



THE WAY

It's meant to be played

Ultimate PC Gaming with GeForce

All the best games

Lose yourself in the action with the power of NVIDIA

- Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Legend
- TOCA Race Driver 3
- FSW: Ten Hammers
- Auto Assault
- Timeshift



The Lord Of The Rings

The Battle For Middle-earth II

NVIDIA brings the game of the year to life with glorious battles and more Middle-earth than you can handle



Get Ready for Windows Vista

WARNING

This important notice about the upcoming availability of the Microsoft® Windows Vista™ operating system (OS) is brought to you by NVIDIA and the following software companies:



Microsoft® Windows Vista™ is the first operating system (OS) to require a graphics processing unit (GPU) to realize the best possible experience.

The upcoming availability of Windows Vista is one of the most significant events in the history of the PC. In the coming months, you will hear a lot about new PCs and hardware for Windows Vista. The most important thing to remember is that, in order to take full advantage of Windows Vista and other PC applications and games, you must have a dedicated GPU in your PC.



Top Performance At A Middle-Of-The-Road Price

Gamers need to be able to rely on graphics technology which has both the feature support and the power required to deliver the best results at rock-steady frame rates. But gamers don't want to break the bank when buying high-performance hardware. That's why NVIDIA introduced the new NVIDIA® GeForce® 6800 GS series of graphics processing units (GPUs) – designed to deliver high-end horsepower seemingly at odds with their mid-range price points. Boasting the features of today's most advanced GPUs – including full support for Microsoft® DirectX® 9.0 Shader Model 3.0 – the GeForce 6800 GS GPUs even offer support for the NVIDIA® SLI™ technology. Find out more at www.nvidia.com/page/geforce_6800.html.

Upping The Ante With the GeForce 6600 DDR2

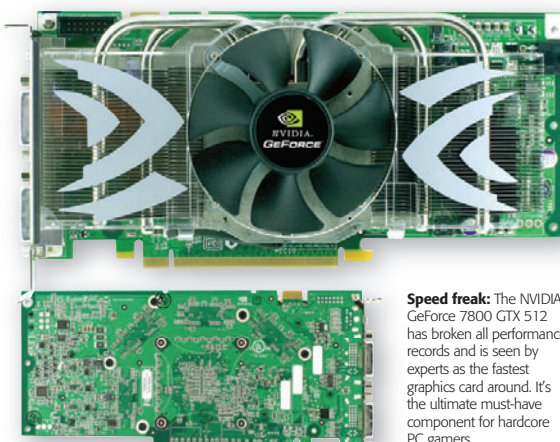
With the GeForce 6600 DDR2 GPU, the new addition to the multi-million selling, award-winning GeForce 6 Series, the only thing that's entry level is the price. Bringing DDR2 to the masses for the

very first time, it boasts eight pixel pipelines and three vertex shaders, a 256MB frame buffer, full Shader Model 3.0 support – including vertex texture fetch (VTF), and even true high dynamic-range (HDR)

lighting support. The result is a GPU delivering performance and features that the competition can't even hope to match. You can read about the GeForce 6600 GPUs at www.nvidia.com/page/geforce_6600.html.

NVIDIA Breaks The Speed Barrier

NVIDIA has broken all records with the introduction of the latest addition to the GeForce 7 Series. Offering a performance increase of 33% over its predecessors, the new NVIDIA GeForce 7800 GTX 512 has been declared by leading experts to be the fastest graphics card around. With a faster clock speed and 512MB of onboard memory, the GeForce 7800 GTX 512 is the ultimate accessory for PC owners who are serious about their gaming and who look forward to the latest generation of graphically intensive titles. Find out more at www.nvidia.com/page/geforce_7800.html.



Speed freak: The NVIDIA GeForce 7800 GTX 512 has broken all performance records and is seen by experts as the fastest graphics card around. It's the ultimate must-have component for hardcore PC gamers.

Welcome...

Welcome to Issue 8 of *The Way It's Meant To Be Played*, the magazine that showcases the very best of the latest PC games. All 19 titles are participants in NVIDIA's The Way It's Meant To Be Played program, whereby NVIDIA's developer technology engineers help development teams 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 any game with the TWIMTBP logo on the box will deliver the ultimate 'install and-play' experience with an NVIDIA GeForce-based graphics card. We also bring news this issue of new hardware developments, particularly the exciting new Xtreme High Definition (XHD) Gaming technology. I hope you enjoy the magazine – let us know if there's anything you think should be included.

Bill Rehbock

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THE WAY

The Regiment

Publisher: Konami Developer: Kuju Release: April

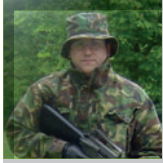
You may have donned the virtual uniform of a SWAT team member, fired upon the enemy in the guise of a marine, or even worn the insignia of an elite Ranger unit. But nothing can compare to the challenge thrown at

gamers by *The Regiment*. Here combat, action and strategy fans are given the unique opportunity to fight as a member of the most feared counter-terrorism unit in the world: the S.A.S.

