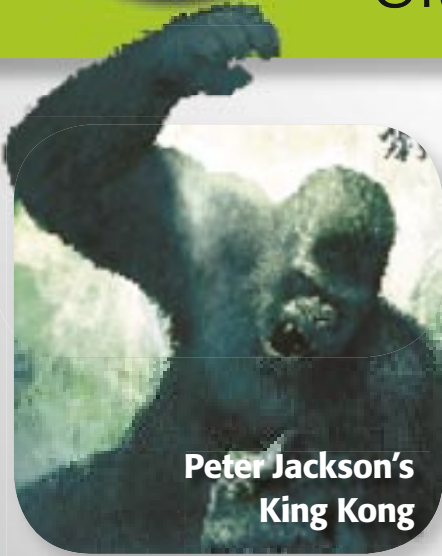




# THE WAY

## It's Meant To Be Played

Ultimate PC gaming with GeForce



Peter Jackson's  
King Kong



Age Of Empires III



Serious Sam 2

# Blockbusters

Enjoy the season's hottest games  
on the hottest gaming platform



City Of Villains



F.E.A.R.



Chronicles Of Narnia:  
The Lion, the Witch  
And The wardrobe



## Welcome

Welcome to Issue 7 of *The Way It's Meant To Be Played*, the magazine that showcases the very best of the latest PC games. All the 30 titles featured in this issue are participants in NVIDIA's The Way It's Meant To Be Played programme, a campaign designed to deliver the very best playing experience possible.

Development teams taking part in the programme are given access to NVIDIA's hardware, with NVIDIA's developer technology engineers on hand to help them to get the very best graphics and effects into their new games. The games are then rigorously tested by NVIDIA for compatibility, stability and reliability to ensure that customers can buy any games with the TWIMTBP logo on the box, confident that the game will deliver the ultimate 'install-and-play' experience when played with an NVIDIA GeForce-based graphics card.

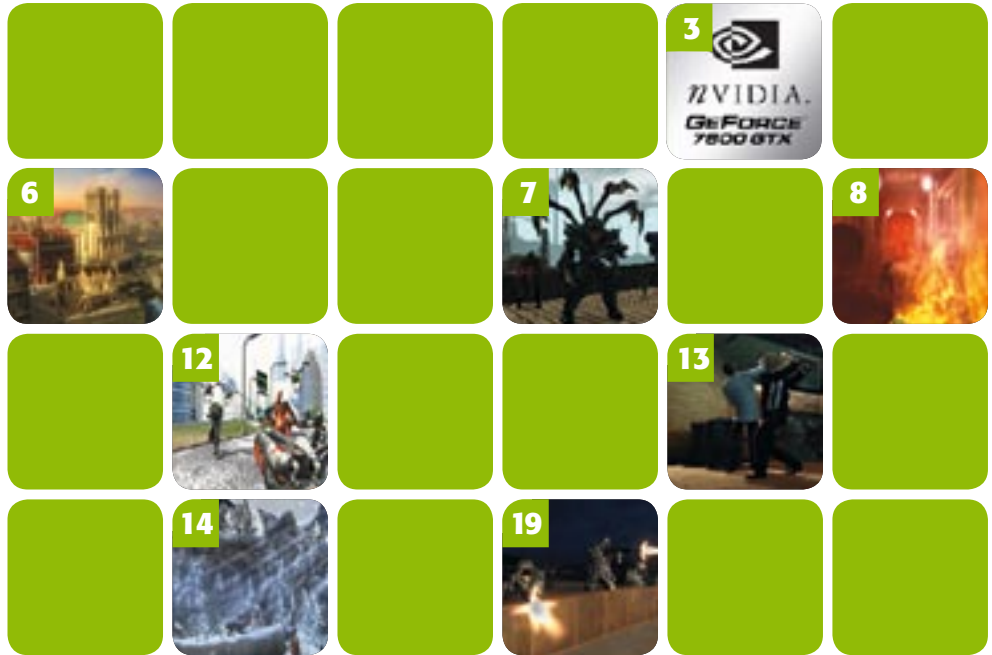
Games developers today like to use Shader Model 3.0 technology for stunning, complex cinematic effects – a technology fully supported by all NVIDIA's GeForce graphics processors (GPUs), as is High Dynamic Range (HDR), which creates lighting effects to truly bring games to life. Combine these with NVIDIA's hugely successful SLI technology, which enables two graphics cards to be used together in a single PCI Express-based PC for the highest possible performance, and you can see why NVIDIA graphics continue to set the standard.

Since our last issue earlier this year, we've seen the graphics performance bar raised again with the introduction of NVIDIA's brand new GeForce Series 7 graphics processors – the most advanced GPU ever built, running over twice as fast as the dual-slot GeForce 6800 Ultra. We have more on GeForce Series 7 and its staggering performance on page 22.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *The Way It's Meant To Be Played* – let us know if there's anything you think should be included in our pages.

### Darryl Still

Head of developer relations, EMEA  
NVIDIA  
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gaming experience

**FuturePlus**



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# NVIDIA Hits Full Throttle With GeForce 7800 GTX

**S**avvy gamers have been eagerly awaiting the next generation of graphics processing units (GPUs) from NVIDIA for some time now. At last we can reveal the technology that's set to push gaming to the next level. Representing a significant leap forward in 3D graphics design, the new NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7800 GTX GPUs deliver up to twice the shading power of previous generation cards and fill rates of some 10.32 billion texels per second.

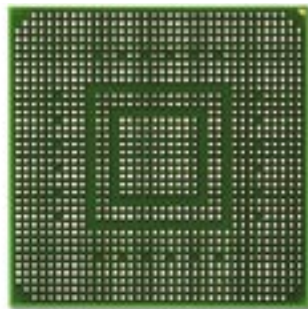
The GeForce 7800 GTX also brings a number of movie-level image processing functions to the realms of truly affordable, real-time 3D processing. Microsoft® DirectX® 9.0 Shader Model 3.0 compatibility, a new NVIDIA® CineFX™ 4.0 engine, high



dynamic-range (HDR) lighting support, and support for NVIDIA® SLI™ technology (for up to twice the gaming performance of a single GPU configuration) comprise just a handful of the product's industry-leading features.

You can read more about the amazing new GeForce 7800 GTX's incredible performance, its innovative feature set, and the significance of NVIDIA SLI support over on page 22.

[www.nvidia.co.uk/page/geforce\\_7800\\_systems.html](http://www.nvidia.co.uk/page/geforce_7800_systems.html)



■ The NVIDIA GeForce 7800 GTX GPUs deliver unprecedented power to your PC.

## NVIDIA launches the International Mobile Gaming Awards

**B**eyond the world of the desktop and notebook, NVIDIA is also working to deliver the best possible graphical experience on a whole range of mobile solutions. The International Mobile Gaming awards, initiated by NVIDIA and supported by leading companies including Orange, Nokia, and Alias, have been designed to promote this by recognising the world's most talented mobile developers.

The contest was officially launched at the E3 event in May, 2005, and entrants (including bedroom enthusiasts, students, and industry professionals) have until October 17th, 2005 to submit their proposals via the official IMG Awards Web site. Twenty projects will then be chosen, with support provided for the qualifying entrants to build a demonstrable version of their concept. New companies and students will even be provided with office space and technical assistance. Four winners will then be announced at the 2006 3GSM World Congress in Barcelona.

[www.imgawards.com](http://www.imgawards.com)



IMGAWARDS



Orange Partner  
great minds think differently



■ The Quadro FX4500 packs a huge punch.

### INTRODUCING THE QUADRO FX 4500 GPU

It's not only gamers that benefit from NVIDIA's commitment to delivering ever-greater graphics processing power. Designed for pro-level users, the NVIDIA Quadro® FX 4500 delivers an incredible 50 percent more horsepower, support for NVIDIA SLI multi-GPU technology that enables even greater performance, and the implementation of several breakthrough features. These include 32x full-scene antialiasing, support for up to four dual-link high resolution displays from a single PC, and the ability to match multiple units with the NVIDIA Quadro G-Sync board to drive displays such as large-scale powerwall screens.

