

y Mudgeon

[DISTILLATIONS: news and new products](#)

* COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT NEWS *

THE HUNT IS ON

A new interactive spy thriller with a comedic edge has just been released by Capcom Entertainment (408-774-0500). This title is currently available for PC CD-ROM and will release later this month for Macintosh CD-ROM machines. Plus, in March, to complete the embrace of various environments for this title, the Sony(R) Playstation(RM) and Sega(R) Saturn(TM) versions will release. This title contains action, adventure, plus dueling Elvises. There are more than 3 hours and 20 minutes of full-motion video. The title was filmed during a 33-day shoot in Los Angeles and Aspen, Colorado. Shot entirely on 16mm film, the game delivers a deep, rich picture quality that cannot be achieved with videotape. The film production required more than 40 sets and 2,100 camera set-ups to depict some 735 scenes. When you consider the average feature film contains 160 scenes, that's saying something. The game features more than 20 different action sequences, from hand-to-hand combat, a ski-diving gun battle, and skiing and snowboarding action, to a climactic high-speed race-and-shoot through a maze of tunnel tubes, filmed using miniatures and fiber-optic cameras. Fox Hunt also features 10 different outcomes, depending exactly on the players' routes, decisions and skill.

You enter the world of Jack Fremont. This is one ordinary guy whose been thrust into a rather extraordinary situation. His mission: find the missing launch codes, avoid being killed by Frank, discover the Fox's true identity, snatch a briefcase full of cash and diamonds and, if there's time, get the girl! Jack is the free world's only hope to stop a missile aimed for Los Angeles and he's been recruited by the CIA because of his incredible knowledge of BAAAD 70's television. He'll cross the paths of a Russian mob, a psychotic former CIA agent, and a virtual army of folk who are out to stop him, no matter the cost. Plus, he's got to manage this entire adventure in just 24 hours!

This title features 28 lead players (such as George Lazenby, one of the Bonds of feature film,

and Timothy Bottoms) and hundreds of extras. A special guest appearance is by Rob Lowe who plays Edison Pettibone, the King of the Infomercial. Additionally Rhino Records has released the first-ever dedicated soundtrack album for a video game. Containing 12 tracks, Fox Hunt includes songs by Violent Femmes, Butthole Surfers, Faith No More, Sublime, and Poster Children.

MORE ON EA'S PLATE

A developer of interactive entertainment and education software has been acquired by Electronic Arts. The company acquired is Manley & Associates, Inc., based in Issaquah, Washington, and they will become a wholly-owned subsidiary. The company, which was founded in 1982, has developed over 70 titles for the industry's top publishers. They will produce computer and 32-bit video game titles exclusively for Electronic Arts from this point on.

INTERACTIVE TOY BUNDLE DEBUTS

GTE Entertainment (619-431-8801) is bundling five CD-ROM titles together in a limited Discovery Pack promo. The Interactive Toys Discovery pack includes GTE's award-winning titles Vitsie Visits the Ocean and Lost & Found, Volume 1, plus three new releases: Monster Lab, Night Light and Professor Wise and His X-Ray Eyes. These titles provide a high level of entertainment with a built-in fun learning factor. Designed for pre-school aged children, these titles reinforce cognitive learning. The Discovery Pack has an SRP of \$19.95 and runs on Macintosh and PC computers.

Monster Lab challenges children to interact and play with a dozen animated monsters who are quite charming, including MurMur the mummy, Howleer the werewolf and Uno the Cyclops, in three imaginative games that help them overcome fear of the dark. Night Light is a richly-rendered game that turns the imaginary nighttime images that children conjure up into ordinary daytime reality. Kids explore a variety of rooms within a big dark house with help of two delightful animated companions. Professor Wise and His X-Ray Eyes includes a special X-Ray Viewer that lets children discover what's hidden inside objects such as boxes, statues, buildings and even people. Exploration is the theme in this colorful, cartoon-like game, which also includes a magnifier tool for enlarging objects. Vitsie Visits the Ocean has children traveling on an underwater adventure to meet mammals of the ocean in this award-winning title. Vitsie explains when and why whales migrate and how dolphins communicate. Lost & Found is an exploratory game that challenges children to search for lost items in 12 richly-detailed photographic scenes. There are 40 colorful objects in each scene, five levels of play and eight random audio clues to help locate the hidden items.

