69	9.63	-0.65%	31.06%
NYSE	SNE	Sony Corp.	181.50	65.50	54.2	176.50	176.63	0.07%	145.31%
NASD	TTWO	Take Two	13.62	5.87	24.9	10.88	12.94	18.97%	56.82%
NASD	THQI	T-HQ	50.44	16.37	20.5	40.50	50.44	24.54%	80.13%
NASD	CSCC	CenterSpan	26.00	2.87	-	14.25	13.75	-3.51%	-14.06%
AMEX	VIA	Viacom	54.25	31.68	112.0	49.00	52.63	7.40%	43.08%
NASD	VOXW	Voxware Inc	2.12	0.56	-	0.88	0.78	-10.71%	-19.35%

Retailers and Distributors

EXCH	TICKER	COMPANY	52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	P/E RATIO	11/12/99 CLOSE	11/19/99 CLOSE	% CHANGE IN PERIOD	% CHANGE IN YEAR
NASD	AMZN	Amazon.Com Inc	110.62	25.25	-	74.94	77.94	4.00%	45.56%
NASD	AMES	Ames Stores	48.87	19.81	-	24.75	25.88	4.55%	-4.17%
NYSE	BKS	Barnes & Noble	48.00	20.06	18.1	21.13	22.44	6.21%	-47.21%
NYSE	BBY	Best Buy	80.50	22.93	39.3	52.75	50.25	-4.74%	63.75%
NASD	BYND	Beyond.Com Corp	41.31	7.21	-	9.06	11.50	26.90%	-44.58%
NASD	CDNW	Cdnow Inc	39.25	11.37	-	12.81	14.50	13.17%	-19.44%
NYSE	CC	Circuit City	52.93	16.87	106.7	47.63	45.88	-3.67%	83.73%
NYSE	CPU	Comp USA	15.25	5.18	-	5.75	5.81	1.09%	-55.50%
NASD	COOL	Cyberian Outpost Inc	45.50	7.62	-	10.88	13.13	20.69%	-52.27%
NASD	CYSP	Cybershop Intl Inc	30.00	5.12	-	9.13	10.00	9.59%	-12.09%
NASD	DRIV	Digital River Inc	61.37	11.25	-	33.25	29.88	-10.15%	-15.85%
NASD	EBAY	eBay Inc	234.00	41.75	-	136.88	145.94	6.62%	20.98%
NASD	EGGS	EggHead	40.25	6.50	-	10.94	13.50	23.43%	-35.14%
NASD	ELBO	Electronics Boutique	26.31	12.12	18.9	22.50	22.44	-0.28%	10.12%
NASD	FNCO	Funco Inc	24.62	12.00	11.6	18.00	17.88	-0.69%	2.14%
NASD	GGUY	Good Guys	8.31	2.75	-	6.56	6.50	-0.95%	0.97%
NASD	IMAL	IMall Inc	32.75	8.87	-	17.06	17.06	0.00%	-6.51%
NYSE	KM	K Mart Corp	18.62	9.18	13.1	9.81	9.19	-6.37%	-40.00%
NYSE	MAY	May Dept Stores	45.37	31.62	13.3	32.63	32.81	0.57%	-18.48%
NASD	NAVR	Navarre	27.00	4.43	-	7.72	7.06	-8.50%	-29.81%
NYSE	S	Sears	53.18	26.68	9.9	29.31	32.13	9.59%	-24.41%
NYSE	SME	Service Merchandise	2.06	0.09	-	0.25	0.28	12.50%	0.00%
NASD	SPLS	Staples	35.93	16.43	46.2	21.94	24.50	11.68%	-43.92%
NYSE	TAN	Tandy	72.00	18.50	65.7	68.81	71.00	3.18%	244.76%
NASD	TOPS	Tops Appliance	4.56	0.68	-	0.94	0.84	-10.00%	-70.00%
NYSE	TOY	Toys R Us	24.75	13.06	13.0	16.50	17.19	4.17%	1.48%
NYSE	WMT	Walmart	61.00	35.68	49.7	58.88	58.13	-1.27%	42.75%

Source: CNET Investor (investor.cnet.com) "This information is based on sources believed to be reliable, and while extensive efforts are made to assure its accuracy, no guarantees can be made. CNET Investor assumes no liability for any inaccuracies."