[www.nvidia.co.uk/page/quadrox\\_family.html](http://www.nvidia.co.uk/page/quadrox_family.html)

### LOWER COST SLI DELIVERS GREATER POWER

By enabling users to double up their graphics processing potential by placing two video cards into one PC, NVIDIA SLI technology revolutionises graphics performance for professional and high-end enthusiasts. Now NVIDIA is bringing this remarkable technology to the mainstream, with SLI support on the highly popular GeForce 6600 GPUs. When used in conjunction with new, lower priced, SLI-based motherboards, the result is a powerful entry-level graphics solution that any gamer would wish for.

[www.slizone.com/page/home.html](http://www.slizone.com/page/home.html)

### WINNERS NAMED IN ELECTRONIC WORLD CUP

**T**he fifth Electronic Sports World Cup came to a spectacular climax on Sunday, July 10th. Held at the Paris Louvre, the NVIDIA-sponsored event was broadcast both online and on television. The French ultimately came out on top, winning the *Unreal Tournament 2004*, *Warcraft III* and *Gran Turismo 4* categories, while the USA ruled with *Counterstrike*, winning both the main and female-only categories. A Russian clan walked away with the *Quake III Arena* trophy, while Saudi team Arabian Joker scored with *Pro Evolution Soccer 4*.

[www.esworldcup.com](http://www.esworldcup.com)





Publisher: **2K Games**  
Developer: **Pterodon**  
Release: **October 2005**

## Vietcong 2

**B**ased on first-hand accounts from Vietnam soldiers, *Vietcong 2* puts players into the boots of two soldiers fighting on opposing sides during the Vietnam War's infamous Tet Offensive. The first is a US Captain, who is initially tasked with escorting a war reporter but soon finds himself embroiled in the bloody conflict. Battling through 14 distinct locations, the ultimate aim is to reclaim the Imperial Palace and the pivotal Vietnamese city of Hue. The second playable character is a young Vietcong conscript, fighting with the South Vietnamese Army, who eventually rises to the rank of Sergeant and has to do battle in the Hue Uprising.

The gritty action covers everything from combat in rice fields and jungles through to street-by-street urban combat, with each historically accurate mission flowing seamlessly into the next. Developer Pterodon already has something of a reputation for pushing graphical boundaries, but with *Vietcong 2* the studio has really excelled itself. "The NVIDIA development support team has helped us a lot, especially

with optimisation of our new rendering engine, providing us with detailed information and useful suggestions about how we should improve our pixel shader libraries," notes Pterodon's Jarek Kolar.



■ Battling through the finely modelled recreation of the ancient city of Hue, *Vietcong 2* soldiers can make use of a whole range of vehicles.



Publisher: **Deep Silver**  
Developer: **Piranha Bytes**  
Release: **January 2006**



■ Detailed environments, incredibly life-like characters, and an ever-evolving storyline push *Gothic 3* into uncharted action role-playing territory.



## Gothic 3

**I**f you haven't already sampled the delights of the popular *Gothic* series, this latest instalment provides the ideal starting point. Blending a strong narrative with a free-roaming, 'living' world, *Gothic 3* takes fantasy genre into more epic, involving and visually spectacular territory.

Played out on the wildly diverse mainlands of the fantastic game world featured in earlier *Gothic* titles, this thrusts gamers into a world where humankind has been enslaved by orcs. Thereafter the game constantly changes and evolves, and the story's evolution depends wholly on the unique actions of each gamer. The laws of cause and effect have rarely been so tightly integrated into the fighting fantasy experience.

The same can be said about *Gothic 3*'s true variety and beauty. The many challenges and side quests bring more than 50 magic spells and over 100 weapons into play, while more than 50 monsters, animals and enemy types lie in wait.

"We've been flabbergasted by the sheer power delivered by the multiple pixel pipelines on NVIDIA hardware," says developer Piranha Bytes. "In particular, its ability to render z-only pixels twice as fast is essential to engines like ours that run a pure z-pass before rendering any textured objects." We're sure you'll agree that just one look at the images from the game should convince even the most jaded gamer of *Gothic 3*'s visual charms.

## The Matrix: Path Of Neo

**T**he trilogy may be complete, but stories from deep within the Matrix continue. The Wachowski brothers (the creators of *The Matrix*) have joined forces with development studio Shiny Entertainment to give *Matrix* fans what you've always wanted. Yep, you can be 'the chosen one', guiding Neo on his journey to become humanity's saviour within the virtual, machine-controlled world.

While the six million-selling *Enter The Matrix* presented a story that ran parallel to the original films, in *Path Of Neo* you can re-live all your favourite scenes from all three blockbusting movies. You'll get embroiled in everything from martial arts showdowns in temples and gravity-defying battles against the Merovingian's soldiers, through to spectacular scraps with the one and only Agent Smith. The addition of actual footage from the trilogy puts another layer of icing on the generous *Matrix* cake, while the pathways offered to you as a player and the consequences that result from your actions have been scripted and directed by the Wachowski brothers.



■ Get ready to step back into the Matrix, this time in the guise of The One, the most famous of its inhabitants.

Much like the original movies, *Path Of Neo* is a visual knockout. Familiar environments have been faithfully reconstructed. All the wild martial arts, bullet-time sequences, and other reality-bending antics of the Matrix inhabitants are present and correct, and even the likenesses of all key cast members are included – including those of Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, Carrie-Ann Moss and Hugo Weaving. Who could resist?



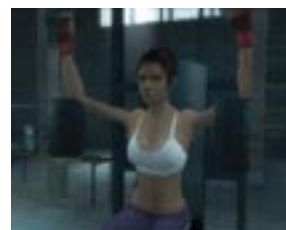
Publisher: **Atari**  
Developer: **Shiny Entertainment**  
Release: **November 2005**

## Case study: Fahrenheit

**A** paranormal thriller set in the dark underbelly of New York City, *Fahrenheit* is not your average action adventure game. Instead try to imagine an atmosphere-drenched murder mystery that combines true interactivity with all the visual flair of a real movie. Using motion picture techniques such as actor direction, motion tracking and capture, contextual music scores, and multiple camera views, *Fahrenheit* uses its cinematic splendour to draw the player right into the heart of the story. And with the ability to play as one of four different people, including Lucas Kane – a man wanted for murder but with no recollection of the actual crime. Already awarded 'Best Action Adventure' and 'Most Innovative Game' at the 2004 E3 computer show, PC gamers can now find out what the fuss is all about for themselves.



■ A psychological thriller, an epic four-way interactive odyssey, and a uniquely cinematic kind of action adventure – *Fahrenheit* is like no PC game you've ever played before.



Publisher: **Atari**  
Developer: **Quantic Dream**  
Release: **September 2005**





Publisher: **Microsoft Game Studios**  
Developer: **Ensemble Studios**  
Release: **October 2005**

# Age Of Empires III

A civilising game that's truly built to perfection...

**F**ew strategy game series have proven their mass appeal as much as *Age Of Empires*. A mind-boggling 16 million copies of the game have already been sold. The secret of its success is its canny ability to take familiar world history and use it as the backdrop to an accessible and wildly addictive game of empire-building, trading and combat.

It's a formula that *Age Of Empires III* pushes further than ever before. Picking up where its predecessor left off, it gives players the opportunity to build up one of eight European civilisations in the highly eventful period between 1500 and 1850AD, a time in which the New World is ripe to be explored, colonised and conquered. But not without a fight from its indigenous inhabitants or rival European empires.

*Age Of Empires III* also introduces a number of significant new gameplay elements, not least a new combat system. This combines complex strategy, realistic physics effects and great visuals – with battles including the use of both blades and gunpowder. Also new in this latest epic is the ability to build a capital city in Europe, which provides a way to measure the success of the campaign over in the New World. The Americas, meanwhile, are portrayed in vibrant detail, giving gamers the opportunity to search for treasure in the Caribbean, hunt bison on the plains of North America and journey deep into the jungles of the southern continent.

This also represents a quantum leap in graphical terms, with physics simulation and a superb new graphics

## The lighting and shadow effects lend each and every scene a depth that's unlike anything seen before on the PC

engine designed to push the power of NVIDIA technology in a unique way. The ever-evolving city locations are intricately rendered, while the vast landscapes benefit from stunning lighting and shadow effects that lend

each and every scene a depth and softness that's really unlike anything seen before on the PC.

