

NAG

E3 2011

In-depth coverage on some of the show's biggest exclusives

Reviews

Red Faction: Armageddon

DIRT 3

Dungeon Siege III

inFAMOUS 2

+ MORE!

Hardware

Gaming headset roundup. We listen and you hear.

RED FACTION

Dust off your old school, the masters of DOOM are back!

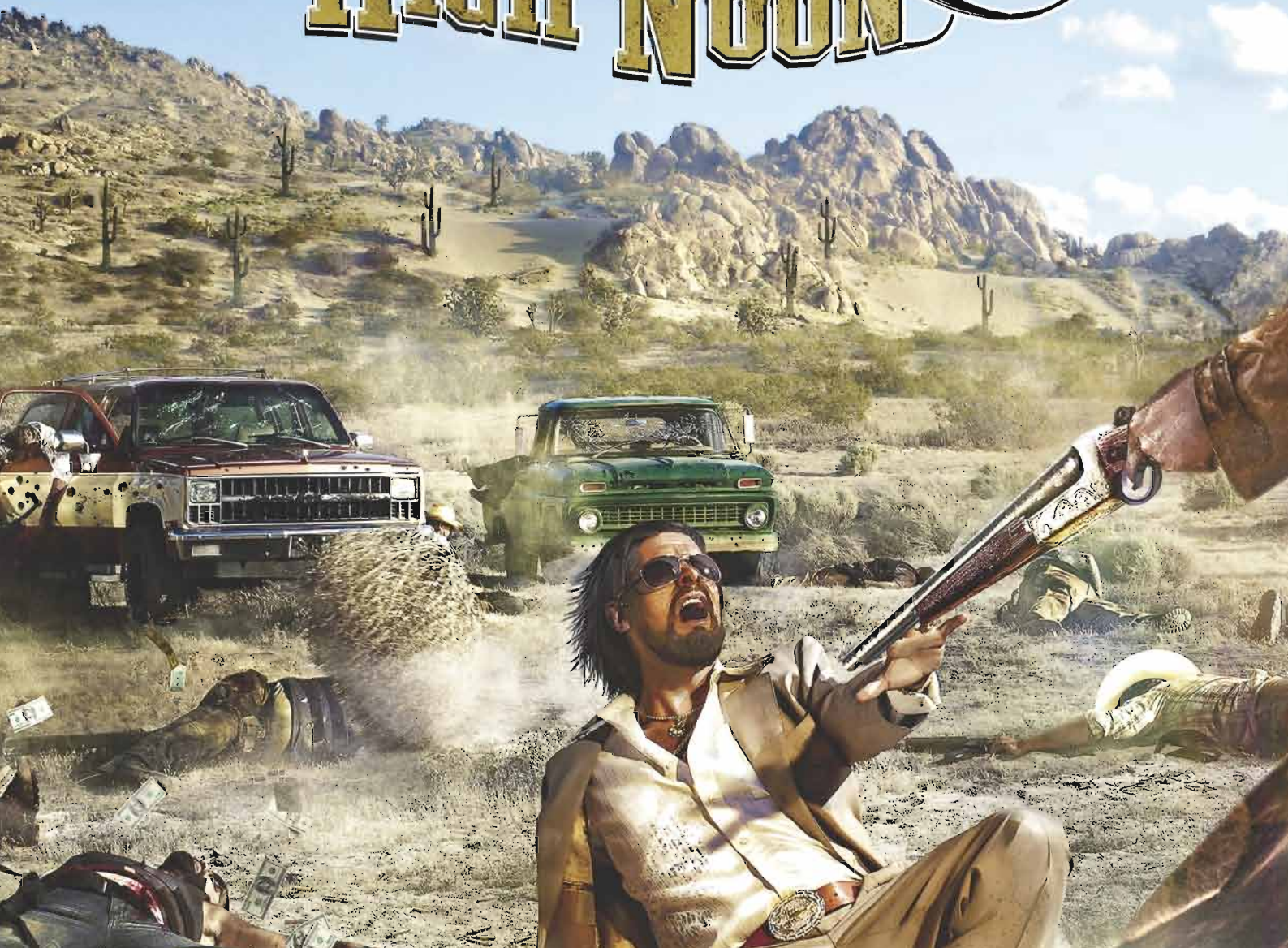


Due to global warming, polar bears are losing their natural habitat. The fish in the world's oceans are dwindling. People are dying of starvation right now and all you can worry about is your missing DVD – shame on you.

AUGUST 2011 SOUTH AFRICA R42.00



SHOOTOUT AT HIGH NOON



WELCOME TO THE NEW WILDWEST!



Fight together in 3-player co-op while competing to be the best.



Engage in unique Cops vs Gangsters multiplayer modes.



Embark on a hellish road-trip to bring the cartel to justice.



PlayStation 3



PlayStation Network



XBOX 360

XBOX LIVE

MEGA ROM INTERACTIVE

Available
July 22nd

CALL OF JUAREZ[®]

the CARTEL

◆ ◆ ◆ WWW.CALLOFJUAREZ.COM ◆ ◆ ◆

© 2011 Ubisoft Entertainment and Techland. All Rights Reserved. Call of Juarez is a trademark of Ubisoft Entertainment and Techland. Techland and the Techland logo are registered trademarks of TECHLAND. Ubisoft and the Ubisoft logo are registered trademarks of Ubisoft Entertainment in the US and/or other countries. KINECT, Xbox, Xbox 360, Xbox LIVE, and the Xbox logos are trademarks of the Microsoft group of companies and are used under license from Microsoft. "PS", "PlayStation", "PS3", "PS3" and "PS" are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved.



TECHLAND[®]

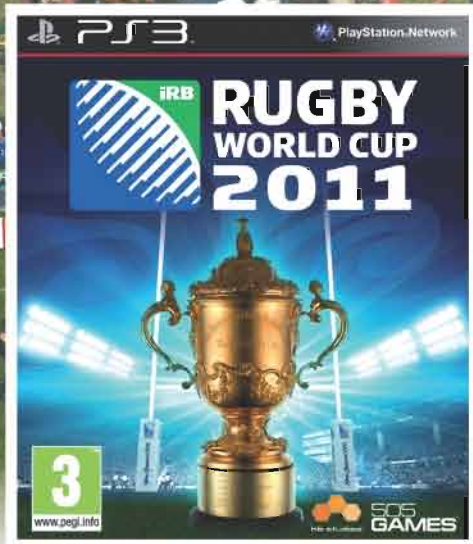


UBISOFT[®]

STAY INSIDE



NEW RELEASE
Available 26 August



**Rugby
World Cup 2011**
Available on PS3, XBOX360
R599.95 each



NEW RELEASE
Available 26 August



**Deus Ex
Human Revolution**
Available on PS3, XBOX360 R599.95 each
PC R399.95
Go to www.gaminginc.co.za for details
on special editions.

HIBERNATE WITH THESE AWESOME GAMES

THIS WINTER

2 September

XBOX 360



Bodycount
Available on PS3, XBOX360
R499.95 each

PRE-ORDER

16

codemasters

2 September



The Sims Medieval Pirates & Nobles
Available on PC R249.95

PRE-ORDER

EA

EXCLUSIVE TO GAMING INC MEMBERS ON PRE-ORDER!
 GET 13GB FREE ADSL BANDWIDTH (VALUED AT R500) FROM INCRECIBLE CONNECT.
 FREE DELIVERY & 10% OFF YOUR PURCHASE
 SIGN-UP AT WWW.GAMINGINC.CO.ZA
 TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY

2 September

PS3



Driver San Francisco
Available on PS3, XBOX360
R599.95 each
PC, Wii R399.95

PRE-ORDER

codemasters

23 September

PS3



Formula 1 2011
Available on PS3, XBOX360
R599.95 each
Nintendo 3DS R499.95
PC R399.95

PRE-ORDER

codemasters

www.incredible.co.za

PROMOTION VALID AUGUST 2011

*RELEASE AND AVAILABILITY DATES MAY CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE FROM SUPPLIER.

Incredible Call Centre 0860 011 700

Prices include 14% VAT. All standard terms and conditions of Incredible Connection & suppliers herein apply. We reserve the right to limit quantities on all promotional items per customer.

Prices correct at time of going to press.

All names, logos, images, characters, slogans, likenesses, trademarks, copyrights and other intellectual property featured are the exclusive property of their respective owners and are used under licence from these owners.

Incredible
CONNECTION

WHERE TECHNOLOGY & HUMANITY MEET



GeForce® GTX 590 3GB (3072MB GDDR5)



- *Memory Amount: 3072MB
- *Memory Interface: 768 bit
- *Dram Type: GDDR5
- *GPU Core Clock: 607MHz
- *Memory Clock: 1707MHz (Effective 3414MHz)
- *Shader Clock: 1512MHz
- *CUDA Cores: 1024
- *Memory Bandwidth (GB/Sec)327.7
- *NVIDIA SLI-Ready 2Way



GeForce® GTX 580 3GB (3072MB GDDR5)



- *Memory Amount: 3072MB
- *Memory Interface: 384 bit
- *Dram Type: GDDR5
- *GPU Core Clock: 783MHz
- *Memory Clock: 2010MHz (Effective 4020MHz)
- *Shader Clock: 1566MHz
- *CUDA Cores: 512
- *Memory Bandwidth (GB/Sec)192.96
- *NVIDIA SLI-Ready 3Way

GeForce® GTX 570 Sonic 1GB (1280MB GDDR5)



- *Memory Amount: 1280MB
- *Memory Interface: 320bit
- *Dram Type: GDDR5
- *GPU Core Clock: 800MHz
- *Memory Clock: 2000MHz (Effective 4000MHz)
- *Shader Clock: 1600MHz
- *CUDA Cores: 480
- *Memory Bandwidth (GB/Sec)160
- *NVIDIA SLI-Ready 3Way



TECHNOLOGY • VISION • RELIABILITY

Johannesburg
 Tel : (011) 807-1390
 Fax : (011) 807-1589
 Unit 11, 8 Trinity Close
 Cambridge Commercial Park
 Paulshof, Sandton

Pretoria
 Tel : (012) 665-4923
Nelspruit
 Tel : (013) 755-1234
Cape Town
 Tel : (021) 555-0891

Durban
 Tel : (031) 263-0371
Port Elizabeth
 Tel : (041) 365-2390
Bloemfontein
 Tel : (051) 406 0945

Huntkey® X7

Power Your Dream



1200w

- *1200W Power Supply.
- *Complies With Intel ATX12V V2.3 & EPS12V V2.92.
- *The Smart Fan With Segmented Voltage Regulator
- *A Quiet Environment.
- *Cable Management Design.
- *Supports SLI & Crossfire Multi-GPU VGA Cards.



900w

- *900W Power Supply.
- *Complies With Intel ATX12V V2.3 & EPS12V V2.92.
- *Two Unique Technologies Interleaved PFC and Phase-Shifted.
- *The Smart Fan With Segmented Voltage Regulator
- *A Quiet Environment.
- *Cable Management Design.

90W Energy Star

Universal Power Supply



- * 5V USB Power Port
- * Input : 100-240V AC
- * Output : 19V DC
- * (+- 5%), 0-4.74A

Huntkey Case

H405



- *M/B Type :Micro ATX / ATX
- *Color: Black
- *Multi Port: USB2.0 x 2 / Audio / USB
- *Material: 0.6mm SECC
- *Dimension: 475 x 190 x 450mm
- *Drive Bay: 5.25"x 3 3.5"x 7
- *Expansion Slots: 7



Huntkey Hong Kong Development Co., Ltd.
 Huntkey Industrial Park, Banxue Road,
 Bantian, Shenzhen, 518129, China
 Tel: +86-755-86906666 Fax: +86-755-89606699
 Email: markets@huntkey.com
 www.huntkeydiy.com

Huntkey®
 Power Your Dream

NAG

The mad king

Michael "RedTide" of House James
ed@nag.co.za

Grand Maester

Neo "ShockG" of House Sibeko

Littlefinger and The Spider

Geoff "GeometriX" of House Burrows
Dane "Barkskin" of House Remendes

Lady Lannister

Lauren "Guardi3n" of House Das Neves

Chief of the mountain clans

Miktar "Miktar" of House Dracon

The Night's Watch

Rodain "Nandrew" of House Joubert
Walt "Ramjet" of House Pretorius
Miklós "Mikit0707" of House Szecsei
Pippa "UnexpectedGirl" of House Tshabalala
Tarryn "Azimuth" of House Van Der Byl
Ettienne "DAE_JA_VOO" of House Venter
Alex "R.A.V.E.N." of House Jelagin

King's hand

Chris "SAVAGE" of House Savides

Banners and livery

Chris "SAVAGE" of House Savides
Dreamstime.com
Fotolia.com

Khaleesi

Cheryl "Cleona" of House Bassett
cheryl@nag.co.za
+27 72 322 9875

Lady of Winterfell

Jacqui "Jax" of House Jacobs
jacqui@nag.co.za
+27 82 778 8439

Lord of The Twins

Paul of House Ndebele

By horse or raven

P.O. Box 237
Olivedale
2158
South Africa
Tel +27 11 704 2679
Fax +27 11 704 4120

Subscription department

subs@nag.co.za

Internet

www.nag.co.za

Printing

Impress Web Printers
031 263 2755



Distribution

Jmd Distribution



Copyright 2011 NAG.

All Rights Reserved. No Article Or Picture In This Magazine May Be Reproduced, Copied Or Transmitted In Any Form Whatsoever Without The Express Written Consent Of The Publisher. Opinions Expressed In The Magazine Are Not Necessarily Those Of The Publisher Or The Editors. All Trademarks And Registered Trademarks Are The Sole Property Of Their Respective Owners.

Don't Pirate NAG!



this magazine when you're finished with it.

Regulars

- 10 Ed's Note
- 12 Inbox
- 14 Bytes
- 96 DIY – Modding 101: Remote power/reset switches

Opinion

- 14 I, Gamer
- 16 The Game Stalker
- 18 The Indie Investigator
- 20 Miktar's Meanderings
- 75 Hardwired
- 98 Game Over

Features



- 26 **Lazy Gamer's Guide to MMO games**
You've heard your friends talking about these things called "em-em-ohs". You like the sound of them – massive online worlds populated by real people pumping countless hours into imaginary exploits. You want in – but where do you start?
- 28 **The top 9 weapons in gaming**
Any great action game is nothing without great weapons. We take a look at nine of the greatest murder accessories ever to grace the hands of gaming's favoured heroes.
- 30 **Rage**
Miktar takes a stroll through id's post-apocalyptic wasteland and comes out the other side with a necklace made from mutant bits and a gripping story to tell.
- 76 **A Whooshing Sound: gaming headset roundup**
Everybody needs a headset. How else are you going to drown out the sound of your mom's dinner call so you can focus on what's truly important? We cherry pick the best of the best.

E3 Previews

- 34 Brothers in Arms: Furious 4
- 36 Batman: Arkham City
- 38 Hitman: Absolution
- 40 BioShock Infinite
- 42 Need for Speed: The Run
- 44 Warhammer 40,000: Space Marine
- 46 The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim
- 48 Prey 2
- 50 XCOM

Reviews

- 52 Reviews: Introduction
- 53 Short Reviews: Frozen Synapse / Puzzle Agent 2
- 54 inFAMOUS 2
- 56 White Knight Chronicles II
- 57 MX vs. ATV Alive
- 58 Alice: Madness Returns
- 60 Red Faction: Armageddon
- 62 DiRT 3
- 64 Dungeon Siege III
- 66 Green Lantern: Rise of the Manhunters / Sniper: Ghost Warrior

Hardware

- 68 Tech News
- 72 Lazy Gamer's Guide: Antec LanBoard
- 74 Dream Machine
- 86 Gainward GTX 560 Ti Phantom / Evetech mid-range gaming PC
- 88 CM Storm Sentinel Z3RO-G / GIGABYTE Z68XP-UD3-iSSD
- 90 GIGABYTE GeForce GTX560 Super Overclock / Antec High Current Pro 1200 Watt PSU
- 91 Samsung Omnia 7
- 92 MSI GTX580 Lightning
- 94 OCZ Vertex 3 240GB SSD
- 95 ASUS Rampage III Black Edition



Brought to you by



NAG DVD

Demos

Angry Birds / Breaking The Rules / Pride of Nations
Star Ruler / Trucks and Trailers

Drivers

Next month

Extras

Cheatbook DataBase and updates to 07 2011 / Gamecca Volume 3 Issue 25 July 2011.pdf / Winamp 5.62 Full / Portal 2 maps / **[Free Games]:** CSiS / Hydra Castle Labyrinth
Pokémon - Type Wild / UFO Alien Invasion - FIXED
[Free Music]: Portal 2 OST Volume 2 / Professor Kliq - The Scientific Method II / Professor Kliq - The Scientific Method

Musica

Same as last month

Patches

Crysis 2 Patch v1.9 | Crysis 2 DirectX 11 Pack

186 Videos

149 Game Trailers / 2 ScrewAttack Video Game Vault videos / 4 Pop-Fiction / 31 Best of E3 2011 Awards



ARKHAM CITY

Get a Top CD Gift Card worth up to R100 when pre-ordering Batman: Arkham City at Top CD.

Batman: Arkham City will once again see the Caped Crusader having his most deadly of weapons, stealth. Batman: Arkham Asylum introduced us to a superhero that stayed true to his comic book roots with both the strength to overcome his foes in the realm of hand to hand combat, but also gave the character a huge advantage with the ability to move through the shadows with grace and finish enemies with power as the silent predator.

No Deposit needed when you pre-order games at Top CD.

You only pay for it when it is released and you then receive a Top CD Gift Card for R100 if pre-ordering it on PS3 or XBOX or receive a Top CD Gift Card for R50 if you pre-order it on PC.



Coming October 2011



Xbox 360
R599.95



PC
R399.95



PS3
R599.95

Find us on Facebook



www.topcd.co.za

CDS, DVDs, Games & Books



Dial 08610 Top CD (08610 867 23) to speak to your nearest Top CD

Blatant truths

E3 puts a smile on my gaming face that lasts for months. We all know that we gamers are only really interested in the future when it comes to new games. An example, *Duke Nukem Forever* was the most exciting thing on the gaming horizon since *StarCraft II*.

Until we got it, played it and passed judgement on it. There's something about this industry that makes hype about future products infinitely compelling. Then, the second we install and play the thing we've been dreaming about for months it all fades away like mist in the morning sun. The why, how and who on this topic I'll leave for the experts to debate. I'll just tell you what I'm looking forward to, with some why here and there.

BioShock Infinite. I really want to explore that world and most importantly rescue Elizabeth from that nasty bird – I'm such a sucker for a damsel in distress. Based on the genius of *StarCraft II*, I can't wait to play *Diablo III* – I know it's going to be special, it feels special. I want *Rage* to fill in all the gaps left by *Borderlands* and the current crop of shooters; they're all about weapons and bombs and ranking up and not enough about rockets, jump pads and double-barrel shotguns. Of course the mighty *Battlefield 3* is very high on my list, *Modern Warfare 3* is there too but I really want to fly a chopper again and parachute behind enemy lines again and blow up enemy jets with C4 just as they take off again. And if I'm mentioning those two games then I have to mention *Brothers in Arms* – they had me at bear traps loaded with grenades. Then on the lighter side, things like the new *Trials Evolution* and *TrackMania 2: Canyon* have me excited and maybe even that silly-looking XBLA version of *Burnout*, *Burnout Crash*, might be fun. Add to this the ever updating *Minecraft* and now the fun *Terraria* and I've got a problem: how to get out of going away for December and rather staying at home to play all these amazing games. Or perhaps I should just make sure I do more game reviews then I can laugh it off as work and win at life some more. This is such a good time to be a gamer, you really have no idea.

E3 2011

Please do enjoy the E3 supplement we've put together. It's one of the biggest and best we've done in recent memory and really does cover everything you need to know about gaming for the next few months. Go and have a look and see if anything grabs your fancy. One last thing, at the show, *NAG* was invited to a few exclusive presentations; in this issue you'll find our impressions of everything we saw at

the show worth talking about. Only the best is selected for the main magazine so enjoy it all and know that core gaming is about to take a big leap forward this and next year.

rAge 2011

This is a reminder that the NAG LAN tickets go on sale 1 August 2011 and will sell out in less than 36 hours. You have been warned. Please get there early and make sure the person you send to buy them understands that, 'I'll do it after lunch' isn't going to work. Also calling the office won't help. We don't keep tickets for sob stories because this wouldn't be fair to the last guy in line that did get to Computicket early. The show itself is almost sold out from an exhibition point of view. I know we're going to have more actual game developers here this year – the guys that actually make the games are flying out to South Africa to talk to you. Just like at E3. Yeah! The *rAge* dates are 30 September – 2 October 2011. Hardcore is back baby!

RedTide
[Editor]

COVER STORY

This artwork on this month's *NAG* cover was touch and go my fellow gamers. Touch. And. Go. We didn't really have a proper cover until about one week before the magazine went to bed. We had all the feature options ready to go, just no cover artwork. Scary stuff indeed, fortunately the good people at Ster Kinekor (thanks again Jacqui) came to our rescue and pulled a mutant out the hat. It's interesting to note that id Software still supply their covers in the same way since the old days (*DOOM 3*) – a selection of backgrounds and a few characters to go on top are provided. This way each publication will have a unique front cover of the id Software game they feature – so clever. The length of the feature was kept short because we had so much E3 stuff to fit in but I think *Borderlands* meets *DOOM* with a little rock and roll just about covers what *Rage* is all about.



GIGABYTE™



BIOS Control Has Never Been Easier

New GIGABYTE 6 Series Motherboards

Touch BIOS

Hybrid EFI Technology

Patent Pending



Intel® Smart Response Technology
4X+
Faster than
HDD-only system



For more information visit www.rectron.co.za or call 0860 582 835 / For Support call our National Technical Support Line: 0861 788 789



Johannesburg:
Tel: +27 11 203 1000
Fax: +27 11 203 1940

Cape Town:
Tel: +27 21 555 8200
Fax: +27 21 555 7136

Durban:
Tel: +27 31 582 0200
Fax: +27 31 582 0280

Port Elizabeth:
Tel: +27 41 398 7082
Fax: +27 41 398 7140

Bloemfontein:
Tel: +27 51 430 0000
Fax: +27 51 430 1144

Join Rectron's social network today: Join and "Like" Rectron on Facebook™ | Follow "Rectron SA" on Twitter™

Lucid VIRTU and Touch BIOS availability may vary by model. Touch navigation requires a touch enabled monitor + Windows 7 operating system. Mouse navigation is supported with any standard monitor (including touch enabled monitor) + Windows XP/Vista/7 operating system.

2X
Copper PCB

Letter of the Month August 2011



The 'Letter of the Moment' prize is sponsored by Megarom. The winner receives two games for coming up with the most inspired bit of wisdom or cleverness.

**IMPORTANT STUFF!
PAY ATTENTION!**

Land Mail: P.O. Box 237, Olivedale, 2158
Cyber mail: letters@nag.co.za
Important: Include your details when mailing us, otherwise how will you ever get your prize if you win...

From: Susan

Subject: My 16 year old son

As a parent I am writing here today looking for help, my 16 year old boy needs facial re-construction... His eyes started turning square about 10 years ago after he received his first PlayStation and I think I need to have that fixed. He developed problems with his nose around the age of 11 when he started buying the NAG for the first time, now he can't get his nose out of a new publication for hours after he bought it. With his mouth I noticed much bigger problems; I will just list

a few... Firstly I only see him smile about once a month, which is when he receives his pocket money and has to decide what game to buy... Secondly, he has problems with his teeth now, I think it is because of all the teeth grinding when playing a difficult game. Thirdly, I think he is developing a problem with his tongue, I just see him licking his lips every time he wins a new trophy on one of his games... After all of this, I must honestly tell you I have the most wonderful son any parent could ever dream of having. Luckily I don't think the games have affected his hearing

though, because he always seems to hear me when I call him for a meal, or does that just means he is 16 and growing?

We did a quick office poll and voted you our official mom of the year at NAG for 2011. Your prize is a shiny new game for your son and our official orders for him to make you breakfast in bed next Sunday. Now, for all you gamers out there with parents that don't fully 'understand' your hobby, you can show them this letter in building your case for more gaming time. Ed.

From: Alec

Subject: What video games where made for

Hi best magazine in the world! First of all I am not tuning [? Ed] sports games but the reason video games were made, in my opinion, is for people to do things, on the PC/360/PS3, that they will never do in anyone's live time. In real life someone is going through a career in a sport, but there is no guy/girl out there shooting holes in the wall which he/she goes through and comes out the other, well that I know so far. Sure sports games have good graphics, I think, but I would rather go outside and play that sport in real life. Whereas you can't go outside in real life and shoot lightning out of your hands. Don't you agree? And if you don't then I just wasted your time with my stupid opinion.

Well, you said it. Ed.

From: Sean

Subject: I've been violated.

Its 08:00 I've just woken up and I'm lying in bed asking myself what did I do last night? I feel so dirty and used. I bought a copy of Duke Nukem Forever yesterday on PS3 and have just realised that I have become a victim of hype and great marketing! They had 14 YEARS to make DNF a bench mark of amazingness and we got this?! I was expecting 1080i graphics, awesome level design and better looking aliens! I may be wrong? I keep telling myself. It's Duke Nukem. It's supposed to be corny; it's supposed to have no real story line. But then again? It's Duke Nukem and it's supposed to be 14 years' worth of amazing! I'm half way through it and I'm hoping it somehow will get better. I am going to finish off by saying being seduced and molested by hype and great marketing can happen to anyone. I should know, prey it doesn't happen to you. Great magazine guys keep up the good work!

Molested by hype – this is LOL. Please get this straight – it hasn't taken 14 years to make the game, it's been started, stopped, the engine changed a few times, the developers fired/left for other projects/resigned, cancelled, handed over to a new team, fiddle with, cancelled again, left on a shelf for a while, forgotten about, modified and finally handed over to Gearbox, who took what they had and actually finished it. The game was never going to be cutting edge – I thought we made that clear in NAG with our previews – you need to read the magazine, not just look at the pictures. So come on people, give Duke a break and just be glad we can all close this chapter in our lives. :D Ed.

From: Cianran

Subject: Gaming is education... and stuff

Hi there, everyone. I know this is my second letter this month, but I have struck upon a rather interesting new topic. The replacement of knowledge by games. My mother claims that playing too much computer has made my marks go down (here comes the 'but'). But, I have also discovered that although I may not be scoring very high on my maths tests, that knowledge has been replaced with knowledge of a rather different kind. For example, when will X amount of Rand and need to buy Y oranges? It's not very practical, but they still teach it to us. But do they teach us how to tackle a zombie apocalypse? No. But games (and NAG) do. I have learnt many helpful things from games, such as how to handle terrorist situations, arm and disarm a gun, command an army of Zerglings to take down some Terrans and the most important lesson of learnt from anything gaming related was: how to take a loss. Yes. I spent most of my time, last year, hitting my keyboard with a dumbfounded look on my face because I wasn't in ship-shape with certain games. I

Shorts [extracts of LOL n00b from NAG reader letters]

"The good old days where the game manual was printed neatly on a little book that gave useful hints and some secrets to the game you just bought."
– Marius

"If I ever can't find it I will start a nuclear war."
– Cianran

"Well guess what? You can also switch the volume on and off and that is not unnecessary."
– Sebastian

"So I want to ask a favour and it has been on my mind since late 2008 and I can't hold it in anymore!"
– Shaun

"When I think back to the so called 'good old days' I long for that feeling of enjoyment and anticipation when I put an old one in."
– Jeffrey

hope my fellow gamers and game developers can take this into account next time they are ripping open a new copy of NAG, making a game, or even being a victim of technology hate. Anyways, I hope the E3 brings is much new innovation and many new lessons.

Nice try buddy. You're going to need those maths skills one day for earning X money so you can buy Y games when you get older. Your parents are probably concerned that you're on your way to becoming a stay-at-home child, feeding off them indefinitely – a terrifying prospect. What you learn from games is fun but pretty useless unless the zombies do invade. Furthermore, when they invade, unless you've received the proper real-life training, you'll just end up peeing in your pants in terror while they tear your limbs off and eat your face. Ed.

From: MTN MMS

Subject: Nothing given

Wen is da reliz dat 4 tikts

It took a while for me to figure out what this was supposed to mean – I think I got it. I sometimes get messages like this from illiterate morons and I usually delete them. One day when cows and donkeys become sentient we'll send people like this in to communicate with them while cleaning up their dung. Ed.

From: Jesse

Subject: An epic idea.

I just had a brainstorm... What if NAG... yes I said NAG... were to become full-on game developers as well as run the magazine! This idea may seem a bit weird, but think about it. Imagine walking into a shop and then you saw an epic new game, and in the corner of the box, there that little sign was, in all its glory... GAME BY NAG! LOL!! This idea probably won't become a reality, but it still sounds cool. Anyway, looking forward to more E3 news in the next mag, and keep up the good work!

The office sometimes plays the lottery when the prize is huge in the hope of winning massive amounts of cash. The funny thing is, most of the guys here say they would get new minions to run the magazine while we all make cool games. I really don't know how we'll do. We certainly have some solid ideas but when faced with the realities of making a game on time and within a budget we'd probably also cut corners like so many real developers do. Ed.

"What you learn from games is fun but pretty useless unless the zombies do invade. Furthermore, when they invade, unless you've received the proper real-life training, you'll just end up peeing in your pants in terror while they tear your limbs off and eat your face. Ed."

NAG Fan artwork

This is the cream of the crop that we received at NAG this issue. If you insert, use or create a piece of gaming artwork incorporating the NAG logo you might also end up here for your three lines of fame. Remember, don't just stick the logo on a picture – use the logo in a picture or you win squat.



Daniel Schuleman, "I present to you all NAG corp. 2.0. Unable to be seen from the outside and complete with walkway, reception area, offices, boardroom, break room, elevator and pool (Yes the pool is in the nether)."

From: Ricardo

Subject: The switch...

You can imagine the awesomeness of buying a NAG magazine, getting home, ripping open the plastic cover, putting the DVD into my computer and after all that realizing there is nothing on the disk! Wow I was disappointed, so I went back to the shop I bought the magazine from and sneakily switched DVDs (insert James Bond theme song here). This one worked so I was happy, but I feel bad for that person who got that DVD, actually not really, I've been playing some of the 1st in FAMOUS and chose the "evil" path so I don't feel bad because I'm "evil" apparently. Anyway amazing magazine, keep it up! I also bought the green ("evil") issue of the June issue, just to prove a point.

Or... You could have told us and we would have replaced the DVD for you free of charge... Ed.

From: Uwes

Subject: Game Testing

I didn't know who to send this email to so I would appreciate it if you could forward it to the correct person. I have heard from my work colleague that at a time you used to send "normal" people like us copies of games to test and review. I would like to know if this is still the case and how I can sign up for this.

Unfortunately if you're 'normal' you can't work for NAG. Remember, Tarryn is our benchmark for normal around here. So your 'colleague' is mistaken. The process is, when we need new writers we advertise it in NAG and then ask for an 800 word feature about gaming or a review to see if you have the chops. At the moment our writers haven't annoyed us in a while so we're all good. Ed.

From: Timothy

Subject: Relationships & Gaming

What's up guys and girls of the NAG hope you all are warm this winter since it's going to be another nice cold one. But enough of the weather the reason I am writing this letter is for those of you who are married and who have children and how difficult it is to keep a

balance life style and still have room to play our favourite game without having a pot or pan thrown at you once in a while. I read an article where the Physiologist answered a very difficult question what do you do when your BF or husband spends too much time in front of the PC? Well I was shocked to the core when the Dr replied that men that work do need time to unwind and take a lot of stress off so when they play PC games and instead of blaming him try to understand him and support him even try to get involved and you will see the relationship will prosper. Well I hope some of the GF and wives out there do read this and try to understand we are only human not robot's. Keep up the excellent work, I do appreciate it.

Having some trouble there with the wife hey Timothy. I think your problem with the old lady is more about how you think and not about how much time you play games. Although, it must be said, if the pots and pans are already coming at you then you're probably too far gone... Problem one is that you're assuming your 'work' is more stressful than her 'work'. Managing a household while dealing with kids and all the soccer mom politics eclipses your little cubical wars in ways you haven't even begun to grasp yet. Problem two is thinking for her; I'll bet all my gold she doesn't think you're a robot at all, just some lazy bum she has to clean and cook for while he sits surrounded by pizza boxes and videogame controllers. You need to find balance or get a divorce or buy her all the episodes of any current medical drama series. Good luck or R.I.P. Ed

From: Jan-Hendrik

Subject: Console sometimes better than PC

I recently almost did myself an injustice because of a PC gaming experience. I got Mass Effect 2 on PC because of the great review you guys gave it and I was so happy with it that I went and got the X-Box 360 collector's edition while I still could get it. So naturally because I got a 2nd of something I needed the first of it as well so I bought a Replay Value for PC of Mass Effect 1. I was so disappointed with the game because the controls were very bad for me, the graphics (even though it was older and it was PC) was just not that great and something just didn't feel right about the game. So I condemned the game a just put it in the darkest corner of my closet I could find. Then the other day visited my friend at Top CD and he knew how I felt about Mass Effect, he then suggested me to get the Xbox version. It was on special and it had a bonus DVD. So I decided to buy it and trust my friend's judgement. I'm so glad I did. The gaming experience was totally different: graphics were better, controls were great and everything just felt perfect. What I want to get to with this is all those P.A.B's that complain about the console/PC war. They always try to make things sound better on this or that, but some games are just better on certain platforms. People wouldn't enjoy playing Mario on PC, they want it on Nintendo. People wouldn't enjoy Halo on Nintendo; they want it on Xbox. I love all games and platforms and I love PC, but unfortunately some games are just meant to be played with a controller in hand then a keyboard.

I can't disagree with your line of thinking – I've tried games on both platforms before (PC and console) and in a few cases nothing beats a controller – like Trials HD as an example. Of course the same is true the other way around. This is why you can buy game controllers for the PC. Now if only they'd make a proper mouse and keyboard device/thing for consoles. Ed.

On the Forums

Fake therapy using video games without your mom finding out, come see. Almost everyone is welcome: <http://www.nag.co.za/forums/>

Question: Which game sequel are you waiting for (however likely or not), and why?

ClericZA: Ultima 10, to right the wrongs of Ultima 9 and give the series the ending it deserves.

echo: Clive Barker's Undying 2. But Jericho wasn't that great.

Toxyc: Darksiders 2 - To fix the graphical disappointment from Darksiders: WoW but continue the action from the same game. And I want them to make the dual-scythes perfect!

5h@un13: Mirrors Edge 2, I still haven't got enough red in my world.

The Wolf: BioShock: Infinite. Do I really need to give a reason? :)

Darranged: Postal 3. I need my dose of politically incorrect digital shenanigans.

wisp: Doom 4, cause it i need to feel a BFG at my fingertips again.

Fredder: Doom 4, Quake 5 and Serious Sam 3, since Duke's here now we need more classic FPS than ever before and less military-sim-like FPS such as CoD and Battlefield.

Zoop: Freelancer 2. I need a space sim that isn't X3.

Atticus: Max Payne 3 - I'm a sucker for bullet-time and Rockstar's biggest fanboi.

nukehead: I need a Timesplitters sequel, not want, need. Even an HD remake of Timesplitters 2 would do it for me at this point. Actually, I really want an HD remake of Timesplitters 2, that's a sequel right?

OllieTheDog: Mass Effect 3. I have played the second one eight times.

Repline: Dungeon Keeper 3... Because it's good to be bad.

Jodez: Digimon World 5! And it has to be on consoles and PC, those Nintendo ds ones just didn't fill the void enough.

Cpt.Monde: A new Syphon Filter for PS3. I'm having withdrawal symptoms cos I haven't heard Gabriel Logan's crusty voice in such a long time.

Changsta 197: I may look like a fool saying this, but I'm not afraid to say Halo 4. I just want to find out what happens: Metro The Last Light, enjoyed the crap out of 2033, atmosphere was just brilliant and leaving me wanting more!

Ro\$hi: Evil Genius 2...Taking over the world in HD.

Chevron: Unholy War 2. In case you didn't know it was on awesome PlayStation game that desperately needs an updated release.

Cube: Mass Effect 3!

Slither: Deus Ex - Human Revolution, because I love the luxury of CHOICES in a game.

Jerkydarkstar: Alan Wake. I need to know if Alice is still alive.

malmarius: Uncharted 3 and Battlefield 3 :)

Xperimance: Assassin's Creed Revelations because we're gonna get more of that Ezio awesomeness that we know and love and the storyline looks like it'll put everything that we knew about the series together.

Grimnebulin: Legacy of Kain. Defiance was not a terrible game, but the series needs a conclusion on par with Soul Reaver and Blood Omen. There have been enough hints and Easter eggs lately to have me hoping my wish just may come true.....

The King is dead



Confession time! I was going to spend this column lambasting all of the *Duke Nukem Forever* haters. I was going to go against the grain and tell all the bitchy reviewers to suck the big one because nobody relegates Duke to a sub-fifty percent rating and gets away without a Mighty Boot to the sphincter. For me, Duke is a part of who I am today – dramatic, isn't it? That's not to say I regularly smash steroids and pump 30kg dumbbells at gym (I mean look at me in that picture up there, I can barely hold up *The Evil Monkey* without looking like I'm in pain). What I mean is the original *Duke Nukem 3D* played a huge part in me beginning to identify myself as a gamer.

There was a ton of games that I devoured when I was younger: *Wolfenstein 3D*, *Commander Keen*, *Dune II*, you name it, I probably played it. At the end of standard six (grade eight) my family moved to Cape Town. I started at a new school knowing absolutely nobody. I had no

"That's not to say I regularly smash steroids and pump 30kg dumbbells at gym (I mean look at me in that picture up there, I can barely hold up *The Evil Monkey* without looking like I'm in pain)."

friends and no real way of infiltrating groups because I'm actually kind of shy. There was also nobody else interested in games like I was; my handful of gaming friends had been left behind in Johannesburg. I was marooned in a wasteland of jocks, surfer types and ad-math super nerds. *NAG* would only come into existence later that year; life was bleak.

Thankfully somebody in my class took pity on me and my awkward social fumbling, and invited me to his birthday party. There, amongst the myriad of festivities were three PCs networked and playing *Duke Nukem 3D*. I was invited to play, an invitation I hastily accepted. I then proceeded to decimate my opponents systematically. For the first time I realised that I was good at something; something that was yet to become a regular pastime for many people. *Duke Nukem 3D* was responsible for making gaming somewhat of a mainstream activity in my standard at high school. It was also responsible for my peers identifying me as "that guy who plays games" and for me accepting that label and running with it. I had found my niche during a particularly tumultuous move across the country. So you can understand that I anticipated the eventual release of *Duke Nukem Forever* with much fervour – it was, after all, a continuation of what helped mould my public identity.