CHANGE OF NAMES

Because the company is now involving themselves in digital entertainment titles on CD-ROM as well as their core-business of reference materials, Grolier Electronic Publishing will now be known as Grolier Interactive, Inc. The name change comes after the Danbury, Connecticut-based company, merged with Matra Hachette Multimedia in Europe.

MORE MCKENZIE & COMPANY NEWS

Coming later this month is the Macintosh version of the first computer game for girls from Her Interactive. McKenzie and Company will also have two CD-ROM add-on discs for the Windows version of the game which work with the full, five CD-ROM game that shipped last November. This is a live-action social adventure set at an all-American high school. You play

either Kim or Carly, and you alternate between the main game disc and story discs keyed to guys you meet at School. In addition to live-action video interaction, the games feature 12 mini-games which serve as homework, school quizzes and after-school job, sections for makeup experimentation and shopping, where you can mix and match over 400 clothing items, plus a bonus audio CD of original music in the game. Designed for girls ages 10 to 15, this title is proving to be quite popular. Fan mail and email is arriving at Her Interactive's offices with testimonials from the girls and their parents. More info may be obtained from the Her Interactive Web site at <http://www.her-online.com>.

YEAR-IN-REVIEW RESULTS FROM IDC

Stable growth in the games and entertainment markets have resulted in a nearly 143 percent and 122 percent growth, respectively, of those segments, according to International Data Corporation's year-in-review research. Their report is entitled 1995 Preliminary Consumer Market Year-in-Review. Revenues for the consumer software market reached \$2.6 billion. That's an 82 percent increase over 1994 numbers. However, PC shipments into the home have slowed, due to market saturation. IDC predicts that, by the end of 1995, games and entertainment should be responsible for 38 percent of all earned revenues, followed by home productivity at 33 percent and edutainment-related software at 29 percent. For more info on this report, call Cheryl Toffel at 1-800-343-4952.

NEW CEO AT MINDSCAPE

Coming from Western Publishing Company and Penguin USA to Mindscape as that company's new CEO is John Moore. He has held a number of senior management positions in the leisure and publishing industries, including a ten year stint running Parker Brothers. We wish John well in his new venture.

NUMEROUS TITLES ANNOUNCED

Motion Works Group Limited has announced they are currently in production on over 20 CD-ROM products, including entertainment and educational titles as well as multimedia software tools for WWW page creation and presentations. Macintosh and Windows titles include A Ghost in the Dark, which should release during Q4 of this year. This is an interactive film that revolves around strongly drawn live and animated characters facing critical choices in an atmosphere of urgency and danger. You must battle wits with the characters and explore the innermost depths of your soul and morals. Then there's The Sacred Earth which finds Motion Works working with Gumboot Productions in an exploration title where you are taken on a journey exploring sacred places and wonders of nature. Whatley's Quest is an edutainment title that takes you through an elaborately illustrated and whimsically animated alphabetical journey with an underlying quest for buried treasure. The Multimedia Education Series will be published by Macmillan/McGraw-Hill School Division and will result in 40 separate modules to be completed by the end of 1997.

Other titles include Internet Access Guides for Q2 which makes surfing the net easy, fun and profitable; Go!Guides Series which shows you how to find the latest and greatest Internet sites; Get it Free on the Internet will show you what can be obtained at no cost, how to get it and what to be wary of; The Truth is in Here, which takes you through the back alleys and secret passageways of the Internet Underworld; Sounds of Cyberspace, your guide to band home pages on the WWW plus info on music zines, discographies, lyric pages and more; The Internet Media Guide directs you to where all of that info you crave is located; Family Internet Guide which reveals the best Internet resources for families; You Could Already be a Winner, a guide to 101 magazines on the Internet; Internet Travel Guide with up-to-the-minute resources for travel; A Night Out on the Internet which reveals where live concerts

and real-time chats with celebs are located; The Internet Business Guide which shows what benefits await on-line business folk; To Surf and Detect which will uncover where the best crime, espionage and unsolved mysteries exist on the Internet; plus much, much more.