Dave Pottinger, Technical Director at Ensemble Studios has nothing but praise when talking about NVIDIA's support for the powerful Shader Model 3.0 and HLSL (High Level Shader Language). "Using Shader Model 3.0, we can do advanced effects in *Age Of Empires III*," he explains. "These include true high dynamic range lighting and film-quality real-time water effects, techniques that enhance the overall experience in our game."

■ *Age Of Empires III* harnesses the latest 3D technologies supported by NVIDIA to bathe its highly detailed environments in incredible light and shadowing effects.



■ There's no time to sit and rest in *Age Of Empires*. The civilisation-building action switches to the New World and you also get the chance to build your own European capital city.



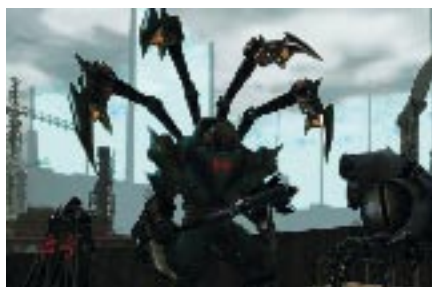
## City Of Villains

**S**o you've saved the world as a card-carrying superhero – now how about playing for the other team, fighting for evil and living a life of crime on a grand scale? That's the exciting and enticing premise of *City Of Villains*, the sequel to NCSoft's critically acclaimed massively multiplayer online role-playing game *City Of Heroes*. This all-new experience gives thousands of gamers the chance to play together in the same crime-infested world, working their way through the ranks from lowly thug to legendary arch-criminal. And of course no all-conquering bad guy's reign of doom is complete without a fortress of evil – so *City Of Villains* enables gamers to design and build their very own, complete with vicious weapons and diabolical defences.

As with its predecessor, *City Of Villains* presents the action in glorious, effects-laden cartoon 3D. Not that NCSoft and Cryptic Studios have been idle. This standalone sequel also makes full use of the latest NVIDIA technologies. "There's no better platform for experiencing *City Of Villains* than on NVIDIA GeForce graphics processors," opines Brian Clayton, Producer of *City Of Villains* at NCSoft. "The blazing-fast performance and high-quality rendering allows gamers to experience *City Of Villains* exactly the way it's meant to be played."



■ In *City Of Villains* gamers get to play with new super powers and abilities, crazy new costumes, and – here's the best bit – indulge in all manner of evil deeds.



Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**NCSoft**  
**Cryptic Studios**  
**September 2005**

## Case study: Auto Assault



■ Explore a post-apocalyptic future, form gangs, embark on quests, and smash the hell out of other gamers in *Auto Assault*, a new kind of Massively Multiplayer Online Game.



**T**he world of PC gaming hasn't been the same since the introduction of the Massively Multiplayer Online Game genre, one that enables hundreds, even thousands, of gamers to exist in the same Internet-based game universe. But while the majority of MMOGs are based around fantasy and role-playing themes, *Auto Assault* blasts off in the other direction, leaving high-tech carnage and the smell of burning rubber in its trail. Set in a post-apocalyptic future where humans, mutants and 'Biomeks' battle for control of what's left of our world, this has been designed to provide more speed, more thrills, and more instant action than any other MMOG around.

As the name suggests, vehicular combat is at the very heart of *Auto Assault*. Driving through hostile environments, players must fight for every scrap of wealth, power and fame while turning their vehicle into a lethal, uniquely customized fighting machine. Taking a spin through the world of *Auto Assault* it's not only the vehicles that suffer in the battles between rival factions. The world itself is uniquely destructible, with the *Havok 2* physics engine making all the car behaviours, carnage and action that much more realistic, while the 3D engine lavishes as much attention to detail on the vast, *Mad Max*-style landscapes as it does the beautiful stars of the show: customisable cars, motorcycles and even tanks!



Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**NCSoft**  
**Net Devil**  
**Early 2006**



Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**Dreamcatcher**  
**Mindware**  
**October 2005**

# Cold War

## From Russia with love? No chance, mate...

**S**et during the tumultuous 1980s, *Cold War* follows the story of a journalist who travels to Moscow and quickly finds himself deep in the midst of an international conspiracy to take control of the Soviet Republic. Beaten up and thrown into jail by the KGB, he must somehow escape, battle elite Soviet forces, and bring down the conspiracy. Oh, and remember to pick up the dry cleaning.

It's a truly epic struggle that takes him through numerous infamous frosty-looking locations, from the notorious Lubyanka Prison to the bleak and industrial heart of Chernobyl.

Played out in both third- and first-person perspective, *Cold War* builds on the kind of stealth-based exploration seen in the giants of gaming like *Metal Gear Solid* and *Splinter Cell*. But all the while it's expanding the concept to provide gamers with a fantastic sense of

freedom (or lack of it...) within the communist state.

In many instances there's no single way to overcome a challenge – instead players can choose to tackle it more sensitively, or with all guns blazing, or by finding a solution somewhere in between. There are even rubber bullets for taking down civilians without mortally wounding them. The game also places a strong emphasis on improvisation, with the ability to fashion new weapons and traps to quickly and quietly eliminate a range of opponents, while hidden routes open up further pathways for progression. No game of espionage and covert operations would be complete without cool gadgets, and *Cold War* dutifully obliges – just wait until you see what the zoomable X-ray camera can do.

Visually *Cold War's* use of both an over-the-shoulder viewpoint and one

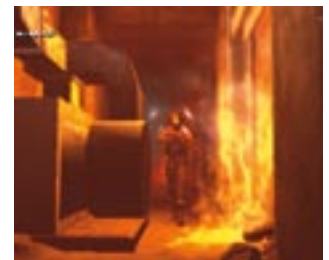
through the eyes of the hero enables you, the gamer, to get a real sense of the character you're playing – which is sadly lacking in so many no-nonsense shoot 'em ups. And the game engine is particularly adept at atmospheric lighting effects, from warm night glows to blazingly lit scenes filled with amazing flame effects. Normal mapping is also used extensively, piling on extra detail to scenes and characters already modelled with a high number of polygons. And, of course you get to pull off all the cool stealth manoeuvres – but with a bit more polish than normal. "NVIDIA hardware allowed us to move one step forward in graphical excellence," explains Karel Papik, Chief Executive Officer CEO at Mindware Studios.

When paired with elegant design and a meaty game engine, the results are nothing short of magical – as *Cold War* so coolly demonstrates.

■ Players can use stealth, fire power, create traps, and even use rubber bullets to tackle the many challenges that lie ahead in the heart of the Soviet Republic.



■ Prepare for a chilly reception in the Soviet Republic, in captivating espionage thriller *Cold War*.



■ *Cold War* dutifully demonstrates the awe-inspiring lighting effects.







■ Harnessing the remarkable 3D engine used by *Doom 3*, *Quake IV* features superb per pixel lighting and shadowing techniques.



Publisher: **Activision**  
Developer: **ID Software/Raven**  
Release: **TBA**

# Quake IV

It's only the classics that keep coming back for more...

**S**hoot 'em up fans rejoice – after meeting their *Doom* in ID Software's most recent action horror game, it's time to fight the alien Strogg race once more in the latest instalment of the legendary *Quake* series.

Todd Hollenshead, CEO of ID Software explains that this remarkable new title – developed with long-time collaborators Raven Software – cherry-picks the best narrative and gaming elements from previous titles in the series to provide a perfect starting point for the fourth. "We felt that *Quake 2* was the best single-player of all of the *Quakes*, and we felt that the *Quake 3* style, with *Arena* elements, was the ultimate version of multiplayer," he says. "We really believe we've combined the best single-player experience with what was the best multiplayer of all the *Quakes* and put those together to make the best *Quake* yet"

The game marks the first time ID Software has collaborated with veteran studio Raven on a *Quake* title, but the two go back a long way. Most recently Raven was responsible for the return of ID's *Wolfenstein* saga. Clearly, though, with ID's acclaimed *Doom 3* game engine and Raven's design skills the *Quake* franchise really couldn't be in safer hands.