Too bad it's the most putrid, vapidly crappy game under the sun. Not even the desire to close an unfinished chapter in my gaming life is enough to make me want to push through this game. I can't even use my own argument against myself (the one I planned to put in this column to dissuade would-be Duke haters; the one that says "it's a fourteen year old game, what do you expect?") because the original game played better than this one and was infinitely more enjoyable. I just replayed *Duke Nukem 3D* and had more fun than I've had at any point during *Duke Nukem Forever*. I try... I try so hard to love this game but every time I do it just kicks me in the penis again. Not even the allure of Achievement Whoring is enough to coax me through a single playthrough. The industry's biggest vapourware title has devolved into its biggest has-been character.

Miklós Szecsei

The even darker side of L.A. Noire

Harsh news has emerged regarding the development of *L.A. Noire*. According to many sources within Team Bondi (the developers), over 130 people who worked on the project were excluded from the credits because they weren't employed at the studio during the final months of production. That's not all, however, employees have described horrendous work conditions in which they were required to put in over one hundred hours a week at times, and a crunch time (i.e. "time to work your ass off") that lasted for the final year of the game's production.

Reports are also coming in that studio head Brendan McNamara was difficult to work with. "It's one thing for him to be angry behind closed doors, but it was incredibly common for him to scream at whoever was pissing him off in the middle of the office," claims one developer at the studio.

As a result of this combination of complaints, the IGDA (International

Game Developers Association) has begun an investigation into the situation. "Reports of 12-hour a day, lengthy crunch time, if true, are absolutely unacceptable and harmful to the individuals involved, the final product, and the industry as a whole," Brian Robbins, chair of the IGDA Board of Directors, told game design website Develop.

On the other side of the fence, McNamara has his own complaints, although these go right up to Rockstar. Allegedly, Bondi management and Rockstar's producers locked horns on multiple occasions, but employees further down the food chain are adamant that without Rockstar's stern leadership and "take no sh1t" attitude, the game would never have been completed.

Just who exactly is telling the truth remains to be seen, but for now, it appears as though the inevitable sequel to *L.A. Noire* may well not be published by Rockstar.



"I think the home console experience is going to be with us for a long time. **Do I think that the iPad will encroach? Absolutely, it has to.** But I don't think it'll be exclusive, I don't think that just because somebody buys one of those things they wouldn't buy a console."

Sheldon Carter, *The Darkness 2* project director



Gears of War 3 leaked – Microsoft looks stupid

An early build of Epic's upcoming *Gears of War 3* was found sitting online for anyone to download. Fortunately, not everyone would have been able to do anything with it as it was what's known as a JTAG version of the game, meaning you'd need a specially modified Xbox 360 or a dev kit to actually run it. Still, there are people who have access to those and as a result there are some *Gears of War 3* campaign spoilers floating around the Internet. The build supposedly featured the entire single-player campaign as well as multiplayer and is believed to have been an E3 build of the game.

It's been suggested that a bit of lax security on Microsoft's behalf is the reason for the leak, as a Google search for "codify.com xbox" returned Microsoft's Codify URL. Anyone visiting that website would have found the JTAG build sitting there in folders marked "Confidential". Epic has refused to comment on the matter.

Sony halts updates to the PSP Comic Store



// About a year and a half ago, Sony added a nifty feature to the PSP: a comic book reader. Along with the reader, the PSP Digital Comic Store launched and was regularly updated. Comics from houses like Marvel, IDW Publishing, DC and more quietly amassed a catalogue of over 4000 digital comics. Sony has now announced that no further updates will be made, but the store will continue to run, presumably for as long as there is a market.

The team that worked on the Digital Comic Store is being whisked away to work on bringing the same feature to other Sony handheld products. In other words, while the PSP shopfront gets put on hiatus, it will find its way to other platforms. It's likely that those other platforms include the PlayStation Vita and Sony's tablets.

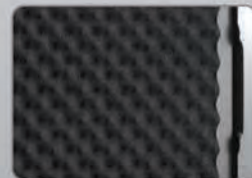
// Did you ever play the quirky claymation-built platformer *Neverhood*? Actually, that's not an important question, but what is important is that **there's talk of the game heading to mobile platforms** courtesy of mobile developers Bazinga Studios. The company is currently in negotiation with the licence-holders and, as yet, can't comment on which mobile platforms they're working on.



Enjoy the atmosphere
of SILENCE



SILENCIO 550



Side panel and front door with sound proofing



External SATA X-dock



Supports Long VGA cards (without HDD cage)
ATI 6990 / nVIDIA GTX 580



USB 3.0 & High Speed SDHC card reader



Sonic Informed
COMPONENT IMPORTER & DISTRIBUTOR
WWW.SONICINFORMED.COM

Johannesburg
Tel: 011 314 5800
Fax: 011 252 5974

Cape Town
Tel: 021 551 8218
Fax: 021 551 8244

coolermaster.com

Tweeting Twits



I recently joined the Twitterverse... Yes, that's right I said recently. Don't judge me! It was a conscious choice ok! Ahem – sorry...

You might have noticed I sound slightly defensive... Predominantly because of the perpetual "You're not on Twitter!?" response. Nevertheless, the push that I finally needed to take that perverse step along the road to Twitter addiction was the fact that someone was impersonating me.

Yes. That's right. There was a fake Pippa Tshabalala on Twitter. Why should I care, you ask? Imitation is the highest form of flattery people told me. Perhaps. But somehow when friends and game related peeps are following the bland, generic tweets that @Pippatshabalala was spewing forth in my name, it grates. I'm way more interesting.

I wanted to shout "But it's not me! Can't you tell that I would never write my surname with a lower case 't'? Mine would be @PippaTshabalala! Can't you see the difference? I was a university lecturer for f***s sake!" Ok that wouldn't fit

"Yes. That's right. There was a fake Pippa Tshabalala on Twitter. Why should I care you ask?"

into a Twitter message – too many characters, but anyway...

I tried telling people via @TheVergeNews - I tweeted it there. I CCed the offender in the hope that they would be shamed into changing their account. I sent them a direct message. Some friends retweeted my angst, and desisted in their following of the imposter. Yes, ok I went to a lot of effort for the fact that I wasn't *actually* on Twitter personally and providing an alternative. But alas it was all in vain...

@Pippatshabalala continued responding to questions and talking about their favourite games (some of which didn't align with my preferences – another source for "Grrrr!").

And so, months later, when people were still asking the fake pippa (not Pippa) when I was coming back to present, I finally took the plunge.

I joined Twitter. And I couldn't even use my gamertag – it was taken, by someone who hasn't tweeted since last year. Yes, I did a bit of twit-stalking myself.

But onwards and upwards as they say, and @UnexpectedPippa joined the Twitterverse.

Ah! NOW I had the power... I tweeted via my Facebook account, I mentioned @TheVergeNews, and I reached into the digital world of 1s and 0s and took back ownership of my name! Muhahahahahaha!

Completely without instigation, friends berated the fake pippa for their impersonation! And then one day, oh glorious day! @Pippatshabalala was no more. They promptly changed their name and their stolen profile picture. And followed me...

And now, no longer with a sense of purpose, there lay before me the task of actually getting to grips with Twitter. No longer reclaiming my sense of online identity, but rather forging a path for myself in a world full of the stream of consciousness that is the Twitter timeline.

And I'll be honest, I never thought I would say this but I finally see the fascination, although I don't make use of #tags nearly as much as I'm sure I should, but that's #somethingIllprobablynevergetusedto.

Being able to access what appears to be a stream of thoughts from people around the world might seem overwhelming at first, as well as somewhat irrelevant, but after you get used to sorting through the chaff, you find some true gems circulating in the (tw)ether. @Grant-finds for example: "I'm going to start a game review site where I equate games to inanimate objects. Portal 2 = Zinger Street Wise Meal".

Who wouldn't love that idea?

Pippa Tshabalala

That'll be \$0, please



Free-to-play. The term might make you think of the word "cheap", but the truth is that this is a huge industry that's growing every day. If you don't believe us, then take a look at this month's Lazy Gamer's Guide that highlights a few such MMOs that have moved from paid-for to F2P and actually increased their profits by pushing microtransactions over monthly fees.

Now the MMO giant *World of Warcraft* has taken its first step into this deep, shark-infested pool with the offer of the *WoW* Starter Pack that feels incredibly similar to *Warhammer Online's* offering. The Pack entitles you to essentially play the trial for an unlimited amount of time, including *The Burning Crusade*, with the character level cap increased to level 20, which we feel is a much more reasonable limit than the previous level 10 (we'd still

prefer something closer to level 40, but that's just because we're greedy). Other than that, the same trail restrictions apply: no use of the auction house or post boxes; trade skills are capped at 100, as is your gold; freebie players can't join guilds and they cannot form their own parties.

This move certainly puts a damper on the attitude that F2P is the last dying breath of any MMO, but it does get us thinking about the future of this game. With at least one more expansion on the horizon, we're interested to see what *WoW's* prospects look like when it ultimately has to make way for Blizzard's next MMO. Perhaps a fully-fledged F2P model would be a way for the two to co-exist.

You can sign up for the Starter Pack and download the game at eu.battle.net/wow.

Wii're going to let someone else handle that



We've previously heard from the folks at Nintendo (including their number one foot-in-mouth expert Reggie Fils-Aime) that the Wii U isn't going to be as patently useless online as the Wii. "Great!" we exclaimed while attracting strange looks from passers-by. The Wii U is already heading straight for the hardcore crowd and we know how important online gaming is this segment. Now, however, the slightly bendy versions of this feature are starting to emerge: the Wii U won't offer the same level of unified online gaming as we expected.

According to Fils-Aime in a recent interview with Forbes, "...a situation

where a publisher has their own network and wants that to be the predominant platform, and having arguments with platform holders, we're going to welcome that. We're going to welcome that from the best and the brightest of the third party publishers," which, in non-prancing-around-the-truth form, means "we're going to let the publishers handle their own online services."

How little Nintendo will have to do with online gaming remains to be seen, but for now we think it's safe to expect very little, and be pleasantly surprised if they'll handle anything more than a unique username and a Wi-Fi adaptor.

Dishonored is worth keeping at least one eye on

Arkane Studios' next game boasts *Deus Ex*, *Half-Life 2* talent



Bethesda has revealed the latest in its stable of games: it's called *Dishonored*, and it's looking mighty inviting. The fine folks over at Arkane Studios are in charge of development. In case you're in need of a quick history lesson, Arkane previously gave us the excellent *Arx Fatalis*, which may as well have been *Ultima Underworld* dressed in new pants. They also developed *Dark Messiah of Might & Magic*—a fun, if somewhat flawed, outing in the world of first-person melee combat.

Most intriguing of all the details that have trickled out about *Dishonored* relates to two of the people who are joining Arkane in its development. Harvey Smith, co-designer of the original *Deus Ex*, now serves as *Dishonored's* co-creative director. Smith's credentials don't stop at *Deus Ex*: he's worked on everything from *Wing Commander* to *System Shock*. Then there's Viktor Antonov, who was the visual architect on *Half-Life 2's* City 17. The reveal of the game comes courtesy of *Game Informer*, who've once again bagged the exclusive first dibs on the game. They've put out an overview of what to expect from the game:

"*Dishonored* is the antithesis of a edge-of-your-seat roller-coaster ride. It's a game about assassination where you don't have to kill anyone. It's a game about infiltration where you can set up traps and slaughter the entire garrison of an aristocrat's mansion rather than sneak in. It's a game about brutal violence where you can slip in and out of a fortified barracks with nobody ever knowing you were there. It's a game about morality and player choice where the world you create is based on your actions, not navigating conversation trees."

Shortly after *Game Informer's* detail spillage, Bethesda issued a press release stating that the game is due for release next year on Xbox 360, PC and PS3. Scant details have since emerged at the time of writing. You play as a legendary Imperial bodyguard named Corvo, whose duty revolves around protecting the Empress—until he's falsely implicated in her murder by some filthy, corrupt noble. You escape (obviously) and begin unleashing your supreme powers of time-slowness and rat-summoning on the world. There's promise of many different ways to solve each challenge you're presented with, using a combination of supernatural skills and mysterious gadgets to gain the upper hand.

Rather than a simple system of moral choice, the game will instead employ an interesting "chaos" mechanic, which tracks how much collateral damage you're causing in the world. The world then changes in reaction, but not in a punishing or detrimental way, instead acting behind the scenes to affect the outcome of the story.

With its focus on stealth and assassination, we're getting a definite *Thief* vibe from all this. It's worth noting that Raphael Colantonio, lead designer of *Arx Fatalis*, is co-creative directing the title with the prolific Mr Harvey Smith. Expect more details to appear in the coming months.

Two gaming powerhouses collaborate on something other than a game

// After teasing everyone with a surprise announcement via his *Hideradio* podcast, Hideo Kojima (*Metal Gear Solid*) unveiled the first part of a collaborative project between himself and Goichi Suda (aka Suda 51, creator of *No More Heroes*). The project, secretively named *Project S*, was first alluded to back in 2007 and involves a series of works based on Suda's favourite Kojima-created title, 1988's *Snatcher*. The first of these works, a radio drama scripted by Suda (he also stars as one of the voice actors), is set to be released to coincide with the 300th episode of *Hideradio*—which, at the time of writing, is set to air within the next few months. It's called *Sdatcher*, a pun on Suda's name. In addition, Akira Yamaoka, former composer for the *Silent Hill* series and who recently provided the score for Suda's *Shadows of the Damned*, will provide music for the radio drama.

// Crytek is sticking to their plan to offer greater support for the console platform, if this new listing on the ESRB is to be believed (and why shouldn't it?). The listing, which has now been matched by PEGI, was filed by Electronic Arts and **makes provision for the release of the original *Crysis* on both Xbox 360 and PS3**. No release date has yet been confirmed but we're willing to bet that it'll be any day now.



ELITE 311 SERIES

- COLORFUL
- POWERFUL
- UNSTOPPABLE



- Full black interior coating
- Transparent side panel (Elite 311 Plus only)



Supports Long VGA cards (without HDD cage) ATI 6990 / nVIDIA GTX 580



Bottom PSU placement



USB 3.0 for faster data transfer (Elite 311 Plus only)



Sonic Informed
COMPONENT IMPORTER & DISTRIBUTOR
WWW.SONICINFORMED.COM

Johannesburg
Tel: 011 314 5800
Fax: 011 252 5974

Cape Town
Tel: 021 551 8218
Fax: 021 551 8244

Stage presence



Indie game marketing. Oh dear. I'll admit, this is something that regularly peeves me. By itself, it's not too bad: you find enthusiastic communication, valuable ideas and similar experiences while getting in touch with the broader community. But when the time one spends on this starts to rub against the time one spends on game creation itself, things get rather awkward to balance.

When you're in a small dev company, it's unrealistic to expect only a single on-the-job task (such as "coder who permanently hides from public realm"). One of the most common responsibilities to pop up is that of "part-time marketing dude", which means that instead of actively working on a game, time is set aside to answering a bunch of questions: have you checked your mail? Have you checked your Facebook fan page? Have you checked your Twitter stream? Have you checked your blog? Have you checked your other blog?

Are people commenting on your news updates? Are there

"Are there news updates about your news updates? Do people like the new blog layout? Have you fixed the site downtime issue? Have you responded to the interview request from Blah Blah Dot Blah? Have they written anything else about you there? What did they say? What do others say? What does NAG say? And hey, isn't your column due, like, now? [Well, it is called a deadline for a reason, Ed]

news updates about your news updates? Do people like the new blog layout? Have you fixed the site downtime issue? Have you spoken about fixing the site downtime issue? Have you responded to the interview request from Blah Blah Dot Blah? Have they written anything else about you there? What did they say? What do others say? What does NAG say? And hey, isn't your column due, like, now? [Well, it is called a deadline for a reason, Ed]

What about the business meeting? The investment meeting? The network meeting? The expo next week? The expo next month? What about our application for the expo next year?

What's being said on our forums? What's being said on their forums? Are there any other forums talking about us? Is someone on our forum spamming us? Is someone on our wiki spamming us? Did we just mark the wrong message as spam?

If they're not spamming, then what are they saying? Are they talking to each other, or us? Do they expect a reply? How should we reply? Haven't we made this reply somewhere else? Do we have to make this reply again? Can we update the FAQ? Should we update the blog? What can we talk about on the blog? What can we talk about elsewhere? Which parts of our development can we advertise? How long will it take to make a post? How long has it been since the last post?

Who do we add to our press contact list? Are there any new contacts for consideration? Do we need to write personalized e-mails? How are sales? How were they yesterday? How can we keep them going tomorrow? When should we release the next version? How are people receiving the current version?

And hey, when it's all done, should we consider having a look at some game code today?

Of course, the survival of just about any idea relies on community involvement. There's no doubt that these are all important – and sometimes quite rewarding – questions to answer. But it's admittedly quite a temptation to skip out on some (or many) of these tasks because they don't seem urgent, fast or effective enough (or simply because they feel like a pain in the ass when we run into a tight part of our schedule).

It's fun, it's interesting. But it's definitely an area which requires a lot of work.

Rodain Joubert

Order in the court

US Senate prepares to accidentally bugger the gaming industry

Copyright infringement is a big problem in the videogame industry, with pirates rampantly sharing content and hacking apart sensitive software to get to its juicy innards, but no matter on which side of the piracy fence you sit, we're probably all guilty of infringing on a particular part of game copyright: recording and viewing recorded gameplay on websites (and our very own cover disc), in the form of machinima, walkthroughs, home-made reviews and "let's plays".

This form of entertainment is huge, with sites like machinima.com putting out thousands of fan- and pro-made videos every year, and the growing e-sports industry owes most of its popularity to the shoutcasting of games like *StarCraft II* and *Call of Duty* games by many YouTube and Justin.tv users. Here's the cold, hard truth about all these forms of entertainment: they're in violation of most games' end-user licence agreements and, should the publishers and developers of these games be daft enough to take the afore-mentioned violators to court, they'd probably win. Of course, these publishers aren't daft and know that having an active online video community based around their games is vital to the survival of those games.

Here's where things get a bit messy: the US Senate is on the verge of passing a new act that will make it a prosecutable, finable, *criminal* offence to replicate videogame footage (the bill, as it stands now as Bill S.978, makes provision for *all* copyright material) in digital format without express permission by the licence-holders. Their intentions aren't the issue here, but rather the completely vague wording that doesn't take into account this huge



A typical example of an authority figure.

part of the videogame industry.

Nobody is sure yet what the outcome of this bill will be. If it's passed as an act, all US-based shoutcasts, machinima and servers on which such content is hosted, will be forced to pull their content until they can attain permission from the licence-holders. Hopefully, if the bill is passed, most publishers will have the sense to include a clause in their games' EULA that will make express provision for this type of content.

Team Meat's McMillen binds someone named Isaac



Edmund McMillen, one half of the pair responsible for brilliant, wrist-slashing platformer *Super Meat Boy*, has been working on a totally secretive secret project. It's called *The Binding of Isaac*, a side project for McMillen which has nothing to do with Team Meat's next "feature-length" project. McMillen is working with coder Florian

Himsi (*Coil*, *Triachnid*) and audio aficionado Danny Baranowsky (who provided *Super Meat Boy*'s brilliant musical score). Not much else is known at this time, other than it's a roguelike and McMillen says it's inspired by his "favourite game of all time". More info (like release date and platforms) will be revealed when the title is finished in about a month.

You may not pass



No matter how you swing it, once-off redeemable online access keys included with games are there to curb the second-hand market. That's cool, we're not here to judge in that regard, but when companies decide to cover up their intentions with marketing waffle, we're a little less than impressed. Well that's exactly what Sony has done with their new Online Pass, which will be included with the retail release of *Resistance 3* and will be included with future games as well. This pass will enable the buyer to access all of the game's online multiplayer features, and won't cost them a cent extra. If, however, they decide to sell the game or trade it in, they should be aware that its value will be significantly reduced, as the next owner will need to purchase a separate online pass should they want to jump online with the game.

The official reason from Sony is that "this is an important initiative as it allows us to accelerate our commitment to enhancing premium online services across our first party game portfolio."

Would you like cream or ice cream with that?

This is far from the first time we've seen this in action (EA and THQ have been using this system for a ages), but we're a bit surprised to see SOE climb onboard with the scheme, especially considering the minor backpedalling they did with PlayStation Plus. As companies continue to monetise previously "free" aspects of gaming, we can't help but wonder where the consumer will draw the line of what's acceptable.

"We're close to ninety percent of our revenue being digital. Retail sales are like a bonus for us now. **We don't really need retailers anymore** and that is a relief because retailers have not been good for the creative part of the industry, for finding new cool games."

-Fredrik Wester, CEO of Paradox Interactive

Monkey Island Special Editions coming to retail

// Good news everyone! The lovely folks at Lucasarts have decided they need to squeeze more sales out of the Special Editions of both *The Secret of Monkey Island* and *Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge*. You'll be able to pick up a nice, shiny boxed version of both remakes crammed into one scurvy-inducing package. Best of all, they've promised to add in all sorts of extra bits including the soundtrack (fantastic!) and the concept art and storyboards for a never before seen failed attempt at an animated *Monkey Island* movie – we didn't even know that existed! *The Monkey Island Special Edition Collection* is headed for Europe (so it's practically a given that we will get it too) on 9 September 2011 and will be available on PC, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.

// Nintendo of America is **sued for alleged patent infringement regarding the pick-up and play 3D display of the 3DS**. The complainant, Tomita Technologies, alleges that Nintendo wilfully infringed on Tomita's patent, which was granted in 2008 for "stereoscopic image picking up and display system based upon optical axes cross-point information". We'll wait and see what happens but at the very worst, it's likely that Nintendo will settle out of court if they feel that they are in the wrong.



EVOLUTION FOR YOUR LIFE

NOTEPAL INFINITE EVO

DUAL FAN ALUMINUM LAPTOP COOLING PAD



Small but Powerful Blower Fan



Unique Curved Airflow Cooling Design



NOTEPAL LapAir



NOTEPAL U2



NOTEPAL U Stand



Sonic Informed
COMPONENT IMPORTER & DISTRIBUTOR
WWW.SONICINFORMED.COM

Johannesburg
Tel: 011 314 5800
Fax: 011 252 5974

Cape Town
Tel: 021 551 8218
Fax: 021 551 8244

coolermaster.com

Misplaced space race



I'm watching the launch of the shuttle Atlantis. It's heading up to the International Space Station for one last supply trip. When it returns on July 22 it will be scrapped, and that will mark the end of a three decade long U.S. shuttle program. Granted, the space shuttle was a truck – an expensive and deadly low-orbit ferry stopgap that was never meant to have been utilized this long. For the next six years or so, U.S. and international astronauts will be forced to hitch rides on Russian Soyuz spacecraft. This costs about \$60 million per seat, making visits to the International Space Station unappealing to budget-conscious governments.

In 2009, the Obama administration said the program was just too expensive, writing off nearly \$10 billion in design and development of the Constellation moon program rockets and infrastructure. The administration believes things will be more economical (and faster) if it's left up to private-sector spaceships. In the meantime, over 3,000 people at NASA will lose their jobs as the company

"It's no wonder younger generations have lost the dream of mankind getting off this rock. They've been shown almost nothing that would inspire them..."

refocuses on overly-long-term plans to eventually put a man on an asteroid, and visit the Red Planet.

Something I didn't notice until now: the utter lack of interest from the videogame sector with regards to space. Yes, we have incestuous copied-from popular-sci-fi-books science-fiction third-person shoot-that-alien games and such, but I can only think of three games off the top of my head that deal with the reality of mankind's reach into space.

The obvious one is *Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space*, a 1993 strategy game that dealt with a mostly-realistic look at the Russian / U.S space-race. Accurate and fun, it wasn't so much about the journey or destination, but rather the logistics involved. Then there's the more recent *Moonbase Alpha* on Steam, published by NASA themselves and a rather excellent co-op excursion on the moon, dealing with fixing equipment and other scenarios. It didn't get nearly as much attention as it deserved, even if it was lacking in presentation. Beyond that, is the handful of space simulators like *Microsoft's Space Simulator* and that ilk, which are numerically accurate spaceflight sims but very boring unless you're utterly into that kind of thing.

It's no wonder younger generations have lost the dream of mankind getting off this rock. They've been shown almost nothing that would inspire them, get them interested in why we're still here and what we might do to finally leave our slowly-decomposing nest. Schools (and gaming) do a poor job of getting kids interested in the kinds of skills needed for space exploration. There's no lack of topics: engineering or designing space excursion vehicles, understanding and crafting the kinds of habitats needed to survive in space, human physiology and the long-term effects of zero-gravity, the psychology of isolation and wide-open spaces, long-distance communication, sustainable environment design, the list goes on and on.

Society likes to perpetuate the lie that "space has nothing to do with Earth", implying that research into space-travel is a dead-end money-sink. But that's ignorance. *All science is related*. Advancements in one field in the interest of reaching space, benefits all fields and research. Pushing space exploration is the ultimate test of how to keep people alive. Such study is more than a little related to all of humanity's problems on Earth. So in spite of the ennui towards the space, the billions sunk into research of Viagra and hair-restoration, what humanity seems to need the *most* is to get away from here.

Miktar Dracon

Skyrim doesn't care for your confusion



If there's one complaint that the cool kids constantly drone on about, it's the claim that games today are often "dumbed down" for the sake of the masses. Whether you agree with them or not, Bethesda's Todd Howard believes that games are capable of immense depth and intricacy, yet can still appeal to gamers of all types without making their brains bleed. Speaking with *Gamasutra*, Howard (lead designer on *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*) explained that the goal with *Skyrim* is to "remove confusion" and present everything more clearly than it was in *Oblivion*, but in so doing they're not going to make the game "more accessible". You still with us? You can remove that deeply confused look from your face: it means there'll be no "dumbing down" here.

"We want to remove confusion, that's what I'd say," said Howard. "As opposed

to making it more accessible, we'd like to remove confusion for anyone who's playing. What happens in *Oblivion* is you start the game, play for three hours, and then think 'I want to start over, I chose wrong.' So we'd like to sort of alleviate some of that. I also think the controls work better... it's more elegant."

"You look at *Call of Duty*, the most popular game in the world, and that's actually pretty hardcore. At the end of the day, it's a hardcore game, has RPG elements in multiplayer, making classes, picking perks. I think the audiences are there, and we tend to make our game more for ourselves and other people who play a lot of games."

The man makes a good point. It'll be much appreciated if *Skyrim* manages to be as wonderfully rich in content and brilliantly diverse as *Oblivion* was, minus all the uncertainty-induced nosebleeds.

Modern Warfare 3 to feature colour-blind accessibility

Did you know that about 6% of the world's total population is colour-blind? Now did you also know that 100% of the world's population plays *Call of Duty*? It's totally true*, which means that 6% of the people you nootube online are colour-blind; shame on you.

When a person is colour-blind they don't see everything in black and white, but rather they're unable to distinguish between certain colours. Ordinarily it's red and blue that causes the mix up, but green and the various shades thereof are equally to blame. You can imagine then that playing most games becomes somewhat tricky, especially when your mini-map is displaying your team and the opposing team as blue and red dots respectively.

Not many games support a colour-blind mode; a quick Google search will throw up dozens of pages of people petitioning developers to incorporate colour-blind support in patches and updates. The guys behind *Modern Warfare 3* are moving with the times and doing just that. Their decision, however, can also be seen as them following suit from Treyarch, who



also included a colour-blind mode in *Black Ops*. Perhaps this is just a reflection of the size of the *Call of Duty* audience? Regardless, if you battle to tell your reds from your blues and greens, then luckily for you you'll still be able to hold your own online and during the single-player campaign when *Modern Warfare 3* launches this November.

*It's totally not true; we made that stat up, but it's close enough.

Can't touch this



DICE wants people to buy their upcoming FPS *Battlefield 3*, but doesn't think that the public is smart enough to figure their way around in the big, scary Frostbite 2 engine. As a result, expect zero support for modding tools unless they have a change of heart.

"If you look at the Frostbite engine, and how complex it is, it's going to be very difficult for people to mod the game, because of the nature of the setup of levels, of the destruction and all those things... it's quite tricky," said DICE's Patrick Söderlund. "So we think it's going to be too big of a challenge for people to make a mod."

Of course, this is all assuming that the weak-minded community won't eventually crack this Da Vinci Code of a game engine, which will almost definitely happen if they put their minds to it. Let's wait and see what we can come up with then, shall we?

Dun dun dun, dun de dun dun de duuuun

Star Wars meets *Call of Duty*! You can die happy now. This is the *Galactic Warfare* mod for the so 2007 *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare*, and it turns terrorists into rebel scum so you can shoot them with laser rifles while wearing white plastic suits.

The project has been in development for almost two years but has finally seen its all-important 1.0 release. *Galactic Warfare* will only convert your multiplayer experience, but will feature a number of familiar settings in which you can battle each other in *COD's* regular game modes. We'll get the mod on the cover disc as soon as some space opens up (file space, that is; not the opening up of space that tends to swallow dimensions), but until then those with Force-powered Internet can download it at www.moddb.com/mods/star-wars-mod-galactic-warfare. For the Emperor!



Rockstar Games trademarks Rockstar Films

// If the wonderfully creative minds over at Rockstar Games were to use their talents for the good of film as well, would you support them? If a recent trademark filing is to be believed, Rockstar seems to think you would. The trademark covers "animated motion picture films featuring entertainment, namely, action, adventure, dramatic, comedic, children's and documentary themes; pre-recorded video discs and other pre-recorded digital and electronic media in the field of live action programs, motion pictures, or animation featuring entertainment, namely, action, adventure, dramatic, comedic, children's and documentary themes."

Back in April, Rockstar's Dan Houser said this to *The Hollywood Reporter*: "We love movies, but we also love games and that is what we remain focused on. If we were to attempt to make a movie, we would like to make it ourselves, or at least work in collaboration with the best talent." This trademark filing points to a move in that direction. Their games often have a strong movie-like quality to them, so we imagine that if anything ever comes of this, there'll be reason for excitement.

 **baobab**
Where IT Grows



Your Music Host on the go!

Portable Speaker!

Built-in Rechargeable Battery – Save Money!
Charge by USB – Take it Anywhere!

Features

- Supports SD Memory Cards
- USB Host - Play Audio from USB Storage Devices
- Built in FM Radio
- Aux-in Interface Supports MP3 Players



Distributors

Apex Interactive	[011] 796-5040
ASUS SA	[011] 783-5450
BT Games	0861 4 GAMES
Comstar	[011] 314-5812
Core Gaming	[087] 940-3000
Corex	[011] 655-8800
EA South Africa	[011] 516-8300
Evetech Solutions	[012] 326-6547
ESET	0860 313 872
Frontosa	[011] 466-0038
Incredible Connection	0860 011 700
Intel Corporation	[011] 806-4530
Look & Listen	[011] 467-3717
Megarom	[011] 361-4800
Microsoft	0860 225 567
Nu Metro Interactive	(011) 340 9300
Phoenix Software	[011] 803-5437
Prima Interactive	[011] 799-7800
Rectron	[011] 203-1000
Samsung	0860 726 7864
Sonic Informed	[011] 314-5800
Ster Kinekor Entertainment	[011] 445-7700
TVR	[011] 807-1390

If your company isn't listed here, phone NAG on [011] 704-2679.



Support Lines

Got a legal boxed game and need some technical help? Before you call please do the following. Update your system software, drivers and have a look online for a game patch. Just these simple tasks eliminate 93% of all problems – it's a made up statistic but probably close enough.

Publishers: Activision / Blizzard 2K Games / Rockstar / Ubisoft
Codemasters / NC-Soft / Namco-Bandai

E-mail: support@xtrememem.co.za
Number: 0861 987 363

Publishers: Microsoft Xbox
Number: 0800 991 550

Publisher: Electronic Arts
e-mail: zasupport@ea.com
Telephone: 0860 EAHELP/324357

LG's CEO probably doesn't own a handheld



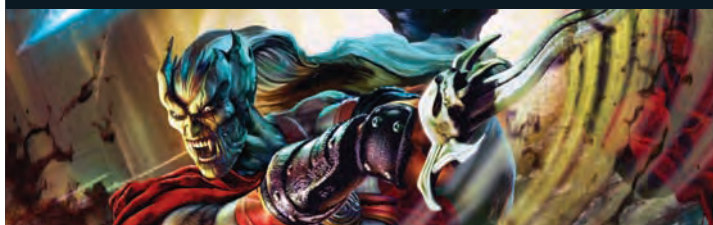
Fact: Nintendo could line the outside of all their offices with 100 dollar bills and still have change left over with which to buy the world, courtesy of all the money they've made from the 3DS alone (please note: this is actually not a fact – it is unadulterated exaggeration). Sony is currently pimping the hell out of their impressively powerful PlayStation Vita. Regardless, tech company LG still does not stand impressed.

"The era of dedicated handheld gaming platform is over," said LG CEO Dr. Jong-seok Park. "Today's smartphones have the horsepower to compete with the best portable gaming devices and LG Optimus 3D is our proof." Park also had this to say, a quote which you won't find in the official press release: "We think 3D is the natural next step in portable entertainment and LG is eager to throw its hat in the ring with the

Optimus 3D and Gameloft's 'must-be-seen-to-be-believed' titles."

What he's saying isn't entirely false – it's true that smartphones are indeed capable of impressive power, rivalling that of dedicated gaming handhelds. What he fails to mention is that a handheld gaming platform doesn't have to worry about all the superfluous garbage that smartphones have to deal with – stuff like being able to make phone calls and having an interface that is suited to a variety of different tasks, not all of which relate to gaming. With their dedicated gaming controls and focus on delivering all available power to games and very little else, the portable platforms have proven time and again that there is no better way to game on the move. LG should have a word with Nokia to find out how that whole N-Gage thing went down, maybe get some perspective.

Crystal Dynamics is polishing up something new



Oh! Exciting news has poured out of the first episode of Crystal Dynamics' podcast, *The Crystal Habit*. They've revealed that once they've gotten the upcoming *Tomb Raider* reboot out the door, their next project will be a completely new IP – provided everything goes according to plan. "We're starting to look at doing a new IP here, and we're in the very early stages of that," said Darrell Gallagher, head of the studio responsible for other lofty titles like the *Legacy of Kain* series.

Gallagher went on to add that the team hopes to "take all the learnings and the technology and everything that we've done with *Tomb Raider* over the last six years and apply that to something new moving forward." The game aims to encompass the same story-centric action adventure focus that the studio has become so well versed in. A new IP is not a new *Legacy of Kain*, but it is nonetheless very exciting.

Hollywood invades our space

// Ugh. This is a thing that does not need to exist. *The Hollywood Reporter* brings word of a big-screen adaptation of... wait for it... *Space Invaders*. Lorenzo di Bonaventura (producer of Michael Bay's *Transformers* flicks) and Gigi Pritzker (who is also producing the film adaptation of Orson Scott Card's novel, *Ender's Game*) have secured the rights to produce a film based on Taito's classic. The duo is presently on the hunt for a writer to pen the film's plot. Seeing as how the actual game has no plot other than "these blocky things that may or may not be aliens are drunkenly invading your turf, so you should probably blast them for high scores and stuff," we expect whatever crazy fool they find to write the story is going to need a vivid imagination. We're under the impression that we've already had several thousand *Space Invaders* movies anyway. They're given names like *Independence Day*, *Battle: Los Angeles* and *Legally Blonde*.

// A recent survey has shown that the majority of apps that people download on mobile devices are games. With that in mind, there is no better time-sucking, soul-squelching game missing on this humble platform than Pokémon. Time for change, says Nintendo, **as they're currently developing a rhythm-based Pokémon game for both iOS and Android**, which should be available (for free!) by the end of the year. There's no word on a DSi/3DS version of the game, which is a little surprising.

Drop the gun!



"And that's how you cast a magic fireball."

Satoru Iwata, God-King of Nintendo (when he's feeling modest, he announces himself as Nintendo's president), doesn't seem to enjoy being called for duty or gearing up for war. He's shown a bit of concern over the constant stream of shooters that are seemingly inundating the Western market.

"Currently, in the western countries especially, war-themed gun-shooting games, which are not well-received in Japan, are very popular," said Iwata. "It is a reality that some of these games sell 10 million units per year in those markets, and this is one valid type of video game genre. I would personally feel sad if all video games became something like that, but on the other hand, I do not think such games should disappear."

Way to tread the middle ground there man. If there's one company that's proved that not every title needs to involve shooting innumerable nameless soldier boys in the face in order to make an inordinate amount of cash, it's Nintendo.

NUAds: coming to a Kinect near you

We know why you all forked out about R2,000 for a Kinect sensor: so that Microsoft could use it to shove advertising down your throats. Wait, that's *not* why you bought it? Huh, who'd have thought?

At present, Microsoft is busy readying an advertising method that will make use of everybody's Kinects and Xbox 360 consoles providing they're online. NUAds will allow companies, such as Coca-Cola, to pop up adverts on your Dashboard that you will be able to interact with. By "interact" however, they really just mean you'll be able to use hand gestures or voice control to Tweet a link to the advert you just watched, because it's so super awesome that you simply have to share it with your Twitter followers. Another example provided in the presentation video is the ability for people to vote in polls using, you guessed it, hand gestures. It sounds pretty lame and it's causing a bit of a stir with gamers; many are complaining that Microsoft is wasting resources turning a gaming peripheral into an advertising machine when they should be making more games for the thing instead.

It's worth mentioning that we're already subjected to loads of advertising on the ordinary Xbox 360 Dashboard, so having adverts migrating over to the Kinect Dashboard was going to happen sooner or later. Also don't forget that all of these adverts have to be activated via user input, so nothing is being forced on you.

Look & Listen



Pre-orders / www.lookandlisten.co.za

PC

Rage	October
Batman: Arkham City	October
FIFA Manager 12	28th October

Xbox 360

Warhammer 40,000: Space Marine	9th September
NHL 12	9th September
Dark Souls	7th October

PS3

Bodycount	2nd September
FIFA 12	30th September
Ace Combat: Assault Horizon	14th October

Wii

Monopoly Collection	28th October
Trivial Pursuit: Bet You Know It	28th October
Mario & Sonic at the London 2012 Olympic Games	November

3DS

F1 2011	23rd September
WRC 2011	23rd September
Sonic Generations	November

DS

Barbie: Jet, Set & Style	23rd September
X-Men Destiny	30th September
Happy Feet Two	November

Kinect

Dance Party with Mel B	August
Rise of Nightmares	September
Sesame Street: Once Upon a Monster	October

Move

National Geographic Challenge!	July
Child of Eden	13th September
After Hour Athlete	23rd September

Little boxes on the hillside

// A man in America decided to spend a week locked inside a custom-built shipping crate to play *Lord of the Rings Online* will be driven from Bald Knob, Arkansas to Portland, Oregon.