Also, the company will continue to build their multimedia software tool line, including CameraMan 2.0 and 3.0 for Windows and Macintosh which is their screen recording and editing utility. Plus there's Code Name: Zep Tepi will be a content creation and management software solution with particular application to Internet web pages design and maintenance. For more info, check out the company's WWW site at <http://www.mwg.com>.

DEAL 'TWEEN TWO BIGGIES

The distribution of Simon & Schuster Interactive products will now be handled by Paramount Home Video, thanks to a new multi-year agreement between the two companies. The former's product line will continue to build upon the success of their Star Trek titles. Their flagship CD-ROMs include Star Trek(R): The Next Generation(TM) Interactive Technical Manual, which has sold over 300,000 copies. Plus Star Trek Omnipedia, a title with a 300,000 unit first pressing, the largest in book publishing history. Other titles will be found in edutainment and in other innovative arenas.

POPULAR PSX TITLE NOW FOR PC

ESPN Extreme Games has now been released by Sony Interactive PC Software America for PC and compatible computers. The same features that made the Sony Playstation title so popular are resident in the PC version, in-line skates, mountain bikes, skateboards and street luges. To participate in these non-traditional sports, you select from five different courses around the world. You also select one of three difficulty levels and compete in solo or head-to-head action against the computer. You'll punch, kick, and jump while you race opponents. The game may be controlled using either the keyboard or a Gravis Game Pad. Check out the company's WWW site for more info at <http://www.sony.com>.

** VIDEO GAME NEWS **

ATARI AWAY?

Not long ago, a great deal of noise was made by Atari of the hiring of Tedd Hoff as president of their North American operation. Now, Tedd Hoff has been laid off in addition to around 20 other employees that were employed in the advertising, engineering, marketing, merchandising and product development departments. As Atari only just recently announced Atari Interactive to develop software for the PC and other platforms, Hoff's dismissal comes as somewhat of a surprise. Atari is truly one, shaky video game manufacturer. In fact, they've halted production of their Jaguar, as the machine is still in channels in glut numbers. Regardless of what Atari does with their some \$50 million in the bank, their Jaguar is about as dead as dead can be.

SEGA BOOSTING THEIR CHANNEL

A new licensing deal with Tele-Communications International (TCI) by The Sega Channel for expansion of their on-line game service. So, you really could see Sonic the Hedgehog running amuck on cable services across the globe. This agreement will cover around 20 European and Pacific Rim countries. Sega will provide the programming know-how while TCI will have the distribution and marketing rights for the channel overseas. Within the next six months, Australia, Malta, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom will provide Sega

launchpads. Four months ago, The Sega Channel began operation in Taiwan.

**** DIGITAL DELIGHTS ****

KUAUI CONFERENCE ANNOUNCED

Storytelling for the New Millennium is the name of an international new media conference sponsored by Adobe Systems Incorporated and Apple Computer, Inc., to be held in Kauai, Hawaii. The dates are April 25th through April 28th, and the event was organized by the Kauai Institute for Communications Media and the American Film Institute (AFI). This is the third in a series of forums designed for leading professionals in the film, entertainment and technology industries. In conjunction with the conference, Adobe will lead a series of workshops that will provide hands-on training in Internet publishing and digital video editing. Sessions will include workshops on the Mac platform Adobe PhotoShop, Adobe Premiere and Adobe After Effects software. Plus, there will be a class in Web design that includes using Adobe PageMill software, and a master class in digital video taught by Russell Brown, Adobe's senior creative director. Apple will feature a Cybercafe where attendees will be able to create and publish their own home page on the WWW in real-time. Early registration until March 1st is \$595; thereafter, it is \$695. Members of AFI, educators and students will qualify for a 10 percent discount. More info can be obtained at <http://www.afionline.org>.

PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCED

Black Entertainment Television (BET) and The Microsoft Network (MSN) have decided to form an alliance that'll result in interactive TV (ITV), CD-ROMs and on-line programming content. The new company does not yet have a name, but will be managed from BET's Washington headquarters, with equal ownership by BET and Microsoft.

**** DEVELOPER DUMPS ****

POST PRODUCTION SERVICES INITIATED

GTE Interactive Media (619-431-8801) has started Digital Park(SM). This is a video services group that offers video, audio, authoring and compression post production services for today's computer gaming, Internet, corporate video and interactive film feature markets. The multi-million dollar facility offers digital on-line and off-line editing, graphics creation, SGI 3D animation, Avid 8000 digitizing, editing and effects rendering, plus several video and audio compression services. Digital Park also offers semi-custom authoring for CD-I, CD-ROM, Video CD and CD+ products. The lessons learned by the MPEG compression group at GTE Interactive Media resulted in this endeavor after that group discovered few of its customers have expertise in all of the disciplines needed to create interactive video. Multimedia developers, who understand computers and interactivity, increasingly use video and high quality audio in their development processes and final products. The recording industry is even developing a new market, producing CD+ albums that combine music videos with audio tracks. Additional info and rate cards may be obtained by calling 1-800-464-6434.

BRIDGING SONY AND SEGA

Multi-Platform Language has been developed by Konami Company. It runs on SGI workstations. According to the company, this language can be used to write Sony Playstation and Sega Saturn software. Normally, ports from one platform to the other can take as much as six months, depending upon the game's complexities. However, with Multi-

Platform Language, this time could be cut by at least one-half, and the number of folk that will be needed to conduct that port could be reduced by around 33 percent. As much as 60 to 70 percent of the game code between the two machines can be standardized, as both units use much of the same hardware.

DIGITAL MAG FOR MUSIC DEVELOPERS

If you're an audio engineer, a recording artist, a producer, songwriter, or erstwhile music enthusiast, perhaps the new Control digital magazine is for you. From Light Rail Communications (415-294-1850), the content of this CD-ROM digizine addresses issues pertinent to both aspiring and professionals in the music industry. The interactive magazine lets you listen, watch and learn from recording musicians through multimedia scrapbooks, video documentaries and more. There are four regular departments: Cool Stuff, a potpourri of the best new tools, interactive products, music CDs, and inspirations for creative minds; C-mail, a reader input section to pass along shareware and interesting files; Bonzai's Desktop, a "fun screen" hosted by the industry's leading raconteur and celebrity interviewer; and Inside, a view of what's going on, in and around Control. Light Rail Communications will simultaneously produce a companion on-line service, ControlLine. This service will provide a networked access among and between the readers of Control and the magazine's advertisers. The quarterly publication will be available for an SRP of \$15.95 per issue or for an annual fee of \$49.95.

IN THE EXTREME!

Now shipping is Macromedia's Extreme 3D modeling and animation program. This is cross-platform 3D creation software that enables artists and multimedia developers to produce dynamic 3D projects. The program takes you through three components of the 3D design process: creating professional models, animating 3D models and providing a professional finish through rendering. Extreme 3D combines the capabilities of Macromedia's 3D products, including MacroModel, into a single, integrated 3D authoring solution. Not only can new users use Extreme 3D right away as it uses familiar tools found in most illustration and drawing programs, but power users will find integration with Macromedia FreeHand, Director and Authorware solutions. Features include spline-based, CAD-accurate modeling, time and frame-based animation, and production quality-rendering.

* ONLINE STUFF *

AIN'T NUTTIN' TO IT

Yeah, you've heard the rumors--Netscape and America Online are going to merge. This idle chat was [allegedly] the result of info from Bertelsmann AG in Germany, a stock holder in AOL. According to one of those fine company officials, such talks were underway. Talk, talk, talk. Despite the fact that AOL adamantly indicates such a merger is not in the offing, there was no denial of an alliance between the two companies. Regardless of the outcome, this chat has certainly done no harm to AOL's stock price!