The list of features alone will be enough to delight *Quake* fans. The blaster, hyperblaster and nailgun all return, as does the peerless rocket launcher. You'll even be able to use the nailgun to climb the walls: it's clear that the *Quake 3*-style gameplay in the multiplayer is massively benefiting from the more robust *Doom 3* physics technology. The rocket-launcher, meanwhile, brings rocket jumping back to the multiplayer formula, a trick that enables shots fired downwards to propel players across



■ The *Quake* saga continues, this time using ID Software's world-leading graphical skills to give the battle against the Strogg a grittier, highly detailed, and more gruesome look.

distances. *Quake IV* truly places the emphasis on deft use of movement and accurate shooting, for what Hollenshead describes as a more pure gaming experience.

But *Quake IV* isn't just set to turn the multiplayer community upside down. Single-player gaming gets equal billing, with an all-new battle on the Strogg homeworld. There's a whole army of soldiers fighting side-by-side against cybernetic enemies, even commandeering Walker vehicles and hovertanks as they battle across the planet. And then there's the story arc of the hero character, Kane. We're not giving too much away by revealing that the tide of war only truly begins to turn when Kane survives a gruesome operation by the enemy, and learns to use the abilities of his half-robotic body against the alien hordes...

■ TWIMTBP title *Quake IV* may well just be the best PC shoot 'em up ever.





Publisher: **Konami**  
Developer: **Hothouse**  
Release: **September 2005**

## Case study: Crime Life: Gang Wars

**V**iolence, backstabbing, gang warfare – it's all in a day's work for gang members out in the streets of Grand Central City. And in *Crime Life: Gang Wars* players get a real taste of urban street culture, embarking on a life on the wrong side of the law and working through the ranks until they control their very own gang. Blending free-roaming gameplay with a detailed storyline, *Crime Life* presents its very own hip hop-flavoured brand of action, strategy, and beat 'em up carnage. Fans of movies like *New Jack City* and *Boyz 'n The Hood* will immediately identify with the ultra cool atmosphere of the game, but make no mistake – no other videogame has dared to present inner city gang culture in such unflinching detail. In a world where reputation and respect mean everything, gang members will stop at nothing to prove they are the toughest, most ruthless, and most feared. And that makes for some pretty hardcore gaming.

Andy Lockett, Head of Development at games studio



■ Take a walk on the wild side in the gritty urban epic action game, *Crime Life: Gang Wars*.

Hothouse stresses the role played by NVIDIA technology in the development of the game: "NVIDIA GPUs and developer relations have provided opportunities to optimise and enhance *Crime Life* beyond what would normally be possible, ensuring NVIDIA is the graphics card of choice for *Crime Life*, and the games industry as a whole."



Publisher: **Aspyr Media, Inc**  
Developer: **Wideload Games**  
Release: **October 2005**

## Stubbs The Zombie: Rebel Without A Pulse

**E**ver watched a movie featuring the living dead and wondered what it would be like to be a zombie rather than a good guy? Yes? Us too. Wideload Games have been working on a game with this exciting premise. This madcap horror romp marks the studio's debut, but the technology is tried and tested – it's based on the same advanced 3D engine that powers Bungie's award-winning *Halo*.

The game follows the misadventures of Edward Stubblefield, a door-to-door salesman who's dead and buried, only to return to his old stomping ground 20 years later. Re-animated in a decidedly 1950s vision of what the year 2000 would be like, *Stubbs* does what any regular zombie has the inescapable urge to do: rip apart anyone who gets in his way. From humble beginnings, *Stubbs* gains more power from his attacks and eventually commands his very own zombie army. He even has a detachable hand, which acts as a miniature helper!

"*Stubbs The Zombie: Rebel Without A Pulse* takes advantage of NVIDIA GPUs to bring gamers a rich 3D world and totally immersive gameplay experience," says Glenda Adams, Director of Development at Aspyr Media, Inc. "By working closely with NVIDIA, Aspyr Studios has been able to get the top level performance and high quality rendering possible on GeForce graphics processors."

A gut-wrenching game made hilarious through wit and lashings of cheese, there's never been anything quite like *Stubbs The Zombie* before.



■ Built around the fantastic *Halo* game engine, *Stubbs The Zombie* is a tour-de-force of cheesy horror, gruesome comedy, and macabre storytelling.



## Spellforce 2

**T**he role-playing and real-time strategy game styles are two of the most enduring and popular ever to grace the PC, so it makes perfect sense to blend them together for double the playability. *Spellforce* showed the way, and now development studio Phenomic is back with a sequel that refines and expands the concept even more.

In *Spellforce 2* gamers assume the role of the 'Avatar', leading armies into battle while also embarking on quests, solving puzzles and getting embroiled in all the classic strategy and character progression elements that make role-playing games so utterly addictive to millions of gamers. And just in case that's not enough of a challenge, it's also possible to amass a team of five further heroes, each of whom gets to play a crucial role in the ongoing tale.

In addition to all the cool new gameplay ideas, *Spellforce 2* also has a host of graphical delights to show off. "With the help of NVIDIA's excellent developer support and development tools, the process of creating a shader-driven engine with all the latest features was very much eased," says Martin Loehlein, Project Manager on *Spellforce 2*. "And the broad availability of Shader Model 3.0 capable hardware across the NVIDIA product line also gives us the opportunity to enhance the engine even further, creating even better effects and illumination."



■ *Spellforce 2* innovatively blends role playing with real-time strategy, using the unique click 'n' fight control system to give gamers total control in both single and multiplayer modes.



Publisher: **Deep Silver/JoWood**  
Developer: **Phenomic**  
Release: **November 2005**

## Case study: Dark And Light



■ The largest massively multiplayer online game ever created, *Dark And Light* blends dynamically evolving storylines with finely wrought character design and immersive action.

**A** game to break all records, *Dark And Light* presents fighting fantasy fans with the largest persistent gaming world ever conceived. Its incredible virtual environment spans an astonishing 40,000 square kilometres, the realistically varied terrain providing a lavish backdrop to the battle between the forces of darkness

and light. While thousands of gamers take part in their own adventures online, building social status and developing combat prowess, the game's 'community managers' further evolve the action, constantly introducing new storylines, events, quests and challenges for people to tackle solo or in groups. Even Gary Gygax, the man who created the legendary *Dungeons & Dragons* boardgame, has been brought in to write new scripts for the game.

Refreshingly, *Dark And Light* doesn't skimp on the visuals, either, thanks to the custom Mafete 2.0 game engine, which provides horizon views of up to 50 kilometres. "As a developer we're proud to use the benefits of NVIDIA's research in graphic technologies," says Laurent Paret, co-founder of game developer NPCube. "Thanks to its continual support we are always excited by the latest development tools and hardware NVIDIA provide us. This makes us more comfortable and gives us more time to concentrate on the game itself to give players more fun." Wise words, indeed.



Publisher: **Farlan Entertainment**  
Developer: **NPCube**  
Release: **November 2005**





Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**2K Games**  
**Croteam**  
**October 2005**

# Serious Sam 2

Mayhem and mirth join forces once more...

**P**unching the lights out of the po-faced competition and revelling in the sheer silliness of blowing up aliens, *Serious Sam 2* is so over the top it makes even the original game seem meek by comparison. Storywise, it picks up exactly where the first game left off, with Sam embarking on a quest to recover fragments of a mystical medallion scattered across the entire galaxy. Only once he has the whole medallion can he then head to Sirius, where the notorious despot and all round bad guy, Mental, awaits.

It's all nonsense, obviously, but provides all the excuses any shoot 'em up fan could ever need to embark on a marathon session of madness, mayhem and extreme carnage. And what carnage! With complex physics modelling, vehicles to drive, and even the ability to mount animals and ride them into battle, the potential for destruction is near limitless.

Making use of a newly designed graphics engine, you'll be amazed at



■ Bleeding-edge graphics, high speed action, and thousands upon thousands of bad guys feature in hilarious action sequel *Serious Sam 2*.

how much of the beautiful game can be displayed on the screen at any one time. The visuals are an astonishing 100 times more complex than in the original *Serious Sam*, and our hero is up against even more on-screen bad guys to boot. There are 45 new types of enemy in all, and this being *Serious Sam*, each and every one is a bizarre, nasty or downright comical creation. The inspired and deadly line-up of oddities includes Onan The Librarian, the Martial Arts Zombie and Marcel The Clown – a children's entertainer with a lethal line in exploding strawberry cakes. No, we're not making it up...