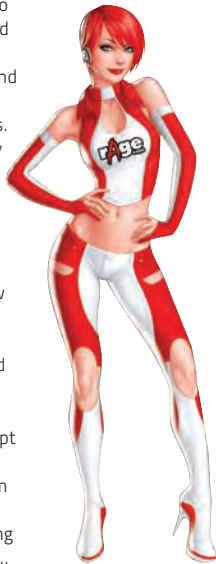
Jordan Long is a performance and video artist whose work deals a lot with the coping mechanisms used to deal with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and in particular, videogames as a coping mechanism. That's the point of this entire ordeal which saw Long trapped inside the confines of a crate with only the following items to keep him alive/sane: one white t-shirt, one pair of pants, one pair of underwear, one pair of socks, one pair of tennis shoes, 28 protein bars, four gallons of water, a computer with Internet connectivity, vitamin D tablets, aspirin, wet wipes, three cooling fans, a pillow, five feet of tubing and two custom air-sealed containment units for waste.

He did survive, you might be surprised to learn, and spent the vast majority of the time in-game, playing his (then) level 65 hunter and level 57 warden, with less than a quarter of his time in the box spent sleeping and performing limited amounts of exercise. He also seems mostly okay after this experiment, which we guess proves that gaming, and online/social-based gaming in particular is a great way to not only cope with previous traumas, but existing ones too. Science!

What's that noise?!

Thanks to the redesign we were rushed for time to come up with a new story for the badger. So, instead, we'll just tell you the truth. We're sick of him; we stole him from a stupid flash video like years ago and kept modifying him with more and more ridiculous ideas and stories. We've effectively washed away everything that was good and wholesome with our plagiarised garbage and now it's time to move on. Whoa! That felt good. Instead we're going to whore out a marketing concept and make you find Scarlett from rAge. See if you can find her hiding in the magazine...

Clue: It's in NAG magazine somewhere. Send your sighting to ed@nag.co.za with the subject line 'August Scarlett' and don't get it wrong or deleted it will be.



July Winner



Michael Bezuidenhout, Page 30

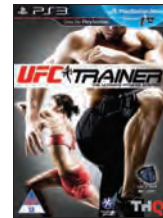
Win!

A Universal Challenge Racing Wheel valued at R710. Sponsored by Bowline and Thrustmaster.



Caption of the Month

Every month we'll choose a screenshot from a random game and write a bad caption for it. Your job is to come up with a better one. The winner will get a copy of *UFC Trainer* for PS3 from Ster-Kinekor Entertainment. Send your captions to ed@nag.co.za with the subject line 'August Caption'.



NAG'S LAME ATTEMPT AT HUMOUR / "What's for dinner, honey?"



LAST MONTHS WINNER / "Circumcisions are done a bit differently in Asgard..."
- Jaryd Lutchman

"Almost certainly, 2 years from now, there will be **mobile devices more powerful than what we're doing all these fabulous games on right now.**"

-John Carmack, co-founder of id Software

Next PlanetSide is not called PlanetSide Next

// At Sony Online Entertainment's Fan Faire event, the sequel to MMOFPS *PlanetSide* (which was previously referred to as *PlanetSide Next*) was officially revealed to be *PlanetSide 2*, finally removing the veil of secrecy surrounding it. The press release spouts many thrilling words like "reimagining," "groundbreaking" and "intense," but time will tell if this sequel is a greater success than its forebear.

Players will once again be afforded the opportunity to select from three different factions (the Terran Republic, the New Conglomerate and the Vanu Sovereignty), able to customise their character, vehicles and weaponry to suit their tastes. As your character gains in experience, you'll gain access to "ranks, unlockable traits, and skill sets." The enormous game world of Auraxis will support both ground and air combat, with sea battles thrown in for good measure. Matt Higby, creative director on the upcoming title, promised battles of massive scale (thousands of players fight in each war zone, with battles supposedly lasting days or even weeks) in the new title, which is being built in SOE's new ForgeLight engine.



Now 37 stores Nationwide

For contact information go to www.btgames.co.za



ETA: 8.11.2011

CALL OF DUTY MW3

GET A PSN BACKGROUND WHEN YOU PRE-ORDER ON PS3 + BT GAMES EXCLUSIVES: A SCUBA AVATAR (XBOX 360) & STEEL TIN CASE (XBOX 360 & PS3).

GET TO RAGE 2011, PRE ORDER MW3 TO RECEIVE A MW3 T-SHIRT



Put on your PC pants



The PC version of Eric Chahi's (creator of *Another World* – or *Out of This World* if you hail from the US) much-anticipated upcoming downloadable god-sim *From Dust* now has a release date: July 27th. If you fancy a bit of terrain deformation and subjecting a tribe of helpless people to your every whim and desire, you'll be able to snag the game via Steam, UbiShop and numerous other digital outlets by the time you read this. It'll come out on XBLA on the very same day, but PSN users unfortunately have no concrete date with Chahi's latest, incredibly intriguing project. If you're reading this and July 27th has already passed, we suggest you whip out that credit card right now and get buyin'.

In other news relating to the PC and its downloadable exploits, it's been announced that Playdead's *Limbo*, the shadowy indie darling that the world fell madly in love with when it launched on the 360 last year, is making its way to PC and PSN soon. PSN users will be able to grab the game right now (we're writing this from the past, predicting the present in the future – aren't we awesome?), while PC users will be able to grab it on Steam on August 2nd. *Limbo*'s soundtrack is available on iTunes at this very moment, just in case you're looking to kick back with some of the game's haunting melodies.

Stop right there, criminal scum!*

Square Enix is preparing to sue fifteen individuals over the illegal distribution of a preview copy of *Dues Ex: Human Revolution* that has been making the rounds online. The code only includes the beginning portion of the game and was likely leaked by Italian videogame site GMC and/or someone with access to the code that they were supplied.

At present, Square doesn't know exactly which of the fifteen accused is guilty. Perhaps they're hoping that the sought damages of (a relatively mere) \$5,000 will scare someone into owning up. Whatever the outcome, we hope that their servers are locked up tight. The last time a videogame company tried to sue someone for illegal activity, PSN went down for over a month.

*We may have used this heading before, but there's no better criminal scum reference than an *Oblivion* reference. We dare you to suggest otherwise.

Release List



Dates subject to change without notice

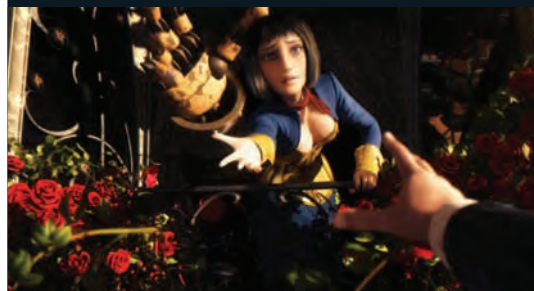
August: Week 1

Magic: The Gathering - 2012 Event Decks	Trading Card Game
---	-------------------

August: Week 4

Deus Ex: Human Revolution	PC / 360 / PS3
Tropico 4	PC / 360
Rugby World Cup 2011	360 / PS3
Call of Juarez: The Cartel	PC
Dance Party with Mel B	360 / PS3 / Wii

Ken Levine is feeling philosophical



In an interview with *Rock, Paper, Shotgun*, Irrational's Ken Levine provided some interesting insights into the mind of *BioShock Infinite*. In between discussing the stress that comes with ensuring that *Infinite* provides nothing but absolute perfection and the implications of living in a dream within a dream, Levine had many other poignant things to say regarding the game's direction.

He wants the game's story and the AI driving your companion Elizabeth to function so brilliantly that gamers have no choice but to fall in love with her. They want her every move to be laced with emotion, making her as believable a character as possible.

The plan is to take a more psychological approach to making you care about Elizabeth as well – by creating an intense bond between Elizabeth and protagonist Booker DeWitt. "I started thinking about how a very sick patient often rapidly feels an intense bond with their doctor, because they're in danger," said Levine. "The same is true of people in combat. This tuned us to the nature of sacrifice, and to what a character wants and will sacrifice to get it. Elizabeth wants to control her own destiny and she'd rather die than not control her own destiny. We thought that this was something people could empathize with, but we also thought that sacrifice rapidly builds connections between people."

Noble pirates invade The Sims Medieval

// Sure, many people might have taken issue with *The Sims Medieval*, whining to anyone that would listen that it "just isn't *The Sims*, y' know?" That hasn't stopped Electronic Arts from treating it like every other *Sims* game that's come before it. EA has revealed the first expansion pack for the game, dubbed *The Sims Medieval: Pirates and Nobles*.

You can expect new gameplay elements like treasure hunting, along with new items like birds (falcons and parrots, in keeping with the theme) and interrogation chairs. Two warring factions (the Pirates of Aarbyville and the Nobles of Tredony) arrive in the kingdom, allowing players to play as a pirate or noble. Nobles can choose between being a monarch, a knight or a blacksmith. Pirates can look forward to the obligatory treasure hunting and timber shivering. The war creates new opportunity for everyone involved, which should make for interesting times (and many new quests to embark on) when the game launches on PC this August.

In the midst of an elaborate con to settle a twenty-year old score, fortune hunter Nathan Drake stumbles into a centuries-old conspiracy that puts him back on the trail of his infamous ancestor, renowned explorer & privateer Sir Francis Drake.

But his search for a lost 16th-century treasure leads him to an even greater discovery, an ancient secret that ensnares him in a web of deceit, pitting him against a shadowy clandestine organization & the occult treachery of its cunning & ruthless leader!

UNCHARTED 3
 DRAKE'S DECEPTION
 ETA: 1 NOVEMBER 2011

DON'T PAY FULL PRICE
PRE-ORDER & SAVE
 ON RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE

EXCLUSIVE TO BT GAMES. HEAL FROM YOUR WOUNDS FASTER! PRE-ORDER TODAY & GET THE REGENERATION BOOSTER!

Lazy Gamer's Guide to MMO games

Compared to what we had to deal with ten years ago, MMO gaming has come a long way. RPGs and strategy games still dominate the field, however, so we decided to take a look at a handful of the available titles, both free-to-play (F2P) and entirely paid-for, to let you know what's floating around the Internet.

World of Tanks

Website: www.worldoftanks.com
Pricing model: F2P with premium content

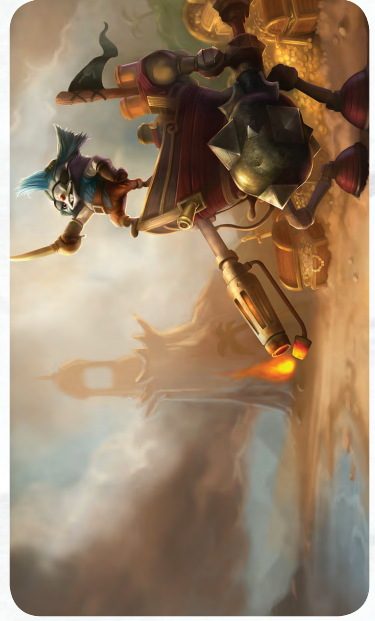
A freemium-based game, *World of Tanks* will give you access to almost all that the game has to offer for no cost. This is an action-strategy game in which players take on the role of a tank crew, and team up with other players to capture enemy positions or obliterate them. Players will earn experience points and currency from each game, which can be spent on upgrading existing tanks and buying new ones, but those willing to cough up the cash will be able to redeem their money for in-game currency to speed up the process. The game features plenty of historically accurate details for warfare enthusiasts and strategy gamers alike.



League of Legends

Website: www.leagueoflegends.com
Pricing model: F2P with premium content

HoW's rival and another DotA-like, *League of Legends* is entirely free with optional premium content. The game has been around since 2009 and has seen plenty of growth in that time. It allows players to customise their characters before-hand with talent trees – similar to what many MMORPGs allow – as well as supply them with boosts and skins that can be purchased from the store. LoL was developed by Riot Games using the assistance of two of DotA's previous designers – Steve "Guinsoo" Feak and Steve "Pendragon" Mescon.



RIFT

Website: www.riftgame.com
Pricing model: Monthly subscription only (trial available)

What one could call a "highly traditional MMORPG" (and with a highly traditional monthly fee), *RIFT* is set on the world of Telara, which is the focal point of two different planes. Due to the actions of the Death God, Regulos, these two planes now invade Telara and rifts frequently appear throughout the land and spew forth all sorts of monsters that the players must fight off. If these rifts go unchecked, more monsters will continue to enter the world and will eventually take control over critical landmarks, killing NPCs and quest-givers. The game's two factions – Guardians and Defiants – will have to set aside their differences whenever a rift opens.



The Lord of the Rings Online

Website: www.lotro.com
Pricing model: F2P with premium content

LotRO: *Shadows of Angmar* is no newcomer to the MMORPG space. Originally released in 2007, it was welcomed by online gamers and *Lord of the Rings* fans alike, but as time moved on it failed to keep up the necessary subscription numbers. The developers periodically release expansions and additional content in the form of books and, at the end of last year, have moved to a freemium model. This means that you can download and play the game at no cost, but content like certain character classes, dungeons and siege warfare are limited unless you pay up. Since this move was made, the developers have reported a 300% increase in revenue, which means that this is one game that's not going to die any time soon.



Heroes of Newerth

Website: www.heroesofnewerth.com
Pricing model: Once-off payment with premium content

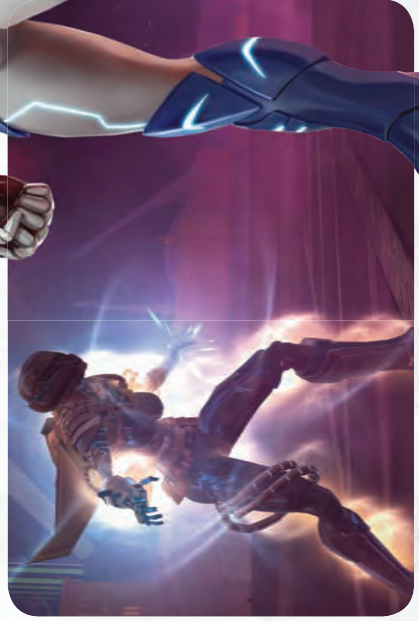
Those who remember the fantastic action-strategy title *Savage* and its sequel, *Savage 2*, should be familiar with the world of *Newerth*. Developed by the same team that brought you *Savage*, *S2 Games*, *HoN* is a *Dota*-inspired strategy game that has no subscription fees, all you need to play is a \$30 (once-off) account and the relatively small (500MB) client, although additional content is available to those who either earn in-game currency through match-made games or exchange real money for it. The game has undergone many updates since its release in 2010, including better support for newcomers.



Champions Online

Website: www.champions-online.com
Pricing model: F2P with premium content

Champions *Online* is another paid-for MMORPG that has adopted a freemium model that gives players the opportunity to buy access to additional content for real money; otherwise, you can play entirely for free while still having access to eight character archetypes and much of the game world. *Champions* has a much greater focus on action than other MMORPGs, and tries to reduce the grind usually associated with these games by increasing the pace of gameplay and allowing players to get back into the action as quick as possible. It also features a ton of customisation options so you can truly create your ultimate superhero or villain.



Top 9 weapons in gaming



Weapons! Use them for hitting things that want to eat you for breakfast! While we're all pacifists at heart, try explaining that to a Locust when it's trying to fill your face with bullets, or maybe

have a nice sit-down with Sephiroth and the two of you can talk through your anger issues. That didn't work? Here, use this gun with a chainsaw attached to it and let us know how things turn out.

9 Translocator – Unreal Tournament series

Telefragging: insanely frustrating when it happens to you and deliciously satisfying when you do it to other people. Can also be used to get around the map quickly, but let's be honest: everyone is secretly hoping for a telefrag every time they break out the Translocator.



8 Medigun – Team Fortress 2

Hey, it has the word "gun" in its name, so it's not going anywhere. The Medigun makes it into this list because the best offence is a psychotic doctor with a knack for kooky science and rapid regeneration technology. He's also the only reason that Heavies get away with moving that slow.



7 Lancer – Gears of War series

It's a big-ass gun with a frikken' chainsaw attached to it – what more must we say?



6 Fireball – Super Mario Bros. series

You don't get much more iconic than Mario's (and Luigi's!) fireball attack that is enabled once you pick up one of those weird flowers that grow out of bricks that float in the air. Are you sure you're meant to eat that, Mario?



5 BFG 9000 – DOOM series

Never before had there been a gun that made the player feel so damn powerful as the original BFG from *DOOM*, and it continues, to this day, to instil fear into the hearts of anyone unlucky enough to be stuck in a deathmatch game with the guy who just picked one up.



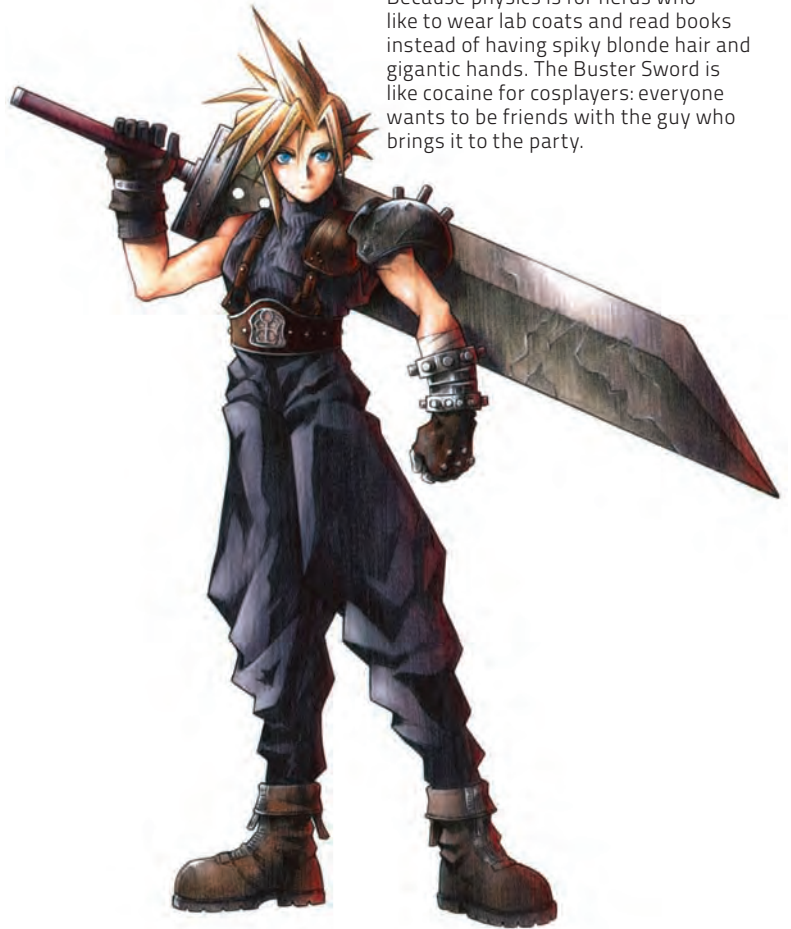
4 Aperture Science Handheld Portal Device – Portal series

Or "Portal Gun" for you nincompoops who don't pay attention. Perfect for escaping deranged AI-controlled puzzle-rooms, taking quick trips to the moon and getting rid of old pizza boxes before the in-laws arrive.



3 Buster Sword – Final Fantasy VII

Because physics is for nerds who like to wear lab coats and read books instead of having spiky blonde hair and gigantic hands. The Buster Sword is like cocaine for cosplayers: everyone wants to be friends with the guy who brings it to the party.



2 Rocket Launcher – Quake III

Specifically, the one from *Quake III*, but you can insert your favourite here if it'll make you feel better. The rocket launcher is responsible for

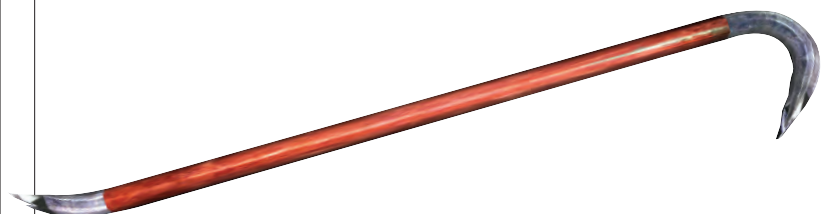
rocket-jumping, which is just about the coolest thing to happen to level navigation in first-person shooters since the strafe key was invented.



1 Crowbar – Half-life series

While many may believe that Gordon Freeman single-handedly saved humanity from complete destruction, a few of us appreciate

the truth: he'd just be another drooling brain-slave with a gooey pink crab on his face if he didn't have this little fellow handy.



Can id Software bring back that old-school magic?

Welcome to the Wasteland. There's plenty to see and do (from a first-person view). If you can survive that is. Better muster up some righteous indignation, those mutants over there think you look mighty pretty and/or tasty.

You got here via your Ark, one of hundreds of buried cryostasis capsules that were supposed to help repopulate the Earth after that damn asteroid wiped out most of humanity and friends. Each Ark carried twelve people, each with a special ability or trait that, when combined with the others, would help rebuild society. Your Ark malfunctioned, killing everyone inside it but you. So much for that. Oh, and you've lost your memory.

To make it in the Wasteland, you're going to have to find a set of wheels, arm it to the teeth and find other survivors. With your trusty inventory (for carrying stuff, of course), weapon-

upgrades system and money-making side-missions, this open-world post-apocalyptic fun park should be no trouble, except for all those factions trying to kill you.

It may quack like a role-playing game, and thematic comparisons to *Fallout 3* are easy, but *Rage* is very clearly a more conventional first-person shooter. You gun down agile mutants and race around in third-person where applicable as you try to figure out why The Authority are after you, what they want with Ark survivors, and what you should be doing now that Earth has gone to hell.

Rage is powered by some impressive tech and backed by a developer pedigree that goes back 20 years. id Software is even credited with having given birth to the first-person shooter genre. So just maybe, they can revitalize the stagnant FPS genre and bring back some of that old-school magic. If not, there's always *Doom 4*.

[details]

Release Date:
October 2011
Platforms:
PC / PS3 / 360
iOS / Mac
Genre:
First-person action
Developer:
id Software
Website:
www.rage.com
Publisher:
Bethesda Softworks

[trivia]

// In 2000, Romero was rumoured to have been killed, a photograph of his corpse with a bullet wound was spread on the Internet.

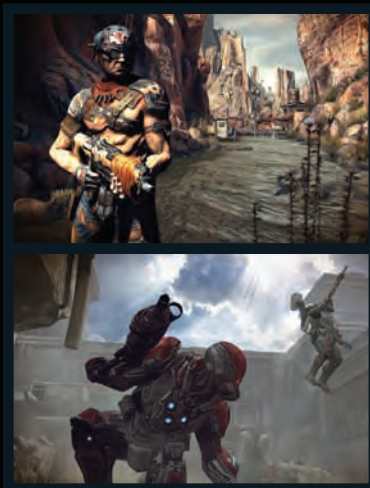


MULTIPLAYER MAYHEM

There will be two multiplayer modes out of the box for both online and System Link, with the co-op mode allowing for local split-screen.

Combat Rally: Up to six people free-for-all in an arena designed to use vehicles. Collect rally points and drive over people (or shoot them) to steal their points.

Legends of the Wasteland: Two-player co-op missions based on stories you hear about in the single-player side of things.



THE TIMELINE OF TERROR

You can't have an epic post-apocalyptic adventure without setting the scene. Try to read this timeline in the voice of that guy who narrates movie trailers.

2004: Asteroid detected in deep space. Scientists get all giddy and call it 99942 Apophis, after the Egyptian god of chaos. (This is an actual asteroid)

2024: Apophis no longer cool when scientists realize it's probably going to hit Earth. World governments keep this a secret from the general population.

2025: The Eden project begins, filling Ark capsules with knowledge, essential items and a few humans doped up on Nanotrites, an untested super-science allowing for survival of the lengthy cryostasis.

2025-2027: Governments start stockpiling tons of guns and weapons inside bunkers.

August 2029: The general population discovers that Apophis is on the way. The Eden project buries the Ark capsules deep inside the Earth.

December 2029: Apophis pwns the Moon and hits Earth. Megaton disaster ensues, wiping cities and some entire countries off the map. The Earth enjoys a new Ice Age as the resulting dust cloud blocks out the sun. Over 80% of life on Earth is wiped out.

2035: Dust has settled, survivors crawl out of caves and shelters. Clans form, small settlements and camps spring up. The Wasteland is born.

Later: You pop out of an Ark capsule with no clue as to what's going on. Enjoy!

THE FREAKY FACTIONS

Plenty of people (and not-people) are out to get you. In the interest of giving you a sporting chance, here are the factions you need to watch out for:

Mutants: Radiation is a bitch. Mutants roam the Wasteland fighting everyone and are being experimented on by The Authority, resulting in two-story tall behemoths.

The Authority: Bunch of pious d-bags in armour looking to get you for some reason, putting a reward on your head and other Ark Survivors.

The Ghost Clan: Like fearless occult-dabbling Mad Max enthusiasts, the Ghost Clan are agile and like to use blade-edged boomerangs.

The Scorcher Clan: Worshipping the asteroid that wasted Earth, these guys believe bits of the asteroid will make them invincible, and like setting fire to things.

The Wasted Clan: Bunch of idiots that like home-brewed alcohol and cars. They hang around what were once industrial areas, building cars and hitting things with blunt objects.

The Jackal Clan: Howling part-animal savages who hunt in packs. They like to wear the bones and furs of animals.

The Shrouded Clan: With a gas-mask fetish and orange scarves, the Shrouded are those who gave up on their previous clans. Skilled engineers, they booby-trap their environments with turrets.

The Gearheads: Intelligent bandits with advanced machinery and weaponry. With a grudge against Mother Nature for that asteroid thing, it's hinted the founders may have been Ark survivors.



"Over 80% of life on Earth is wiped out."



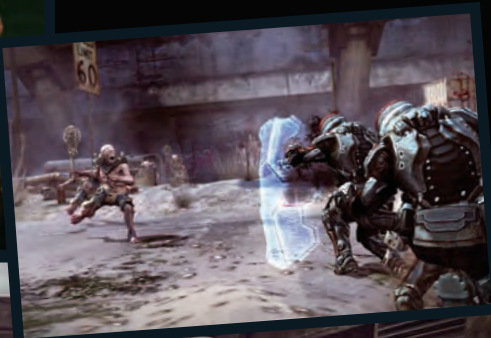
A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

In their 20 years, id Software has developed six games and published fourteen externally-developed titles. It was founded in 1991 by four guys: programmers John Carmack and John Romero, game designer Tom Hall, and artist Adrian Carmack.

id Software released *Commander Keen* in 1990 as shareware (first episode free), going on to achieve critical success selling *Wolfenstein 3D* (1992) and *DOOM* (1993) the same way via mail-order. They only started selling their games in retail boxes in 1994 when *DOOM II* hit. John Romero is credited with coining the term "deathmatch", at least in the context of first-person shooters, thanks to *DOOM*.

The company has always focused on technology. They've licensed their game engines to other developers, leading to games such as *Sin*, *Anachronox*, *Call of Duty*, *Star Wars: Jedi Academy*, *Star Trek: Elite Force* and *Medal of Honor*. The client-server architecture that *Quake* introduced became the industry standard for all networked first-person shooters going forward.

In 2009 ZeniMax Media acquired id Software, taking *Rage* away from being published by Electronic Arts.



MODS AND MAPS?

"Pull down the console, type 'id studio', then press enter; Then, bam, there's all the tools we use." said Tim Willits, creative director and former co-owner of id Software. Beyond that, it's anyone's guess how mod-able and map-able the game will be.

MASTERS OF DOOM

If you want an in-depth (and only slightly embellished) look into the history of id Software, check out the book *Masters of Doom: How Two Guys Created an Empire and Transformed Pop Culture*. Written by David Kushner, it examines id Software by mostly following the childhood-to-adulthood paths of John D. Carmack and John Romero. It's full of fascinating tidbits, humour and quality behind-the-scenes peeks into their lives. You'll be surprised, we guarantee it.

Masters of Doom: ISBN 0375505245 (Hardcover) / ISBN 0812972155 (Paperback)

ID TECH 5

The buzzwords to know now that id Tech 5, a proprietary game engine by id Software, is almost upon us. Initially it'll be used for *Rage* and the upcoming *Doom 4*, but the engine supports practically every platform including mobile devices.

Virtual texturing: An advancement on the MegaTexture tech from id Tech 4, VT allows for a dynamic and changeable world as textures are streamed into memory as needed. The engine automatically optimizes the textures as it goes for the platform it's on, letting developers not worry about memory or texture limits.

Shadow penumbras: Shadow maps won't have that stair-step edging, instead the engine soft-edges the penumbra (the area between the light and dark parts of a casted shadow).

Multi-threading: The engine supports full multi-threaded processing for its rendering, game logic, sound processing, physics and A.I., so that expensive processor of yours won't go to waste.

The regulars: high-dynamic range, bloom, volumetric lighting, radiosity, soft particles, pixel shaders, post processing, dynamic water surfaces, cloth simulation, depth of field and motion blur are all present and accounted for. **NAG**

Miktar

OUT 9th SEPTEMBER 2011

WARHAMMER
40,000

SPACE MARINE

I AM WAR



Elite Armour Pack

Stand out as the ultimate defender of humanity, or show your true allegiance to the forces of evil in multiplayer and stride onto the Battlefield in these exclusive Space Marine chapter colours and Chaos Space Marine markings. This Elite Armour Pack includes the Emperor's Elite Pack and the Traitor Legion Pack, which includes four complete armour skin sets to choose from.



COLLECTOR'S EDITION ALSO AVAILABLE



PRE ORDER NOW

SEARCH: SPACE MARINE



www.SPACEMARINE.COM



Available at these stores:



Warhammer 40,000, Warhammer 40,000 Space Marine, I Am War, and the Space Marine logo are trademarks of Games Workshop. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Microsoft, Xbox 360, and the Xbox logo are trademarks of the Microsoft group of companies and are used under license from Microsoft. © 2011 Games Workshop Ltd. All rights reserved. Distributed by Games Workshop Ltd. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. "Xbox 360" and the Xbox logo are trademarks of the Microsoft group of companies and are used under license from Microsoft.



Brothers in Arms: Furious 4

Borderlands, Bulletstorm, Team Fortress and Inglourious Basterds had a smiley baby



[details]

Release Date:
2012
Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
Genre:
First-person shooter
Developer:
Gearbox Software
Website:
www.brothersinarmgame.com
Publisher:
Ubisoft

[trivia]

// Hardcore fanboys of the franchise can safely untie their knickers because we have it on good authority that there is another proper / serious version of *Brothers in Arms* coming (eventually). This future game will feature the good old Sergeant Matt Baker and his somewhat true adventures in another fairly accurate version of World War II combat.

Brothers in Arms: Furious 4 is a spin-off. There is no Sergeant Matt Baker, no 101st Airborne Division and no 'realistic combat' or 'historical accuracy'. This game is the exact polar opposite to all that, and rather proud of it. Shouting from the rooftops with fireworks and dancing bears kind of proud.

Ever since the first game in the series (*Brother in Arms: Road to Hill 30*), the *Brothers in Arms* franchise has placed its muddy boots firmly in reality. Gearbox even hired a 'historically accurate' real-life soldier spokesperson to guide the development team through each bullet-riddled encounter. Although everyone has some military expert guiding them these days, back in 2005 this was a fairly unique concept. The series carved a solid reputation for itself in the bark of the tree of realism – no easy task considering how most 'realistic' army games lack excitement and are impossible to squeeze any enjoyment out of. Realism over entertainment is a fine line, one that developers Gearbox Software have now trodden all over and run away laughing.

With *Furious 4*, Ubisoft and Gearbox must be concerned about being forgotten and left behind in the jumble of advertising and propaganda heating up between Electronic Arts and Activision in their FPS war. There really is little point in trying to take on the two juggernauts of first-person shooters this year (*MW3* and *BF3*), so Gearbox have done something different and taken this latest addition to the series in a new direction. It's an FPSLOL, take all the cool from games like *Bulletstorm* and *Borderlands*, dress it in a tongue-in-

"Realism over entertainment is a fine line, one that developers Gearbox Software have now trodden all over and run away laughing."

"Okay, now do something fabulous!"



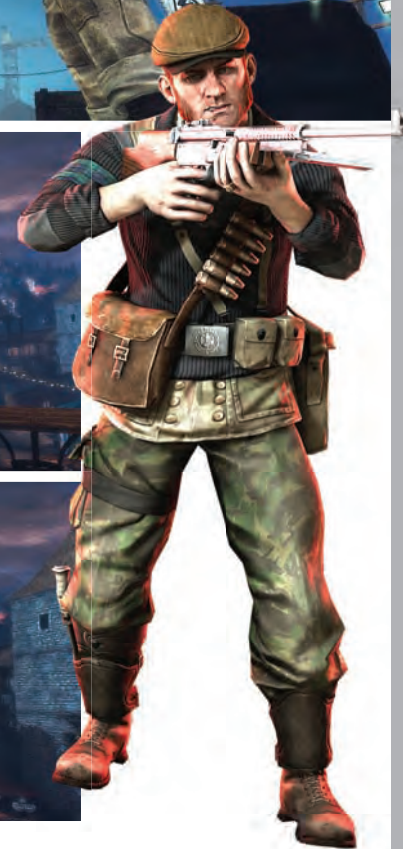
cheek World War II let's get Hitler outfit and send it out the door laughing and poking fun at everything else.

Your objective is to dismantle the German war machine one screaming Nazi at a time and eventually eliminate the Führer himself (that's Adolf Hitler to you unwashed) in a series of increasingly elaborate and ridiculous missions and settings. You know those exaggerated war stories your crazy uncle Albert and his friends at the old age home are always telling anyone that will listen? Well you're going to take part in all of them. Remember the time Uncle Albert and his exhausted company took on a thousand Nazis and won, yeah that story – well you're going to do that mission. You and three friends, or if you weren't popular at school, you and three AI buddies. Playing cooperatively is important as shown at the E3 reveal demonstration. After clearing out a beer hall and holding it against what felt like a million enemy soldiers, the foursome faced a mini-boss, complete with machinegun and impregnable shield. A direct assault on him was impossible, so while two players drew his attention the other two flanked and hit him from the side. Boss man then switched to the new attackers, opening up his flank for the original two. It wasn't easy and took some nimble dodging and careful aiming to bring him down – fun times.

Right off the bat it's easy to see the strong influence *Borderlands*' graphical style has had on this game. Instead



Love & Rockets



of drab dark greys hiding in the black shadows, it's vibrant blues with bright orange lamps lighting up the streets. The traditional dullness of war games is replaced with lighter tones and stylish settings. Try and imagine a Warner brothers cartoon version of World War II and you're almost on the right track. This art direction extends to the four main characters (more on that later) and the enemy forces they face. Exaggerated features go hand-in-hand with equally outrageous and experimental weapons (jetpacks and helicopters in 1944?!). The mission settings provide more than just another backdrop to the action and in a similar style to *Splinter Cell: Conviction*, the landscape, buildings and objects is where you'll find your mission objectives written. It's all very epic and exciting.

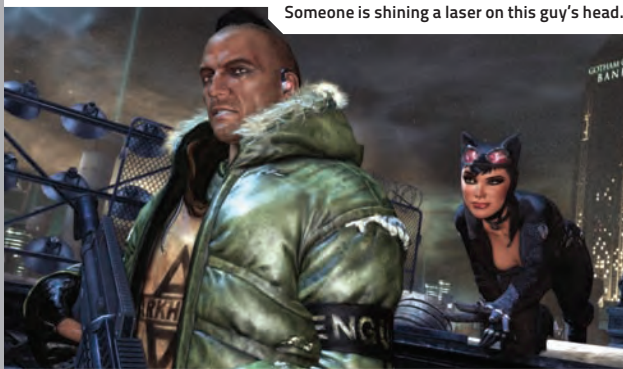
'Over the top and fun' is the Gearbox reply to the man shooter in 2012 and if you can put your preconceived notions about the *Brothers in Arms* series aside for just this one game you might even have a fun ride.

MEET THE GANG

Crockett is the leader of the gang, a Texan with a flamethrower who also carries a cattle brand with a long spike on it. The idea here is to kill them painfully and leave a 'message' behind. Stitch is a fan of electricity and knows

the shortest route to earth often begins at the crotch. Chock carries a tomahawk and can set nasty traps and finally we have Montana, the heavy. He carries a heavy machine gun and chainsaw (complete with a smiley face crosshair) and can also load his bear traps with grenades. That's right, bear traps with grenades. The game is designed for four players in campaign mode and up to 10 players in the six different multiplayer modes. No accident *Borderlands* also featured four players, or are we getting too close to conspiracy theory here? There's also a kind of fifth character in the game – a narrator who sarcastically relays the exploits of the four with palpable disdain. As is standard your characters will level up during the game, unlocking new abilities, weapons and also powering up existing ones. All of this is earned as you shoot and fight your way through the many bonuses, combinations and skill shots. After all the big serious FPS craziness that's going to dominate this year's Christmas stockings, *Furious 4* will provide a much-needed break from the chaos at the beginning of 2012. This is definitely one to watch if you enjoy tongue-in-cheek, over-the-top action but avoid it if you're looking for something serious. **NAG**

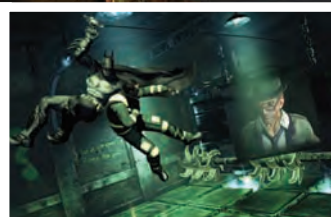
RedTide



Someone is shining a laser on this guy's head.



"He's all over the place, delivering meaty blows with all the grace and poise of a ninja-ballerina."



Batman: Arkham City

Excuse me waitress, there's a bat in my city



[details]

Release Date:
Q4 2011
 Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
 Genre:
Action Adventure
 Developer:
Rocksteady Studios
 Website:
www.batmanarkhamcity.com
 Publisher:
Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment

[trivia]

// Don't take our word for it. *Batman: Arkham Asylum* (the first game) was well received by both the gaming press and the gaming public. It scored 91 for both the PC and PS3 versions and 92 for the Xbox version on **www.metacritic.com**.