Index Comparisons



Summary of Results

Advances: 43 Declines: 21 Unchanged: 1

GAINERS	% CHANGE
3D Labs Inc Ltd	37.74%
Beyond.Com Corp	26.90%
Logitech	26.39%
T-HQ	24.54%
EggHead	23.43%

LOSERS	% CHANGE
GT Interactive	-32.29%
Voxware Inc	-10.71%
Eidos Interactive†††	-10.55%
Digital River Inc	-10.15%
Tops Appliance	-10.00%

INDEX COMPARISONS	11/12/99	11/19/99	NET CHANGE	% CHANGE
GameDaily Composite Index	2161.88	2220.04	58.16	2.69
GameDaily Publishers Index	2063.28	2134.50	71.22	3.45
GameDaily Retailers/Distributors	3181.66	3186.84	5.18	0.16
NASDAQ Composite	3221.15	3369.25	148.10	4.60
Dow Jones Industrial Average	10769.32	11003.89	234.57	2.18
S&P 500 Stock Index	1396.06	1421.99	25.93	1.86
Russel 2000	442.41	442.41	0.00	0.00

Reader Information

VIDTRAC's Top 25 Renting Games

For the week ending November 14, 1999

Rank	Game Label	Title	Game Publisher	Street Date	Days In Release	List Price/ (Equiv.)	Weekly Turns (000)	Weekly Revenue (000)
1	N64	Pokémon Snap	Nintendo of America	07/26/99	111	$54.99	84.79	$272.62
2	N64	Super Smash Bros.	Nintendo of America	04/26/99	202	$0.00	61.35	$199.98
3	N64	Army Men Sarge's Heroes	3DO Games	09/29/99	46	$59.99	60.68	$197.89
4	PSX	Driver	GT Interactive	06/01/99	166	$0.00	58.69	$173.93
5	N64	WWF Attitude	Acclaim Entertainment	08/31/99	75	$59.99	43.73	$152.59
6	N64	NFL Blitz 2000	Midway	08/25/99	81	$54.99	42.89	$133.55
7	PSX	WCW Mayhem	Electronic Arts	09/21/99	54	$39.99	41.23	$132.63
8	N64	WCW Mayhem	Electronic Arts	09/22/99	53	$49.99	41.73	$131.87
9	PSX	Crash Team Racing	Sony Computer Entertainment	10/19/99	26	$39.99	41.90	$126.52
10	N64	Knockout Kings 2000 N64	Electronic Arts	10/13/99	32	$49.99	36.58	$120.13
11	PSX	Metal Gear Solid: VR Missions	Konami	10/11/99	34	$39.99	36.08	$118.70
12	N64	Jet Force Gemini	Nintendo of America	10/12/99	33	$54.99	37.57	$118.13
13	N64	Gauntlet Legends	Midway	09/29/99	46	$54.99	35.41	$115.58
14	PSX	Star Wars: The Phantom Menace	LucasArts Entertainment Inc.	08/11/99	95	$44.99	38.74	$115.46
15	N64	Road Rash 64	THQ Inc.	09/22/99	53	$54.99	38.74	$114.29
16	PSX	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Activision	09/29/99	46	$39.99	34.58	$109.47
17	PSX	Dino Crisis	Capcom	09/23/99	52	$44.99	35.91	$109.34
18	N64	Mario Golf	Nintendo of America	07/26/99	111	$54.99	33.92	$107.91
19	PSX	WWF Attitude	Acclaim Entertainment	07/14/99	123	$39.99	34.08	$107.26
20	PSX	Madden NFL 2000	Electronic Arts	09/01/99	74	$39.99	29.59	$100.43
21	N64	Madden NFL 2000	Electronic Arts	09/01/99	74	$49.99	33.25	$99.71
22	PSX	Army Men 3D	3DO Games	03/02/99	257	$0.00	31.09	$97.77
23	N64	Mario Party	Nintendo of America	02/12/99	275	$0.00	33.08	$95.54
24	PSX	NFL Blitz 2000	Midway	08/25/99	81	$49.99	29.93	$93.90
25	N64	GoldenEye 007	Nintendo of America	08/01/97	835	$39.99	29.26	$89.47