**All the excuses any shoot 'em up fan could ever need to embark on a marathon session of madness**



The scale of the action in *Serious Sam 2* is also hard to believe, with more than 40 massive levels spread across seven different environments – including jungles, swamps, volcanic planets and futuristic cities – each as beautiful as it is big. "NVIDIA SLI technology allows us to achieve significant performance gains for *Serious Sam 2*," explains Dean Sekulic at development studio Croteam. "With SLI, we have an opportunity to further push the capabilities of Serious Engine 2 and perfect the artistic direction of our game."



■ The world's most action-packed shoot 'em up delivers lots of comedy among the carnage.



# Hitman: Blood Money

## America beckons for the world's finest contract killer

**B**efore the Hollywood movie gets released (starring Vin Diesel, no less) comes the most ambitious, detailed and downright vicious game in the multi-million selling *Hitman* series.

This latest adventure sees the hunter become the hunted, as Agent 47 finds himself caught in the middle of a war between two rival contract killing agencies. A new lease of life as an assassin in the USA beckons, but it's only a matter of time before fate catches up with 47 and his reputation as the ultimate killing machine is truly put to the test.

It's not just the intricate plot that pushes *Hitman: Blood Money* to new heights. With a new camera system and greater freedom of movement,

the game plays more intuitively than ever, while improved AI means enemies investigate suspicious behaviour and even follow blood trails carelessly left at the scene of a crime.

New gameplay elements also abound, with Agent 47 able to use new weapons (including some designed to provide decoys) and also use new violent and shocking tactics. What other game lets you dispose of bodies or even use enemies as a human shield?

There's also the new 'Blood Money' system. The cleaner a 'hit' is performed, the more money is earned. This cash can then be used to customise weapons, buy special equipment, elicit vital information, and reduce notoriety – vital to prevent

guards and civilians blowing 47's all-important cover.

Powered by a new version of developer IO Interactive's amazing Glacier game engine, *Hitman: Blood Money* is every bit as beautiful as it is brutal, with more complex environments (including some fantastic Las Vegas locations), more finely detailed characters, and the visuals hugely boosted by cool 'normal mapping' tricks.

"The innovation and flexibility that NVIDIA shows really help us push the visuals of our games, and makes us feel confident experimenting and developing new render technologies," says Rasmus Højengaard, Game Director at IO Interactive.

Agent 47 may be a cold-blooded assassin, but with the arrival of *Hitman: Blood Money* he's on his way to becoming the most celebrated video game action star of all time.

■ *Hitman: Blood Money* makes the most of NVIDIA technology. Assassinations have never looked so good!



Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**Eidos**  
**IO Interactive**  
**Early 2006**





Publisher: **Disney Interactive**  
Developer: **Traveller's Tales**  
Release: **November 2005**

# The Chronicles Of Narnia:

## The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe

**A**fter reading the game's title, we're betting you're either punching the air in sheer delight or groaning with despair at the inevitability of it all. Okay, so it was only a matter of time before somebody decided to bring C S Lewis's tales of Narnia to the cinema, but judging by sneak previews of the first instalment, it may well prove to be just as popular as the *Lord Of The Rings* trilogy. It's no surprise to find a videogame spin-off also in the works, but what's unusual is the care and attention to detail lavished on it. Developed by veteran UK studio Traveller's Tales (clearly avid readers of the books), *The Chronicles Of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe* is every bit as epic and involving as fantasy fans could hope for.

As in the hugely popular books (the seven novels have sold some 85 million copies to date), the game follows the adventures of four ordinary brothers and sisters – Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy – as they embark on an extraordinary adventure in Narnia, a mysterious land frozen in a 100-year winter by the evil White Witch. Narnia's salvation lies in the hands of the children as they wage war on werewolves, minotaurs, wraiths and other deadly creatures, and ultimately attempt to fulfil the prophesy of the mighty lion Aslan.

Bringing the lands of Narnia to life in vivid detail, the game closely follows both the storyline and visual style of the

new movie. The fantastical creatures are closely modelled on the computer-generated monstrosities featured in the cinematic version. The game also provides a unique opportunity to wage your war against the White Witch in new and exciting directions. Developer Traveller's Tales has done a fantastic job in making the videogame experience every bit as epic as the movie and novel.

"NVIDIA's team has been fantastic in helping us graphically recreate the magical world of Narnia," comments Jon Burton, Director at Traveller's Tales. "We're delighted that *The Chronicles Of Narnia* has been chosen as a TWIMTBP title and look forward to continuing to work alongside NVIDIA and releasing a chart-topping game this Christmas."



Traveller's Tales has worked closely with NVIDIA to create a graphically stunning depiction of the fabled land of Narnia and its many magical inhabitants.

■ Making a videogame of a much-loved novel is no easy task, but Traveller's Tales has done it with aplomb.







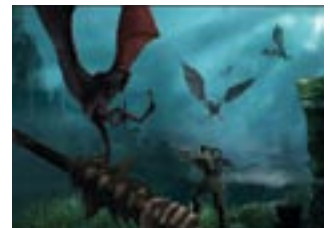
■ Ubisoft's Jade engine is a perfect partner for NVIDIA technology. Here it's expertly harnessed to give Kong a realistic coating of fur.



■ Michel Ancel



■ With Peter Jackson's input, Michel Ancel's design skills, and Ubisoft's programming talents, Peter Jackson's King Kong is looking just as spectacular as its big-screen counterpart.



Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**Ubisoft**  
**Ubisoft**  
**November 2005**

# In Focus: Peter Jackson's King Kong

## Michel Ancel unveils the Christmas blockbuster from Ubisoft

**T**his year's must-see film is *King Kong*, the latest from none other than Peter Jackson, the director responsible for the *Lord Of The Rings* movie. What's so unusual about the videogame spin-off is that Jackson has chosen to collaborate with Ubisoft and famed gaming visionary Michel Ancel, the man responsible for the multi-million selling *Rayman* series.

Ancel reveals that his team have ensured Jackson is kept well up-to-date with the game's development, with the director often playing the latest versions and providing feedback. "He's been able to share his vision of the *Kong* universe with us, so we've always been on the same wavelength."

Ancel explains that 2D art from Jackson's Weta studios provided the starting point for development. "Our

work was to understand how his vision would translate in movie environments, and how we could translate those into 3D interactive environments. The richness and the depth of the artwork was really inspiring, helping convey the scope of what he wanted to do with the movie."

The unique relationship with Jackson has also enabled Ubisoft to create a game with its own exclusive *Kong* content. "We had access to all the material for the film, but because cuts were necessary to make it a two hour film, some creatures will only be in the game," says Ancel. "Also, from the moment Peter Jackson felt we were working in the spirit of the movie he let us create our adaptation freely. One of his key phrases to us was 'it's not in the movie, but... it could be in the game!'"

The finest possible game art and 3D engine are fundamental to bringing this content to life. Working with the Jade engine, the development team have been able to incorporate cool stuff like particle effects, dense vegetation that actually moves, and filter effects for lightning flashes, storms and the like.

Ancel says that one of the biggest challenges was to ensure gamers feel fear, panic and tension in the same way as when watching the film. "We worked hard to implement that, using the environment, the food chain and so on, through the audio, and through the AI and animations of the creatures. They'll actually look at you, following your movement with their whole body. It's the integration of all these elements that make the game both exciting to play and faithful to the movie."



■ Featuring all the key scenes from the film and familiar faces and voices of all the key cast, Peter Jackson's King Kong is every inch the videogame blockbuster.