Fuelled by the success of their first crazy good Batman game, Rocksteady are preparing to giving players exactly what they want with the sequel, adding a few surprises while making sure they keep delivering what fans expect. Their first game, *Batman: Arkham Asylum* was surprisingly brilliant. The game's inspired setting and skull-cracking melee combat made it a must-play while at the same time breaking the crippling stereotype of rubbish video games that haunt movie and comic franchises. So this sequel carries a lot of expectation then. First up, it has to be a good sequel and second, it must maintain its lofty status – it has responsibilities now. The question is... can Rocksteady pull another bat from the hat? We went to E3 to find out.

HI, I'M BAT... UMM, PERSON

To recap (from July NAG), Batman is now outside and completely free to explore Arkham City. It's an enclosed part of Gotham City filled with thugs, murderers and the criminally insane – a wretched hive of scum and villainy really. It's like the advanced course of a superhero spinning class. Batman can swoop and glide around the city using his cape and occasionally a grappling hook for more height and to get into and out of trouble. His melee attacks flatter the player because Batman can really handle a crowd of bad guys. He's all over the place, delivering meaty blows with all the grace and poise of a ninja-ballerina. The Riddler leaves puzzles around the city while the Penguin and Harvey Dent try and outdo each other's evilness. This we know, and based on what was played at E3 it's looking and 'feeling' better each time we see fresh code.

What was new and exciting just for E3 was the loosely guarded secret that Catwoman is now in the game. Not a bolted-on gimmick or useless AI controlled sidekick, but a fully fleshed-out playable character complete with her own intertwined storyline and unique style of getting things done. For those of you still reeling from that other *Catwoman* effort from Electronic Arts fear not – this is nothing like that. Catwoman in *Arkham City* is more about stealth and speed over brute force and power. She can move around the game world much like Batman but will use her whip and claws to slink up, over and around buildings. She also possesses a six sense that can detect enemies through cover and highlight items of interest to steal. In the E3 presentation she used this talent to steal a vault control key card. The card was stolen after spending time crawling upside-down and stealthily avoiding the thugs guarding the vault – very tense stuff with one wrong move ending the mission. When Catwoman does get into a combat situation she's all over the place, landing blows with lightning speed and then disappearing into the night. The style of combat is less about thudding impacts and taking blows and more about avoiding damage and striking from the shadows. This competent inclusion of Catwoman into the game is solidifying Rocksteady's growing reputation of perfecting the Batman experience. If the final game has all they're promising, then *Batman: Arkham City* is going to steal all the awards away this year – just like last time. **NAG**

RedTide



ENLIST FOR GREAT PRE-ORDER SAVINGS!



BODYCOUNT

PS3 R424⁹⁹ *save R75*

Xbox360 R424⁹⁹ *save R75*

COMING 2 SEP 2011



ACE COMBAT ASSAULT HORIZON

PS3 R524⁹⁹ *save R75*

Xbox360 R524⁹⁹ *save R75*

COMING 14 OCT 2011



BATTLEFIELD 3

PC R349⁹⁹ *save R50*

PS3 R524⁹⁹ *save R75*

Xbox360 R524⁹⁹ *save R75*

COMING 28 OCT 2011



CALL OF DUTY MW3

PC R424⁹⁹ *save R75*

PS3 R624⁹⁹ *save R75*

Xbox360 R624⁹⁹ *save R75*

COMING 8 NOV 2011



THESE, AND MANY MORE AMAZING PRE-ORDER TITLES, AVAILABLE IN STORE OR
ONLINE AT WWW.LOOKANDLISTEN.CO.ZA

(Pre-order terms & conditions can be viewed at www.lookandlisten.co.za/terms/)

Look & Listen is NAG's preferred Gaming Retailer

DVD • CD • GAMES • DIGITAL • ACCESSORIES

Look & Listen
For the Fans

Shop online at www.lookandlisten.co.za or visit our stores nationwide. Contact us on 011 467 3717.

While stocks last. Errors and omissions excepted. Availability and prices subject to change at the discretion of the supplier.
Not all items are available in all stores - please call your local store to enquire on availability.



I know what you're thinking, "does the carpet match the drapes?"



Hitman: Absolution

Attention: Barcode scanner needed on aisle 47



[details]

Release Date:
2012
Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
Genre:
Action stealth
Developer:
IO Interactive
Website:
www.ioi.dk
Publisher:
Square Enix

[trivia]

// "In the United States, within 100 years, four presidents, Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, William McKinley, and John F. Kennedy, died at the hands of assassins. There have been at least 20 known attempts on U.S. presidents' lives."
- www.wikipedia.com

It's been five years since the last *Hitman* game. They even made a movie starring the bald barcoded killer, Agent 47. What has developer IO Interactive been up to since then? Unfortunately for them, the *Kane & Lynch* series is their current claim to fame – oh dear. Wait, wait... Before you turn the page in disgust, give them a chance; see how they plan on redeeming themselves by waking up this hibernating franchise.

Agent 47 is a fugitive, and the E3 demo began with him on the run from what looked like *all* the police in rainy Chicago. Oh, before we go on, the game is being delivered on a shiny new graphics platform called Glacier 2. It does look the part with all the right beams of light being flashed realistically through suitably dusty rooms. It's important to remember that this is the first time we're seeing Agent 47 on current generation hardware. The developers are quick to mention that the game also features some nifty dynamic AI too; enemies will react to noise or become confused and take appropriate action when players sabotage the environment, shorting out the lights for example. It's hard to say how the overall game will look, feel and play based on what was shown at E3 but it does feature a few nifty graphical tricks designed to enhance the play dynamic options. New features, for this series at least, such as translucent walls and other cover showing the highlighted outlines of targets and then their proposed path of travel. Agent 47 can use this information to avoid enemy



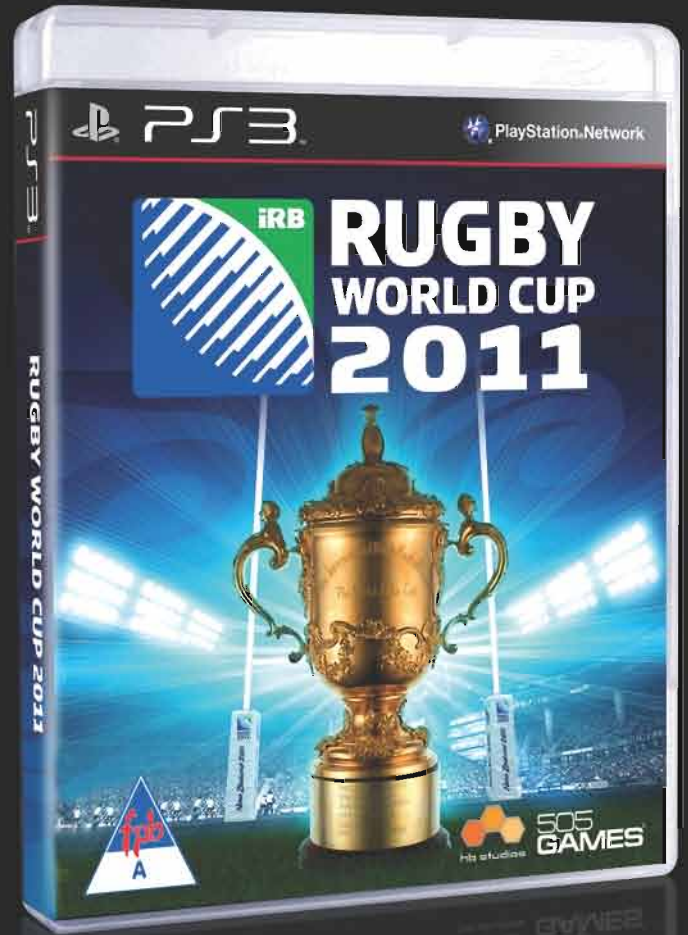
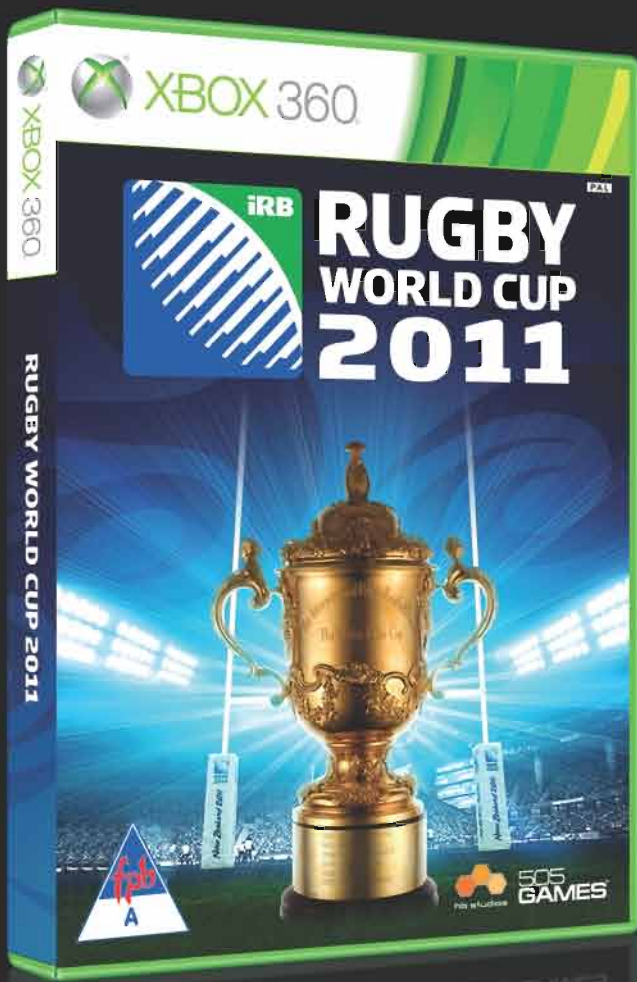
encounters when he is outnumbered or if the mission demands a stealthy approach. All of this is confirming the developer's promise of freedom of movement and choice, a claim that players can complete the game's missions how and when they want – guns blazing or creeping around in the shadows.

But now back to rainy Chicago. With random flashes of lightning and the drumming of rain, Agent 47 hides out in an abandoned library. The reception area soon fills up with cops and they quickly organise a search and capture or kill manhunt. The developer controlling the action gave running commentary on how he would get out the building without being seen. He did this with a lot of sneaking around, once using a power cord to strangle a cop, another he pushed into a deep hole in the floorboards. This new Agent 47 is a nimble minx too, able to climb, dangle and get around the game world with ease. At some point he was

spotted and took the only viable course of action at the time – use a fresh-faced recruit as a human shield. Inevitably bullets started flying and Agent 47 was on the run again with half the police department hot on his heels. Once the guns came out it was all a blur, Agent 47 escaped outside and up a fire escape. A police helicopter started tracking him, firing through and destroying any soft cover each time a bald head appeared in the night. After escaping the chopper, Agent 47 took down another cop and changing into his clothes for a bold exit out the main, cop saturated, entrance. But not before coming across a few dope smoking scum bags that scattered, thinking Agent 47 was a real cop. So the game has a sense of humour too. The whole experience was tense and exciting and it looks like IO Interactive might just have the right mojo on tap to make *Hitman: Absolution* a hit and restore our faith in them. **NAG**

RedTide

This is the official game of Rugby World Cup 2011.



“The fast gameplay and fluid animation made it feel like the Rugby equivalent of FIFA.”

Gamespot UK

OUT 26TH AUGUST 2011

www.rwc2011game.com

www.facebook.com/RWC2011game



Distributed Exclusively by Apex Interactive Tel: (011) 796 5040
www.apexint.co.za Email: sales@apexint.co.za

All rights and trademarks and logos are copyright of their respective owners.

TM © Rugby World Cup Limited 1986 - 2011. All rights reserved. Published by 505 Games. Developed by HB Studios 2011 ©. All Rights Reserved.
KINECT, Xbox, Xbox 360, Xbox LIVE, and the Xbox logos are trademarks of the Microsoft group of companies and are used under license from Microsoft.
“fcb”, “PlayStation”, “PS3”, “PS3” and “” are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.
RWC 2011 Official Licensed Product.

www.apexactive.co.za



BioShock Infinite

The sky is the limit



[details]

Release Date:
2012
Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
Genre:
First-person shooter
Developer:
Irrational Games
Website:
www.bioshockinfinite.com
Publisher:
2K Games

[trivia]

// There really is a medicine called Snake Oil. It's made from the Chinese Water Snake and can apparently relieve joint pain. We didn't research how they actually get the oil out of the snake – probably some squeezing and pulping device.

Ken Levine has some new ideas about the evolution of *BioShock* and they have nothing to do with a broken undersea utopia – instead, he's looking up to the floating city of Columbia. In the original *BioShock* players explored and battled through the wreckage of a dream torn apart by a terrible conflict. In *BioShock Infinite* they'll witness the coming apart of the game world first hand as fighting escalates between the two opposing factions in the game. Going skyward is a bold statement from Irrational Games, who have come under pressure after *BioShock 2*, a highly anticipated sequel that just delivered more of the same and didn't really innovate like the original did.

We saw a brief demonstration at E3 beginning with lead character, Booker DeWitt and Elizabeth, a mysterious NPC he's just rescued from her prison tower. The action picked up with the pair looking for loot in an abandoned shop. They chat idly back and forth bringing the player up to speed on their relationship and giving a little insight into their personalities. Elizabeth has been locked away in a tower from a young age and possesses strange powers that she doesn't completely understand and cannot control properly. To complicate matters she is being pursued by the Songbird, a huge mechanical avian creature that wants to take her back to the tower. Faced with the possibility of being caught, Elizabeth begs us to rather kill her than let the Songbird capture her. *BioShock Infinite* is employing an underused and often misused rare nugget in video games – a compelling story with complex and interesting characters. Imagine that.

BOOM STICK

During the demonstration, DeWitt fired a pistol, a machine gun and lobbed a



“Facing with the possibility of being caught, Elizabeth begs us to rather kill her than let the Songbird capture her.”

few grenades around using a crank-driven launcher. So it has enough guns – tick. He also picked up bottled tonics with intriguing labels that read 'Bucking Bronco' and 'Murder of Crows' for example. The latter allowed the player to spawn a murder of bloodthirsty crows that attacked and distracted nearby enemies and the Bucking Bronco temporarily launched hiding enemies into the air. The third 'weapon' is Elizabeth herself. She opens 'tears' in the game world that can help in specific situations, during the demonstration she summoned a whole train coach that provided cover from the bullets (the two other options were more weapons and an escape route). Many tear options exist while you play but you're only allowed to use one at a time; Elizabeth needs to 'recharge' this ability. Finally, Booker has a sky hook, a device that attaches to the spaghetti network of rails connecting most locations in Columbia, allowing for quick 'rollercoaster' access

anywhere. The session ended with the Songbird capturing Elizabeth; she actually gave herself up in exchange for your life and is taken away, tears streaming from her eyes.

One of the many reasons why this game received our coveted game of the show award for E3 is because you don't have to babysit Elizabeth – she's essentially a self-sufficient weapons upgrade. It also features a 'rollercoaster' system for getting around the game world; you'll also fight enemies while riding this elaborate and fun transportation system. The game is lovely to look at – there's an insane amount of detail in the most inane places, you care about the characters and above all it's a straight up action shooter at its core. You'll battle to find anything but gushing praise for this next step in the *BioShock* franchise. Basically, just go and pre-order it now – you won't be disappointed. **NAG**

RedTide

NXT GEN GAMING

AT MUSICA



Released 26 AUG

**DEUS EX:
HUMAN REVOLUTION**
599⁹⁵

Also on XBOX 360 & PC

As Adam Jensen, a mechanically augmented ex-SWAT specialist, you travel the world to find the people responsible for a gruesome attack on a biotechnology firm and uncover a shocking conspiracy in the process.



Released 22 JUL

**CALL OF JUAREZ
THE CARTEL**
599⁹⁵

Also on XBOX 360



Released 9 SEPT

**WARHAMMER 40,000:
SPACE MARINE**
599⁹⁵

Also on XBOX 360

Space Marine is a fast-paced action-shooter. Players defend the emperor in a battle for the survival of humanity and defend an Imperial Forge from invasion by the savage, brutal Orks.

PRE-ORDER ANY NEW RELEASE IN-STORE AND GET 10% OFF



Artwork Not Final

Released 30 SEPT

FIFA 12
599⁹⁵

Also on XBOX 360, PC, PS2 & PSP

FIFA 12 flips the virtual pitch on its head with a host of revolutionary gameplay innovations for their most engaging and realistic game to date. It's time to tackle, attack and defend like never before!

Global warfare is raging and the battle will begin on November 8 when the cultural phenomenon **Modern Warfare®** returns with the worldwide release of **Call of Duty®: Modern Warfare® 3**.



Released 8 NOV

**CALL OF DUTY
Modern Warfare 3**
699⁹⁵

Also on PS3, PC & Wii



Released 7 SEPT

RESISTANCE 3
599⁹⁵



Released 2 SEPT

**DRIVER
SAN FRANCISCO**
599⁹⁵

Also on XBOX360 & PC



Released 7 OCT

RAGE
599⁹⁵

Also on XBOX360



Released 20 SEPT

GEARS OF WAR 3
699⁹⁵



Released 28 OCT

**BATTLEFIELD 3
LIMITED EDITION**
599⁹⁵

Also on PS3 & XBOX360

VER:2.0



Give the gift of choice. Give a Musica Gift Card.

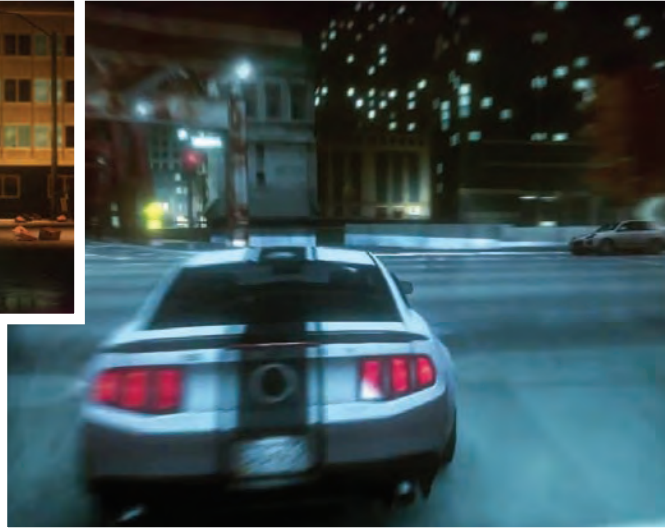
NEED HELP? CONTACT OUR FRIENDLY CALL CENTRE ON 0860 MUSICA (687 422)
ASK FOR TERMS & CONDITIONS FOR PRE-ORDER IN-STORE'S.
MONDAYS - FRIDAYS 08:00 - 17:30, SATURDAYS 08:00 - 13:00

ALL PRICES ARE INCLUSIVE OF TAX AND CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS.
ERRORS AND OMISSIONS EXCLUDED WHILE STOCKS LAST. AVAILABLE AT SELECTED STORES.
NO CLUBCARD POINTS EARNED ON GIFT CARD PURCHASES.

LIKE US ON www.facebook.com/musicasouthafrica



MUSICA
A WORLD AWAITS



FROSTBITE 2

The Frostbite Engine, known for providing exceptional audio fidelity and destructible terrain, started in 2008 with Version 1 in *Battlefield: Bad Company*. Version 1.5 powered *Battlefield 1943*, *Battlefield: Bad Company 2*, and the multiplayer part of *Medal of Honor*. *Battlefield 3* will be the debut of Frostbite 2.0, which for the first time takes full advantage of DirectX 11 and 64-bit processors to support its enhanced environmental destruction and higher-fidelity visuals. It will have no support for DirectX 9, which means no more (official) support for Windows XP.



Wiggle that stick to escape!



Need for Speed: The Run

American "quick time event" car racing adventures



[details]

Release Date:
November 2011
Platforms:
360 / 3DS / PC / PS3 / Wii
Genre:
Racing
Developer:
EA Black Box
Publisher:
Electronic Arts

[trivia]

// The *Need for Speed* franchise is now 17 years old, 18 games deep and has had 7 developers.

// Apparently the overwhelming desire for speed remains insatiable, because they keep making games about such needs.

For the first time in *Need for Speed* you can get out of the car. But it happens automatically. You're just illicit street racing along when suddenly *Omnipotent God of Scripted Events* T-bones you with a Fiat. Playing as a 30-something brown-haired Caucasian man called Jack, you bail from the car, flee up some stairs and start doing awesome running jumps across rooftops. Keep pressing the correct quick-time buttons to make the cut-scene continue.

Jack does some crazy footwork across scaffolding before landing behind a dumpster to hide from some cops that just pulled up. Another QTE later and you're in the cop car dodging helicopter machine-gun fire, cutting into a train-yard. The bits where you actually drive are tight and arcade-like, feeling more like *Underground* than *Hot Pursuit*. Suddenly *Omnipotent God of Scripted Events* yanks the camera from behind the car to show you a fuel tanker exploding in front of you, perfectly placed to make you careen off an embankment. Jack wakes upside-down, the car is on the train-tracks, and a train is barreling right at you. Press buttons! Press the *right* buttons! Now wiggle the stick to simulate punching the car window. It looks like Jack is just about to escape when: cut to black, demo's over.

Autolog, the super-stat-tracking



"Press buttons! Press the right buttons! Now wiggle the stick to simulate punching the car window."

system introduced in the newer *Hot Pursuit*, returns to number-fondle your entire race from San Francisco to New York. The entire thing is being powered by the Frostbite 2 engine, which is interesting considering Frostbite has up until now been used entirely for first-person shooters. No word on multiplayer, no elaboration on how much content we can expect. Is this going to be a top-heavy "Hollywood-quality" narrative that pads like crazy

around the actual driving bits, or will there be more to it? The press sheet promises "heart-pounding" racing down narrow canyons, dense urban traffic, icy mountain passes, the usual, but no word on what *type* of racing. Are you always going to be driving point-to-point, or will they mix things up with some actual laps? So while *The Run* looks good, it leaves us with more questions than answers. **NAG**

Miktar

[LOCK] YOUR PRE-ORDER

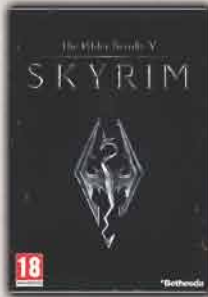
AND LOAD



Batman: Arkham City
PC
R349.95
 also available on
 Xbox 360 & PS3
 Coming 21 Oct 2011



Battlefield 3
PC
R399.95
 also available on
 Xbox 360 & PS3
 Coming 28 Oct 2011



Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim
PC
R349.95
 also available on
 Xbox 360 & PS3
 Coming 11 Nov 2011



FIFA 12
PS2
R299.95
 also available on
 Xbox 360, PS3, PC,
 3DS, Wii & PSP
 Coming 30 Sept 2011



X-Men: Destiny
PS3
R459.95
 also available on
 Xbox 360, PC, Wii
 & DS
 Coming 30 Sept 2011



Dark Souls
PS3
R529.95
 also available on
 Xbox 360
 Coming 07 Oct 2011



Call of Duty: MW 3
PS3
R649.95
 also available on
 Xbox 360 & PC
 Coming 08 Nov 2011



Uncharted 3
PS3
R529.95
PS3 exclusive
 Coming 11 Nov 2011



Gears of War 3
XBOX 360
R529.95
Xbox 360 exclusive
 Coming 20 Sept 2011



Dead Island
XBOX 360
R529.95
 also available on
PS3 & PC
 Coming 30 Sept 2011

[FREE]
DELIVERY*

See us at **rAge**
 expo
COMPUTERS | GAMING | TECHNOLOGY

* On orders over R250
 See site for terms and conditions.

Prices, artwork and release dates subject to change.



kalahari.com



GEARS OF WARHAMMER

If anything was made after 1987 and even remotely resembles a dystopian science-fantasy universe in gothic drag, you can trace the inspiration straight back to *Warhammer 40,000*. The dark and gritty table-top miniatures wargame and role-playing universe set the tone and style for gothic science-fiction for decades to come. Games such as *Gears of War*, *StarCraft* and *Warcraft* all draw inspiration from the ancillary material created for the *Warhammer* universes, often to the point of what would arguably be plagiarism if one didn't believe imitation was the sincerest form of flattery.



Warhammer 40,000: Space Marine

Building a better bigger balding bad-ass



[details]

Release Date:
September 2011
Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
Genre:
Third-person shooter
Developer:
Relic Entertainment
Publisher:
THQ

[trivia]

// The Emperor that leads mankind in *40k* is essentially half-dead but still capable of calling down trans-dimensional warp-storms.

// The Orks in *40k* have a gestalt psychic field called 'Waagh!' which lets them instinctively construct a tiered power hierarchy (they always know who's in charge).

Space Marine is not *Gears of War*. It may look sort-of like it, they may share some design (See: *Gears of Warhammer*) and a control layout, and both have incredibly thick-necked men in power-armor, but the two games couldn't be more different. The lack of a cover-system (and chest-high walls) aside, *Space Marine* is about forward battle momentum. If you want to survive you're going to have to put yourself in increasingly mortal danger, not hide behind some rubble like a giant wussy.

As a 2.4m tall armoured juggernaut, you don't *need* a cover system. You have genetically enhanced regenerative properties (your health regenerates), and your Iron Halo power-shield saves you from instant death (and it regenerates). As you melee into crowds of Orks your fury bar gradually fills, giving you access to bullet-time for careful aiming or a super-charged room-clearing melee strike. All this was pretty obvious from the get-go when we ascended into the dropship booth at THQ's E3 stand to get some hands-on time with the game, but we still died quite a lot.

Visually, the style Relic has gone for works. Their custom-made Phoenix Engine mimes Unreal Engine efficiently: everything is appropriately chunky, shiny and/or meaty with plenty of splatter-gunk to go around once bodies start bisecting. The melee combat system isn't that deep (no branching move sets), and shooting things is pretty standard fare (hold left trigger to aim, right trigger to fire). The nuance comes in with the quickest way to heal being getting



"As a 2.4m tall armoured juggernaut, you don't need a cover system."

into battle, not out. By ramming into enemies with your shoulder charge and sync-killing them, you get a dramatic slow-down camera view of one of many gruesome kill-moves. More importantly, you get a large chunk of health back. Combat is fast and fluid. Lobbing grenades into a pack of Orks to soften them up, picking off ranged units quickly

before running into the brawl to try and get some health, all pieces together well. If you're good, you can remain near-invincible. If not, the abruptness with which death can come is surprising. Relic have confirmed co-op and multiplayer, but like the RPG side of things, details are sketchy. **NAG**

Miktar



Ster Kinekor Entertainment are giving away
 3 x collector's editions of Space Marine 1 PS3 / 1 PC / 1 360
 To enter SMS the keyword **Chainsword** to 32541

Out 9th September 2011



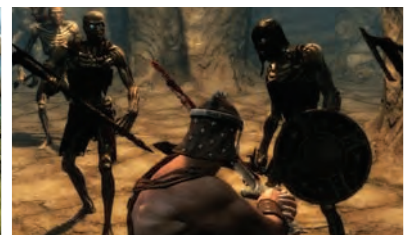
The images, pictures, and illustrations shown are for illustrative purposes only, and do not necessarily represent the final contents of the Collector's Edition. Such content may be subject to change at THQ's discretion.

SMSes charged at R1 each • Free SMS bundles do not apply
 Competition closes 31 August 2011 • Winners will be notified by SMS

prize sponsored by
SK STERKINEKOR
 ENTERTAINMENT



"People actually have more than two expressions, and the crash-zoom into the face during dialogue is gone."



The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim

Dragons dragons dragons dragons dragons dragons dire-badger...



[details]

Release Date:
November 2011
Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
Genre:
Action role-playing game
Developer:
Bethesda Game Studios
Publisher:
Bethesda Softworks

[trivia]

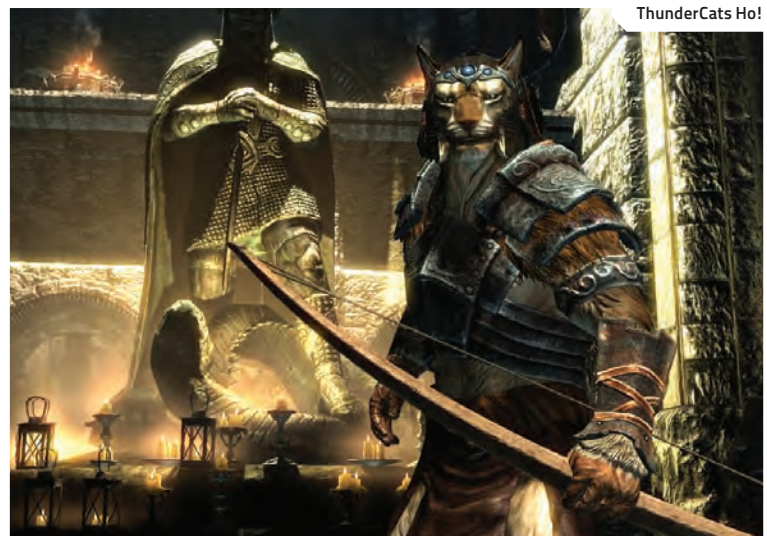
// When you go to assign skill points, your character literally looks to the heavens to put points into skill constellations.

// Punching wolves still looks weird, even with the improved combat system.

E3 did not bring any big revelations about *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*. Information about what could safely be called the biggest RPG of 2011 has been slow and steady since *Skyrim*'s official reveal. What can be said with surety: this game will destroy your life.

It's natural that even the best technology will be stretched thin in a game with the scope of an *Elder Scrolls*, but on the whole, *Skyrim* has become quite a good-looking spectacle considering the granularity of its world. The latest visual reveals show a world that lives up to *Oblivion*'s promise of dynamic rolling hills, dense forests and massive cities. Our demonstration at E3 only showed a small town in the foothills of some frosty mountains, but it looked pretty nonetheless. The technology scales well to consoles too; it's not just the PC version that massively benefits from the new internally developed "Creation Engine". The infamous Bethesda zombo-characters have gotten a merciful overhaul. People actually have more than two expressions, and the crash-zoom into the face during dialogue is gone. The greatly improved Radiant AI directs NPCs to have daily lives: they farm, they mine, and they gad about. *Skyrim* in a nutshell: everything from *Oblivion* is here, but massively refined, reworked or expanded upon.

There's more to cover than is possible in a single page. Dragons may sometimes support one another in battle. Herds of woolly mammoths roam and defend the group if you're a poor



ThunderCats Ho!

hunter. One can, if one dares, literally pick the noses and toes of giants' corpses for loot. Get rich off nose gold! The 3rd person camera mode is less of a hack now, benefiting from the improved (read: modern) animation system. There are more reassurances that in addition to the core dragon-busting storyline, there are 300 hours of specific content. Foxes eat rabbits. Giants are 12 feet tall. You may get to ride a dragon, in a purely platonic way.

The rest of the classic races have yet to be revealed, we eagerly await news about the Argonians. The level cap is twice that of *Oblivion*, and the dual-wield system makes for interesting

experimentation with regards to combining spell/weapon effects. More importantly, we hope the polishing stage is given the time it needs. No one wants another *Fallout: New Vegas* situation with crippling bugs through the launch window. Bethesda has reiterated they're investigating user-based game modifications for the console versions. It seems they truly want to make this happen, in spite of how iffy it has been in the past with the closed networks of Xbox LIVE and PSN. However, if you are hedging your bets, Bethesda warns that modification support definitely won't be on the consoles at launch.

NAG
Miktar

rage expo

COMPUTERS | GAMING | TECHNOLOGY

30 Sep - 2 Oct 2011

www.rageexpo.co.za

Video gaming
for  everyone.

Brought to you by

SAMSUNG



"No problem, but that's going to cost you extra."



Prey 2

A new game, a new lead character and a totally new direction.



[details]

Release Date:
March 2012
Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
Genre:
First-person shooter
Developer:
Human Head Studios
Publisher:
Bethesda Softworks

[trivia]

// Human Heads has confirmed that you do run into Tommy in *Prey 2*, which kicks off the main plot.

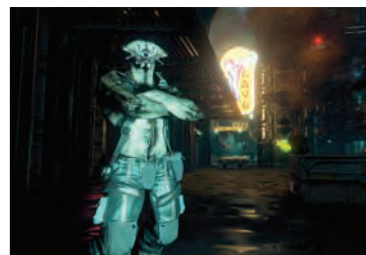
// *Prey 2* will use a traditional checkpoint system, and not a native-American dream-scape soul grease-trap.

If you've seen the recent CG trailer for *Prey 2*, you actually have a good idea of what the game currently looks and plays like. Obviously the in-game graphics don't match the visuals in the trailer, but the mood, gameplay and overall idea are surprisingly spot-on.

We checked out a live demo of the game being presented in a back corner of the Bethesda booth at E3. *Prey 2* starts around the same time as the first game, but follows a different lead character. If you played the original, you'll recall the scene where a passenger airplane crashes into the Sphere that portal-jumping native-American Domasi "Tommy" Tawodi is fighting through. Aboard that flight was U.S. Marshal Killian Samuels, who starts his game aboard that plane as it's about to crash. After the plane goes down, Samuels tries to fight off some aliens using his sidearm but fails, getting knocked unconscious. The plot moves forward several years, and now Samuels (who has lost his memory) is an alien bounty hunter on the planet Exodus.

Looking like a proper homage to the neon-edged cityscapes of *Blade Runner*, Exodus is covered with a sprawling megacity. You can run pretty much anywhere in the open-world city, leaping from ledges, edge-grappling and climbing up walls, the full parkour minus wall-running. No matter what you're doing though, be it sliding under a railing or hanging from a ledge, you can always aim and fire your gun, making for some compelling run-and-gunplay.

By talking to random NPCs in bars or wandering outside, or by scanning a crowd with your high-tech glasses, you uncover bounties to capture or kill. Bracketed by colour-coded lines, the crowd-scanning gives you a clear view of who to avoid, who to shoot and what to chase. If your prey knows you're on to



"Bracketed by colour-coded lines, the crowd-scanning gives you a clear view of who to avoid, who to shoot and what to chase."

him, they'll bolt and try to lose you in the city's complex vertical structures.

You've got some sweet tech and weaponry at your disposal. You can track DNA trails, grab enemies to use as meat shields, and fire multi-lock micro-missiles from your shoulders. Bounties have their own tech, the one shown in our demo teleports short distances, making tracking quite tricky. After catching the bounty inside a kind of force-field bubble, you're presented

with the option to teleport them in and collect your cash, or interrogate them. The alien pleads for his life and offers to pay you more than the bounty offered, but if you accept you'll lose reputation with the people who put out the bounty. It's unclear how deep the open-world reputation rabbit hole goes, and how much the narrative will tie into the first game, but it already looks pretty good on its own merits. **NAG**

Miktar



Lightning Fast Internet with Connect Surf.

Did you know that qualifying cheque customers get up to 2GB ADSL data for FREE EVERY MONTH, as well as pay as you use 3G data from as little as 30 cents per MB?

Get your unshaped ADSL data bundles from only R12.38/GB.

1GB FREE unshaped ADSL data when you register.

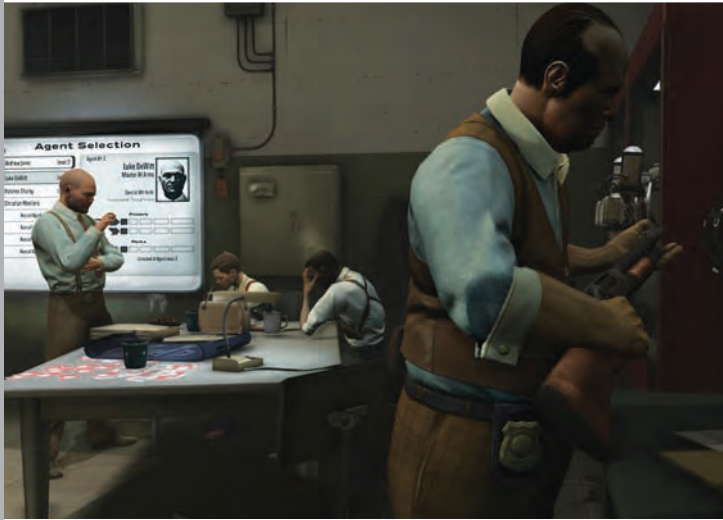
Manage your spend and never run out of data with auto top-up.



FNB
First National Bank

Register for free today at www.fnbconnect.co.za.
Terms and conditions apply.

how can we help you?



XCOM

Bold new direction, or epic betrayal?



[details]

Release Date:
March 2012
 Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
 Genre:
First-person shooter
 Developer:
2K Marin
 Publisher:
2K Games

[trivia]

// The original *UFO: Enemy Unknown* (1994) had 11 fictional alien races.

// *UFO: Enemy Unknown* was later released under the title *X-COM: UFO Defense* in the United States.

Because of my history with the series, I needed a fresh opinion on the new *XCOM*. So I asked my roommate (who's an alien):

M: Say, you never played the original *X-Com* games, right? Check this trailer out.

A: I'd never even heard of it. Hey, it's the '50s! Another FPS. *BioShock: Men in Black?* Seems a shotgun solves all problems.

M: It does the *BioShock*-style systemic level thing when you deploy to an area: events evolve out of the aliens present, the kind of research you've done, etc. At E3 I saw the actual tactical side of things finally: basic movement orders and an ability wheel for selecting powers you and your two teammates have, like distract and flank.

A: The problem with *BioShock* is that it was really pretty linear and repetitive. A more dynamic scenario doesn't sound bad.

M: Selecting one mission may cause another mission to time out, so it does channel some of the original series. The hardcore fans of the original are up in arms about it being a FPS. Funny really, since 12 years ago when *X-Com: Alliance* was announced (then cancelled) the idea of it going FPS was exciting.

A: There are so many first-person shooters these days; I can see how this would make a bad first impression.



M: If it were third-person and looked a little more like *Mass Effect*, would it have had the same knee-jerk reaction? You still recruit your teammates in-between missions, level them up and customize their abilities and perks.

A: It sounds like a typical experience in a lot of ways, bits taken from all the reference titles of the last few years. It's going to be up to the story to keep it tied together.

M: I hope you'll take the fight to the alien homeland, a common trope in the originals. You can take photos of aliens or people they've killed, but you don't get much research benefit from it compared to incapacitating and capturing them.