MORE AOL ACTIVITY

For nearly \$73 million, data compression technology company Johnson-Grace has been acquired by America Online, one of the most active of all on-line services, regardless of what Microsoft and CompuServe like to indicate. Johnson-Grace has been providing AOL's core compression technology for a couple of years and AOL will plan to make this technology more widely available to IPs and other developers wishing to enter the AOL environs.

MORE ON-LINE PUBS

BRP Publications has intro'd their World Wide Web site at <http://www.brp.com>. This company's new services will include Communications Billing), Electronic Gaming News (the title says it all), State & Local Communications Report (in-depth studies of new systems and major enhancements), and TR Daily (telecommunications industry news). The site will also provide info from nearly 20 newsletters, including two dailies, and the data will be updated every day.

WARCRAFT II ON THE NET

There's no question that one of the leading titles for late '95 and early '96 is Warcraft II: Tides of Darkness from Blizzard Entertainment (310-793-0600). Mudgeon remains addicted to this title, even though he's been playing it for over two months! There are always new strategies to try from either the Human or Orc perspective. Well, now, using Kali, a special network driver, this awesome title may be played over the Internet. You can now match your skills against another player from anywhere in this wide, wide world. The driver may be obtained from the following net address: <http://www.internexus.net/kali/kali/>. This driver will enable 15 minutes of game play, so you can test out its capabilities. The registered product with unlimited gameplay is only \$20.

Once you install Kali, logon to Kali Central and align yourself with an opponent. Running 24 hours a day, seven days a week, you can also chat about the game as well as get into multiplayer games. As many as four folk can play Warcraft II simultaneously over Kali. If you have an IPX network, as many as eight players may compete. Or, you can go head-to-head against another player via modem or direct-link. Even if you only have one copy of the game, that will allow three players to play using Kali or via an IPX network. And, guess what? There are NO hourly rates over Kali, so you may play for as long as wish--just watch your phone bill.

CYBER-COMICS

A new WWW page is coming your way, one that will be especially enjoyed by folk who enjoy comics. DC Comics new site at <http://www.dccomics.com> will detail their comic book titles and licensed publishing entities, including excerpts of the new Batman comic series. New sets of DC trading cards, classic radio programs and the original program will also be provided on-line. Another feature to watch for this month is when DC launches a new trading card set called Firepower. Every card image available will be yours to download through DC Comic's Warner Brothers site at <http://www.warnerbros.com> and Warner Brothers Pathfinder site at <http://www.pathfinder.com>.

JAVA MAG ON THE WEB

JavaWorld Magazine is coming from International Data Group (IDG) this month. Unless one has been secluded in a monastery, the Sun Microsystems' programming language, Java, is taking programming by storm. One of the language's strengths is its cross-platform capabilities and the new WWW-based magazine will feature tutorials, business profiles and coverage of Java-related events and news. There will be tons of code samples and demo applets. You can reach the magazine at <http://www.javaworld.com>.

NEW INTERNET SERVICE FROM PRODIGY

The great roll-out by Prodigy of their new Internet service will occur in March--but only for folk in the New York City area as the company undergoes a market trial of this offering. The charge will be \$1 per hour during the trial with no monthly minimum so that Prodigy can determine usage patterns. National pricing and availability will be announced later.

INTERNET ON T.V.

A trial is already being conducted in Scotland and it appears as though Viewcall, a United Kingdom company, is just about set to launch both a set-top box and a service that'll provide TV users with the Internet. The boxes will be leased and connected to television sets for about the equivalent of \$15 per month. Not only will the company lease the boxes, but their service will also include on-line shopping, plus an entertainment and news network, all done over normal phone lines. We fully expect Viewcall to promote their service internationally.

ON-LINE WEATHER

The success of The Weather Channel continues, not only on television, but via its CompuServe forum. Now, the company is also on the Internet with its one-stop weather information, ranging from global maps and forecasts to current conditions and Weather Channel program guides. Their Internet address is <http://www.weather.com>.