Consumer Publications

An Express View of Software Ratings From Leading Consumer Magazines and Websites

Title	Publisher/System	Publication/Website	Review Score
TOCA 2	Codemasters, PSX	videogames.com	5.4/10
		OPM	4.5/5
		EGM	8.5/10
FIFA 2000	EA Sports, PSX	videogames.com	9.4/10
		EGM	9.0/10
		GameFan.com	92/100
WWF Attitude	Acclaim, DC	videogames.com	6.8/10
		GameFan.com	40/100
		igndc.com	8.0/10
Pokémon Yellow	Nintendo, GBC	EGM	7/10
		Nintendo Power	8/10
		Gamcenter.com	9/10
Pong	Hasbro, PSX	ignpsx.com	9/10
		EGM	6.5/10
		gamecenter.com	7/10
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes	3DO, N64	EGM	4.5/10
		gamefan.com	75/100
		Nintendo Power	7.4/10
Dune 2000	Westwood, PSX	EGM	7/10
		GameFan	74/10
		gameinformer.com	7.75/10
Space Invaders	Activision, PSX	GameFan	88/100
		EGM	6.5/10
		gamecenter.com	8/10

Calendar of Events

January, 2000

4-8 MACWORLD Expo
Moscone Convention Center
San Francisco, CA
macworldexpo.com

6-9 CES (Consumer Electronics Show)
Las Vegas Convention Center
Las Vegas, NV
cesweb.org

February

13-17 American International Toy Fair
Javits Convention Center & Showroom Locations
New York, NY
www.toy-tma.org

14-18 Milia
Cannes, France
www.milia.com

March

8-12 Game Executive/ Game Developer's Conference
San Jose, CA
www.gdconf.com

April

5-7 Spring Internet World
Los Angeles, CA
www.events.internet.com

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GameWEEK Interview:

Interplay's

Trish Wright

After being acquired by French publisher Titus, Interplay has streamlined and remolded itself to focus on its core brands

By Marc Dultz

As a company "By gamers. For gamers," Interplay has certainly fulfilled its creed for 1999, releasing a number of top-flight entertainment products that include Star Trek: Starfleet Command, Descent 3, Freespace 2: Exodus *and* Baldur's Gate: Sword Coast. *For the year 2000, Interplay plans to follow up on its success with a bevy of highly anticipated titles that will, in all likelihood, include* Star Trek: New Worlds, Fallout 3, Baldur's Gate 2 *and* F/A-18E Super Hornet.

Interplay's Star Trek: Klingon Academy *(developerd by 14° East) is one of the three* Trek *games that Interplay has or will publish in 1999.*

While it takes a staff of incredibly talented developers and other artisans to craft such epic works, it also requires the efforts of a skilled strategist to continually bring such high caliber products to market year after year.

GameWEEK spoke recently with Trish Wright, vice president of development at Interplay. In our exclusive interview, Trish comments on some of the recent goings on at the resurgent software publisher, which include a further streamlining of operations to make the Company run more efficiently and a renewed focus on its highly successful core brands. Trish also addresses some of the challenges facing both the Company and the industry at large, explaining, in due course, some of the hurdles confronting software publishers in the 21st century.