A: There's *Monster Hunter* and *Dead Rising*! Hi guys! Based on the videos you've shown me, it does look

reasonably interesting. The 1950s theme isn't overdone yet, neither is the *Men in Black* idea. Kind of odd considering how obvious it is.

M: They've talked a bit about how the missions vary: sometimes you'll be there just to investigate, other times you have to go rescue someone like a scientist.

A: I think it'd go a long way towards freshening the experience if they can make an interesting mission out of pure investigation.

M: Think you'll play it?

A: It's likely that I'd check it out based on what I've seen. It's another FPS, yawn, but the concept is inherently interesting. **NAG**

Miktar



Tablet Water Resistant Cover

Ideal For:
Bath
Jacuzzi
Sauna
On the Beach

R499



Stylus Capacitive Touch
Precise/smooth Writing
(Excludes Tablet PC)

R99



Ultimate Gaming Control

Capacitive Touch
Excludes IPAD

R199



Gaming Joy Stick

iPAD/Galaxy Capacitive Touch
Excludes Tab PC

R149



Keyboard Leather Case

Galaxy/HTC Flyer and iTAB
Excludes Tab PC

From **R799**



Mini Pad 8"

Capacitive Touch
Android 2.3
1.2ghz
Wi-Fi
3G via USB
HDMI Out

R2999



iPAD Charger

2in1
Docking/Charging
Excludes iPAD

Vertical/Horizontal

R499



Keyboard iPAD

Excludes iPAD
Bluetooth

R599



We will be at

rAge
expo
COMPUTERS | GAMING | TECHNOLOGY

The reviewers

Question: What is the craziest, most insane/ embarrassing thing you've done out of anger while playing a game? Hit it. Get it?

R.A.V.E.N.



[Sorry, too long, Ed]

RedTide



I hit my Microsoft keyboard with my fist causing both little legs to snap off. I'm now forced to glue small doorstops underneath so it sits up at the right angle. It was embarrassing.

Miktar



Stood up, punched the CRT monitor so hard it flew off the back to the table, stormed out, slamming the door so hard it fell off its hinges.

Azimuth



I wish I could say I'd chucked a TV out of a tenth-storey window or gone out on a suburban sniper spree or hurled bags of anthrax as small children, but I haven't. I think I might've shouted a rude word this one time.

Mikit0707



When I was about ten, and while playing *Dune II*, I smashed up a giant LEGO castle in a fit of rage. I think I was banned from the computer for a week. I'm not proud.

Geometrix



This is all just a cover-up to make Michael seem like less of a psychopath among his staff full of pacifists.

Barkskin



I once hurled an ill-fated baby out a car window during a furiously heated mobile gaming session. This is not a true story – I hardly ever play mobile games.

Ramjet



Reinstalled my entire PC to make sure all traces of the game would be gone, forever...

SAVAGE



Smashed my keyboard and insulted a dude's mom.

ShockG



Neo doesn't get angry with software – only hardware.

Anatomy of a review

A quick guide to the NAG reviews section

/1/ Totally interesting stuff: Developer, publisher, platform, random junk and more. The number of players listed under multiplayer is the maximum number you can have in a game at one time. Local means "couch", not LAN.

/2/ Obligatory words (i.e. a review): This is the stuff you probably won't read before ogling the shiny pictures, glancing at the score and then flipping the page. We don't blame you – word-reading is hard.

/3/ Screenshots: These are the pretty pictures you'll probably stare at before peeking at the score, ignoring the wonderful review and then flipping the page. You should probably ask your mom to make your sandwiches too. Just to be on the safe side. You might cut yourself.

/4/ Captions: Funny. Informative. Touching. The captions are usually none of these things. Except maybe touching, when we put some innuendo in there.

[Link to Review](#)

Marvel vs. Capcom 3: Fate of Two Worlds 5

An amazing dog saves the universe. Woof

1 [details] [edit]

Platform: PS3, Xbox 360, PC

Genre: Fighting

Multiplayer: 2-6

Developer: Capcom

Publisher: Capcom

Release Date: 2007

ESRB Rating: M

Website: www.marvelvscapcom.com

2 [details] [edit]

Despite their perceived difficulty in solo play, the game is a blast to play with friends. The character roster is huge, and the variety of moves and combos is staggering. The game is a true test of skill, and the replay value is high. The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are top-notch. The game is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre.

3 [details] [edit]

Collecting much like previous games, it's not only a fun way to spend time, but it's also a great way to spend money. The game is a true test of skill, and the replay value is high. The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are top-notch. The game is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre.

4 [details] [edit]

Marvel vs. Capcom 3 is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre. The game is a true test of skill, and the replay value is high. The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are top-notch. The game is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre.

5 [details] [edit]

Marvel vs. Capcom 3 is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre. The game is a true test of skill, and the replay value is high. The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are top-notch. The game is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre.

6 [details] [edit]

Marvel vs. Capcom 3 is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre. The game is a true test of skill, and the replay value is high. The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are top-notch. The game is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre.

7 [details] [edit]

Marvel vs. Capcom 3 is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre. The game is a true test of skill, and the replay value is high. The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are top-notch. The game is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre.

8 [details] [edit]

Marvel vs. Capcom 3 is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre. The game is a true test of skill, and the replay value is high. The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are top-notch. The game is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre.

9 [details] [edit]

Marvel vs. Capcom 3 is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre. The game is a true test of skill, and the replay value is high. The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are top-notch. The game is a true masterpiece of the fighting genre.

/5/ Game name: The most reading you'll do will likely happen in this bit right here.

/6/ Award: Comes in three delicious flavours. See below for maximum info.

/7/ Those things with extra info: These things have extra info.

THE AWARDS

Editor's Choice: If a game gets this award, you know it's more than just good. It means it pulled the editor away from *Call of Duty* for long enough to actually play another game – and we can't think of anything more remarkable than that.

Must Play: It means exactly what it says: you must play this game. Beg your parents for cash, dole out sexual favours, etc. – fight past the pain and do whatever it takes to get your sweaty paws on it. You'll thank us for it later.

Pony: You know how everyone wants a pony? Yeah, that's not the case here and we're not just being mean. We're trying to protect you from the horror of being punched in the nether regions by thoroughly rubbish games.



THE SCORE BOX

/1/ Plus: These are the great things that make us happy.

/2/ Minus: These are the rubbish things that make us sad.

/3/ Bottom line: The waffle stops here. Hundreds of words distilled into a tiny bit of text that can either damn a game to the depths or shower it with praise.

/4/ The Score: It's a number out of 100. It lets you make an informed decision as to whether or not you should spend money on this game. This isn't rocket science, people.

1 / PLUS / Very detailed / Enthralling setting / Amazing graphics

2 / MINUS / Not enough detail / Boring setting / Rubbish graphics

3

4

69

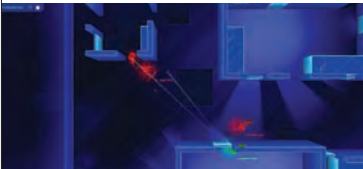
BOTTOM LINE GOES HERE; KEEP IT UNDER 15 WORDS, 15 WOULD BE IDEAL. THANKS.

QUICK HITS

Frozen Synapse

Frozen Synapse is great fun. Imagine something like *Jagged Alliance*'s epic turn-based battles distilled into brief, brutal bouts that reach their conclusion in a matter of minutes (if not even quicker), and you've got the basic idea behind *Frozen Synapse*.

You and an opponent are handed a handful of faceless, nameless troops and dropped into a small, randomly generated arena. You then direct your troops in several short rounds of turn-based combat, directing their every move, telling them when to crouch, where to focus their aim and which enemies to focus on. You know exactly where the enemy is – but you can never know what they're planning for the next turn. You hope and pray that your carefully laid plans lead to maximum damage while minimising your own casualties. Then you ready up, and watch the carnage unfold. Unlike other turn-based titles, matches are over incredibly quickly, brought to close when either side is eliminated. It's best played multiplayer, but the single-player campaign and skirmishes also provide plenty of enjoyment. *Frozen Synapse* is simply fantastic.



// *Frozen Synapse* provides an excellent quick fix of turn-based action.

Puzzle Agent 2

We really enjoy Telltale's titles, but for all their humour and classic gameplay, a few of them tend to feel a little repetitive. *Puzzle Agent* is something a bit different to what they usually do and, while it's still very-much an adventure game, with clicking on things and talking to people as key gameplay elements, instead of messing around with inventory items to solve puzzles, you'll actually just solve puzzles – lots and lots of puzzles.

Playing again as Agent Nelson Tethers of the fictitious FBI Puzzle Research Division, you'll return to the sleepy town of Snoggins that is filled with intrigue, conspiracy and people with a strange addiction to puzzles. The puzzles range in difficulty from easy to moderately thought-provoking, so those less puzzle-inclined won't be too strained, and there's a hint system in place to help you along for the tougher puzzles. *Puzzle Agent 2* is entertaining but highly linear, which has the double-edged effect of lending a strong (and funny) narrative to the game while constraining the player's actions.



// Dead linear, funny and decently challenging.

WEB SCORES

How do we measure up? We scour the Net to find out what the rest of the world thinks.

NAG / Metacritic average / Game Rankings average

inFAMOUS 2



90
83
84

Alice: Madness Returns



78
70
76

Red Faction: Armageddon



75
72
75

DiRT 3



82
86
XX

Dungeon Siege III



68
73
74

MX vs. ATV Alive



40
62
65

TT

TRITON™

AX Pro

TRUE 5.1 surround headset



the unfair ADVANTAGE

One headset for all systems

Xbox 360,
Playstation 3,
PC and MAC

still the only company offering a real, genuine 5.1 console gaming headset on the market.

Multi-Function in-Line Controls with Breakaway Design

Detachable, Flexible Microphone with Mute

Using Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound

Independent Game and Voice Volume Controls

Precision 3D Directional Audio and 8 Performance-Tuned Speakers

Digital Optical Input



sales@cometcomputing.co.za |
www.cometcomputing.co.za
office : +27 (0) 11 824 3368 |
fax : +27 (0) 11 824 3339



inFAMOUS 2

Ride the lightning

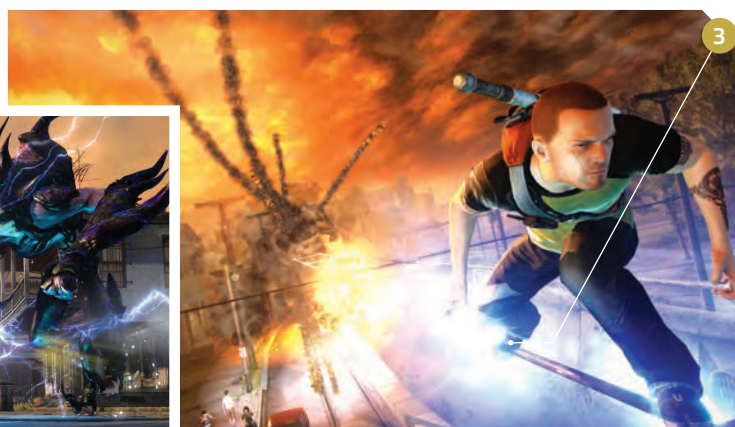
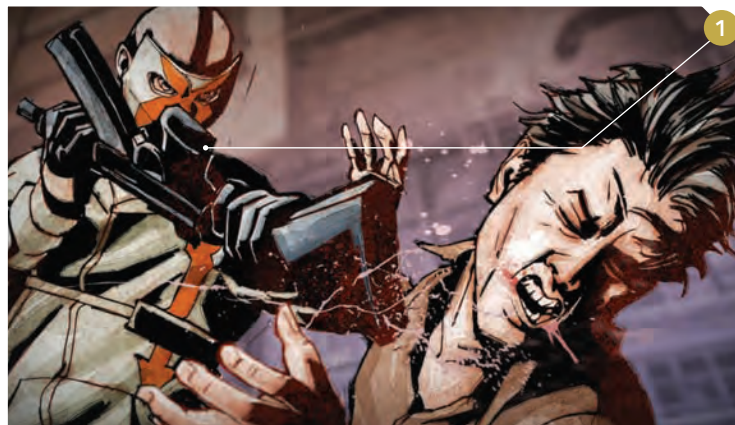
Without expectation, disappointment cannot exist. The first *inFAMOUS*, as an all-new IP, did not carry the immense weight of insurmountable expectation that sequels to good games so often buckle under. It simply stepped into the room with zero introduction and proceeded to wow everyone with its powerful charisma and impressive array of flashy party tricks. I count myself among those who felt drawn to the original *inFAMOUS*: I loved the hell out of every moment I spent learning the ins and outs of Empire City and moulding protagonist Cole MacGrath into the kind of digital superhero I wanted him to be.

Were I faced with real-world versions of Cole's in-game choices, I like to think I'd have followed the same path that I led him on. **[Spoiler]** I like to think that, were I forced to choose between the life of a loved one or that of six doctors who could go on to save countless lives, I'd choose to save the medically trained bunch. In truth, I'd have told the doctors to go f**k themselves. Don't judge me – faced with a heartbeat decision like that, you'd likely also choose the selfish option. Still, I left Cole to suffer



[details]

Platforms: PS3
Genre: Action/adventure
Age restriction: 16+
DRM: None
Multiplayer: Local: None
Online: None
Developer: Sucker Punch Productions
Website: www.infamousthegame.com
Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment
Distributor: Ster Kinekor Entertainment



/1/ Those awesome animated cinematics return at key points in the game. It's important, because comic books.

/2/ It's amazing how much of the game world can be torn apart, whether it happens accidentally or otherwise.

/3/ Another of Cole's travel powers in action. In addition to being able to parkour his way along pretty much anything in the game, he's able to hastily grind on power cables when he's late for work.

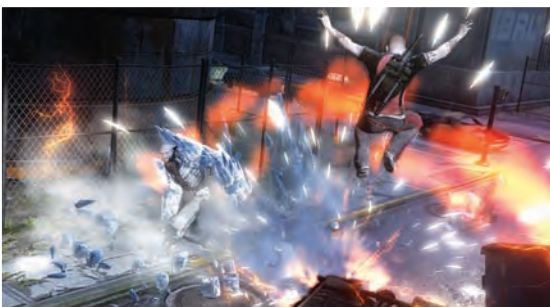
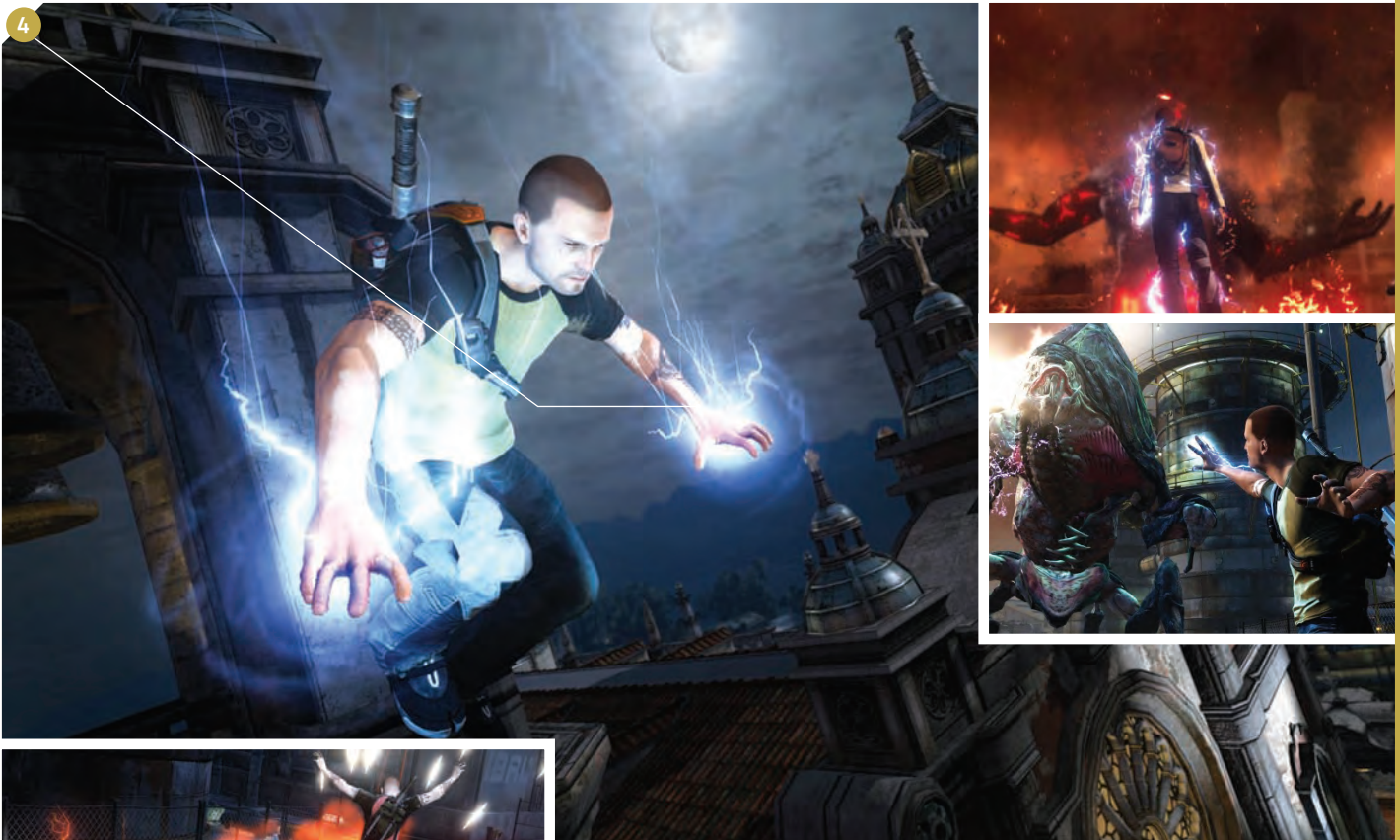
/4/ Various travel powers make getting around New Marais less of a ball ache. These are Cole's Static Thrusters. They grant him the power of float.

the loss of the woman he loved for the good of humanity, because that's what I'd want to be able to do. **[/Spoiler]** That's why we love superheroes: because they're paragons of virtue onto which we can bestow all the ideals we wish we possessed. It's also why we love certain supervillains (think Magneto): because the greatest of them aren't blatantly evil; instead they're merely humans marred by the same flaws and imperfections as those of us not gifted with immeasurable power. And that's why we loved *inFAMOUS*. The game's simple moral choices were enough to get its point across: that often the only thing separating the heroes from the villains is human nature. It's one of the few games that got the whole comic book superhero/supervillain thing right – and it did it all from scratch.

With *inFAMOUS 2* then, there's elevated expectation, and therefore, room for disappointment. I've had an awesome time with this sequel, immediately feeling completely at home with its familiar nuances. It stands not as a progression for the series, but rather

as a refinement, an improvement on almost all the things that made the first game great. It's safe to say that this game is in no way a disappointment. There's a ton of fun to be had here. It starts off with a brief stint back in Empire City, where Cole has been awaiting the arrival of The Beast – the coming of which you'll remember Kessler predicting in the original game. Your first encounter with it is brief, bringing about the realisation that Cole definitely needs to nurture his powers if he's to have any hope of stopping The Beast from wrecking humanity. So you head off to a new city to discover an entirely new playground, meet new friends, punch new things in the teeth and gain some new electrifying powers.

New Marais is a city altogether more believable than Empire City, if not quite as impressive in stature. There's a definite feeling that there are fewer things to see, and the locations available to explore in this sandbox world aren't as uniquely inviting (I seem to remember scaling a massive tower made entirely out of scrap metal in the original game)



this time around, but it's inarguably more focussed. People on the street behave more realistically, the world feels more alive and there are so many seemingly insignificant details packed into this New Orleans-inspired city that make it easy to love these uncharted environs. It provides a range of side missions and tertiary activities to pursue when not engaged in the story, each one bringing a welcome experience boost that'll let you unlock new powers (and new ways to use existing ones) and augment Cole's abilities. The game still plays like a mix of third-person shooting and brawling, affording a wealth of electricity-infused superpowers that are all wonderfully satisfying and pack tremendous punch. Ice and fire powers make their debut, with Cole gaining access to one or the other somewhere around the game's midway point. They're tied into the game's simple but effective karmic system (ice for heroes, fire for villains) and help bring some variation to the proceedings. Ice powers, for example, sometimes allow you to freeze opponents, letting you quickly turn the odds of larger battles in your favour. Melee combat is now more fluid thanks to the Amp – essentially a giant weaponised tuning fork which channels Cole's energy to boost his melee prowess, created for Cole by returning comic relief/sidekick Zeke.

The story told in the game is lengthy, deep and enthralling enough to keep you ensconced all the way through. Cole still makes for a likable protagonist and his supporting cast all make for an appealing

second outing, with interactions between characters noticeably improved by motion-capture tech. Backed up by impressive visuals (special mention has to be made of the game's outstanding lighting effects – which make Cole's powers look especially striking when night falls) and audio, it all comes together to make the entire experience well worth losing yourself in, with the exception of a few minor niggles. The three enemy gangs that plague New Marais aren't quite as colourfully or distinctively designed as those in the first game, although one of these gangs is a particularly nasty bunch of super-powered South African mercenaries – yay us! The missions suffer from similarly modest design compared to the original. I found many of the first game's missions far more memorable than those on offer here. The game becomes a bit repetitive towards the end as you realise that you've had your fill of the side missions and no longer care to intervene in the random mini-missions (like preventing muggings and defusing bombs) that New Marais frequently spits out. Thankfully, there are always the user-generated missions to alleviate this.

To be honest, I'm nitpicking for things to complain about in a game that otherwise boasts first-rate design in every aspect. It's awesome fun, packed with unforgettable characters and gratifying gameplay, all set in a world that is impeccably detailed. *inFAMOUS 2* is definitely worth buying a PS3 for.

NAG

Barkskin

/ PLUS / Solid action / Good story / Fantastic open world / Looks and sounds amazing
/ MINUS / Becomes repetitive

WHO SAYS LIGHTNING DOESN'T STRIKE THE SAME PLACE TWICE?

90

White Knight Chronicles II

Sadly, just more of the same...

Almost a year after its Japanese release, Level-5's *White Knight Chronicles II* sees its Western release, and though it offers no shortage of content, it does little to remedy the flaws that plagued its predecessor. *White Knight Chronicles II* opens with a lengthy and complicated cut scene, before tossing you into a battle sequence, leaving you to figure out the game's complex mechanics by yourself. Once you've survived this first trial by fire, it's on to the lengthy process of creating your personalised avatar. Despite the intricate customisation process, your avatar never plays any significant role in the story – the part of the protagonist is reprised by Leonard, from the original game. The fact that your painstakingly crafted custom character does little other than slink in the shadows of cut scenes immediately

[details]

Platforms: PS3
Genre: Role-playing game
Age restriction: 12
DRM: None
Multiplayer: Local: None
Online: 6 players
Developer: Level-5
Website: <http://eu.playstation.com>
Publisher: SCEE
Distributor: Ster Kinekor Entertainment

serves to detach the player from an already uninspired storyline.

The world of *White Knight Chronicles II* encompasses towns, replete with non-player characters and menial fetch quests, as well as expansive dungeons – most of which take well upwards of an hour to traverse. Travelling between any two destinations is fraught with multiple enemy encounters, leading to a frustrating grinding experience, particularly in those all-too-common instances when the game forces you to backtrack through familiar locations. The online component allows you to tackle dungeons with a party of up to six characters (up from the original's four) and any gains of items or experience made online carry over to offline play, though this doesn't prevent the online features from



Hey, isn't that the three-headed dog thing from *Harry Potter*?



feeling like they've just been tacked on for the sake of Western appeal.

As for the mechanics of the combat itself, not much has changed from the previous title. Combat is still a frustrating and sluggish affair that sees you grinding through multitudes of foes trying to accumulate sufficient Action Chips to transform into the giant Incorrupt characters that were the trademark of the first game. Although you can only directly control one character during combat (with the AI piloting your team-mates), you're able to fine tune each character's abilities to your liking, though this necessitates negotiating the game's cumbersome interface.

Visually, *White Knight Chronicles II*

is quite impressive, featuring gorgeous lighting effects, sweeping landscapes and superbly detailed characters. All this is accompanied by a passable score and reasonable voice acting, even if the scripting of the dialogue is somewhat lacking. Ultimately, *White Knight Chronicles II* is a lengthy and well-presented package, let down by its uninteresting story and monotonous combat. The inclusion of a remastered version of the original title on the game disc is a welcome addition particularly for newcomers, but *White Knight Chronicles II* remains a needlessly taxing experience that offers little reward for the hours it demands.

NAG
Madman

PLUS / Lengthy / Visually impressive / Good value package
MINUS / Dreary story / Uninspired game mechanics / Altogether frustrating
PROVING THAT QUANTITY CANNOT COMPENSATE FOR QUALITY, *WHITE KNIGHT CHRONICLES II* COMES OFF FEELING DISTINCTLY AVERAGE.

57

MX vs. ATV Alive

Should be put down

MX vs. *ATV Alive* has the stupidest career progression I've ever encountered in a game. Instead of giving players the traditional career mode with limited progression, Rainbow Studios elected to give players only a free play mode (single or multiplayer), and force them to replay the same limited selection of tracks over and over again before they're allowed access to more. Oh, unless they pay up for additional tracks, bikes and other content over and above the slightly reduced retail price of this game.

The game features 16 tracks, composed of 12 national (regular) and four short (really short) tracks, as well as two wide open free-ride locations. At the beginning of the game you only have access to two national, two short



[details]

Platforms: **360 / PS3**
 Genre: **Racing**
 Age restriction: **12+**
 DRM: **None**
 Multiplayer: **Local: 2 players**
Online: 12 players
 Developer: **Rainbow Studios**
 Website: **www.mxatv.com**
 Publisher: **THQ**
 Distributor: **Ster Kinekor**



and one free ride track, which you are forced to repeat until you've achieved the requisite 36,000 XP to unlock the next batch. A win grants you 1,050 XP, and bonuses are given for extra difficulty or for completing optional race goals. Taking these bonuses into account, you'd have to win at least 30 races before you're allowed to continue. Before I gave up trying to earn that XP

and decided that suicide was rapidly becoming a better option, what I played was great fun, with responsive controls, challenging AI opponents and a decent amount of vehicle customisation. The bikes and ATVs feel sufficiently different and the five tracks that I did play were well designed and felt very authentic. **NAG**

GeometriX

/ **PLUS** / Tight controls / Challenging / Good track design
 / **MINUS** / Horribly limited / Pricing model

AN OKAY IDEA THAT'S POORLY EXECUTED.

40

Tel: (021) 422 0706
 For all the latest games,
 consoles, accessories,
 figurines, and more!

LEVEL UP

G a m i n g

Shop 9 Kloof St Junction
 115 Kloof Street
 Gardens
 Cape Town

R579



R379



R489



R279



R365



www.levelupgaming.co.za

featuring the
PC LAN ROOM

Alice: Madness Returns

It's almost time for tea!

I don't care what American McGee says, we've all been waiting eleven years for this game. The first *Alice* might not have been an incredible action platform title, but it gave people a new window into that classic tale of a girl who falls down a rabbit hole, with its tormented teenage angst and an anorexic Cheshire cat. We loved the new perspective, the twisted visuals and psychotic Alice Liddell who spent more time slicing up monsters than brushing her hair. *American McGee's Alice* was a cult hit in every sense, and American himself pulled in a big following after its release. Today, with his career teetering on the edge of obscurity and this sequel long overdue, there's a lot riding on this game.

Madness Returns takes place eleven years after the first title. Alice is grown up and managed to scrounge together enough sanity to be released from Rutledge Asylum into the care of her psychologist who runs a centre for troubled, slightly bonkers and generally mangy youths in the heart of a particularly grotty part of London. The

[details]

Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3
Genre: Action adventure
Age restriction: 18+
DRM: None
Multiplayer: Local: None
Online: None
Developer: Spicy Horse Games
Website: www.ea.com/alice
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Distributor: EA South Africa

player will actually be able to control this version of Alice, in the "real" world, between chapters. Those chapters take place when she finds herself knocked out or overly stressed, which sends her spiralling back into the warm place inside her brain called Wonderland. As it turns out, Wonderland has had a change of management while Alice was undergoing her mental rehabilitation program to quash her maddening memories, and it's now up to her to stop the bad juju that's messing with her fantasy world by unlocking those memories and freeing the secrets from within her mind.

We have to hand it to American's Shanghai-based Spicy Horse Games: these folks have done an excellent job at bringing the twisted visual and gameplay style of *AMG's Alice* into the current generation. *Madness Returns* looks fantastic: the art direction is so incredibly strong, and so brilliantly executed, that it courses through every aspect of the game. This strength is important because for quite some time, you'll have no idea why you're



/1/ When Alice gets low on health, she may be entitled to trigger Hysteria mode which renders her temporarily invulnerable while increasing the damage she does.

/2/ Each chapter will also give Alice a new dress to wear, so you can feel as pretty as the world around you.

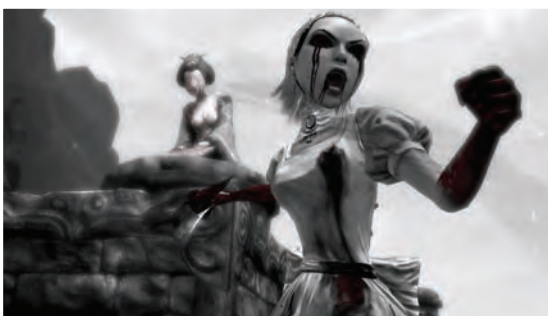
/3/ As the enemy composition changes and increases, you'll be forced to refine your tactics to deal with the most immediate threats, usually before dealing with the most obvious.

doing anything, instead you'll merrily journey through each beautiful area to get to the next one because that's what you do in games. Thankfully, things do start to come together about halfway through the game, which gives enough strength to the story to take over as the main driving force behind player progression. Nonetheless, the visuals never cease to be absolutely breathtaking, even right to the end.

So, aesthetically it's a great looking game, but how does it play? Rather well, with a few hiccups. The gameplay is divided between exploration/platforming and combat, with many sequences in which the two will take place together. The platforming sections will throw every single known mainstay of this genre your way, including moving platforms, falling platforms, slicing things, swinging things with spikes, squashy wall things and even platforms that you won't always be able to see. Alice can quadruple jump and float to make her way through these areas, and it's great to be given this much freedom of movement, which often

means you'll be able to easily make a jump instead of being forced to attempt the same damn leap fifteen times over. This mobility does tend to make the platforming pretty easy, but we're okay with that because hey, this isn't *Super Meat Boy*. It's not meant to be frustrating; it's meant to be accessible and accomplishable to move along the story and let you get to the bits where you get to chop up monsters with a kitchen knife.

The combat in *Madness Returns* is initially pretty darn challenging, even on the medium difficulty setting. Each chapter will feature about five or so unique enemy types, and there are another five or more enemy types that occur throughout the game, and each enemy requires a different tactic to be defeated. Some will require brute force or specific weapon use, others careful timing and others still will need to be attacked from certain directions. The combat is fast-paced and figuring out how to despatch your foes is fun. To help deal with the threat, Alice has at her disposal a number of weapons



including her fast-attacking Vorpal Blade, the high-damage, mace-like Hobby Horse and a Teapot Cannon. You'll unlock these weapons and more as you progress, and by collecting teeth scattered throughout the game world, you'll be able to upgrade them for increased damage or attack speed. This all adds up to combat that has, oddly enough, a downward-sloping difficulty curve. The game is tough at the beginning but by the final chapter, with all your weapons maxed out and even new enemies requiring little innovation to be defeated, you'll find that the game isn't as difficult as it was when you first started playing. The same can be said for the platforming elements, unfortunately, which never really slip into the realm of humdrum, but, since they're not particularly challenging to begin with

and don't fundamentally change from about a third of the way through, fail to offer the same excitement that they did earlier in the game.

To add some spice to the repetitive aspects of the game, there are a ton of mini-games that appear throughout your progress. Each is quite clever and initially fun, especially the *Marble Madness*-inspired sequences in which you roll around a porcelain doll's head, and the hand-drawn side-scrolling platform games, but these too suffer from repetition by being thrown at the player too many times. With everything combined, it feels like the developers had a target game time in mind, in this case 10-12 hours, but only had the gameplay to fill half of that. Solution? Repeat what you've already got until that target is reached. **NAG**

GeometriX

PLUS / Looks incredible / Interesting level design / Fun combat / Tons of hidden secrets
MINUS / Repetitive / Becomes too easy

IT'S NOT AS SPECIAL AS ITS PREDECESSOR, BUT *MADNESS RETURNS* MAKES A GOOD ATTEMPT.

Red Faction: Armageddon

Rocks and hard places

The *Red Faction* franchise has been around for quite some time. It managed to gain a few accolades in the early days, particularly for initial forms of terrain modification – something that was a bit of a pipe-dream in those days.

Four instalments later, *Red Faction* is still going strong, and still providing the player with the opportunity to not only take out tons of enemies, but also rain destruction down on the world around them.

The fourth instalment is *Red Faction: Armageddon* and it continues the story of the Mason family – those intrepid pioneers who fight for the liberation of the Red Planet (umm, that's Mars, if you live under a rock). The player takes on the role of Darius Mason, the grandson of Alec Mason (who was the player's character in *Red Faction: Guerrilla*). But where Alec was a great hero of the liberation effort, Darius is

[details]

Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3
Genre: Third-person shooter
Age restriction: 18+
DRM: Disc-based
Multiplayer: Local: None
Online: 4 players
Developer: Volition
Website: www.redfaction.com
Publisher: THQ
Distributor: Ster Kinekor Entertainment

a bit of a screw-up, mainly because he fails to keep a terraforming processor from being destroyed by a bunch of nut-jobs that believe Mars is no place for humans. You could argue in Darius' defence, I suppose, but the real crux of the matter is that the destruction of the terraforming processor forces all humans underground (literally) and is kind of important to the story, so we'll overlook his faux pas.

But the humans aren't alone underground – some kind of alien life-form is down there too, and it is up to the player, as Darius, to restore some semblance of order, while giving the aliens a right-royal seeing to. This begs the question – if these aliens were actually the original life on Mars, does that make the humans the aliens [*not in videogame land, Ed*]?

Philosophy aside, *Red Faction: Armageddon* can provide the player with a lot of fun, if they're willing to overlook



the sections where the game manages to fall a bit flat. The single player campaign has the most issues, really, even though it does provide a fairly decent experience for the most part.

The biggest problem is pacing. The levels manage to range between mad fire fights with all kinds of stuff getting blown to smithereens through to slightly lacklustre tunnel-crawling that features lots of enemies, but little by way of environmental destruction. And this destruction is really what makes the game fun. Blowing up enemies is cool, of course, but blowing up a building so that it falls over and squashes said enemy is just that much more satisfying. Add the magnet gun to that and the fun is bordering on criminal; latch one shot to an enemy and another to, oh, I don't know, a massive earth mover, and the result is great as the enemy goes flying into the machine with a



/1/ To fill in the blanks between *Armageddon* and *Guerrilla*, a made-for-TV film by the Syfy network should be available by time you read this.

/2/ Buildings will more realistically fall based on your attacks. Each building material has its own properties like weight and strength, and presented some tough design challenges to the level designers who found their creations toppling over if they weren't built properly.



satisfying, squelchy noise.

There could have been much more by way of terrain destruction in the game – not only more of it, but a greater degree of it. As things stand, the levels feel a little linear, a little dictated. It would have been nicer if the player could have used the terrain destruction to make their own way through levels, rather than being more or less guided through a series of often pedantic and repetitive goals and check-points.

If you find the single player campaign a little on the boring side, thanks to its under-implementation of destruction and its often linear feel, the multiplayer game modes should more than make up for it. Thanks to the player's ability to rebuild what has been destroyed, the two modes – Ruin and Infestation – are tons of fun. Their names are fairly self-explanatory; Ruin is about breaking stuff for points, and infestation is about keeping hordes

of enemies at bay, while maintaining a structure that the players need to protect. Infestation, particularly, is a lot of fun, and will demand a lot from player teams in later stages.

On the whole, this game will satisfy, if the player doesn't expect too much from it. The graphics, for example, could have been nicer. The AI seems a little too clever at times. The campaign has a few levels that leave something to be desired, and features a plot that could have been much better. But if you're willing to get past these things, and enjoy the game for the near-childlike glee of blowing stuff up, you'll be in for quite a fun time. The controls are fairly well put together

and are responsive, and the enemies the player faces will provide quite a challenge, particularly when the player gets to the aliens... there just never seems to be enough ammunition.

The idea of collecting "salvage" from destroyed terrain elements is quite cool, too. Salvage is essentially the currency that the player uses to upgrade weapons and equipment during missions.

Not playing the multiplayer modes, though, will be squandering the game's real potential. While the campaign offers moments of enjoyment, the multiplayer is the true gem of this title.

NAG
Ramjet

/ PLUS / Lots of destruction / Excellent multiplayer
/ MINUS / Linear campaign / Under-utilised destruction

IT'S WHAT YOU MAKE OF IT, BUT MULTIPLAYER IS KING HERE.

75

DIRT 3

Woah, Gymkhana bro!

When one plays *DIRT 3*, you can almost hear the army of rally pros the team had on call, sitting around a boardroom table, throwing ideas at men in grey suits and frightened looking game developers. One of those things that they almost definitely said was "Dude! You know what would make this rally stuff, like, totally sweet? Gymkhana, brah!"

DIRT 3, which as you may notice does not bear the name Colin McRae in the title, is what many would consider the series' final step into the arcade racer scene. Then again, those people probably played the *Colin McRae Rally* series for its serious business attitude and simulation-oriented gameplay. Those people will probably also hate this game. But then, just the name, written in mixed caps as it is, should be indication enough that Codemasters is pretty-much done with that sort of stuff. That's not to say that *DIRT 3* is an all-out nitro-burning, powersliding-

[details]

Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
Genre:
Racing
Age restriction:
12+
DRM:
Internet connection
required [Games
for Windows LIVE]
Multiplayer:
Local: 2 players
Online: 8 players
Developer:
Codemasters
Southam
Website:
www.dirt3game.
com
Publisher:
Codemasters
Distributor:
Megarom Interactive



/1/ The game's career mode requires that you earn a certain number of points before you can continue to the next series of events, which is much preferred over requiring a podium position every time (although some events will).

/2/ Your vehicle will be automatically adjusted to accommodate different driving conditions, but you're free to change its setup if you'd like to balance features like drifting and direct control, based on your preference and driving style.