Publisher: **Vivendi Universal**  
Developer: **Monolith Productions**  
Release: **October 2005**

## F.E.A.R.

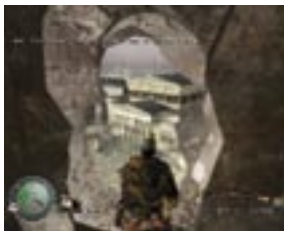
**O**ther first-person-shooters might make you a bit jumpy now and then, but *F.E.A.R.* could be the closest a videogame has yet come to recreating the palm-sweating tension of the best horror movies. Playing a rookie member of the First Encounter Assault Recon (a unit dedicated to battling supernatural threats to US security), you must infiltrate an enemy-controlled aerospace compound where – after an eerie signal interrupted radio communications – a counter-force of elite Special Forces has been massacred by a mysterious wave of destruction.

As you're pitting your wits and weaponry against the cutting-edge AI of the sinister enemy soldiers, the combat experience is brought to life by cinematic effects that see you showered with debris, blinded by smoke and totally immersed in the battle to eliminate the intruders and find out what created the strange signal – and who is the ghostly girl in the red dress? The latest in Microsoft DirectX 9.0 rendering technology uses real-time per pixel lighting, shadow volumes, normal mapping and advanced shaders to create an environment so immediate that the terror and adrenaline grips like never before.

"NVIDIA SLI technology allows us to have our games run at frames never before reached in our lab. By adding a second card, it allows us to plan for the future of GPU performance and design our games to hit certain performance targets," said Kevin Stephens, Director of Technology at Monolith.



■ *F.E.A.R.* uses NVIDIA graphics to give the player viscerally realistic cinematic effects.



Publisher: **MC²**  
Developer: **Rebellion**  
Release: **October 2005**

## Case study: Sniper Elite



■ Rebellion has pushed its custom 3D engine even further to breathe life into a very different kind of combat simulation.

**R**ebellion, the Brit studio responsible for the best-selling *Alien Vs Predator* and *Judge Dredd* videogames, now has its sights set on 3D combat game *Sniper Elite*. Played out in both third and first-person, the action in *Sniper Elite* takes place during the final Soviet advance of Berlin during World War 2, with gamers taking

the role of an American sniper sent into the chaos of war-torn Berlin by the Secret Service to thwart Nuclear ambitions at the very dawn of the Cold War.

Each scene has been created so realistically, you can almost smell the fear. Rifles and bullet ballistics are accurately simulated and sniping missions are played out with all the tension, danger and reliance on true skill that the marksmen needed in that desperate stage of the war.

There are 20 Berlin missions in all, each combining stealth infiltration stages with those crucial sniping elements – where wind, distance to target, barrel spin, and even the quickening heartbeat and breathing of the sniper must be taken into account. A two player cooperative mode and additional online multiplayer modes are also included.

"Working with NVIDIA on *Sniper Elite* has been straightforward, professional and above all enjoyable as they share the same passion for games as we do," says Kristien Wendt, Rebellion's head of communications.

## Joint Task Force

**T**he real-time strategy genre gets a welcome makeover in this new game from the creators of *Codename: Panzers*. An ambitious, state-of-the-art recreation of contemporary warfare, it takes gamers into five global hotspots, including Central Asia, the Balkans and the Middle East. The designers of *JTF* have opted for a game style that doesn't overload newcomers to the genre, yet packs in enough subtlety and nuances to imbue each combat situation with real depth. Realistic physics, dynamic mission designs, destructible environments, player rankings, and units that carry over from one campaign to the next all push the single-player mode into new territory, while eight-way multiplayer options cater for online warmongers.

Naturally the game's intense military operations are



■ The graphically sumptuous *Joint Task Force* introduces a number of cool innovations to the real time wargaming genre.

presented in glorious 3D detail. As Vincent van Damien, producer of *JTS* explains: "The technology developed by NVIDIA allows us to utilise all the latest technical innovations such as Pixel Shader 3.0 and High Dynamic Range rendering, helping us to develop cutting edge visuals for our games."



Publisher: **HD Interactive**  
Developer: **Mithis Games**  
Release: **September 2005**



■ *The Witcher* mixes dreamy landscapes of cinematic beauty with beastly combat and innovative role-playing.

## The Witcher

**B**ased on the dark fantasy world created by best-selling Polish author Andrzej Sapkowski, *The Witcher* aims to redefine the whole role-playing experience. Forget tedious statistics and repetitive combat. In their place come a bunch of fresh ideas and ambitious execution. Environments are based on real locations, ragdoll physics and motion-captured combat animations bring the world to life, and a multi-strand storyline provides twists, turns, and time-sensitive plot progressions. Using an enhanced version of the Aurora 3D engine (last used on *Neverwinter Nights*), it also looks amazing. "Co-operation with NVIDIA has greatly improved our lives as developers, and it's allowed us to create a visually beautiful and unbelievable realistic world of *The Witcher*," says Senior 3D Programmer Michał Iwanicki.



Publisher: **CD Projekt**  
Developer: **CD Projekt**  
Release: **2006**

## Myst 5: End Of Ages

**N**ow this is a real gaming event to look forward to. In *Myst 5*, the ever-popular series reaches a spectacular finale. Vast worlds can be explored with nothing more complicated than the click of a mouse. Yet players have total freedom to explore, interact, solve puzzles, and even communicate with the creatures they encounter. Most impressive, though, are the near-photoreal graphics, with rich 3D environments, live action video techniques and innovative facial mapping techniques. *Myst 5: End Of Ages* provides a fittingly cutting-edge end to a well-loved, multi-million-selling series. "The DevTech team at NVIDIA has been incredibly helpful and quick to respond. Not just with issues specific to their hardware, but also to the field of computer graphics as a whole," says Bob Zasio, graphics programmer at Cyan Worlds.



■ Fully explorable 3D worlds possess a near-photoreal quality in *Myst 5: End Of Ages*, the spectacular final episode in the long-running adventure saga.



Publisher: **Ubisoft**  
Developer: **Cyan Worlds**  
Release: **October 2005**





Publisher: **Microsoft Game Studios**  
Developer: **Lionhead**  
Release: **September 2005**

## Fable: The Lost Chapters

**W**ell, it's been a long time coming, but the PC edition of best-selling Xbox title *Fable* has undoubtedly been worth the wait. A journey into a fantasy world unlike any other, *Fable* actually changes, reacts and evolves based upon each player's unique actions and strategies. Taking control of a character from childhood right through to old age, their appearance, skills and morality are all affected by the choices you make.

The action-packed combat, the evolving world of Albion, and the wealth of characters in *Fable* are all brought to the screen using a game engine designed to take full advantage of the Windows platform and the best PC graphics processing has to offer. "*Fable: The Lost Chapters* delivers an incredible gaming experience for the adventure of a lifetime on NVIDIA GPUs," says Tim Rance, Technical Director of Lionhead studios.



What's more, *Fable: The Lost Chapters* offers even more content and greater opportunities for customisation. PC gamers get their own range of monsters, spells, weapons and armour to collect and use, a whole range of quests to undertake, and even more character customisation than ever before.



■ Play with a sword and just watch those muscles bulge. Master the dark arts and see the sparks fly. Or become a thief and risk notoriety. Every choice the player makes has an impact in the world of *Fable*. This truly is the ultimate edition of the ultimate action role-playing game.



Publisher: **Sega**  
Developer: **Creative Assembly**  
Release: **September 2005**

## Case study: Rome: Total War – Barbarian Invasion



■ The new campaign map moves the action on by 200 years, and night battles add even more atmosphere and graphical finesse to the action, while also introducing new tactical challenges.

**S**trategy fans haven't looked back since battle commenced in the very first *Total War* game. Now comes *Barbarian Invasion*, the first expansion pack for the million-selling hit *Rome: Total War*. Crafted by the development studio behind the original game, this is no mere add-on. Instead it has been designed to simultaneously refine and expand the *Total War*

experience. "*Barbarian Invasion* will contain a multitude of new features comprising enough content to fulfil a full PC title release," says Tim Ansell, Managing Director of Creative Assembly.

The action in *Barbarian Invasion* picks up after the last Emperor of a unified Rome has died. With his successors vying for power and barbarians massing at the borders, the Empire is poised to undergo a bloody and brutal transformation. Players can either choose to defend as one of two former Roman leaders, or assume leadership of the barbarian hordes, navigating them to victory through a torn and trampled Roman Empire.