MDK2 *is being developed by BioWare Corp.*

GameWEEK: *Trish, could you please discuss your background, role and responsibilities at Interplay?*

Trish Wright: I've been at Interplay for four years. Prior to that, I was at Activision for close to three. I am responsible for worldwide product development at Interplay, which includes long-term strategic planning and short-term "get-it-out-the door-with-5-Stars" tactics.

GW: *In August, Interplay announced that French software publisher Titus Interactive SA had completed a strategic equity investment of $25 million in the Interplay Entertainment Corp. by purchasing 6.25 million shares of its common stock. Earlier this year, Titus made a similar investment by purchasing $5 million worth of Interplay's stock. Moving forward, what role, if any, will Titus have in the decision-making process positioning strategy at Interplay, and how will the net proceeds of the latest investment be used to finance Interplay's operations?*

TW: At the close of this deal, Herve Caen will become Interplay's president. As such, he will be integral in all strategic relationships as well as all product development strategies. The proceeds of the investment will be used in part to fund our strategic initiatives so that we can continue to move on and gain critical mass in the console world.

GW: *Interplay releases products through Interplay, Shiny Entertainment, Tantrum, Black Isle Studios, 14° East, and its wholly owned subsidiary Interplay OEM, Inc., as well as its various distribution partners. For starters, why was the Flat Cat label dropped in favor of 14° East and secondly, whatever happened to the Tribal Dreams adventure games division?*

TW: During the process of implementing the division of product development, it became clear that three internal divisions were a better management and creative structure than five. Tribal Dreams and Flat Cat were merged and given a new mission and reborn as 14° East.

GW: *Does Interplay still feel that the relatively recent strategic restructuring of its development department into several independent divisions is succeeding in today's marketplace?*

TW: Yes, more so than ever. We recognize, however, that the product development cycle is a two-year process and that our division strategy has been in place for just over a year. The Black Isle division has branded itself in a very short period of time with its focus on award-winning role-playing games such as *Fallout*, *Fallout 2*, and *Planescape: Torment*, as well as *Baldur's Gate*.

GW: *At the GEN CON Game Fair 1999, Interplay announced plans to develop a new version of* Neverwinter Nights, *which would make it one of the first CRPGs to use Wizards of the Coast new 3rd Edition* Dungeons and Dragons *rule set. However, in October, Hasbro indicated its intent to purchase Wizards of theCoast. Will the Wizards sale have any effect on the* Neverwinter Nights *project?*

TW: No.

GW: *Last year, in a* GameWEEK *interview conducted with Brian Fargo, CEO of Interplay, Mr. Fargo pointed out the need for the company to return to its role-playing roots. Meanwhile, massively multiplayer CRPGs such as Origin's*

(continued on page 38)

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Development Cost

Publishers' R&D investments reflect in-house vs. outsourcing development strategies

By Paul Palumbo

Publishers can invest anywhere from 10-60% of revenue on product R&D, but a closer look inside those numbers reveals a lot about how each publisher is approaching the business of development from a strategic perspective. Looking at pre-paid expenses give a good indication if a publisher leans towards going outside for development or prefers internally driven production. Companies with largely internal development (Midway, Acclaim, EA and 3DO) typically report those R&D expenses on the income statement under operating expenses. And the key point is that those expenses are subtracted from operating income during the reporting period, which directly impacts the bottom line.

Other publishers such as Take 2 Interactive, THQ, Interplay and Activision are weighted toward third-party development and licensing models, and those expenses often appear on the balance sheet as pre-paid assets (royalties and licensing fees), and are not expensed during the quarter.

Under that particular model, R&D is typically amortized (or expensed) over a number of quarters or reporting periods, which boosts the bottom line since the bulk of those costs are not immediately subtracted from operating income. THQ has been a long-time proponent of third-party development, and keeps costs down by doing so. But, the company has modified its strategy, and has so far doubled its internal R&D in 1999 to $9 million from $4.4 in 1998 (see table).