/3/ Three free-ride parking lots are available to be unlocked that feature a ton of bonus objectives for you to find and accomplish for extra reputation.

around-every-corner sort of racer. It still requires the careful control, keen sense of pace and the guts to push out all four wheels without nambypambying around with the throttle that you'd expect from a rally game; but has been made more accessible to those of us who lack a degree in physics and have the attention span of a mentally deficient goldfish.

So, is *DIRT 3* a stupid game for stupid people? No, of course not, but it includes a wide selection of assists that can be toggled as well as seven levels of opponent AI. If you *do* lack the requisite brain cells to turn wheel while make car go vroom at same time, then *DIRT 3* has you covered: slap on the auto-steer, auto-throttle and full driving line and play with one hand while the other shovels spoonfuls of sand into your mouth. Then if you feel like you could do with a bit more of a challenge, disable

an assist or two, pop up the difficulty one notch and see how things pan out. The simulation nuts will likely opt to disable all of the assists, and even I managed to roll around with everything but ABS turned off, and there are also a few other adjustable settings for ride height, differential, brake bias and that sort of stuff for those who like to tinker. The choice is yours, and if you decide that you want the game to punish you, it's capable enough to put anyone but the most hardened simulation gamers to the test.

Another great tool which you might find yourself initially shunning, is Flashback. During each single player race you'll have a handful of these to use at any time, which allow you to rewind the race to an earlier point of your choosing. This not only allows you to correct those tiny mistakes that end up costing you a front axle thanks to its abrupt meeting



with a tree, but it encourages the more aggressive driving that's required to get you onto the podium at the higher difficulty levels, without forcing you to restart every race because you slipped up. And slip you will; *DIRT 3* features a number of different driving conditions to be found on the tracks that suit such variety, such as Aspen's snow-covered mountains or the twisting Kenyan rural roads. Unfortunately, the game relies a little too heavily on alternate driving conditions (such as night-time drives or those that take place while it's raining) and slightly varied routes to generate "different" tracks. As a result, there aren't many to choose from, but those that are available look absolutely fantastic.

To match the visual quality of the tracks, the cars certainly look impressive as well. In all its DirectX 11 glory, *DIRT 3* is one of those games that'll make you glad that you spent the big bucks on your PC, and from what we've seen on console, it's not half-bad there either. With the visual splendour of each car comes the same limitation that applies to the tracks: there aren't many of them. "Over 50" is the final number, and while that would've been impressive a few years ago, many have come to expect more of racing games these days. At least those on offer are varied, with vehicles from the last 50 years of rally on offer, as well as those included for specific event types like the 800bhp

Trailblazer cars. As a minor reprieve from the lack of limited vehicle count, you'll be able to unlock sponsored liveries as you progress through the campaign and earn reputation. This is done by completing races, using as few Flashbacks as possible, completing bonus objectives and taking part in special events that have less to do with traditional rally and more to do with the vehicular equivalent of skateboarding, aka Gymkhana.

Gymkhana is a supposedly new form of rally (actually it's been around for years, but don't tell that to Codemasters) that involves doing donuts, drifting, smashing through things and spinning your wheels in a parking lot. It might sound like the kind of thing you did with the first guy in high school to get his driver's licence, but it's supposedly pretty popular and important, as the pro racer Codemasters got on board to tell you so, will tell you. He'll also call you amigao a lot, and encourage you to share your various triumphs with the YouTube community. In addition to Gymkhana and the regular rally modes, *DIRT 3* features a number of race modes you wouldn't normally find in the sport; they're mostly entertaining in a light-hearted way, and add enough variety to the campaign to keep you from being too irritated by the stupid narrators and sickeningly hip branding all over the game. **NAG**

GeometriX

/ PLUS / Highly accessible / Looks great / Variety of game modes

/ MINUS / Too few tracks / Too few vehicles / Annoying music and voice actors

LESS SERIOUS THAN ITS PREDECESSORS, BUT POTENTIALLY JUST AS FUN IF YOU'RE UP FOR THE CHANGE.

82

Dungeon Siege III

Farewell to old friends

Do me a favour: before you start reading the rest of this review, use that brain of yours to conjure up a list of your favourite action RPGs. It's alright, take your time. Actually, don't, because we've not got all day. Right - are you done? Your first thought likely careened straight into *Diablo's* delightfully devilish maw. Some of you might have thought back fondly on *Titan Quest's* Greek-tastic hack-'n'-slasherly [please use real words, Ed]. *Torchlight's* well-deserved success may still be burnt into your memory, its back-to-basics approach to oh-so-addictively fun dungeon crawling having earned it a place in your heart. Is *Dungeon Siege* on your list? It's sure as hell on mine, and it's for that reason that *Dungeon Siege III* has left me disappointed.

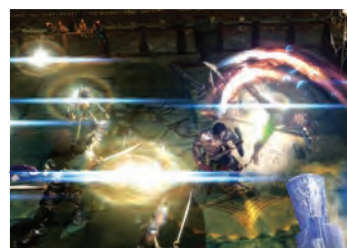
There's a new developer in the driving seat here (Obsidian Entertainment), and they've shot off on their own mission with *Dungeon Siege III*. You're handed a choice of four preset characters, each with a different combat focus - which is entirely misleading, because they all function pretty much identically. The mule, the nameless Farmer and the awesome freeform character improvement are all gone. The advancement system is now completely XP based, allowing you to linearly unlock new abilities as you grind your

[details]

Platforms:
360 / PC / PS3
Genre:
Action role-playing game
Age restriction:
16+
DRM:
Internet connection required: Steam
Multiplayer:
Local: 2 players
Online: 4 players
Developer:
Obsidian Entertainment
Website:
www.dungeonsiege.com
Publisher:
Square Enix
Distributor:
Megarom

chosen character towards the level cap. Replacing the iconic, lovable beast of burden is a system for transmuting loot into coin (for reduced profit) without the need to visit a merchant every three minutes. These changes might not seem all that significant, but they are, because they've altered the fundamental pillars upon which the series was built - which would be fine if this was a great game in its own right. Which it isn't.

Combat in *DS III* functions as it needs to, but it quickly becomes monotonous and boring as the game progresses. Each character can switch between two combat stances at any time. These stances boil down to either single-target, high-damage attacks which are good for tackling beefier opponents, or low-damage, AoE (Area of Effect) attacks intended for quickly crotch-flicking large groups of weaker enemies. Even though it's obvious what Obsidian's intentions were with this system, eventually combat devolves into mindless spamming of your AoE attacks, with very little actual strategy ever coming into play, since it's the most efficient way to speed your way through each tedious combat encounter. Occasionally you'll become embroiled in a fight that's actually taxing and these can be quite satisfying, but most see you mashing the A button until



everything dies and it's safe to move on to the next brainless encounter.

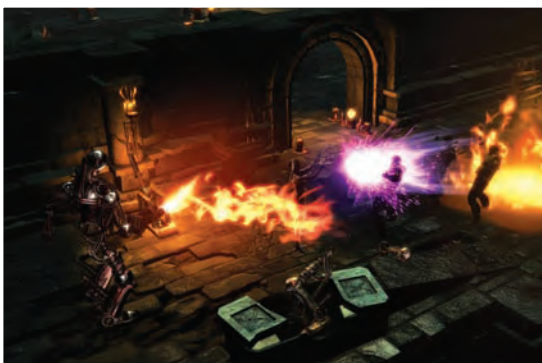
Most of the unlockable abilities on offer for each of the four characters are alarmingly similar in effect to those of their chums, meaning that even if you choose to play the game cooperatively, characters rarely need to complement each other, almost entirely removing the need to work together beyond ensuring that your co-op buddy knows where the A button is on the controller. Most of the nine abilities on offer for each hero aren't particularly satisfying either, each one leaving you with no real sense of accomplishment for having acquired it. Each time you level up, you're able to customise your abilities via Empowerments that'll alter the ability's effect. You'll also unlock Talents that improve your character in various ways, but whereas in other, better action RPGs your upgrade path is exciting and actually important, here it's not worth caring about. Just close your eyes, jiggle the analogue stick a few times so that it lands on a random upgrade and press A to continue.

The loot, one of the most important factors in any action RPG, is completely rubbish. After picking up my seven thousandth pair of Pants of Resolve (wha...?) and my millionth Thingy of Puppy Bashing (just kidding – none of



/1/ This is Katarina. Katarina likes guns. She's the bastard daughter of the 10th Legion's last Grand Master, who seemingly had a bit of a fling with a Lescanzi witch. Nice.

/2/ Lucas attempts to quell a Cyclops uprising with naught but a fierce look and his famed halitosis. The game looks pretty in these screenshots, but in action it's nothing spectacular.



the loot in this game is *that* exciting), it became obvious that things weren't going to get any better and I'd forever be relegated to picking up countless vests identical to the one I'd been wearing throughout the last seventeen dungeons I'd sieged. Foregoing my usual action RPG ritual of painstakingly inspecting the stat changes that each item would bring before making a decision, here I simply navigated the hopelessly cumbersome menus and hit A to equip the most expensive items in my bag. I imagine that even the bag into which my character was cramming all this unremarkable crap was completely mundane in its own, bag-like way. There's no wide-eyed glee as a boss explodes in a shower of magnificent unique items, each one a treasure that'll lead to you fighting a mental battle with yourself when the choice appears to sell it to the next merchant you come across. There's no feverish clamouring for the next item in a set you're trying to complete. It's all just... as disappointing as the game itself.

Is this all a bit harsh? Have I begun to scare away small children with my ranting? It's just because this is not

Dungeon Siege. It's nothing more than an above average action RPG, and that offends me. It's not without merit – the combat system is impossibly mundane and repetitive, but it works, in that you can use it to kill stuff. The story, while quite basic, is fairly well told with all its dialogue options (uncommon in hack-'n'-slashers) and (mostly superficial) moral dilemmas. Moreover, the game world is crammed with Lore items – books and such that flesh out the world of Ehb, providing a somewhat interesting history lesson on this world, going so far as to recap events from the original game. It's a nice touch, but bittersweet given how disappointing this game is.

I think the real problem with this game is that it lacks character and quirkiness, two traits essential to making an action RPG worth slashing through. Monotonous combat is to be expected in action RPGs, but this is usually offset by awesome abilities and killer loot that make the whole experience gratifying. That's not the case with *DS III*. It's not terrible. But it is lifeless. **NAG**

Barkskin

/ PLUS / Decent story / Lore / Functional core combat system

/ MINUS / Lame loot / Boring abilities / Monotonous combat / Where's mah mule?

IT'S DUNGEON SIEGE IN NAME ONLY. IT'S A DECENT BUT ENTIRELY FORGETTABLE ACTION RPG.

68

Green Lantern: Rise of the Manhunters

Go green



More often than not, when you see a game based on a movie, you experience a little shudder, because we all expect games like this to be rubbish. The truth is, though, that these games have been getting a bit better... they're not all brilliant yet, but there is definite improvement.

Green Lantern: Rise of the Manhunters shows a lot of promise (even if the movie leaves a bit to be desired). Still, it doesn't do enough to rise above the ranks of "movie game".

The plot doesn't follow the film, thankfully. It pits the player, who is in control of Hal Jordan (voiced by Ryan Reynolds) against a bunch of nasty machine-warriors called Manhunters. There's a lot of button mashing involved, although that mashing will have different effects as the player unlocks new weapons and upgrades. The graphics aren't bad at all, but are hampered by camera angles that are often just a little nasty.

With ultra-simple game dynamics and a third-person action feel, this game tries to enter into the third person action genre with a bang, but does so more with a loud pop. It desperately wants to be more than what it actually is. In the end, it's a fair bit of fun, but nothing spectacular... a bit like the movie, really. **NAG**

Ramjet

[details]

Platforms: **360 / 3DS / DS / PS3 / Wii**
Genre: **Third-person action**
Age restriction: **12+**
DRM:
Disc-based
Multiplayer: **Local: 2 players Online: 2 players**
Developer: **Double Helix Games [360 / PS3] Griptonite [3DS / DS / Wii]**
Website: **www.greenlanternvideogame.com**
Publisher: **Warner Bros. Interactive**
Distributor: **Nu Metro Interactive**

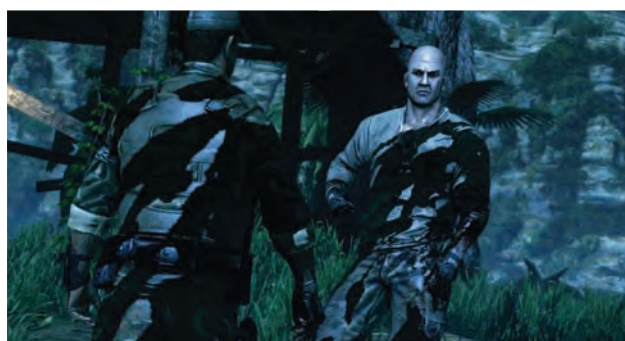
/ PLUS / Lots of action / Addictive
/ MINUS / Repetitive / Camera can be a pain

IT TRIES HARD, BUT IT DOESN'T REALLY BREAK ANY BARRIERS.

72

Sniper: Ghost Warrior

Kill shot



Military shooter games are a dime a dozen, so when one takes on a slightly new idea, it's rather refreshing. Take *Sniper: Ghost Warrior* as an example. While the game presents itself as a military-based first-person shooter, it takes on a subject matter that is normally only touched on by other games – sniping. Sure, you can get a sniper rifle in *Call of Duty* or *Battlefield* and let people have at it at a great distance, but the fine "art" of sniping doesn't enter into those titles.

By that I mean the careful calculation that goes into delivering a kill-shot over great distance. *Sniper: Ghost Warrior* concentrates on this – the game will need the player to factor in a great variety of things, including bullet-drop, wind speed and target movement. It's a fantastic idea, overall, and one that is rather technical and original. But the execution of the game leaves a bit to be desired.

For example, the game will guide the player in terms of certain aspects of sniping – like bullet-drop – but will apparently ignore others (like target movement). It is tricky getting a kill shot right, but there is a certain level of satisfaction that comes with doing so.

In short, it is a frustrating game, and is plagued by a few problems. However, perseverance – and getting to know how the game thinks – can be extremely rewarding. This one is best for pedantic, patient gamers. **NAG**

Ramjet

[details]

Platforms: **360 / PC / PS3**
Genre: **First-person shooter**
Age restriction: **16+**
DRM:
Disc-based
Multiplayer: **Local: None Online: 12 players**
Developer: **City Interactive**
Website: **www.sniperghostwarrior.com**
Publisher: **City Interactive**
Distributor: **Apex Interactive**

/ PLUS / A new approach / Quite detailed
/ MINUS / Some technical issues / Slow paced

A GREAT IDEA, BUT BEST SUITED FOR PATIENT, CAMPER-STYLE PLAYERS.

70

NAG LAN @ RAGE

brought to you by

ALIENWARE  ALL POWERFUL

Tickets go on sale at Computicket

1 August 2011

R300 per person

30 Sep - 2 Oct

**The Coca-Cola Dome
Johannesburg**

www.rageexpo.co.za



HP Networking

NAG



Tt eSPORTS goes big in gaming

Thermaltake has made a slew of new product announcements of late. Their gaming brand, Tt eSPORTS, has a new FPS gaming mouse, gaming headset, and two new chassis.

The AZURES Mini gaming mouse has been modelled on the original AZURES but is slightly smaller (for gamers who have smaller hands) and now sports a side rubber grip.

The new SHOCK Spin HD headset features 7.1 Virtual surround sound, and comes in three sections – the Spin headset, the clip-on microphone and the USB sound adapter.

The tool-free, all black Thermaltake Commander MS-I is an entry-level mid-tower chassis. Features include support for extra-long graphics cards, cable management, 9 drive bays, and 7 PCI expansion slots. If you're an

anti-dust freak then you'll love the removable and cleanable dust filter that lives underneath the power supply housing.

Although the Thermaltake Chaser MK-1 was announced in March already, we've recently only been sent a review sample to take a look at, along with the Commander MS-I. The Chaser MK-1 is also a mid-tower gaming chassis but is extra wide and able to accommodate CPU coolers of up to 18cm in height. Sporting most of the features that the Commander MS-I has, the Chaser also has a water-cooling ready design, a hot-swap top docking station, USB 3.0 ports, and a dedicated filter system on each intake fan, so you won't ever have to open your case to clean the fans. This case comes highly recommended for any gamer looking to upgrade their chassis.



By the numb3rs

12

Support for Microsoft Vista's Service Pack 1 ended on 12 July this year, so no more security updates will be issued. You can still run the software but it will be vulnerable to attack. Software support for Office XP ended the day before, 11 July 2011.



Dreamgear Camo Headset

Wanna funk up your Xbox frag sessions? Then you need to get this Camo headset. It has built-in volume and mute controls, and can be worn comfortably on either your left or right ear.

R179 | www.dreamgear.net



Powermonkey Extreme

This is a must-have portable charger for gadget people. It is waterproof for 30 minutes up to 1 metre, shock resistant, and can recharge most 5V devices multiple times before the charge runs out. The powermonkey-eXtreme can be recharged either via the universal mains charger, via the solar panel or via USB.

R1,400 | www.mobilegadgets.co.za

/ tech Q&A /

Send your hardware questions to lauren@nag.co.za.

GTX590 vs. GTX580

From: Brent Holmes

"Hi there, I was looking through all the motherboards, processors and graphics cards and was just wondering about a few of them. I see that the GTX580 graphics card is part of the dream machine but the GTX590 has some incredible specs. Is the GTX580 better? And with regards to the processors, is the

latest i7 990 worth it? I see the 980 is still dream machine quality even tho the 990 is better. This is a money not an issue, better performance question. Thanks for the amazing magazine each month."

Neo: In my opinion the GTX 590 is a waste of money, it's slower than the older HD6990 and in quad SLI mode gives performance numbers lower than those of 4xGTX580s. That's why we stuck with the GTX580. As for the 980X vs. the 990X, you could easily buy the 990X, but performance is very similar between the two. The 990X is 133MHz faster and that's about it.

RAM voltage question

From: Connie van Zyl

"I have a question regarding the QPI/DRAM voltage on my Rampage 3 Extreme. I have bought a Corsair Dominator GT 12 GB (4x3) memory kit (CMT12GX3M3A2000C9). When it runs at the 1066 Mhz default memory frequency and I leave all the voltage settings on AUTO, the QPI/DRAM is at a mere 1.18-1.20 Volts. If however I configure the memory to run at its rated spe ed (2000 Mhz), I need 1.43 Volts on the QPI/DRAM to get the system stable. Is this voltage safe for 24/7 use? I have the DRAM Bus Voltage on 1.653 and the motherboard complains

CM Storm Enforcer

This mid-tower case is packed with some cool features: two USB 2.0 ports; two USB 3.0 ports; a removable dust filter; four toolless optical bays; six toolless hard drive bays; two 2.5-inch bays; seven standard PCI expansion slots

R899 | www.sonicinformed.co.za



Spire Epoxi SP6002B-CE/R

This case has been made with heavy-duty perforated steel panels and can accommodate a water cooling system (provision has been made for water cooling tubes to be fed through via rubber grommet holes). The mesh front and side panels allow for good ventilation within the case.

R1,199 | www.comstarsa.co.za



about this saying it could damage the CPU, however I don't think the DRAM Bus Voltage should be a problem since 1.65 Volts is the rated Voltage for the memory. I have the CPU Voltage on 1.28 V and CPU PLL Voltage on AUTO (it hovers around 1.81 -1.85 V and according to the motherboard this is "normal").

Can you please tell me whether my Voltage settings, especially my QPI/DRAM, will be a problem and whether I am just stressing for nothing?"

Neo: Your QPI voltage is too high but that depends on the NB frequency. Assuming

you didn't change it from the default then it should be at 2,666MHz and you shouldn't need more than 1.25V for that. Whatever it may be it should not be more than 1.315V for 24/7 use. Lower the NB multiplier if the system is unstable.

Confused!

From: Corne

"I'm thinking the end of the world is upon us! I'm reading the May issue and nearly got an apocalyptic heart spasm. Your magazine indicates on page 86 that the Intel Core i7 990X uses the AM2+/AM3 platform. That would indicate that Intel and AMD is having

an affair, which I find highly unlikely!"

Neo: It is a typo and I apologize for this. It's LGA 1366.

Installing ATI Drivers

From: Hugo Basson

"I would just like to know the following. I have an ATI graphics card; the drivers loaded are still the drivers that came with the card. I now got the latest drivers from this month's NAG DVD. My question is: do I need to uninstall the previous drivers and then install the new drivers or can I just install the new drivers on top of/over the old

Oakley 3D Gascan Transformers Limited Edition

If you're looking to buy a pair of 3D glasses and you're a fan of *Transformers*, then Oakley has you covered. They have released a pair of limited edition 3D glasses with custom *Transformers: Dark of the Moon* graphics. The one side of the frame has an Autobot shield icon and the other a Decepticon shield icon. The glasses can be used in the cinema and at home.



Snippets

Microsoft will be releasing their new Comfort Curve Keyboard 3000 in August. Improvements over its predecessor include a modified organic curve for more comfort and uniformly sized QWERTY keys.

Transformers 3 fans can look forward to some Razer branded products. These include a DeathAdder themed mouse in four colours (Optimus Prime blue, Bumblebee yellow, Megatron silver, Shockwave purple), themed dual-sided Vespula mouse mat, and customised laptop sleeves.

The ASUS WX-Lamborghini wireless mouse has been inspired by the Lamborghini Concept S. It sports 7 buttons, and resolution can be set between 800 and 2,500 dpi.

Lian Li have announced a new edition to their V series of cases. The Mini Tower PC-V600F will be available in black, silver and red. The all-aluminum PC-V600F weighs in at 5kg.

The Qosmio F750 3D has been announced by Toshiba. Its claim to fame is that it can display 3D images without the need for 3D glasses. It is also able to display a combination of 2D

and 3D images on screen at the same time.

Antec has released the Soundscience Halo 6 LED Bias Lighting Kit. The kit adds a ring of white backlight to your PC monitor thereby helping to reduce eyestrain caused by differences in picture brightness from scene changes in movies, TV shows and video games.

Razer has announced an exclusive agreement with EA to produce co-branded licensed gaming peripherals for *Battlefield 3* and *Mass Effect 3*. These product lines will be available when the games launch.

Know Your Technology

/ SATA /

Serial Advanced Technology Attachment is the standard by which all modern day storage and optical devices are connected to the host controller, usually on a motherboard. This computer bus was designed to replace the ATA standard. SATA uses a smaller cable, supports hot swapping and is much faster at data transfers by way of higher signalling rates and I/O queuing. This has become the de-facto standard for computers.

/ IDE /

Integrated Drive Electronics which is now known as PATA (Parallel ATA), is a protocol and standard that uses ATAPI standards for communication and connectivity. This is the forerunner to SATA and supports speeds ranging from 16MB/sec to 133MB/sec (UDMA 133). This standard differs from the SATA standard primarily by allowing two drives to be linked via a single cable in a master/slave relationship, lower speeds than the basic SATA rates and using a parallel protocol instead of serial transmission.

/ SAS /

Serial Attached SCSI is a point to point serial protocol, but unlike SATA it uses the original SCSI command set. It is also backwards-compatible with 2nd generation SATA 3G drives. SAS allows much longer cabling, doesn't have termination issues like SCSI, has no clock skew and supports up to 65,535 devices compared to the 16 device limit on SCSI devices and controllers. This connectivity option is mostly used in Data Centres by workstations and sees very little use or support on home/desktop computers.

/ SCSI /

Small Computer System Interface introduced in the early '80s is a set of command protocols for a wide range of electrical and optical devices. The SCSI standard defined communication from host to host, host to peripheral and from device to device. Speeds range from 5MB/sec for the original SCSI-1 standard to 640MB/sec for the Ultra-640 specification, with bit widths ranging from 8 to 16. With the advent of SAS, SCSI interfaces are seeing a decline in popularity and have largely been discontinued as a legacy interface.

Quote

"We're definitely on this trend now where it makes sense for us given the scale of usage and the information flowing through the network where we're probably going to be building our own data centers, rather than leasing."

Mark Zuckerberg, Co-founder and CEO of Facebook
During a press event in July at Facebook headquarters, the company announced the launch of its new video chat feature powered by Skype. Mark Zuckerberg stated that the amount of data that a Facebook user currently shares is double what that user shared just a year ago and that data sharing amount per user is expected to double once again in 2012.

/ tech Q&A /

drivers? Please I don't want to do something that might screw up my pc or my graphics card. Thanks a lot for your help."

Neo: It's always better to uninstall the old drivers and install the new ones.

Coolermaster v6gt From Thashen

"I have a Gigabyte p67a-ud4 motherboard and was wondering if the CoolerMaster v6gt

will fit properly, because in the may nag it says 'too big for some motherboards:'"

Neo: I have not tested the P67A-UD4 so I don't know about that particular combination. Here's what you can do though: go to the Cooler Master site and take down the measurements of the cooler, then compare them to the clearance area of your Gigabyte board.

Wait for it, and restart From: Christo Strydom

"I am a greenhorn considering pc's and whilst I was browsing through my bios (don't ask me how I got there) I saw a cell menu. Not knowing what

it is I went in and messed around a bit. I changed a few things and now the pc won't start. The blue lights on the mobo shine, the fans go on but it doesn't recognise my peripherals and also doesn't output to my screen. I have a Q8300 +4Gigs ram and a G41 series mobo. I changed the FSB:DRAM ratio (whatever that is) from 5:8 to 5:10 and also the core speed or something from 333mhz to 350mhz. What went wrong?"

Neo: Can't tell what you did, much like you. But the best thing to do is to pull out the CMOS battery, wait for 60 seconds and put it back in. Your PC should reset to the default settings at which point your PC should start up just fine.

PLAY HARD WITH A

VENGEANCE

Introducing

Corsair Vengeance™ Memory

Brilliantly designed to deliver performance, compatibility and stability.

Designed for PERFORMANCE

Using only carefully selected DRAM and performance screening each module, each Vengeance memory kit is tuned to deliver fantastic performance and value. Its unique heat spreaders not only look cool, they keep your memory cooler too, making them a great choice for overclocking. And all Vengeance memory kits are compatible with Corsair Airflow fans.

Designed for COMPATIBILITY

Vengeance modules run at 1.5V for maximum compatibility with all Intel Core i3, i5 and i7 processors, as well as AMD's full range of Phenom II processors. Vengeance modules also include an XMP profile so it's easy to get maximum memory performance from your system.

Designed for STABILITY

Like all high-performance memory from Corsair, Vengeance modules undergo rigorous testing before being assembled, ensuring you'll get rock-solid stability out of the box. Plus, Vengeance is backed by a limited lifetime warranty and Corsair's legendary service and support.

Corsair Vengeance memory. Designed for you. Learn more at corsair.com

WE'VE DESIGNED A COMPLETE LINE OF ENTHUSIAST-GRADE COMPONENTS AND ACCESSORIES TO MAKE YOUR NEXT PC YOUR BEST PC



CHASSIS



POWER SUPPLIES



COOLING



SOLID-STATE DRIVES



GAMING AUDIO

Johannesburg:

Tel: +27 10 223 2220

Fax: +27 10 223 2140

Durban:

Tel: +27 31 582 0200

Fax: +27 31 582 0280

Cape Town:

Tel: +27 21 555 8200

Fax: +27 21 555 7136

Antec LanBoard

[info]

RRP:
R299
Website:
www.evetech.co.za

[technical]

Maximum weight capacity:
60 kg
Weight:
1.0 kg
Dimensions:
68mm (H) x 256mm (W) x 425mm (D)

[summary]

Pros:
// Versatile 2-in-1 solution
// Affordable
// Lightweight
Cons:
// The wheels part isn't suitable for areas with stairs
// Not ideal for a case that doesn't have a flat surface underneath
// No shock absorption on the wheels so bumpy surfaces will cause your case (and the components inside) to rattle around a bit.



All four wheels /1/ operate independently from each other so you can literally move the LanBoard in any direction you want.

The LanBoard has two lockable front wheels /2/ to prevent it from rolling away when you're standing still. When we tested this out with a fairly heavy case we did find that on an incline it tended to still roll a bit. Perhaps four lockable wheels would have been a better option here.

The handle is very sturdy /3/ and could withstand a lot of abuse. It's been molded in an easy to hold non-flexible grip.

The straps are adjustable /4/ on both sides and can be used as well as the LanBoard to simply carry your case around should you be going to a venue that is not accessible with wheels.

A unique little added feature to the straps is the elastic band on each side that you can slide the extra length of the strap into, keeping everything neat and tidy. **NAG**



A Fusion of Innovation, Design, And Performance



Level 10 Inspire the Visionary

"Level 10" The first project co-works with BMW Group DesignworksUSA in the world for gaming station.



Chassis



Power Supply



CPU Cooler



Storage



TT eSport

Display
Samsung P2770HD
www.samsung.co.za



OS drive
OCZ Vertex 3 240GB SSD
www.ocz.com



Motherboard
GIGABYTE GA-X58A-UD9
www.gigabyte.com



Processor
Intel Core i7 980X
www.intel.com



CPU cooler
Cooler Master V6GT
www.coolermaster.com



Dream Machine

Processor	R8,999
Motherboard	R6,499
Graphics	R5,999
PSU	R2,399
Memory	R1,899
OS Drive	R5,699
Storage drive	R1,699
CPU Cooler	R579
Case	R1,799
Display	R4,999
Keyboard	R1,499
Mouse	R899
Mousemat	R319
Sound	R2,799
Headphones	R2,100
Speakers 5.1	R4,499

TOTAL: R52,685

Storage drive
Seagate Barracuda XT 2TB
www.seagate.com



PSU
Antec High Current Pro 1200 Watt PSU
www.antec.com



NEW

Keyboard
Logitech G19
www.logitech.com



Mouse
Roccat Kone[+]
www.roccat.org





The PC Patriot aka "the real world idiot" Part 1



Several weeks ago I finally decided to buy *Crysis 2*. I suspect there are others as well who, like I, wanted to wait for the DirectX 11 patch before purchasing the game. Personally I wanted to finally stress my gaming machine and appreciate the tangible benefits of my many overlocks on almost every component. Much like the previous game, a part of me admires the tremendous amounts of load that Crytek engines place on the system. Something they have become synonymous with ever since *FarCry*. At that time having owned an FX5700 Ultra and later on the 5950, I, like many others, wanted to use the FP32 fragment shader precision that was only available on the FX cards. Despite the performance knock that came with it I was compelled to enable that option. I wanted only the best. ATI's FP24 wasn't it and FP16 caused banding.

This was true for the original *Crysis* as well from a performance perspective. Anything less than a 8800GTX

"I'm no expert at games, but as it turns out, to have an opinion within the gaming community you don't need to know anything let alone be an expert or even have played the game."

rendered the game pretty much unplayable at 1280x1024 at the highest graphics fidelity. More so than any other IP out there, Crytek engines sell hardware. It may not be something that any IHV or distributor/publisher tracks, but it's true especially for those who buy high-end hardware. Very few people need to be inspired by a \$50 game to buy a \$99 graphics card (I use dollars because market segmentation is set by MSRP in USD and not in any other currency). Those who are moved in such a way are the ones who buy \$400 and \$500 graphics cards. The so-called power users and enthusiasts in some way buy a \$50 game to justify their \$500 component purchase.

Having finally invested in *Crysis 2* and applied all relevant visual upgrades, I'm more than ecstatic about the outcome. I have never been happier to have built the systems. No other graphics card other than the ones I chose could have delivered the same experience. I could have bought the game for any one of the consoles but since I wanted to experience the game at its absolute best graphically, I chose to buy it on the PC and on the PC it was more than I could have ever expected.

I thought others would share this opinion, but it seems I was wrong. As it is, I've read more negative comments than anything else. Despite that technically there isn't a more advanced title that is shipping today or one that makes use of more significant DirectX 11 features (in particular tessellation) than this title, there are many who are "disappointed". So much so that they even claim that the original *Crysis* titles looks better. Amongst the other claims are that the game is very console-like and not true to the PC.

I'm no expert at games, but as it turns out, to have an opinion within the gaming community you don't need to know anything let alone be an expert or even have played the game. By virtue of being able to sign up to a forum, you have a meaningful and worthwhile opinion. To these experts then, I would like to know what the terms "console-like" and "dumbed down" mean? (I don't even think that's a real word). A clear definition of what these mean would be highly appreciated. These are the terms being levelled at *Crysis 2* and its updates. I have run out of space for this month, but I shall continue in September. If anybody can shed light on what these terms mean I'd be very grateful.

Neo Sibeko



Graphics MSI GTX580 Lightning

www.msi.com

NEW

Mousemat Roccat Alomic

www.roccat.org



Case Coolermaster HAF X 942

www.sonicinformed.co.za



Sound ASUS Xonar Xense

R2,799 / za.asus.com



Headphones Tritton AX Pro

www.trittonusa.com



NEW

Memory Corsair Dominator GT 2000C8

www.corsair.com



Speakers 5.1 Logitech Z-5500 Digital

www.logitech.com



GAMING HEADSETS

Gaming headsets are something that most gamers will probably own at one time or another. Before we get into the details of which headset is the best, it's important that one realizes that a gaming headset is nothing but a regular pair of headphones with a microphone. For any of these sets to be good they need to excel at delivering the best audio experience, be comfortable if you're having a five-hour fragging session with your buddies online, and should have a decent microphone so you can chat to your teammates and easily co-ordinate your next objective. For this article we looked at headsets for both PC and console gamers. We gave the PC headsets to Neo and the console ones to Geoff, so let's take a look at their favourite picks.

PC HEADSETS

Given that there really isn't much one can do with a microphone that is made for in-game communications, we concentrated on the quality of the audio the headsets delivered instead. For the amount of money that is being asked for some of the units, one should expect nothing but premium sound quality. With that said, all headsets that we have here that make use of their own audio controller and connect via USB will have a hard time impressing most users who have a dedicated sound card or ones that ship with the motherboard that's on a riser card.

Whooshing Sound

ROCCAT Kave

Price: R799 | Supplied By: Sonic Informed

These were by far my favourite in the PC gaming headsets. They sport individual 5.1 stereo mini jack inputs for your sound card, so there's no cheesy HRTF technology. They feature four 40mm drivers so the 5.1 effect is as good as one can expect given the limitations of headphone surround technology. They have no dedicated LFE driver, so if you want to experience reasonable amounts of bass, you'll have to configure them as full range speakers. As for the sound quality, the drivers are quick to respond with an impressive roll-off on the high frequencies. The mid-range is a tad harsh and the bass can be understated at times, however it does remain precise. Noise isolation is good and the build quality excellent. This set is certainly worth the investment, especially because you don't have to sacrifice your sound card to make use of the 5.1 effect. Overall, the ROCCAT Kave set is the best par none in this entire round up. The only downside is the cumbersome cabling, none of which is detachable, probably the only thing that stops these headsets from scoring a 10.

9/10



Cyber Snipa: Sonar 5.1 Championship

Price: R799 | Supplied By: Dawn of Gaming

This headset held a lot of promise but sadly didn't quite live up to it. The Intel C200 audio controller is partly to blame because it really is a low-end unit, and without the real estate of a sound card to add components which would bring out the best of this controller, you're seeing the C200 DSP at pretty much its worst. This is sad, especially because the drivers on this headset deserve so much more. The cans feature individual channel volume control, but the bass or LFE channel is impossible to configure correctly as there's never an ideal setting. Harsh high frequencies are also a major downside to this headset. The mid-range is good provided you've turned down the centre channel, but overall the sound is uninspired. The surround effect is good if not better than expected, but once again this is courtesy of the individual drivers in the unit. Overall, this isn't a bad set; in fact it's easy to get used to and given everything that it does right it deserves a solid 7/10.

7/10



Plantronics GameCom 777

Price: R999 | Supplied By: Headset Solutions

I really expected these to be amongst the best, if not the best, in the roundup, but they were rather disappointing. The ear cups are comfortable but the head band is very tight and after a while will start pressing on your ears and temples. The unit supports Dolby Pro-Logic IIx, but the effect is horrendous on anything that wasn't encoded as such. Its best left off and the headset used as a traditional stereo set. The GameCom 777 is not bad by any stretch of the imagination but there are better units out there for significantly less money.

6/10

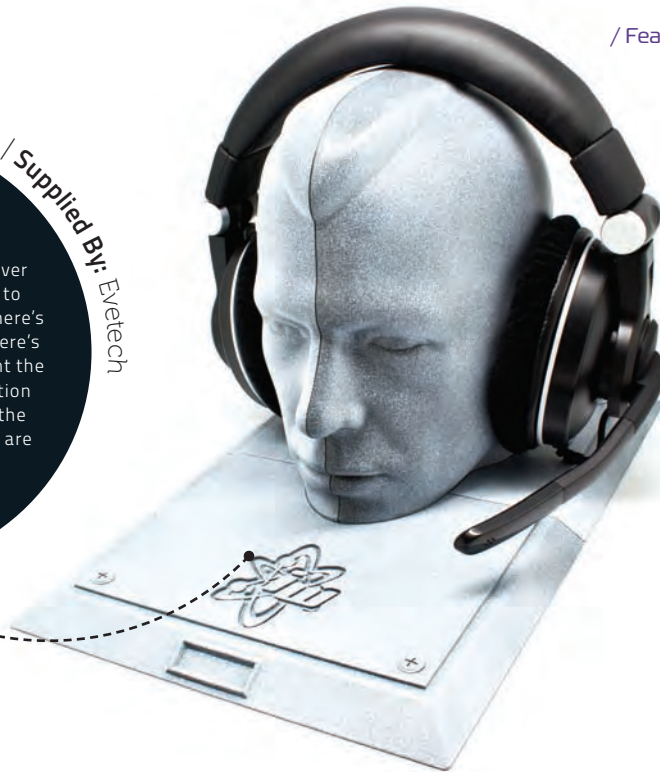


Corsair HS1A

Price: R699 | Supplied By: Evertch

By far the most comfortable headphone set out of them all. For this Corsair score a perfect 10. However it's everything else that isn't up to scratch. The sound is bland, and there's absolutely no bass to speak of. There's really nothing in this set to warrant the price they command. Noise isolation is good but other than that and the supreme comfort they offer, they are average at best.

6/10



Logitech G930

Price: R1,830 | Supplied By: Landmark Computers

Wireless headsets are synonymous with sub-standard audio quality. This is no different with the Logitech G930s. These headsets are probably the most well made in the entire round up and second to the Corsair unit are the most comfortable along with the ROCCAT Kave. The wireless headset is truly plug and play, as you merely plug the Bluetooth dongle in, press the power button on the left ear cup and you're ready. We can't state how fantastic the build quality is of this headset, it truly is a great representation of how good Logitech is with quality and ergonomics. Where audio fidelity is concerned, it is passable as mentioned earlier, but if that's not a priority to you and all you want is convenience, comfort and ease of use, these are as easy as it will get.