A new campaign map reflects all the changes that have taken place in the two centuries since the action in the last game, while the updated gameplay now includes such elements as character loyalty, Roman civil wars and barbarian migrations. There are ten new playable factions in all, encompassing 85 new units and 21 new building types, while improved AI and tactical elements adds greater variety and intensity to the combat.

# Battlefield 2: Special Forces

DICE is ready to roll into action once again...

**D**espite having released the visually stunning, technically astonishing and emotionally engaging *Battlefield 2* as recently as last summer, Digital Illusions isn't resting on its freshly plumped laurels. Instead, the Canada arm of DICE has returned to its bunker to start work on expanding its armies, marshalling its forces and again planning to dominate the world of online first person shooters.

Utilising the same *Battlefield 2* technology, already noted for its colossal draw range, sublime use of shaders and expansive environments, the *Special Forces* expansion pack will add more: more troops, more maps, more weapons, more mayhem.

Six forces of highly trained soldiers have been created in place of the sequel's three, adding Navy SEALs,

## Ten new vehicles will include the slightly unlikely addition of jet skis...

British SAS, Russian Spetznas, MEC Special Forces, Rebel groups and insurgents to an already varied frontline. And with these new troops comes new assault equipment including teargas, flashbangs, night-vision goggles and grappling hooks. Ten new vehicles will include the slightly unlikely addition of jet skis, alongside more conventional and coveted craft like the Apache.

While the original game was famed for its meticulous geography and varied topography, *Special Forces'* eight new maps will focus on close combat in urban arenas – a direct result of the

DICE Sweden team noting that most players of *BF2* preferred street-bound shootouts such as Maashtur to the open expanses of the Kubra Dam.

And with so much content to add to this brand new conflagration, David Yee, the Producer of *Special Forces* has been delighted with NVIDIA's cooperation, saying: "The *Battlefield* team continue to work closely with NVIDIA on *Battlefield 2: Special Forces*, ensuring that we realise the amazing graphical potential of NVIDIA's new GeForce 7800 GTX architecture."



Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**Electronic Arts**  
**Digital Illusions CE**  
**December 2005**



■ At the moment the DICE team haven't decided how the stats will be tracked between the two games but *Special Forces* will feature more chance for even the lowliest grunts to achieve promotions and medals as a new level of character persistence will allow you to rise through the ranks.



Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**Digital Jesters**  
**Kylotonn**  
**September 2005**

## Bet On Soldier

**I**magine a future where war itself has become the subject of a reality TV programme, one in which elite soldiers are the 'contestants'. That's the twisted vision offered in *Bet On Soldier*. But here's the real twist: these soldiers don't just fight for money, they also gamble their earnings on the outcome of each battle. It's a system that gives the bravest and best the opportunity to amass huge profits, that money buying more goodies to take into future battles.

More than 40 different weapons are available in all, while the combat features an equal number of elite champions to bet against and fight with. A multiplayer mode is also featured, enabling up to 32 gamers across eight warrior classes to duke it out across levels set in Europe, Alaska and Cuba.

At the heart of *Bet On Soldier* is the innovative Kt game engine. The product of six years of research and design this custom system is a true TWIMTBP powerhouse, utilising pixel and vertex shader technologies, advanced special effects and even a proprietary physics engine. "Our aim was to create a visual style that was distinctive and dark," says Roman Vincent at Kylotonn. "Working directly with NVIDIA allowed us to fine-tune our Kt engine and make that vision a reality."



■ Powered by a custom engine fine-tuned to harness NVIDIA card performance, *Bet On Soldier* is bursting with energy.



Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**THQ**  
**Climax**  
**September 2005**

## Case study: Moto GP: Ultimate Racing Technology 3



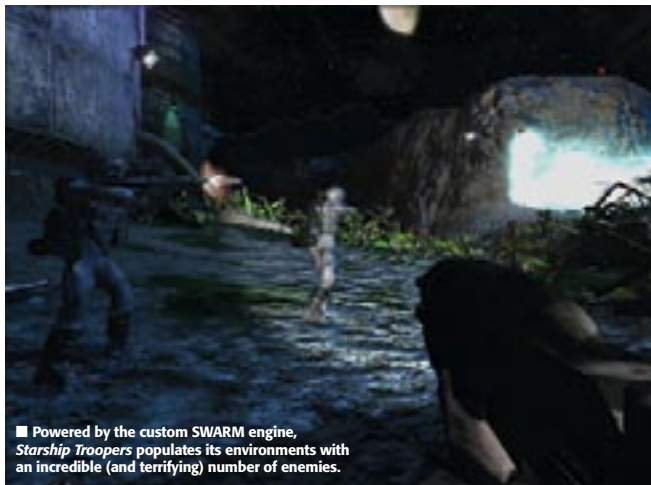
■ Glorious 60-frames-per-second visuals and a completely new approach to multiplayer gaming put *MotoGP: Ultimate Racing Technology 3* well ahead of the pack.



**W**ith fully licensed riders, tracks and bikes from the 2004 MotoGP season, and a wealth of new features, *MotoGP: Ultimate Racing Technology* is big news for fans of the racing genre. What's more, the action now goes beyond the Grand Prix track, with street racing also added to the mix. More than 16 street tracks and bikes are included, while the action – whether urban or on true racing tracks – has been designed to make the most of NVIDIA cards, delivering highly beautifully detailed action at a steady 60 frames per second.

But the latest in the acclaimed *Moto GP* series doesn't merely aim to push videogame motorcycle racing to new heights, it's also been designed to change the face of multiplayer gaming. Key to this is 'embedded gameplay', a feature that blurs the distinction between offline and online action. So, rather than simply opting to play solo against computer-controlled riders, or go online and race against other gamers, *MotoGP: Ultimate Racing Technology 3* will automatically check for other online races about to start, and give the gamer the opportunity to jump straight into a face-off against players of a similar skill level. "*MotoGP: Ultimate Racing Technology 3* will change the face of multiplayer gaming," reckons Climax's President, Tony Beckwith. "Never before have gamers been able to jump in and out of the multiplayer arena with such ease."





■ Powered by the custom SWARM engine, *Starship Troopers* populates its environments with an incredible (and terrifying) number of enemies.



■ The Mobile Infantry face seemingly impossible odds in the battle against the alien Bugs in the videogame adaptation of *Starship Troopers*.



# In Profile: Strangelite

We take a closer look at the studio behind the new *Starship Troopers* videogame

**Y**ou may not have heard of the development team Strangelite before, but you'll soon be hearing a whole lot more. The studio was formed in 2001, following Empire Interactive's acquisition of the legendary Rowan Software. Since then the Strangelite team has developed a cutting-edge game engine designed to do the seemingly impossible: bring the legendary 'Bugs vs infantry' combat of sci-fi horror movie *Starship Troopers* faithfully to life on the PC.

Naturally enough, it helps that the Strangelite crew is composed of veteran programmers, designers, and artists. In fact the team, led by Oxford physics graduate Dr Douglas Binks, has an incredible 215 man-years of game

development experience between them. Their collective CV spans decades, encompasses multiple game styles and platforms, and features numerous landmark titles, not least *Crazy Taxi*, *Reach For The Skies*, *Fly Corps*, *F22: Total Air War*, *Timesplitters 2*, *Destruction Derby*, *Formula One 99*, and *Destruction Derby 3*.

Strangelite's work on *Starship Troopers* began with research into which 3D engine could provide the foundations for the game. In the end they realised none was up to the job – the only course of action was to create their own. The result is SWARM, a game engine custom-built to handle the vast amount of visual detail necessary to depict the war against

the Bugs. This is a true 'next generation' TWIMTBP powerhouse, featuring multiple render paths so that the visuals adapt to specifications of the graphics hardware being used.

"Working closely with NVIDIA engineers from the start, we've developed the in-house SWARM engine for *Starship Troopers* to give the player an unparalleled gaming experience using techniques available on NVIDIA's GPUs," says Dr Binks.

The power and versatility of SWARM means that owners of any NVIDIA card are able to get the full *Starship Troopers* experience, while those with the very latest models benefit from extra pixel and vertex shader features, such as per pixel dynamic lighting effects. Other features of the engine include real-time shadowing, numerous bump-mapping effects, specular glints, glows, refractions, fogging and even realistic light scattering.