THQ made a couple of studio acquisitions over the past coupe of years, buying Game fX and Pacific Coast Power and Light. THQ is also spending a greater percentage of overall revenue on R&D in 1999 (including pre-paid royalties and licensing fees) compared to the same period in 1998. Even so, almost 67% of THQ's entire R&D budget is wrapped up in third-party development.

Similarly, Activision has a high pre-paid royalty component to R&D (84%) compared to THQ because the company has been actively licensing franchises and or brands, and has also gone from an internal development model to one that is geared toward supporting external studios with exclusive output deals.

Activision's third quarter titles include *Toy Story 2*, *Quake III*, *Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense*, *Wu-Tang*, *Star Trek*, *Battlezone II*, *Interstate '82* and others. Activision has learned a thing or two from THQ, but it's still not easy for any publisher to execute that type of model consistently. The danger is that publishers could build up their pre-paid royalties and eventually those would have to be expensed. When that happens, those expenses would then directly impact the bottom line.

Take 2 Interactive is predominately a third party publisher, with fully 90% of its R&D budget tied up in pre-paid royalties and licensing fees. Interplay is on track to allocate 66% of its total R&D budget to third parties. An important part of this type of amortization model is that it has to be matched against the window of sales opportunity for a particular title, titles or technology. If the game doesn't sell, at the end of the day, the publisher will have to expense the entire R&D budget that was parked on the balance sheet under current or long-term assets.

THE INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

3DO is on target to produce 25 games in fiscal 2000, and the company has games in development for all the major game platforms, including the PC, Sony PlayStation, N64 and Game Boy Color, as well as the Internet. And, 3DO is going exclusively with an internally driven model. The odds are (based on Wall Street's reaction to the company's stock) that all the R&D being poured into development is going to pay off next year. 3DO is investing significantly in its studios that turn around and build its brands. For example, *Army Men* cost about $2.2 million to develop, while *Army Men II* cost $800,000. That's the kind of operating leverage that can be derived from internal studios and brands.

Midway is a company that 24 months ago relied more on third party developers, but the product quality was spotty, and the company took some criticism for that. This year, the company is using less third-party development and producing more internally.

As for EA, the company is averaging about 22% of revenue for R&D. That's up slightly this year because most of last year did not include operating expenses for the Westwood Studios. That is now an internal studio and a huge asset. *GW*

Game Publisher Research and Development Investment
R&D figures include all pre-paid royalties and licensing fees

PUBLISHER	1999 YTD R&D ($MIL)	1998 YTD R&D ($MIL)	% CHANGE	1998 REV.	1999 REV.	% '98 REV.	% '99 REV.
3DO Company***	16.9	11.6	45.7%	14.6	33.7	79.5%	50.1%
Electronic Arts***	115.8	84.6	36.9%	424.0	525.0	20.0%	22.1%
Midway Games*	76.0	67.5	12.6%	391.2	351.8	17.3%	21.6%
Interplay Entertainment***	30.4	30.0	1.3%	81.7	51.0	36.7%	59.6%
Electronic Arts**	68.4	48.3	41.6%	245.8	338.9	19.7%	20.2%
Midway Games**	19.2	15.8	21.9%	n/a	106.6	n/a	18.0%
Electronic Arts*	202.1	146.2	38.2%	909.0	1,222.0	16.1%	16.5%
GT Interactive**	16.4	16.5	-0.6%	116.4	121.3	14.2%	13.5%
Acclaim Entertainment*	50.5	37.4	34.9%	326.6	431.0	11.5%	11.7%
Activision***	66.2	47.9	38.2%	127.7	199.5	37.5%	33.2%
THQ****	26.5	12.7	108.3%	104.4	174.6	12.2%	15.1%
Take 2 Interactive***	21.4	14.0	53.4%	130.0	184.0	10.7%	11.6%

* = Full year 1998 vs. 1999 comparison. ** First Q. 2000 comparison.
*** Six-month comparison. **** Nine-month comparison.

Source: Analysis of company reports by Paul A. Palumbo.