6.5/10

Ozone Strato Evo

Price: R720 | Supplied By: TVR

This was a set that held so much potential. It's built well and has some weight to it which gives off the impression that there's some serious quality about it. Sadly that's not the case, at least not entirely. It's an alright set delivering average sound at best. The bass once again vibrates more than anything else. It distorts easily and in some instances robs the audio signal, colouring it more often than not. Part of the blame is the audio controller which I suspect is an Intel C200 controller as well. As far as comfort is concerned the cans can be worn for extended periods of time without tiring you provided the bass is turned down. Other than that, this set will throw sound out so you should be mindful of that should you be using them in an environment where others would not want to hear what you're playing or listening to.

6.5/10



ALIENWARE | ALL POWERFUL



ANNIHILATE FROM ANYWHERE

POWERED BY THE 2ND GEN INTEL® CORE™ I7 PROCESSOR, THE NEW ALIENWARE M14X DELIVERS INTENSE POWER AND PRECIOUS PORTABILITY IN GLORIOUSLY HIGH DEFINITION. DOMINATE ANYWHERE, ANYTIME ON THIS 14" GAMING LAPTOP. OWN THE M14X. OWN YOUR OPPONENTS.

M14x

R17 999.95 each
incl. VAT

- Intel® Core™ i7-2630QM Processor (6M Cache, 2.00 GHz)
- Genuine Windows® 7 Professional (64 BIT)
- 14.1in Widescreen HD+ (1600x900) WLED with TrueLife
- 4096MB (2x2048) 1600MHz DDR3 Dual Channel Memory
- 750GB Serial ATA (7200RPM) Hard Drive
- 8X DVD +/-RW Drive Including Software
- Integrated 3.0 Mega Pixel HD Camera
- 3GB NVIDIA GeForce GT555M
- 4 Year, Next Business Day On-site Warranty

Available Colours: Base Stealth Black ; Base Nebula Red

**Incredible
CONNECTION**
Incredible Call Centre 0860 011 700

Now available at
selected stores or online

While stocks last, prices and specifications are correct at date of publication and may change without notice. Dell, the Dell logo, and Alienware are trademarks of Dell Inc. Intel, the Intel Logo, Intel Inside, Intel Core, and Core Inside are trademarks of Intel Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. For more information about the Intel processor feature rating, please refer to www.intel.com/go/rating. Dell disclaims proprietary interest in the trademarks or trade names of other entities used to refer to them or their products. Copyright 2010 Dell Inc. All rights reserved. Dell Computers (PTY) Ltd. P.O. Box 71170, Bryanston, 2021, South Africa. E&OE

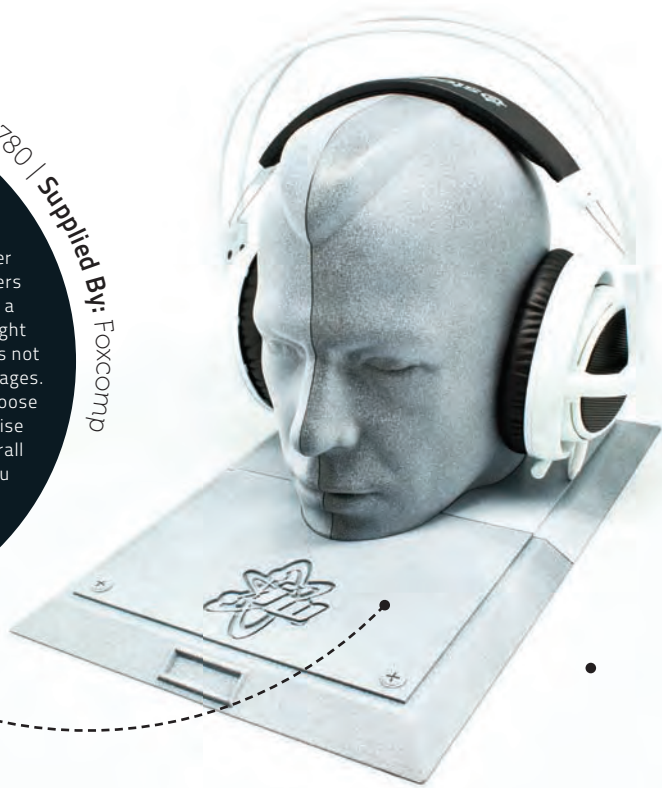


Steel Series Siberia v2

Price: R780 | Supplied By: Foxcomp

Steel Series will be well known to most gamers out there as manufacturers of some of the best headphones for gaming money can buy. This set is no different from their other sets and that is to say it's pretty good. The drivers are particularly good delivering balanced audio, a better dynamic range at the top end and fairly tight mid-range. The Bass is disappointing though as its not precise, easily muffled through complex bass passages. The biggest problem though is that the cups feel loose at the base of the ears so there's virtually no noise isolation and the fit is fairly uncomfortable. Overall one of the better sets in this roundup and if you don't mind the loose fit on the ears they are a set worth considering.

7.5/10



Cyber Snipa Sonar 5.1 Pro Surround

Price: R649 | Supplied By: Dawn of Gaming

This set was definitely the worst of them all. The set feels cheap and the 5.1 effect is laughable at the best of times. The sound distorts easily and they are just downright annoying to use for any reasonable period of time. Better in stereo mode, but not by much. Look at the other Cyber Snipa set as it is significantly better than this offering.

4.5/10

Tt esports shock

Price: R559 | Supplied By: Corex

This is one of the best looking sets in the roundup, the build quality is decent and they are relatively comfortable provided you afford yourself a break every so often. The sound is alright to say the least but the supposed bass enhancement just isn't there. The set is average for gaming but does provide some good noise isolation. The sound stage is narrow but it's fairly easy to get used to. I may have expected more from this set, but with that said it doesn't have any major shortcomings.

7/10

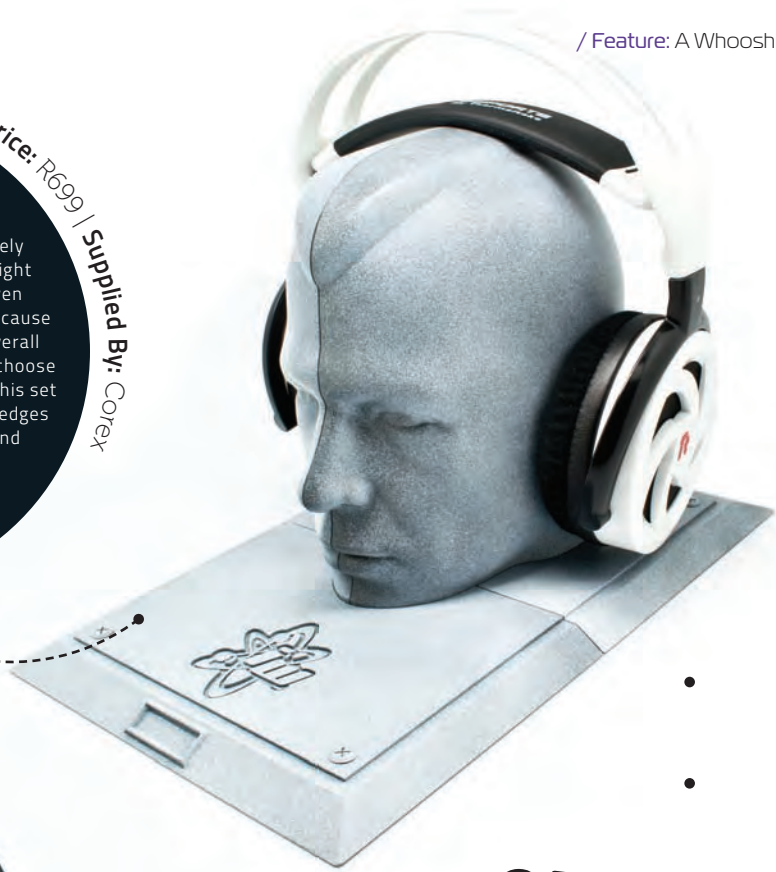


Tt esports Shock Spin

Price: R699 | Supplied By: Corex

The Shock Spin set is similar to the Shock Gaming set. It is however better looking and actually sounds distinctively livelier. The cans are comfortable and light but the sound has a better balance even though it may sacrifice noise isolation because of it. The bass is about the same, but overall this is a better pair of cans. If you had to choose between the two, I would definitely take this set as it will be a lot more versatile and just edges out the Shock Gaming headset in sound quality and comfort.

7.5/10



Genius HS-G500V

Price: R172 | Supplied By: TVR

Genius is synonymous with low-cost devices and this headset will not change that. The sound is average and the vibrating bass effect is a great gimmick for two minutes but is best left off as it will just cause a headache. It's not bad for a Genius product but, as always, you can do much better if you spend more. It is a functional set however and given the asking price, they just may be worth it.

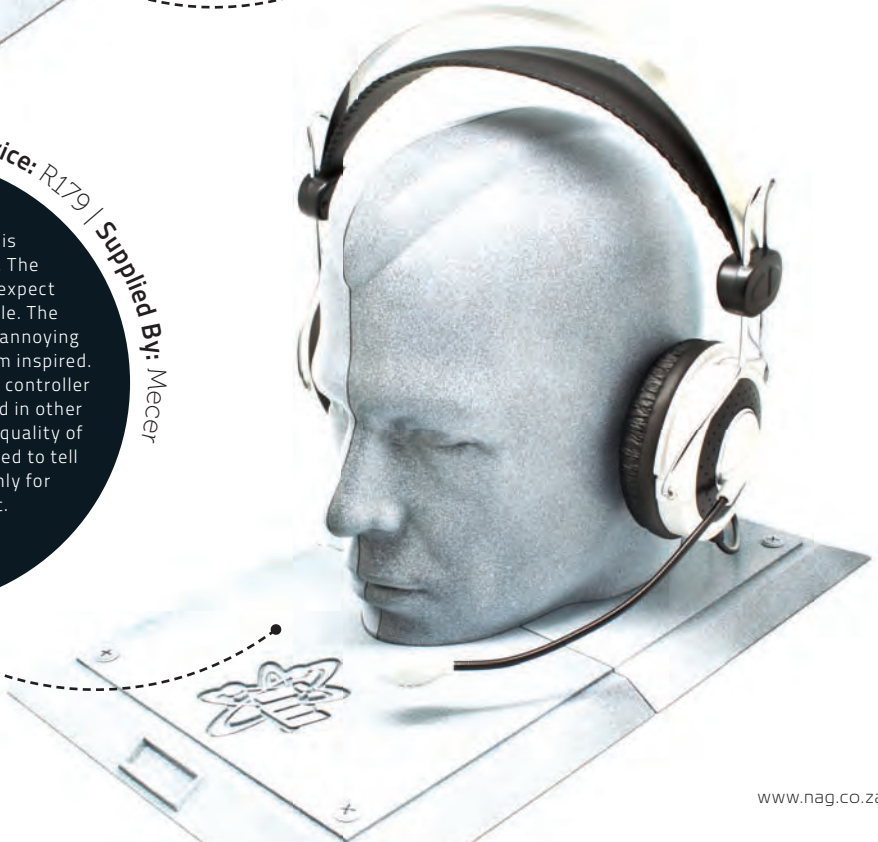
6.5/10

Mecer HS-819USB

Price: R179 | Supplied By: Mecer

The most basic USB set in this roundup is surprisingly not the worst. The sound is exactly what you'd expect and it's equally uncomfortable. The constantly blinking blue LED is annoying and the entire headset is far from inspired. Oddly enough the C-Media audio controller sounds better than the one used in other units (Intel C200) but given the quality of the drivers you'd be hard pressed to tell the difference. This set is only for those on a tight budget.

5.5/10



CONSOLE HEADSETS

With TV prices on the decrease and more computer monitors sporting HDMI inputs, it's not unlikely that you'll find a console sitting on one's desk next to a PC, for more private gaming than what one can achieve in the lounge. Or perhaps you're stuck in the lounge and feel the need to keep your game's audio to yourself. With that in mind, the market for console-focused gaming headsets is on the increase, and here we have a collection of such headsets. When looking at headsets like this, the most important factor for us was quality, but it's also important for these devices to be flexible enough to handle different console types; if they can be used with your PC as well, that's a bonus feature that we'd be pleased to have. Each headset in this roundup also includes a microphone, either removable or permanently attached, so that you can chat with your friends and enemies without the need to bring up an on-screen keyboard.

Tritton AX Pro

Price: R2,100 | Supplied By: Comet Computing

The AX Pro is a true surround sound headset, featuring four physical speakers per cup. This means that you don't have to rely on typically underperforming, software-based virtual surround sound, and the result is fantastic. Clear and loud high-frequency audio is met with sufficiently deep and heavy bass notes from the tiny (40mm) but impressive subwoofers. All of this is managed through the decoder box that accepts inputs from an optical cable or the included 9-pin mini-DIN adaptor that receives input directly from your 5.1-capable sound card. This is a surround sound headset that will actually make use of your sound card instead of resorting to a USB-based "all-in-one" solution, which we really appreciate. There's very little else we could ask for from a headset like this. It's incredibly versatile, sports official Dolby approval, fits snugly, is made of high-quality rubber and plastic, and performs very well. If you have the money to spend on a product like this, you can't go wrong with the AX Pro.

10/10



Plantronics GameCom X95

Wireless headsets worry me at times; one often expects them to be of inferior quality compared to their wired counterparts, but I'm pleased to say that this isn't the case with the X95. Of course, the issue here is that their wired counterparts aren't of the highest level of quality, but they still perform quite well. In-game performance proved to be decent, with clear high frequency notes and expectedly average bass from each cup's single 40mm driver. The X95 is also quite comfortable, and not as heavy as what one might expect from a wireless set, with the cup's cushions sitting snugly over the ears and not on them. The wireless receiver gives full signal up to a distance of about 4 metres before the audio starts to crackle. Unfortunately, the maximum volume in-game isn't very loud (while listening to music, its fine), but it does manage to drown out most ambient noise at that level so unless you're hearing impaired, this limitation shouldn't affect you.

7/10

Price: R999 | Supplied By: Plantronics





INCREDIBLE DEPTH FOR THE ULTIMATE GAMING EXPERIENCE.

Experience real-life depth with the new Samsung 3D LED monitor.

Real 120Hz • Brighter* 3D images • 2D to 3D image conversion • www.samsung.com

* Brightness comparison based upon monitors with same brightness in 2D.

*3D glasses are required and are included with purchase.



careil South Africa



Nitho 3 in 1 Gamer's Headset

This is a disappointing headset, mostly for a single reason: they're incredibly uncomfortable. It's a simple design flaw: the ear cup's cushions (designed to fit over the ear, rather than rest on it) are not thick enough, which results in the speaker grill pressing directly against your ears. You can tell that they've attempted to address this issue by placing foam over the grill, but all this serves to do is dampen the sound; it's not nearly enough to prevent the pain this headset will cause you within minutes of use. The disappointment stems from the fact that the audio quality is actually quite good, offering surprisingly deep bass and quite clear high frequency sounds, although the mid-ranges are prone to sounding a little muddy, partly because of the high bass levels and the foam covering. This headset also claims to include support for PC, but between the stereo RCA adaptors and the USB plug that does nothing but power the device, you'd be hard-pressed to find a way to connect this to your PC without the need for an RCA-to-3.5mm adaptor, which is nowhere to be found in the packaging

Price: R499

Supplied By: Garmatek

4/10

-
-
-
-

Plantronics GameCom X40

Representing the absolute middle of the road is this, the Gamecom X40. It's not a bad headset, but will hardly blow you away with its performance. It also suffers from the same issue as the wireless X95, since it looks and sounds almost the same – in that the X40 struggles to get to high enough levels of volume in-game. Also like the X95, it's quite comfortable, even more so thanks to the lack of batteries and slight increase in weight they bring, and both share the ability to swivel the boom mic up within the headband so that it's completely out of the way (and doesn't look as silly as headsets that store their microphones on the outside) when not in use.

Price: R499

Supplied By: Plantronics

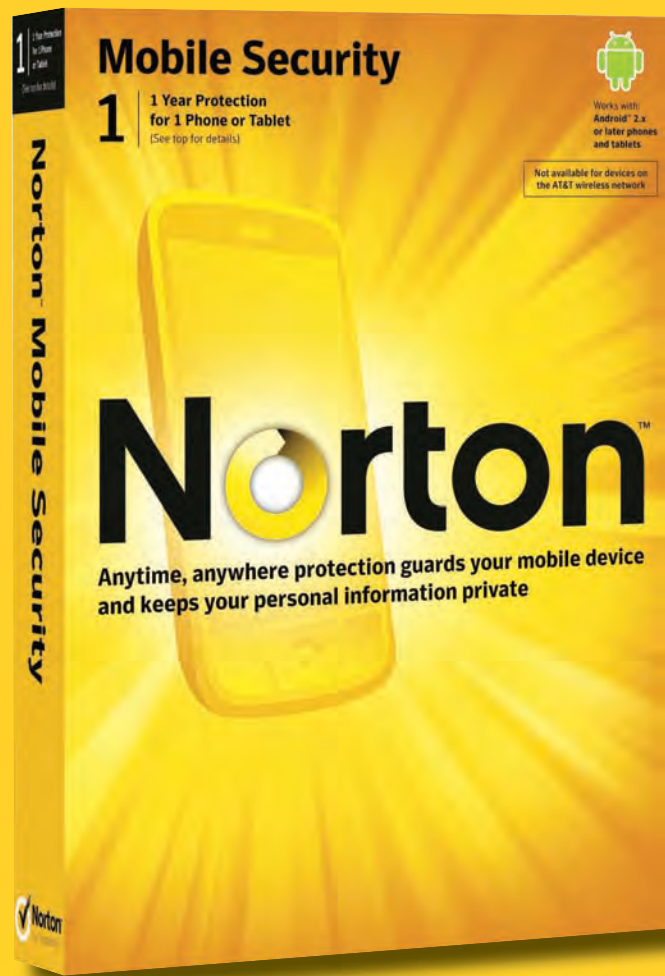
7/10

-
-
-
-
-



Norton by Symantec

launches new product targeting mobile users - Norton™ Mobile Security For Android™



Anytime, anywhere protection that guards your mobile device and keeps your personal information private

You can now protect your mobile device and the information on it with Norton Mobile Security. If your mobile device is lost, stolen, or its SIM card removed, you can remotely disable your mobile device to prevent thieves from using it or accessing your private information. You can even remotely delete all of your personal information so cybercriminals can't use it to steal your identity or money.

"We've taken the approach to developing a post-PC era Norton that includes introducing new mobile products, expanding our current products with mobile apps and combining our technology with mainstream consumer brands to protect more people in more places. The market reception has been highly positive and in the coming year we'll continue creating partnerships and technologies that will bring a trusted name in PC security to mobile and Wi-Fi users all over the world," comments Con Mallon, Director of Mobile Product Management, Symantec Corporation.

Norton Mobile Security lets you remotely disable your phone, erase all of your personal information, and instantly locate your phone, all with a simple text message.

If your phone is lost or stolen, you can locate it fast and not worry about cybercriminals running up your bill or using your private information to steal your identity or hard-earned money. It even

automatically locks your phone if its SIM card is removed, so if thieves try to use it with another SIM card they're out of luck.

Tired of being harassed by unwanted calls and texts? Norton Mobile Security helps protect your privacy – and your sanity – by letting you block calls and texts from specific phone numbers.

"As Android devices become increasingly popular, there is a greater chance they could be targeted by cybercriminals or more commonly, lost or stolen," says Mallon. "We are delighted to now offer customers the ability to secure their smart phones or tablets from physical and online crime with the powerful protection of Norton security."

When it comes to viruses and other threats, your phone is just as vulnerable to attack as your computer. Norton Mobile Security detects and eliminates mobile threats before they can infect your phone. It automatically scans all the files and app updates that you download. And it even gives you the option of automatically scanning SD (Secure Digital) memory cards for threats when you plug them into your phone. Weekly updates help ensure you have the most up-to-date protection. And it only updates when you're in your home service area, so you won't have to pay outrageous roaming charges.

Norton Mobile Security is a breeze to use. It installs with a few simple clicks, and we include a step-by-step tutorial that shows

you how to use all of the features.

Contact information, calendars, text messages, e-mail, usernames, Passwords – your life is on your phone. Keep both safe with Norton Mobile Security.

Norton Mobile Security is available at select retailers and the approximate recommended retail price is R399.

With Norton Mobile Security, you can:

- Prevent strangers from using your phone in case of loss or theft
- Protect your privacy and the personal information on your phone
- Detect and eliminate mobile threats before they infect your device.

Operating system

- Android™: 2.x or later

Device requirements

- Android™ 2.0 with 1.8 MB of storage.



Gainward GTX 560 Ti Phantom

Supplier: **Eveteck** / Website: www.eveteck.co.za / RRP: **R2,499**

We've just about seen everything the GTX 560 Ti is capable of by now and while it remains a good card, it's near impossible for manufacturers to extract more from this core than what has already been achieved. The GIGABYTE GTX 560 Ti SOC we reviewed as our first GTX 560 Ti was clocked at a stratospheric 1GHz, a near perfect product and one that we will use as reference point for all mid-range cards of this generation.

Having said that, this model has been discontinued and what we have left in the market are more attainable products such as the Gainward GTX 560 Ti Phantom we have here.

It's important to note that PALIT and Gainward share a production plant and this card is identical to the PALIT GTX 560 Ti, save for the cooler. Gainward is obviously aware that users are aware of this, so to skew your buying decision, the company has produced one of the best, if not *the* best, cooler on any GTX 560 Ti you can buy right now.

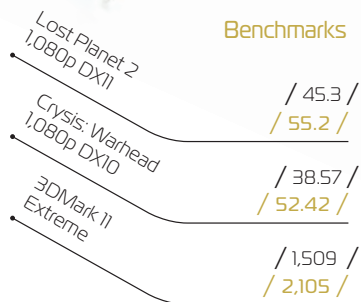
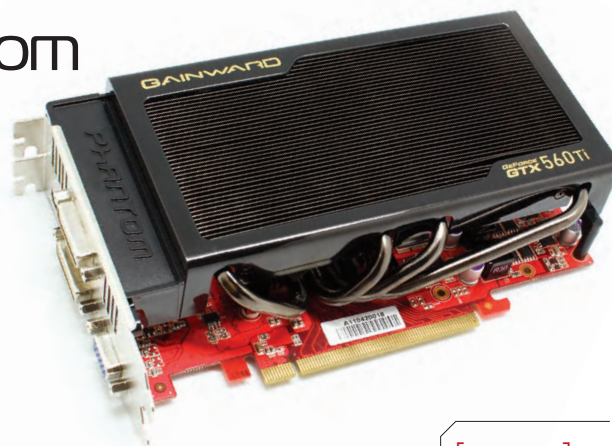
The Phantom cooler looks passive but it's obviously not.

The fins of the heat sink are located above the dual fans and besides making this look rather attractive, it makes for whisper-quiet operation and superior cooling. The card is virtually noise-free even with the fan turned up to its highest setting which happens to be 70%.

As for the performance, it performs identically to the ASUS Direct CU II GTX 560 Ti, which is great but given that it makes use of a much simpler, shorter and cheaper PCB with a 5-phase PWM, we would have expected this card to be much cheaper, yet it's not; it is hardly R100 cheaper than the ASUS card. Where overclocking is concerned, both cards probably reach the same levels, but you'd feel safer having your ASUS GTX 560 Ti at 940MHz which makes use of an enhanced and non reference PCB as opposed to this card which uses a simplified reference PCB.

Overall this is a good card; it performs well and is hardly audible. If you're in the market do consider this card.

NAG
Neo Sibeko



Baseline: NVIDIA GeForce GTX580

- PLUS** / Virtually inaudible / Heatsink works well
- MINUS** / Not compelling against the ASUS Direct CU II / 5-phase PWM

PROBABLY THE QUIETEST GTX 560 TI ON THE MARKET TODAY.

[specs]

Core:
832GHz GF114 (40nm)
Processors:
384
Render outputs:
32
Memory:
1024MB GDDR5
4GHz (128GB/sec)
API:
DirectX11/OpenGL
4.x / OpenCL 1.X /
PhysX/CUDA

7
OUT OF 10

Eveteck mid-range gaming PC

Supplier: **Eveteck** / Website: www.eveteck.co.za / RRP: **R10,999**

Eveteck has been building systems aimed at gamers for a while now, but many potential shoppers who visit their site might not be savvy enough to understand the huge range of machines on offer. To simplify the process, NAG sat down with the chaps from Eveteck to agree on what could be classified as the ultimate mid-range PC.

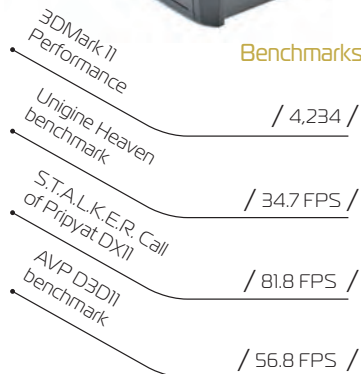
When we discussed the possible specs, we didn't think that Eveteck would be able to reach the R10,000 mark that they aimed at. In truth, this machine is a little higher, R11K excluding an operating system (or R11,899 including Windows 7 Home Premium), but for the performance you get, it's extremely impressive, so we'll let the extravagance slide.

From the look of the NZXT Tempest Evo that wraps up these Gainward, ASUS and Corsair components, you know that your rig will be impressive enough to get you a seat near the cool kids at your next LAN. The entire machine is also quiet enough to not irritate you (thanks to the water-cooling system), but the case has enough fan mounts (with six of the seven occupied, excluding the WC radiator) to allow for some



hardcore air cooling if that takes your fancy. Eveteck has assured us that if you're not interested in the water cooling, they'll gladly swap it for a high-end air cooler, the Noctua NH-D14, which you'll find reviewed in the next issue of NAG. We were happy to see the GTX 560 Ti manage to slip into this price bracket, as it offers a fantastic balance between price and performance, and pushes this machine into a level where it'll run any current game you throw at it, at the high or even ultra setting, at perfectly acceptable frame rates. For a mid-range PC, you can't ask for any more.

NAG
Geoff Burrows



- PLUS** / Great performance / Good price / Relatively quiet
- MINUS** / It's still not a R10,000 machine

ASIDE FROM AN EVEN LOWER PRICE, THERE'S NOT MUCH ELSE ON THIS MACHINE THAT WE'D DESIRE.

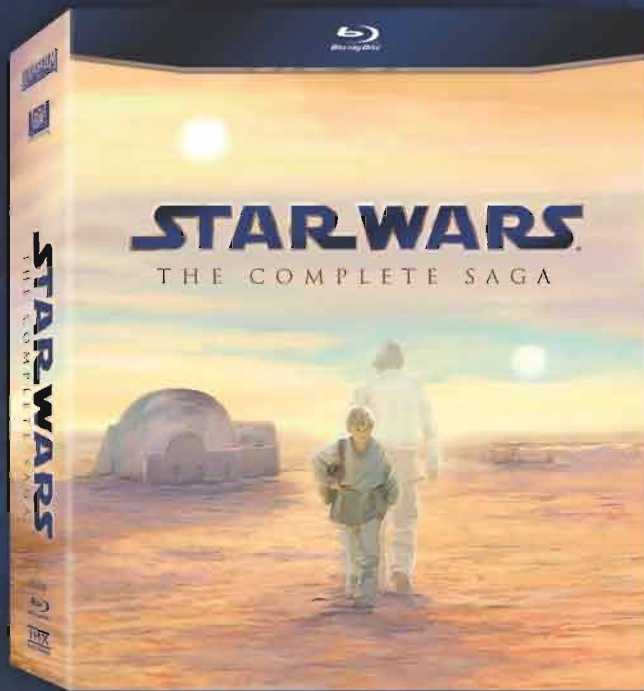


[specs]

CPU: **Intel Core i5-2500K overclocked to 4.5GHz**
Motherboard: **ASUS P8P67 Pro (B3)**
Display card: **Gainward NVIDIA GeForce GTX 560 Ti Overclocked Edition**
RAM: **Corsair 4GB DDR3 1600MHz**
Power supply: **Antec TruePower 750W**
CPU cooling: **Noctua NH-D14 (air) or Antec Kuhler H20 620 (water)**
HDD: **1TB Western Digital Caviar Black**
Chassis: **NZXT Tempest EVO**
Optical drive: **24x Dual Layer DVD +/- Writer**
Warranty: **24 months**

9
OUT OF 10

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER...
STAR WARS
ON BLU-RAY!



STAR WARS: The Complete Saga
Blu-ray (9 Disc)

R899⁹⁹ Save R100*

Coming September

PRE-ORDER NOW

OWN EVERY MOMENT

PACKED WITH NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN SPECIAL FEATURES, NINE-DISC COLLECTION PROVIDES AN UNPRECEDENTED LOOK AT "A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY"

Special Features:

STAR WARS: THE COMPLETE SAGA ON BLU-RAY is presented in widescreen with 6.1 DTS Surround Sound.

- **Disc One** – STAR WARS: Episode I The Phantom Menace
- **Disc Two** – STAR WARS: Episode II Attack Of The Clones
- **Disc Three** – STAR WARS: Episode III Revenge Of The Sith
- **Disc Four** – STAR WARS: Episode IV A New Hope
- **Disc Five** – STAR WARS: Episode V The Empire Strikes Back
- **Disc Six** – STAR WARS: Episode VI Return Of The Jedi
- **Disc Seven** – New! STAR WARS Archives: Episodes I-III
- **Disc Eight** – New! STAR WARS Archives: Episodes IV-VI
- **Disc Nine** – The STAR WARS Documentaries

LUCASFILM
Ltd

© Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All Rights Reserved



Look & Listen is NAG's preferred Blu-ray Retailer

DVD • CD • GAMES • DIGITAL • ACCESSORIES

Look & Listen
For the Fans

Shop online at www.lookandlisten.co.za or visit our stores nationwide. Contact us on 011 467 3717.

*Pre-order terms and conditions can be viewed at www.lookandlisten.co.za/terms. While stocks last. Errors and omissions excepted. Availability and prices subject to change at the discretion of the supplier. Not all items are available in all stores - please call your local store to enquire on availability.

CM Storm Sentinel Z3RO-G

Supplier: **Sonic Informed** / Website: www.sonicinformed.co.za / RRP: R699

If you've got strict anti-establishment standards and refuse to buy anything emblazoned with Logitech or Razer branding, then here's a cool, feature-rich alternative that'll suit your need to be different. It's called the Sentinel Z3RO-G, aptly named since it comes with a free copy of Futuremark Games Studio's gravity-defying *Shattered Horizon*.

The Z3RO-G comes packing all the usual features that we've come to expect from our gaming mice these days. There's on-the-fly DPI switching (up to 5 600 DPI) made possible by a pair of buttons located just below the mouse wheel. Tucked away beneath a plastic cover on the mouse's underside you'll find five 4.5-gram weights for weight customisation. It's adorned with randomly placed LEDs (different LED colours can be assigned to each profile you create for the mouse, so you can quickly see which profile you've got selected) and assorted doodads – most interesting of which is the tiny OLED display just below the aforementioned DPI-switching buttons. This tiny screen has a

few cool functions: by default it displays the *Shattered Horizon* logo, but it'll also display things like your chosen DPI, going so far as to allow you to upload a monochromatic image file (think clan logos and the like) that can be displayed in all its glory. Honestly, it's a bit eccentric and entirely superfluous, but it sets the Z3RO-G apart in this crowded arena.

It's a well-designed mouse for right-handed gamers, exceptionally comfortable to use and sturdy enough to withstand lots of abuse. The bundled software offers a range of tweaks and settings to suit your needs, although you might need to download new drivers to replace those on the packaged disc – it might just be me, but all the supplied installer did was add some empty folders to my hard drive without actually installing the software. A quick download fixed that, but it's fairly annoying that that was necessary. Still, the Z3RO-G is definitely worth considering if you're in need of a new gaming mouse. **NAG**

Dane Remendes



[specs]

Sensor:
5600 DPI "Storm Tactical Twin-laser" sensor
Buttons:
8 – programmable
On-board memory:
128KB, stores up to five game profiles
DPI display:
OLED
Weight system:
5 x 4.5g weights

/ PLUS / Very comfortable / Tons of software customisability
/ MINUS / Supplied software has issues

THE SENTINEL Z3RO-G ISN'T GOING TO REDEFINE MICE, BUT IT'S NEVERTHELESS AN EXCELLENT GAMING MOUSE.

8
OUT OF 10

GIGABYTE Z68XP-UD3-iSSD

Supplier: **Rectron** / Website: www.gigabyte.com / RRP: TBA

We received it on good authority some time ago that Intel would soon stop manufacturing the Z68 chipset. That is, the chipset was approaching EOL even though it had just been released. Needless to say this was concerning for a great many people, but at the same time understandable as Intel's Ivy Bridge, the successor to Sandy-Bridge was initially slated for Q4 2011, but now may only appear in Q1 2012.

What that means is that there's still some life left in the P67 and more importantly the Z68 chipset. A good thing then considering that this motherboard is amongst the latest from GIGABYTE. It would have been a complete waste if the chipset was to see its demise a couple of months later as this is a rather attractive product.

It's essentially a regular entry-level to mid-range Z68 board from GIGABYTE in the line of the UD3 series. The only difference here is that it has an Intel 20GB SSD build right onto the board. So when you buy this board you will receive a "free" 20GB SSD for use in your system to speed up

your main boot drive. Think of this as a caching mechanism of sorts. GIGABYTE calls it EZ Smart response which creates a hybrid drive for you using the 20GB MLC NAND and your magnetic drive. The combination is seen as a single drive by the operating system and through some smart programming it allows you to boost performance by some margin.

GIGABYTE claims up to 4X the performance, however as you would suspect real life gains are not as drastic. Our synthetic tests confirm that average read performance increased by 57% and 4K Reads (QD32) increased by a factor of 170. PCMark Vantage's HDD test suit however only showed an increase of 17.5%. Despite the synthetic benchmarks the real test was in everyday applications and the EZ Smart response software with 20G SSD really did make a difference.

For the price and what you get, this is an easy decision as you'd be hard pressed to find this performance and functionality at a better price. **NAG**

Neo Sibeko



Benchmarks

Super Pi 8M / 1min 57.590 /
CineBench 11.5 / 7.04 /
3DMark Vantage CPU / 9.34 /
/ 24,820 /
/ 33,737 /

Baseline: ASUS RAMPAGE III GENE

[specs]

Chipset:
Z68
Memory:
4x240-pin DDR3
CPU support:
Intel Core i5 / i7 LGA 1155
Slots:
2xPCI-E 16X, 3xPCI-E 1X, 2xPCI

/ PLUS / Built in 20GB SSD / EZ Smart Response actually works
/ MINUS / Nothing

Z68 ENTRY-LEVEL BOARD WITH A BUILT-IN SSD THAT DELIVERS GREAT HYBRID STORAGE PERFORMANCE.

9
OUT OF 10

TOP RATED GAMES

VISIT NAG ON YOUR PHONE AND **DOWNLOAD ANY OF THE PREMIUM GAMES** FEATURED ON THIS PAGE. WHILE YOU'RE THERE, CHECK OUT THE HOTTEST NEW PREVIEWS, HANDS-ON REVIEWS, THE LATEST FEATURES AND A WHOLE LOT MORE PURE AWESOMENESS.

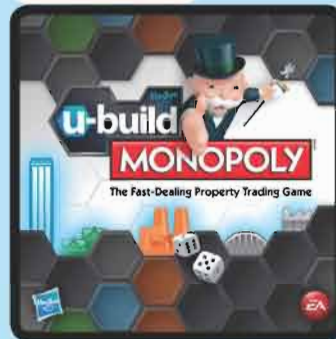
R40



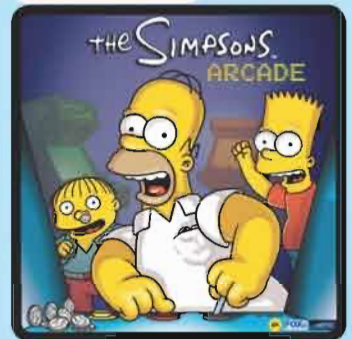
R40



R40



R40



EXPERIENCE THE GAMING THRILL
24-7. GO TO M.NAG.CO.ZA OR SMS
MOBI NAG TO 33978
SMS COSTS R1.50.

**THE ULTIMATE MOBILE
 DESTINATION FOR
 HARDCORE GAMING
 ENTHUSIASTS.**



M.NAG.CO.ZA



Samsung Apps

Visit the Best of the Mobile Web directory on thumbtribe.mobi and browse top categories, including entertainment, news, sport, technology, travel, motoring and more. Point your browser to thumbtribe.mobi or SMS MOBI thumbtribe to 33978 (R1.50).

1. Arkanoïd Evolution. © TAITO CORP. 1988-2009. All Rights Reserved. EA and the EA logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. 2. Bejeweled. © 2003-2006 PopCap Games, Inc. All rights reserved. Published by Electronic Arts under license from PopCap Games, Inc. Electronic Arts, EA, and the EA logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. Bejeweled is a trademark of PopCap Games, Inc. and is used with permission. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners. EA™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand. 3. © 2010 Electronic Arts Inc. EA and the EA logo are trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. Published by Electronic Arts Inc. under license from Hasbro, Inc. The MONOPOLY name and logo, the distinctive design of the game board, the four corner squares, the MR. MONOPOLY name and character, as well as each of the distinctive elements of the board and the playing pieces are trademarks of Hasbro for its property trading game and game equipment. © 1935, 2010 Hasbro. U-BUILD is a trademark of Hasbro and is used with permission. © 2010 Hasbro. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. 4. The Simpsons TM & © 2009 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All Rights Reserved. Game software. © 2009 Electronic Arts Inc. EA and the EA logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Antec High Current Pro 1200 Watt PSU

Supplier: **Evotech** / Website: www.evotech.co.za / RRP: **R2,399**

We haven't looked at a PSU in a long time and part of the reason lies solely with the difficulty involved with testing a PSU. Neither ripple nor noise on any line gives you a true reflection of how the PSU behaves under different loads. Load testers are a viable alternative but they are usually limited and very specific. As such it remains that the most practical but at the same time most unscientific way of testing a PSU is to put it under extreme load.