"Our simple, fast physics engine, allows us to blow loads of enemies into pieces!" says Binks. "Some of our Bugs are protected by armour plates, which can be knocked off to reveal weak spots below, while other parts of the body can be blown off. And the sight of a Napalm drop shattering a swarm of burning Bugs is awe-inspiring."



Publisher:  
Developer:  
Release:

**Empire Interactive**  
**Strangelite**  
**November 2005**



■ Battle up to 300 alien Bugs on screen at any one time in the explosive *Starship Troopers*, developed by Empire Interactive's Strangelite studio





# The GeForce 7800 GTX Unveiled

NVIDIA introduces the most advanced GPU ever built



## GeForce 7800 GTX Features At A Glance

**Memory Interface:** 256-bit

**Dual RAMDACs:** 400Mhz

**Fill rate:** Up to 10.32 billion texels per second

**Vertices per second:** Up to 860 million

- DirectX 9.0 Shader Model 3.0 and OpenGL 2.0 support
- Up to 16 textures per render pass
- Up to 32-bit floating point textures
- High dynamic-range (HDR) rendering support
- NVIDIA SLI technology
- NVIDIA CineFX 4.0 engine
- NVIDIA UltraShadow II
- NVIDIA Intellisample 4.0 technology
- NVIDIA Digital Vibrance Control 3.0 Technology
- NVIDIA PureVideo Technology
- Adaptable programmable video processor
- NVIDIA nView multi-display capability
- Integrated HDTV output
- NVIDIA Unified Driver Architecture
- PCI Express graphics bus

**A**re you ready to take your gaming to the next level? Representing a significant leap forward in 3D graphics processing units (GPUs) utilise 300 million transistors to deliver the kind of graphics horsepower previously out of reach to the gaming community, along with a range of cutting-edge, movie-level features that are set to transform the look of gaming over the coming months. Designed for PCI Express x16 and high-speed GDDR3 memory, this is a GPU capable of delivering incredible effects, blazing frame rates, and outstanding image quality for a full-throttle 3D experience.

In every single respect the SLI-capable GeForce 7800 GTX is a powerhouse graphics solution. Take its support for Microsoft DirectX 9.0 Shader Model 3.0, OpenGL 2.0 and the introduction of the new CineFX 4.0 engine: together they give developers the freedom to create the most advanced, high-quality visual effects around. In addition, the GeForce 7800 GTX features incredible techniques like displacement mapping, geometry

instancing, and high dynamic-range (HDR) rendering. HDR is a fresh-from-the-movies graphics technique that brings a greater exposure range to scenes, ensuring crisp contrast when bright lighting conditions would traditionally wash out details.

Then there's radiosity, a visual effect that calculates how light bounces from objects to affect others nearby. It brings

Another powerful weapon in the GeForce 7800 GTX's arsenal is displacement mapping. You may have noticed how many recent games utilise bump mapping and normal mapping to add more detail to textures. Now displacement mapping takes that concept much further, enabling artists to add real volume to textures without the need for any additional geometry. You

## The terms may sound horribly complicated, but even technophobes will appreciate the difference they make in games

a far more realistic lighting model to 3D gaming, realistically rooting each element in a scene to produce even more believable imagery. And like the GeForce 6 Series, the GeForce 7800 GTX also provides subsurface scattering support. Notice how real digital movie stars like Gollum and Yoda look? That's achieved with the help of subsurface scattering, a technique for simulating the interaction between lights and skin or other translucent surfaces.

can now expect to see games blessed with vastly more on-screen detail thanks to this amazing new technique.

Fans of cutting-edge titles like Doom 3 and the upcoming Quake 4 will be delighted to know that the NVIDIA's acclaimed UltraShadow™ II technology is also featured. By harnessing the GPU's second-generation technology, UltraShadow now delivers more than four times the shadow processing power. NVIDIA's Intellisample™

■ The cutting-edge NVIDIA GeForce 7800 GPU brings movie-standard graphics effects and techniques to gaming PCs for the first time.



technology is also turbocharged, with this fourth-generation version delivering two new antialiasing modes for even clearer, steadier images. The terms “transparency”, “adaptive”, “supersampling”, and “multisampling” may sound horribly complicated, but even technophobes will appreciate the difference they make in games that feature finely detailed objects such as foliage and fences.

The GeForce 7800 GTX also sports a next-generation texture engine, offering up to 16 textures per rendering pass with support for both the 32-bit and 16-bit floating point format. What’s more, the entire rendering pipeline provides full 128-bit, studio-quality, floating point precision, improving the quality of images in motion and facilitating effects like motion blurs and explosions.

But the GeForce 7800 GTX is adept at much more than 3D wizardry: a true multimedia solution, the GPU includes a hardware engine for video post processing, real-time compositing, and accelerated, antialiased text rendering. MPEG-2 and Windows Media Player 9 hardware acceleration is also provided for rock-steady video playback, while NVIDIA’s Digital Vibrance Control™ 3.0 technology gives you total control over colour and image sharpness. The GPU also features integrated HDTV output, multiple video windowing, and NVIDIA nView multi-display technology, while dual integrated 400 MHz RAMDACs power display resolutions up to 2560x1600 pixels at an amazing 85 Hz.

The NVIDIA GeForce 7800 GTX graphics processor is available now in standalone graphics card form, and in complete PC systems from vendors including Scan, Mesh, Evesham, Complet, and Midt Data. Visit the official NVIDIA Web site to find out more:

[www.nvidia.co.uk/page/geforce\\_7800.html](http://www.nvidia.co.uk/page/geforce_7800.html)

## Luna Has Landed

### Introducing NVIDIA’s new poster-girl

**S**ay hello to Luna, the star of NVIDIA’s new technology demo. As with previous NVIDIA poster-girls, Luna was created to demonstrate state-of-the-art graphics processing. Powered by the GeForce 7800 GTX GPU, Luna represents a genuine leap forward for computer-generated characters and real-time animation. And remember, the new Luna technology demo provides just a taste of NVIDIA’s latest technologies. Once game developers begin to make use of the GeForce 7800’s new features and enhanced power, games will never be the same.

#### Here’s a summary of the technical innovations behind this glorious creation:

■ **Pixel Shader 3.0:** The second-generation, pixel-shading core of the GeForce 7800 GTX enables the multiple layers in Luna’s suit, and enables her real-time eyeball refraction..

■ **Translucence:** Light is transmitted through the surface of Luna’s skin and through her attendant “gatekeeper’s” hands through subsurface scattering. The amount of light visible even takes into account occluding bones and arteries within each character’s body.

■ **Displacement Mapping:** Volumetric texturing enables displaced bumps on a surface to occlude each other, lending even greater 3D detail to surfaces.

■ **Real-Time Hair:** Luna’s incredible head of hair uses geometry for every strand. The simulation runs in real-time, with shadows created based on the light source and the number of hairs between each pixel. The result is far more realistic shadowing volume.



## Get Twice the GeForce 7800 GTX Power With SLI

### NVIDIA’s patented SLI technology explained

**M**ore than three quarters of a million gamers have already discovered just what NVIDIA SLI can do. With the launch of the GeForce 7800 GTX, SLI is set to enter the mainstream like never before. Enabling gamers to place two graphics cards side-by-side in their PCs, SLI is the ultimate choice for users who demand the fastest possible graphics processing, and the highest refresh rates at the maximum resolutions.

Using an intelligent hardware and software solution, SLI distributes the graphics workload between both GPUs. As a result, geometry and fill-rate performance scale radically higher. In fact, performance can be boosted by as much as 100 percent! More than 60 games already support SLI, and with the arrival of the SLI-compatible GeForce 7800 GTX GPU, you can be sure that there are many more to come.

SLI can be found in ready-to-buy systems, or users can choose to build their own using two SLI-compatible GPUs, such as the GeForce 7800 GTX, in combination with an SLI-based motherboard and the latest NVIDIA ForceWare™ unified drivers. New, lower cost NVIDIA nForce™4-compatible SLI motherboards are now available.

Find out more at: [http://uk.slizone.com/content/slizone\\_uk/index.html](http://uk.slizone.com/content/slizone_uk/index.html)