Publisher Pre-Paid Royalties and Licensing Fees

PUBLISHER	1999 PRE-PAID ROYALTIES	1998 PRE-PAID ROYALTIES	% CHANGE	% PRE-PAY OF '99 R&D
Take 2 Interactive	19.2	12.4	54.8%	89.7%
THQ	17.6	8.3	112.0%	66.5%
Activision	55.9	37.6	48.7%	84.4%
Interplay	20	18.1	10.5%	65.8%

Source: Analysis of company reports by Paul A. Palumbo.

News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits...

Gamers.com Preview Site Launched—GX Media announced recently the preview launch of Gamers.com Internet portal. The site will offer information about all types of games from board games to console titles. Users will be able to search for information about games, connect to links for games and categories, view overall ratings of products, and make the site their own through user boards and instant messaging. At its formal launch in the first quarter of 2000, Gamers.com will offer 20,000 traditional and electronic gamers online free of charge.

iEntertainment, EarthLink Partner—iEntertainment Network has partnered with EarthLink to host EarthLinks's relaunched website. Under the agreement iEntertainment will provide EarthLink with a co-branded, full service entertainment site. The Games Arena will feature multiplayer Internet games, news, previews, contests, promotions and electronic chat.

Microsoft Announces MechWarrior Champions—Microsoft announced today that Jonathan Lim of British Columbia and Scott Collins of Alabama have been crowned "Masters of MechWarrior." Both Lim and Collins were awarded Year 2000 Harley Davidson Fat Boy motorcycles and a bonus Harley Davidson package. The two lasted through six rounds of online tournament and two more rounds of combat at the championship on November 13 at GameWorks in Seattle.

PC Games for Rent—Blockbuster Inc. and AegiSoft Corporation announced a marketing test introducing rental PC software on demand. The test, being conducted at 175 participating Blockbuster stores, will allow consumers to rent full versions of any PC software product for five evenings for $4.99. Consumers can add additional rental time by connecting to AegiSoft's server through a toll-free modem connection or through the Internet. If consumers wish to purchase the software, a portion of the accrued rental fee will be applied to the full price of the product. Blockbuster plans to carry approximately 20 of the latest software titles.

Stephen King Title—Blue Byte Software announced F13, the first interactive entertainment product from Novelist, Stephen King. F13 features King's unpublished (in book format) novella, Everything's Eventual as well as many mini "king-esque" games, customizable desktops and "Screamsavers." F13 will be available for PC and Mac in January for an MSRP of $29.95.

Train Sims Popular in Japan—Train simulation games are growing in popularity in Japan. A few companies produce the games which are most popular among men in their 30's and older. Pony Canyon Inc. began selling its simulator, which is available on both PC and Mac in 1995 for between 5,800 and 8,800 yen. Unbalanced Corp. first offered Taito's Densha-de-Go! and Densha-de-Go! 2 games in March. The latest train simulation title released in July by Pony Canyon includes actual scenery from a train in France and has already sold over 350,000 packages.

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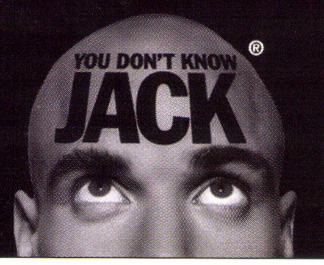

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GameWEEK Interview: Trish Wright

Ultima Online *and Sony's* EverQuest *have literally reshaped the gaming industry, and continue to alter the traditional business model. Will the new version of* Neverwinter Nights *be made available through the America Online service or does Interplay plan on eventually deploying its own pay-to-play gaming site?*

TW: Unfortunately, I'm not at liberty to comment on that at the present time.

***GW:** What products are currently in development at Interplay?*

TW: Internally, we have three role-playing games in development, two strategy games and three action titles.