In this case the load in question was a 990X CPU north of 6GHz with all 12 threads enabled. This may seem a rather light load for most PSUs but that isn't the case. A PSU that can handle four GTX580 graphics cards may fail to supply enough current to the CPU at such a speed. Unfortunately the relationship between current, power draw, supply voltage, frequency and heat output isn't linear. It's rather complicated and as such using a 4-way SLI

or Crossfire X system isn't ideal in practice. Case in point was the Huntkey X7 1200Watt PSU. It was more than capable of handling any 4-way multi-GPU system and would serve well in a high-end gaming machine. However, it was near impossible to start the system at anything higher than 5.5GHz with 12 threads regardless of the voltage and temperatures used. The PSU would shut itself down much like our former Dream Machine PSU the IKONIK VULCAN 1200W PSU. Switching to the Antec HCP 1200 made all the difference. Not only was the CPU capable of scaling all the way to 6GHz, it would run through 3D Mark Vantage's CPU test without issue.

If you're not aware of it this is probably the most significant load you can place on any multi-core CPU and, as a result, the power required to operate the CPU at such settings is above 400Watts. The HCP performed well as expected and we aren't surprised because the world's



[specs]

Rating:
1200W
Certification:
80 Gold
Combined 12V
output:
1188W (99A)

number 1 overclocker Nick Shih works for Antec. To hold such a position you need a PSU that will not fail you. If a PSU is what you're looking for, this is probably the only one you'll ever need. From where we stand it's as perfect as they come.

NAG
Neo Sibeko

/ PLUS / Rock solid stability / Whisper quiet / Powerful 12V lines
/ MINUS / Nothing

10
OUT OF 10

THE BEST PSU WE HAVE HAD IN OUR HANDS BY FAR.

GIGABYTE GeForce GTX560 Super Overclock

Supplier: **Rectron** / Website: www.gigabyte.com / RRP: **TBA**

You're not seeing double. GIGABYTE has released yet another GF114-based Super Overclock card. This time the graphics card in question is based on the most recent addition to the 500 series. The GTX560 is essentially a GTX 460 1GB, but updated with higher frequencies for both the GPU core and the memory. Despite the higher clocks, TDP seems to have stayed at 150W somehow.

Given that we've already seen an overclocked GTX460 1GB card, we weren't expecting much from this one. This card uses the same PCB as the GTX 460 and the GTX560 Ti Super Overclock. As such you'll need the same mods to get the best out of this card should you so choose.

Performance wise, it's actually better than a pre-overclocked Radeon HD6870 which is impressive considering the price point. Having said that, 900MHz out the box is higher than any other GTX 560 on the market is clocked at and the numbers

speak for themselves. In a way this kind of performance devalues the reference GTX560 Ti from GIGABYTE and others because this will give you better performance at a lower cost.

With some voltage tuning, we easily reached the 1GHz mark and even more is possible with a concerted effort. For those who are on a budget, this is the card to get if the Ti or Radeon HD6870 is out of your budget. You'll have a hard time beating this at this price. That is provided you can get it at a reasonable price locally.

In SLI these cards will give you performance that eclipses the GTX 570 and sometimes is as good as the GTX 580 for a much better price. The power draw even in SLI is relatively close to that of a single GTX 580 and as such, it's hard to not be impressed by this GPU. It may not be new, but with such a high frequency it breathes new life into the ageing core.

NAG
Neo Sibeko



Benchmarks

Lost Planet 2 1,080p DX11	/ 42.3 /
Crysis: Warhead 1,080p DX10	/ 55.2 /
3DMark11 Extreme	/ 52.76 /
	/ 1424 /
	/ 2,105 /

Baseline: NVIDIA GeForce GTX580

[specs]

Core:
900MHz GF110 (40nm)
Processors:
336
Render outputs:
32
Memory:
1024MB GDDR5 4GHz (128.2GB/sec)
API:
DirectX 11 / OpenGL 4.x / OpenCL 1.X / PhysX / CUDA

/ PLUS / Even faster than the GTX 460 SOC / Runs cool
/ MINUS / Nothing

A GTX460 RE-SPIN THAT IS EVEN BETTER THE SECOND TIME AROUND.

8
OUT OF 10

Samsung Omnia 7

Supplier: Microsoft / Website: www.microsoft.com/windowsphone / RRP: R5,299

When we last reviewed a Windows Phone 7 device, OS was fresh out the barrel and, as such, lacked the maturity of its rivals Android and iOS. With a few months behind it, we take a look at another device running Microsoft's mobile operating system to see how WP7 is shaping up, and what Samsung has brought to the table.

Compared to the other WP7 devices available locally, the Omnia 7 is the largest. Its 4" AMOLED display boasts impressive contrast ratios (and reduced battery drain) but we can't help but feel that this is a little larger than what the 480x800 resolution can comfortably handle. As great as it is to look at images and play games on this device, fine text results in jagged edges caused by this display that's been stretched to fit the larger screen. At this size, the iPhone's Retina display proves that you can never have too many pixels. Other than the display and slightly bigger battery, there isn't much separating the Omnia 7 from every other WP7 device available, so let's see what the OS has been up to.

Since our review of the HTC 7 Mozart, there have been thousands of new applications for WP7. Gaming especially has seen a huge

improvement, with official ports of titles like *Angry Birds* and *Plants vs. Zombies* being welcome additions to this now impressive library of games, which sees a new Xbox LIVE title hitting the market every week. In addition, the mountain of third-party games and apps continues to grow, as does their quality with each update. What we're seeing is an impressive selection of software that is not only starting to compete with Android and iOS in terms of baseline offerings, but also gives users access to unique titles to go along with this unique OS. As time continues, we'll no-doubt see this trend continue.

NAG
Geoff Burrows



MS's upcoming "Mango" update for WP7 will bring over 500 new features including better multi-tasking, Internet Explorer 9, greater social networking integration and improved features for application developers.

[specs]

Display:
Super AMOLED
capacitive 4"
multi-touchscreen;
480x800 resolution.
Operating system:
Windows Phone 7
Connectivity:
HSDPA 7.2Mbps;
Wi-Fi 802.11 b/g/n;
Bluetooth v2.1
Battery:
Li-ion 1500mAh
Camera:
5MP stills; 720p
video recording.
Chipset:
Qualcomm QSD8250
Snapdragon (1GHz
Scorpion CPU;
Adreno 200 GPU)
Storage:
8GB onboard (16GB
option available)

PLUS / Contrast ratio / Maturing operating system / Smooth performance
MINUS / Screen resolution / No expandable storage

A GREAT DEVICE AND AN EXCELLENT WAY TO SHOW OFF THIS RAPIDLY-IMPROVING OPERATING SYSTEM.

8

OUT OF 10



INFO@DAWNOFGAMING.CO.ZA
SALES@DAWNOFGAMING.CO.ZA
TEL: 011 316 6418 SALES AND INFO
CELL: 082 900 4091 SALES AND SUPPORT

PROUD SPONSORS OF
PEWPEW GAMING

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.DAWNOFGAMING.CO.ZA

<p>GRAPHICS</p> <p>AMD</p> <p>CLUB 3D RADEON HD 6850 1GB OC R 1 729.95 ASUS RADEON HD 6950 DIRECT CUII R 3 139.95 ASUS RADEON HD 6970 1GB R 2 249.95 ASUS RADEON HD 6970 2GB R 4 049.95 CLUB 3D RADEON HD 6990 4GB R 6 119.95 ASUS RADEON HD 6990 4GB R 6 999.95</p> <p>NVIDIA</p> <p>ASUS GTX560TI DC 1GB GDDR5 R 2 269.95 ASUS GTX560TI DCII 1GB GDDR5 R 2 389.95 CLUB 3D GTX570 1280MB GDDR5 R 3 289.95 ASUS GTX570 1280MB GDDR5 R 3 799.95 PALIT GTX580 1536MB GDDR5 R 4 399.95 ASUS GTX590 3GB GDDR5 DCII R 7 299.95</p> <p>GAMING CHASSIS</p> <p>COOLERMASTER HAF 922 R 1 189.95 COOLERMASTER HAF X R 1 669.95 ZALMAN 651200 R 2 389.95 ANTEC LAN BOY AIR R 1 789.95 THERMALTAKE LEVEL 10 GT R 3 799.95</p> <p>MONITORS</p> <p>LG E 19425 LED 18.5" R 999.95 SAMSUNG 2333TN LCD 23" R 1 754.95 LG E2770V FULL HD LED 27" R 4 499.95 ASUS VE 278Q FULL HD 27" R 3 949.95 SAMSUNG 2233RZ 3D LCD 22" R 2 269.95</p>	<p>PROCESSORS</p> <p>AMD</p> <p>PHENOM 2 X4 965 BE 3.4GHZ R 1 299.95 PHENOM 2 X4 970 BE 3.5 GHZ R 1 589.95 PHENOM 2 X6 1055T 2.8GHZ R 1 719.95 PHENOM 2 X6 1075T 3.0 GH R 1 559.95 PHENOM 2 X6 1090T 3.2GHZ R 1 749.95 PHENOM 2 X6 1100T 3.36GHZ R 1 899.95</p> <p>INTEL</p> <p>CORE I5 655K 3.2 GHZ R 2 049.95 CORE I7 870 2.93 GHZ R 2 699.95 CORE I3 2100 3.1 GHZ R 1 099.95 CORE I5 2500 3.3 GHZ R 1 889.95 CORE I5 2500K 3.3 GHZ R 1 969.95 CORE I7 2600K 3.4 GHZ R 2 629.95</p> <p>POWER SUPPLIES</p> <p>AEROCOOL E78-730 700W R 499.95 HUNTKEY 600W APFC R 439.95 SILVERSTONE STRIDER 700W R 769.95 GIGABYTE ODIN 720W R 995.95 SILENT PRO GOLD 600 W R 1 255.95</p> <p>PERIPHERALS</p> <p>RAZER TRON KEYBOARD R 1 195.95 RAZER TRON MOUSE R 799.95 Cyborg R.A.T.9 GAMING MOUSE R 1 359.95 CYBER SNIPER CHAMP EDITION 5.1 R 699.95 RAZER BLACKWIDOW R 569.95</p>	<p>MOTHERBOARDS</p> <p>AMD</p> <p>ASUS M4A88 TD-M/USB3 R 989.95 ASUS M4A88 TD-M EVO/USB3 R 1 034.95 ASUS M4A89 TD-V EVO/USB3 R 1 199.95 ASUS M4A89 GTD PRO/USB3 R 1 599.95 ASUS CROSSHAIR IV FORMULA R 2 199.95 ASUS CROSSHAIR IV EXTREME R 3 499.95</p> <p>INTEL</p> <p>ASUS MAXIMUS III EXTREME R 3 699.95 MSI BIG BANG MARSHAL R 3 589.95 ASUS P8P67 PRO REV.3 R 1 849.95 MSI INTEL Z67 CHIPSET R 1 849.95 ASUS SABERTOOTH SERIES R 2 179.95 ASUS MAXIMUS IV EXTREME R 3 699.95</p> <p>MEMORY</p> <p>KINGSTON 3 X 2GB DDR3 R 779.95 CORSAIR XMS 2 X 2GB DDR3 R 759.95 LIMITED STOCK: MUSHKIN 1333MHZ 4 GB kit R 339.95 MUSHKIN 1333MHZ 8 GB kit R 659.95</p> <p>STORAGE AND DRIVES</p> <p>OCZ 120 GB VERTX3 R 2 799.95 SEAGATE XT 2TB R 1 409.95 ADATA SSD 64GB R 1 195.95 SEAGATE XT 3TB R 2 055.95 INTEL SSD 80GB SATA 3 R 1 769.95</p>
---	--	---

ALL PRICES INCLUDE 14% VAT.
PRICES SUBJECT TO STOCK AVAILABILITY
WHILE STOCK LASTS

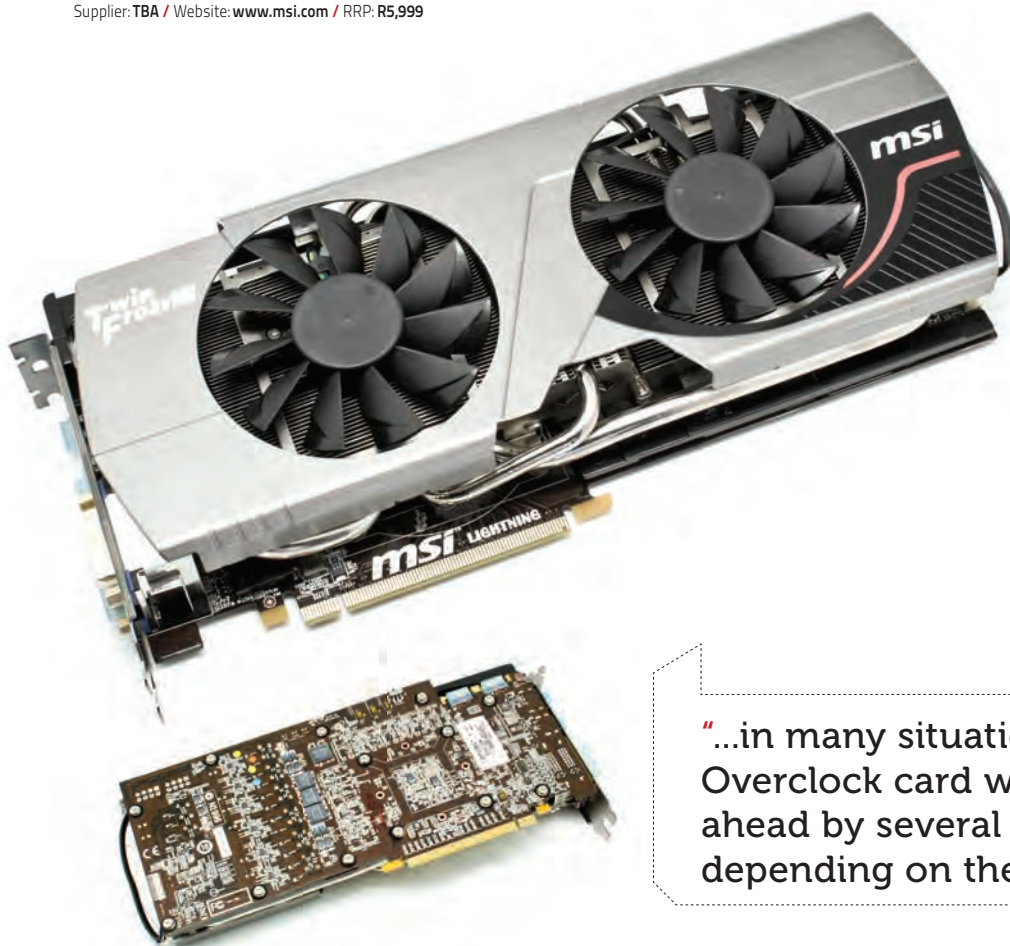
COMING AUGUST





MSI GTX580 Lightning

Supplier: TBA / Website: www.msi.com / RRP: R5,999



Benchmarks

Lost Planet 2 1,080p DX11	/ 56.9 /
Crysis 2 1,080p DX11	/ 55.2 /
Crysis: Warhead 1,080p DX10	/ 48.42 / / 44.763 /
3DMark11 Extreme	/ 56.69 / / 52.76 /
3DMark Vantage	/ 2,277 / / 2,105 /
Unigine Heaven Xtreme	/ 27,361 / / 26,053 /
	/ 1535.912 / / 1409.539 /

Baseline: NVIDIA GeForce GTX580

"...in many situations the Super Overclock card will come out ahead by several hundred points depending on the benchmark"

Say what you will about MSI and their motherboards, but one thing is true: they make some incredible graphics cards. In fact the GTX275 Lightning remains a firm favourite for the most popular benchmark in the overclocking community, 3DMark 2001SE. This holds true for the GTX480 Lightning as well. However you'd not know it because the 580 came out rather quickly after the 480.

You probably know everything you need to know about the GTX580 so we'll not go into that again. Suffice to say this particular graphics card deserves a thorough looking over, not because it is the fastest out the box, but because it's by far the best engineered one. Yes even better than the ASUS GTX 580 Matrix Platinum and its 18-phase PWM. See, MSI, unlike both GIGABYTE and ASUS, are not ashamed or rather not pretentious about why they have special edition cards.

MSI seems to know exactly who it is they are targeting this product at and they make no qualms about it. For a gaming card, you can do no wrong by buying this, but its true power lies in what it allows the competitive overclocker to achieve and how it goes about this.

With every graphics card out there, in particular the GTX 580, overclocking is not a simple matter of adding more voltage and cooling it as best as you can. No, that will get you nowhere fast

and in fact you'd be lucky to hit anything past 1,1GHz. With the 580 graphics cards you have several challenges not limited to circumventing OCP, OVP, PLL, CB, CBB and the dreaded Cold Slow bug. Some cards need even more attention to this and by the time a standard GTX 580 is modified and ready for sub-zero degree overclocking, you're several trimmers and a sizable amount of glue into potentially destroying the card. Even with all this you're not guaranteed you'll not run into some other limitations that may need more modifications, like some SMDs on the board being too cold or warm.

This is precisely where the MSI Lightning cards shine and in particular where the 580 Lightning sets itself apart from the rest, easily moving past the GIGABYTE GTX 580 Super Overclock, the ASUS GTX 580 Matrix Platinum and the Direct CU II as well. This card is an overclocker's dream. 16-Phase PWM, low ESR/ESL capacitors and most importantly DIP switches for everything I have mentioned above. Keep in mind that you will void your warranty by flicking any of these, but competitive overclockers do this anyway and the promise of world records is significantly more powerful than a warranty.

At the back of this card you'll find an OCP, PLL, PWM, GPU and a MEM switch. In addition to that there's a switch between the regular and the

LN2 BIOS. You'll also find dedicated and mounted measuring spots. This may seem insignificant to some but this is everything to the dedicated overclocker. Just these additions including the electronics on the board make this a peerless GTX580. There simply isn't anything out there on the market right now (at least at the time of writing) that is an equivalent to the GTX580 Lightning.

Out the box performance is near identical to the GIGABYTE card as it has a higher memory frequency but a lower GPU core clock. So in many situations the Super Overclock card will come out ahead by several hundred points depending on the benchmark. In games however it's never more than 1FPS difference. As such we would call this a tie of sorts, but because of the vastly superior PCB configuration and options, it's a simple win for the GTX580 Lightning.

If you are a gamer this is arguably the best GTX580, if you're a serious overclocker, this is the only GTX 580 to get. **NAG**

Neo Sibeko



[specs]

Core:
GF110 832MHZ
(40nm)
Processors:
512
Render Outputs:
48
Memory:
1536MB GDDR5
4.2GHz
(201.6GB/sec)
API:
DirectX11/OpenGL
4.x /OpenCL 1.X/
PhysX/CUDA

/ PLUS / Engineering / Speed / Features
/ MINUS / Nothing

THE BEST GTX 580 ON THE MARKET TO DATE, THERE'S SIMPLY NOTHING ELSE THAT PUTS TOGETHER SUCH AN ATTRACTIVE PACKAGE.

10
OUT OF 10

YOUR MISSION: GO GLOBAL

Register your domain

from

R79.00

imaginet
Est 1997

086 111 1101

info@imagnet.co.za

<http://www.imagnet.co.za>



OCZ Vertex 3 240GB SSD

Supplier: OCZ / Website: www.ocztechnology.com / RRP: R5,699



Benchmarks	
Average Read	/ 471.4 / / 230.7 /
Average Write	/ 234.7 / / 191.1 /
IO Meter IOPS	/ 17166.33 / / 1535.96 /
4K Read (QD32)	/ 183.1 / / 21.73 /
4K Write	/ 238.4 / / 12.5 /
PC Mark Vantage HDD	/ 51,291 / / 22,601 /

Baseline: Kingston 128GB SSD

"At the heart of this phenomenal performance is the newer SandForce 2281 controller which brings some sizeable gains as you can see in the numbers. "

OCZ is thoroughly a storage company by now. Yes they may manufacture PSUs as well, but it's very clear that the company's focus is in the solid state storage market. Understandably so because OCZ has been making some amazing drives of late and they are unofficially the leaders when it comes to consumer-level SSDs, at least when it comes to performance.

The last OCZ drive we tested was the OCZ Agility 2 which was our Dream Machine SSD, but in comparison the Vertex 3 is significantly better in every regard. This was expected but the difference in performance is more than what we could have ever hoped for as the Vertex 3 drive is twice as fast in the vast majority of tests that we did. Of course the synthetic numbers that the PR department flaunts are much higher than the numbers we got, but the performance is sufficiently impressive that it makes no practical difference.

At the heart of this phenomenal performance is the newer SandForce 2281 controller which brings some sizeable gains as you can see in the numbers. Closer inspection of the benchmark numbers reveals that the IOPS performance is actually better than

that of the ReVoDrive which if you don't remember, is a dedicated PCI-Express SSD. Obviously write speeds are lower, but they are impressive still for a SATA 6Gbps drive. We recorded an average read speed of 471.4MB/sec, slightly higher than what we achieved with the ReVoDrive. The write speeds were a respectable 234.7MB/sec and arguably the more important number as you'll do more of this than outright reading of large files from your SSD. This is particularly true for 512k and 4K writes. Using a Queue Depth of 32, we recorded an impressive 183.1MB/sec in writes and 238.4MB/sec in the write test. You'll have noticed that this is higher than the average read speed.

We suspect an error of sorts in the testing software, but suffice to say it is one impressive number. The speed of this drive is made more apparent by IOMETER's IOPS results. While we didn't report on all of the tests results, the Total IOPS result is 17,166 versus 1535 of the reference Kingston SSD we use. This is more than 10X the speed and probably the most impressive result we recorded. PC Mark Vantage HDD results were also way above anything else we've used before. 51,291 for the

HDD suite compared to 22,601 for the Kingston SSD and 3814 for a regular 7200rpm magnetic drive.

As always, nothing is perfect and from the pricing we've seen this drive is a little on the costly side. However you have the option of the 120GB model which should deliver roughly the same speed. For such premium performance though the price is somewhat justified, at least until others can manufacture and bring to market drives that compete with this one, not only in performance but reliability figures as well.

For ultimate performance and capacity, the OCZ Vertex 3 240GB strikes the right balance these days as 120GB is a tad on the small side, especially with the average game consuming 10GB of storage. Power users, competitive overclockers and those who don't fancy the PCI-Express cards and their prices but want 1st grade performance, look no further than the OCZ Vertex 3 SSD. **NAG**

Neo Sibeko



[specs]

Controller:
SF2281
NAND Type:
MLC
Form Factor:
2.5"
Interface:
SATA 6Gbps

/ PLUS / Incredibly fast performance / Enhanced encryption security
/ MINUS / Can be quite pricey

OCZ DOES IT AGAIN. THE FASTEST SSD WE HAVE TESTED TO DATE.

9
OUT OF 10

ASUS Rampage III Black Edition

Supplier: **ASUS** / Website: za.asus.com / RRP: **R4,299**

You may be wondering just how many Rampage boards the X58 platform has seen by now. We don't blame you; ASUS, much like others (could be that it's the "others" following the market leader's footsteps) has produced a staggering number of SKUs for the X58 chipset since its inception in 2008. Believe it or not this is one of the longest lasting chipsets in computing history, not counting AMD's chipsets, which have essentially been the same for virtually 6 years not counting the name changes.

This is particularly true for Intel which is prone to platform, socket and chipset changes almost every 12 months, if not less. With X58 chipset, the 1366 socket and platform will be going into its fourth year by the time X79 is released early next year.

So we can't fault ASUS for making yet another Rampage board, especially given that it's possibly the best, features-wise, that the company has ever produced. In what seems like a response to what GIGABYTE has done with the G1 line of products, ASUS has pulled out all the stops and outfitted this board with the best the X58 series has seen. The Rampage III Black Edition, unlike the Rampage III Extreme, features native 4-way SLI without the need for the ROG X-Pander, a standalone full size Xonar sound card and a dedicated

network interface card. As far as audio solutions are concerned, there aren't really any sound cards that can claim to be better than the ASUS offerings. This functionality in addition to the 4-way SLI capability makes this the most capable X58 board from ASUS.

The dedicated network card is not meaningful in the least, but as a tick box feature, it probably helps move units. Every other feature that this board has is in the BIOS and in the overclocking features. It's annoying that ASUS doesn't support the ROG Station on this board at all but given the target market this is probably not a train smash.

Is this board better than the Rampage III Extreme? In some ways yes it is and that, in our eyes, makes it a fine product. This one comes highly recommended.

NAG
Neo Sibeko

Benchmarks	
Super Pi 8M	/ 2min04.395 / / 2min 5.175 /
CineBench 11.5	/ 9.29 / / 9.34 /
3DMark Vantage CPU	/ 33,433 / / 33,737 /

Baseline: ASUS RAMPAGE III GENE



[specs]

Chipset:
X58+ICH10R
Memory:
6x240-pin DDR3
CPU support:
Intel Core i7/ LGA 1366

/ PLUS / Looks great / Xonar high-end sound card
/ MINUS / No OC Station support / 2:10 memory multiplier doesn't work

THE ULTIMATE X58 BOARD FROM ASUS, IF YOU EXCLUDE ITS PREDECESSOR THE RAMPAGE III EXTREME.

8
OUT OF 10

www.landmarkpc.co.za | 0861-iSales | sales@landmarkpc.co.za

From Single Components to Fully Customised Overclocked Gaming Computers, Landmark has it all.



Razer Mamba - Wired and Wireless Dual Mode with Charging Dock



Razer Chimaera 5.1 Wireless Gaming Headset for Xbox 360 or PC



Razer BlackWidow Ultimate Dragon Age II Mechanical Gaming Keyboard



FRONTOSA
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Modding 101

Remote power/reset switches

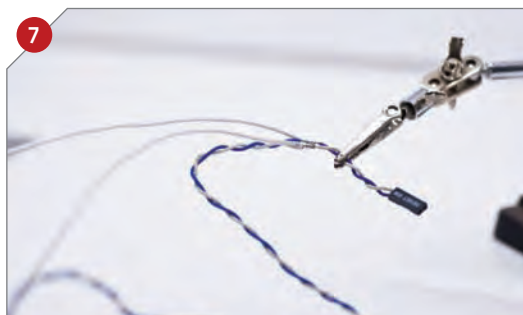
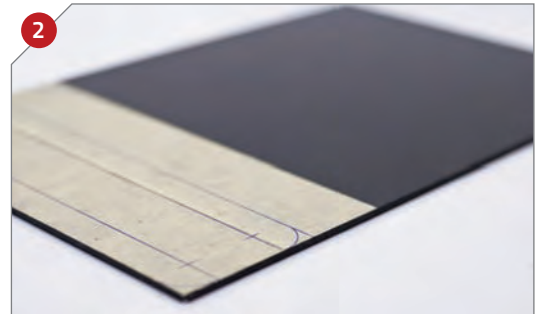
WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- / Some perspex (you could use aluminium as well)
- / Two switches
- / Some thin wire
- / A soldering iron
- / A Dremel tool or drill
- / A 20mm holesaw
- / Cable sleeving (optional)
- / A small furry squirrel (optional)

A TIP FROM THE EXPERTS

NEW GUY

Picture your swiss army knife, just with an electric motor and a Li-Ion battery. That's exactly what Dremel has recently launched: The Multi-Max. The Multi-Max is an oscillating tool that moves an accessory (e.g. a cutting blade) in a 1.5° angle to the right and to the left – with between 2,000 and 21,000 moves per minute. Pretty simple, so far. As usual with Dremel, the accessories do the thing. Twelve different accessories allow you to cut, sand, saw and scrape into almost every material, from plastic to soft metals to copper to wood. It also allows you to do flush-cuts (cutting something even that sticks off a flat surface). Like the Dremel rotary tools, the Multi-Max can be used for multiple applications and will be of great help when you consider giving your desktop housing a bit of a different design.



Like many of you, my computer sits under my desk. Those of us with full size tower cases are especially likely to have our cases under our desks, because they're just too big to have on the desk. The problem with this, however, is that if you want to press the power and reset buttons, you practically have to get on your knees to get there. Imagine there was a way for you to press your power and reset buttons without any of that "butt in the air" action?! Let's make that a reality.

/ STEP 1 /

The first thing you need is your perspex and your switches (**Image 1**). I chose to use two vandal-resistant switches. I got these from a local electronics store. Grab some masking tape and cover up the perspex. The reason we take the plastic off the perspex and replace it with this masking tape is that you can make all your lines and measurements on the perspex, without the chance of them coming off (**Image 2**). You basically just need to make it the size you want, and find where you want the switches to sit. This is entirely up to you. I went with a very simple layout.

/ STEP 2 /

Next up, you'll want to cut your piece of perspex. You could use a Dremel tool, like the 4000 series or the cordless 8200, these will do the job perfectly. You could also use a jigsaw (**Image 3**). After this you'll want to make some holes for your switches. The switches I used have a 19mm diameter, so I

used a 20mm holesaw. If you don't have a bunch of holesaws for this sort of thing, you could use a Dremel here again (**Image 4**). If that's the case, start off with a pilot hole, and just work it bigger with your dremel. Precision isn't absolutely necessary, as the switches cover any imperfections.

/ STEP 3 /

This part is probably the most difficult, as this is where you need to bend the perspex. These days, I use a makeshift bending brake that I made myself, but you could do this just by clamping your perspex to the edge of a workbench. Clamp your perspex down, and keep something solid, hard, and dead straight on top of it too. You need to heat up the part of the perspex that will bend, but heat it up enough! The first one I made for this article actually broke because I didn't heat it up enough, so take your time heating it up. Heat it up with a blowtorch. I used Dremel's VersaTip, but any blowtorch-like tool will work just fine. It should be really easy to bend (**Image 5**). You should be left with something that looks more or less like this (**Image 6**).

/ STEP 4 /

Now, the wiring. The connector that plugs into the motherboard is a small little black connector that only has two wires. We need to solder a second set of wires onto this connector. It doesn't matter which way you fit these wires; there's no positive and negative. You just need to make sure

THE DREMEL 4000 SERIES



that when you press the switch, it makes a connection. So, here I've got mine soldered (**Image 7**). Once that's done, you'll want to put heatshrink on the wires to keep them from accidentally touching. The last thing you want is to have your PC shut down while you're searching a cave in *Minecraft*.

/ STEP 5 /

Connect the other end of the wires to the switches in your panel. If you want to make it all look really nice, you could sleeve all the cables before connecting them. This will make it all look nice and clean (**Image 8**). You also need to drill a small hole in the back of your case for these new wires to go through. I suggest drilling the hole into one of the rear I/O panels where your expansion cards are.

/ STEP 6 /

The last thing you need to do is fix this to your desk. I mounted mine just to the left of me. It's really easy to reach, and now I can power my PC up/down and reset it from these switches (**Image 9**).

That's all there is to it! Very simple mod, but it makes life a little easier. You could take this one step further and mount a remote DVD ROM tray eject switch, or even some activity LEDs. Use your imagination and go crazy!

If you need any help, drop me an email and I'll help you out! Catch me at ett@nag.co.za. **NAG**

Ett Venter



DREMEL 4000 SERIES

*sms the answer to the question to 32541 and stand a chance to win a Dremel 4000 series.

Q. How many accessories come with the Dremel 4000 series? (hint: 45)

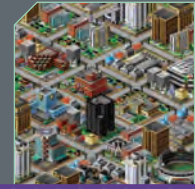
- sms' charged at R1 each
- competition closes 31 August 2011
- winners will be notified by sms

- The most powerful and versatile rotary tool on the market
- Improved ergonomics
- Comes with a Flexshaft and 45 accessories

www.dremel.com

DREMEL®

Remember when...



Following a bunch of classified events sanctioned by other classified factors, I recently moved my base of operations from one classified location to another. Planetary security may have been at stake¹. Logistically, this involved a lot of dismantling of laser weapons prototypes, several emergency dispatches to the Large Hadron Collider's top secret sub-sub-sub-basement level², and packing of important stuff into boxes. Actually, mostly just the packing bit.

Somewhere in between the sandwich toaster, the coffee machine, and a miniature cactus that kinda looks like that Romulan mining ship from *Star Trek*³, I was confronted by the not inconsiderable aggregation of some 25 or so years of video gaming. Okay, that pirated copy of *King's Quest 1* on a 5¼-inch floppy disk is totally MIA, and I've no idea what happened to my PS2⁴, but most of it's still there, including a mouse from around 1990 that most closely resembles a strangely beige brick with a modest range of button-shaped accessories.

Oh, the memories.

Here's a boxed CD-ROM version of *Sim City 2000*, manuals and everything. My favourite part of this game was using the building editor to create Nineteen Eighty-Four-class dystopian metropolises. It looked like a baseball stadium, perhaps, and officially it was a baseball stadium, but the trembling citizens of Airstrip Six could never be quite sure it wasn't some covert annex of the Ministry of Love⁵.

Here's *Conquests of the Longbow* – it originally came bundled with a cardboard replica of the Nine Man's Morris game and a chunky manual featuring academic essays about the Robin Hood legend. Here's *StarCraft*, which I used to play with a friend via a parallel cable hooked up to the printer ports on our PCs. Here's *Arcanum: Of Steamworks and Magick Obscura*, which I once tried to play as an increasingly

"Okay, that pirated copy of *King's Quest 1* on a 5¼-inch floppy disk is totally MIA, and I've no idea what happened to my PS2..."

liberal adaptation of Stephen King's *Dark Tower* series – an endeavour I eventually abandoned because the stupid plot kept getting in my way⁶.

And here's *The Da Vinci Code*, the first game I ever reviewed for NAG, back in 2006, and also the first game I ever awarded 2/100. Sniff, it's special in its own special way. This is also more or less my five-year anniversary with the magazine, so that works out too. **NAG**

Tarryn van der Byl

¹ Or not. That's classified too.

² But you didn't hear about that from me.

³ Which is why I bought it.

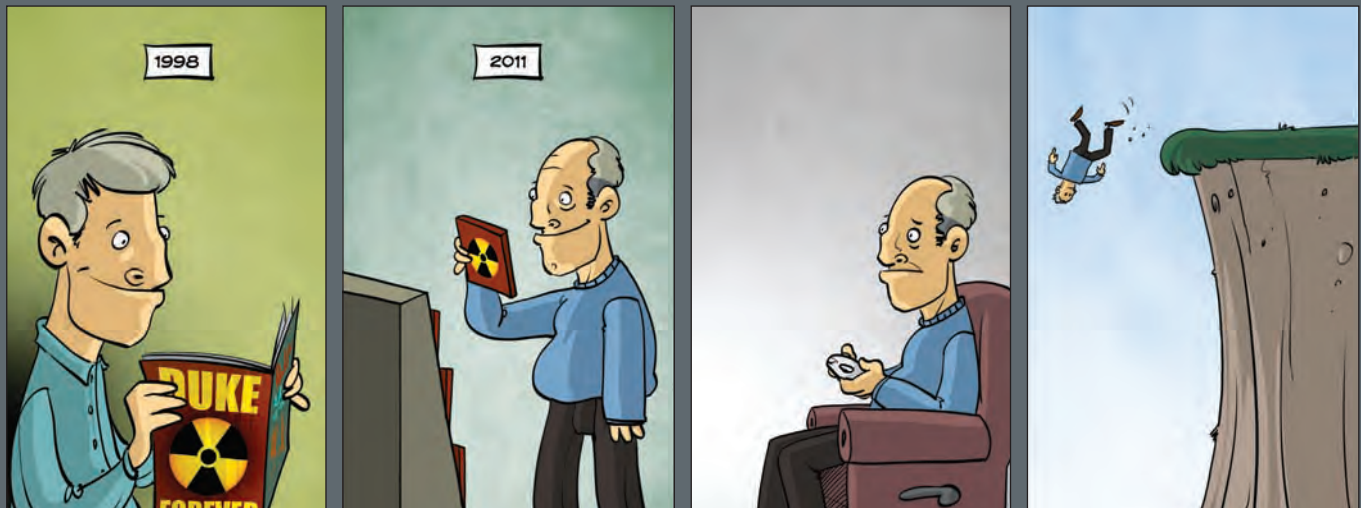
⁴ Seriously, if you have it, please let me know. I still haven't finished *Bust-A-Move 2*, and I probably never will, but I'd like to know I could if I wanted to. Even though I probably couldn't. That game is hard.

⁵ It was. Hahahaha. It was. Not even the game *knew* it.

⁶ Damn it, Virgil, I'm looking for a man in black. Have you seen him? STOP FOLLOWING ME. No, I don't care about this "Living One" you're banging on about all the time. Oh, that's me? **** this, I'm out.

Extra Life

By Scott Johnson - ©2011 All rights Reserved - Myextralife.com





PlayStation®
Move



YOU ARE THE RESISTANCE

— myresistance.net —

INSOMNIAC
GAMES



PS3™

PlayStation 3

SONY
make.believe

The **ZyXEL** digital home



1 PBG11N0-F1
300Mbps Internet Access
Supports Firewall/WPS/WPA/WPA2
Wireless N 300Mbps

2 NSG-4615
Gigabit Wireless N Router
Supports WPS/WPA/WPA2

3 NSA-220 Plus
Central Digital Media Library
Secured by TFTP/HTTPS

4 ZyWALL USG26
Firewall Security Gateway
VPN - Private Security Tunnel
Social Network Control
Anti-Spam Filtering

5 WRG4115
Wireless N & 3G Router
3G Backup Support (USB 3G Modem)
WPS / WPA / WPA2 Support
Wireless N Lite 150Mbps Router

6 NSG-410N
Wireless N 300 Router
WPS / WPA / WPA2 Support
One Touch Wireless Setup
High Speed 300Mbps

7 DMA-1100P
Digital Media Adapter
Full HD Digital Media Streaming
1080p Content Streaming

8 WAP-320S
Wireless N Access Point & Repeater
High Speed 300Mbps
One Touch Protected Setup

9 NWD-270N
Wireless N Adapter
One Touch Protected Setup
Wireless N Lite 150Mbps



For more information visit www.rectron.co.za or call **0860 582 835** / For Support call our National Technical Support Line: **0861 788 789**

Johannesburg:
Tel: +27 11 203 1000
Fax: +27 11 203 1940

Cape Town:
Tel: +27 21 555 8200
Fax: +27 21 555 7136

Durban:
Tel: +27 31 582 0200
Fax: +27 31 582 0280

Port Elizabeth:
Tel: +27 41 398 7082
Fax: +27 41 398 7140

Bloemfontein:
Tel: +27 51 430 0000
Fax: +27 51 430 1144

Join Rectron's social network today: Join and "Like" Rectron on Facebook™ | Follow "Rectron SA" on Twitter™