***GW:** Interplay has announced separate distribution agreements with both Empire Interactive and with Rage that would enable the company to distribute its products throughout North America. Why do you feel these companies were interested in working with Interplay and how will the company ensure that its distribution partners receive the widest possible exposure in the retail channel?*

TW: As a "By gamer. For gamer company," Rage and Empire will be looking to Interplay to help them understand the unique American gamer and to help them better penetrate the market from a product, art, feature, and design perspective. Our sales force has a history of great retail relationships and broad distribution. We will be working closely with our European partners to develop strong channel marketing programs so that we can capture even greater market share for them.

***GW:** In September of this year, Interplay Films, a division of the Interplay Entertainment Corporation, announced that Columbia Pictures had optioned the theatrical motion picture rights to the computer game* Redneck Rampage. *As part of the announcement, Tom Reed, president of Interplay Films, claimed that, "a lot of things are in the pipeline [at Interplay Films] and I'm confident that several things will be popping out in the near future." Obviously, other production studios are already looking into ways to leverage several Interplay properties for the motion picture industry. With projects such as* Wing Commander *failing to recoup its production costs, what makes you believe that other lesser-known games can successfully make the leap from the computer to the silver screen?*

TW: To be successful on the big screen you need to combine a great script with terrific acting and production values. *Mortal Kombat*, the movie, achieved a successful balance of these ingredients. *Redneck Rampage* clearly lends itself to very interesting and clever script writing, not to mention unique casting and production ideas and techniques.

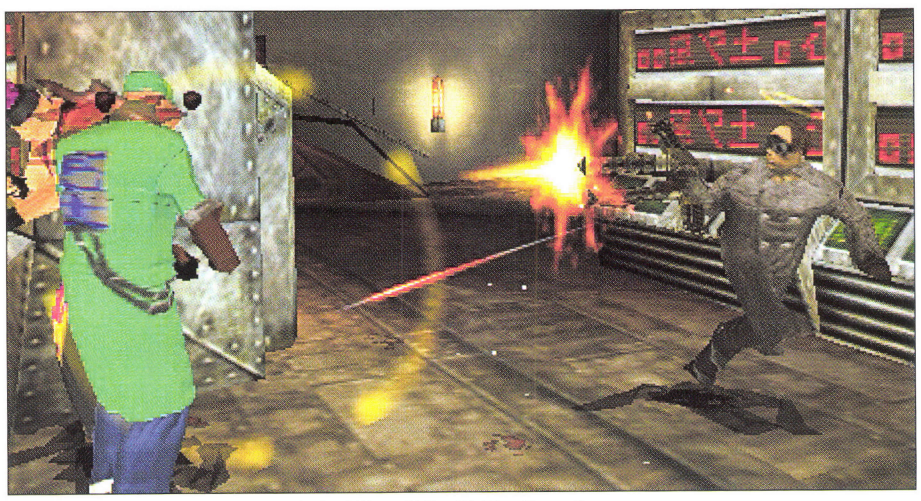
***GW:** As we move forward into the next millenium, what do you see as some of the most challenging issues facing Interplay and the interactive entertainment industry at large?*

Messiah

TW: Going forward, the challenges our industry faces are as interesting and diverse as the challenges faced as recently as the past few years. The issues seem to fall into three principal areas: content, technology, and margin.

Clearly, as more and more companies try their hand at persistent world, multiplayer games, the actual size of that market and the effect of title clutter will become clearer, bringing more sharply into focus the risk/rewards of that particular business model. Secondly, there's the incontrovertible problem of how to make a responsible profit in an increasingly convoluted marketplace. For instance, the overabundance of sequels has driven away some of the best and brightest creative talents this industry has to offer. Then, of course, there's the issue of technology and staffing demands that have to be considered. Although the power of next-generation consoles and high-end PC systems have certainly led to the creation of more astonishing product, these projects are also becoming more expensive to make each and every year, while retail prices continue to face downward pressure from a number of sources. That places a tremendous strain on everyone's bottom line.

Finally, what role will the Microsoft Corporation play in the console world and how will it affect existing industry relationships and the development of content? One thing we do know is that this industry is all about adapting quickly and that won't change anytime in the foreseeable future. *GW*



Messiah *will be available on both the PC and PlayStation formats.*

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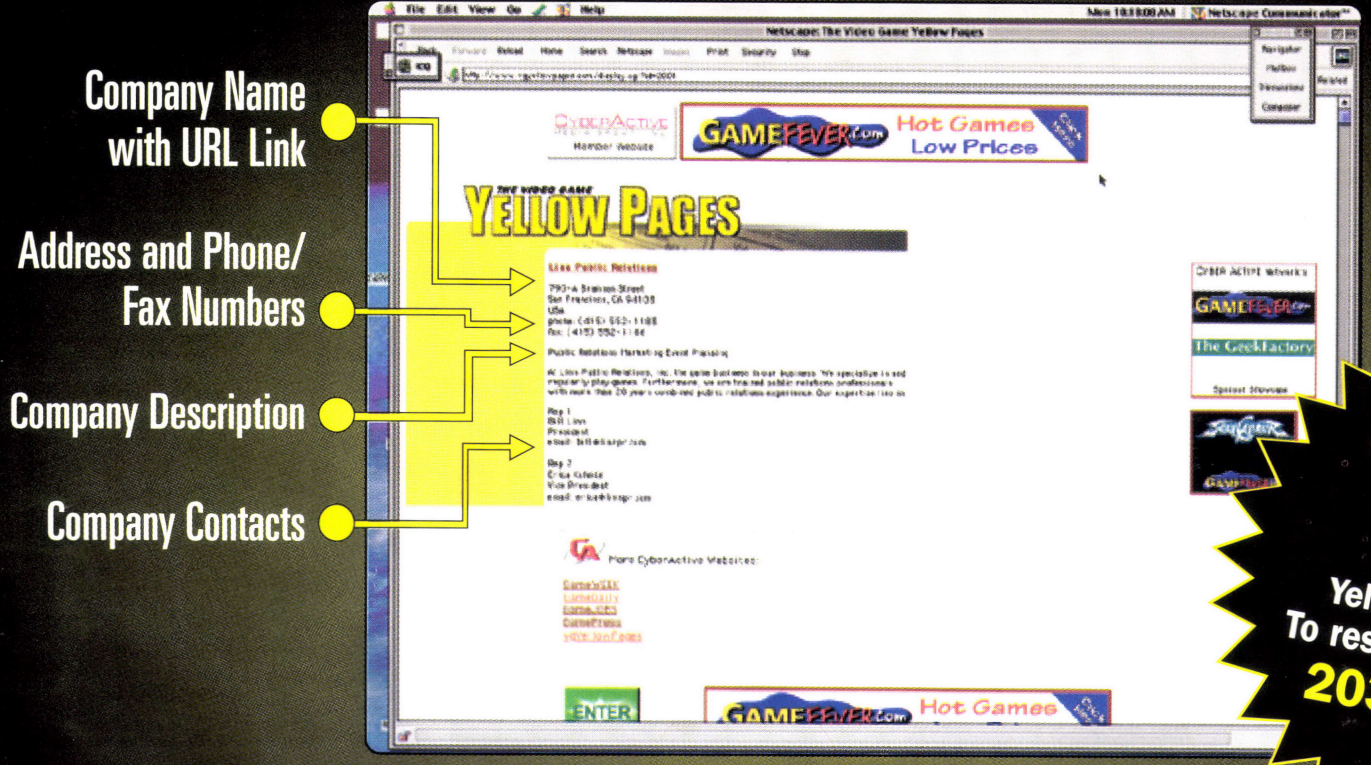

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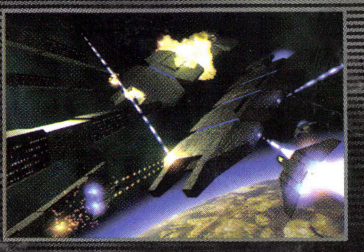

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