A sweat-inducing, shockingly accurate simulation, *The Regiment* evokes hostage rescues (including 1980's Iranian Embassy siege), terrorist takeovers and tense face-offs in spectacular style. Powered by the acclaimed Unreal engine and the Karma physics system, and featuring glorious character and location design work, it offers an unashamedly action-based view of close-quarters combat. Designed in collaboration with a real former S.A.S. instructor, *The Regiment* takes the combat genre into completely new territory. ■



In the army now: Painstakingly created environments, real S.A.S. input and heart-pounding 3D action combine in *The Regiment*.



Phil McDonnell, Konami R&D department:

"Working closely with NVIDIA has

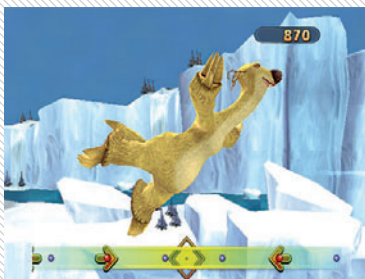
enabled us to reach an unparalleled level of realism and immersion with *The Regiment*, and made our goal of drawing the player into a rich, detailed and believable world that much easier."

Case study: Ice Age 2: The Meltdown

Publisher: Sierra Developer: Eurocom Release: Out now



Ice to see you: The beautifully animated stars of the new *Ice Age 2* movie are brought to life in a videogame packed with even more slapstick action.



Ice Age was the movie that seemed to come out of nowhere to become a massive box-office hit. No surprise there as the story was just as hilarious for adults as it was for kids, and the animation was a sight to behold. At last, the sequel is here, with Vivendi bringing the same lovable characters to the PC screen. It's something it has really done in style. The visuals are brilliantly slapstick, while the gameplay remains true to the action-packed theme of the new movie.

The back-story follows the film, with Manny The Mammoth, Sid The Sloth and Diego the Sabre-Tooth reunited. Their valley is being threatened by flooding from melting glaciers, and the trio must reluctantly work together again to cross the perilous landscape and reach safety.



However, the real star of the show in this clever spin-off is Scrat, the comically desperate squirrel, who gets to swim, dig, sniff, spin and roll his way through the beautiful landscape – in theory on a quest to collect acorns, but somehow also inadvertently helping Manny, Sid and Diego on their journey like only a true sub-zero hero can. ■

"The real star of the show is Scrat, the comically desperate squirrel, who gets to swim, dig, spin and roll his way through the landscape"



TOCA Race Driver 3

Drive whatever sort of race car you want – so long as you drive it fast..

Publisher: Codemasters Developer: Codemasters Release: March



Watch the world go by: *TOCA Race Driver 3* harnesses the power of NVIDIA GeForce to deliver real-time post-processing effects, radically enhancing through-the-camera views of the action.

Devilish detail: Extensive multi-texturing effects bring every organic detail alive and make every metallic one shine beautifully, with the vehicular and trackside detail combining to create amazing environments.

Around the world in 80 circuits: *TOCA Race Driver 3* features 150 miles of courses, in 43 locations, across 13 countries.

On course: Every track has been authentically recreated for the game using real-world GPS topographical data so you're guaranteed to experience them just as real race drivers do.

Long regarded as the world's leading creator of racing simulations, Codemasters has pulled out all the stops to make the latest in the *TOCA* series the biggest AND the best. Featuring an astonishing 150 miles of finely modelled tarmac, the game spans 80 accurately modelled courses, plus an additional 13 custom-designed raceways. From the Shanghai Grand Prix circuit to Hockenheim, and from Laguna Sec to Australia's Gold

"Sparks will fly and bodywork will fold as players work their way through a motorsport career"

Coast Indy 300, it comfortably adds up to deliver more than your average racing game. What's more, *TOCA Race Driver 3* also packs in more than 120 championships, with drivers battling it out in six different modes. From Open Wheel to GT, Touring Car to Oval Racing, Off-Road/Rallying to Historic Motor Racing, it covers just about every conceivable variation.

Naturally, such a diverse range of modes demands an equally varied selection of vehicles, and *TOCA 3* doesn't disappoint. There are 35 different vehicle types in all, including 4x4 Monster Trucks, Muscle Cars, Baja Motocross cars, Formula 3 and Formula 1 vehicles and British GT models. And rest assured that the realistic

vehicle modelling in *TOCA 3* extends to the inclusion of great damage effects. Sparks will fly and bodywork will fold as players work their way through a motorsport career in any one of the six racing disciplines or embark on a full world tour.

The game's enhanced rendering engine, meanwhile, takes full advantage of the power of NVIDIA hardware to deliver the best possible visual experience. Extensive multi-texturing effects bring every organic detail alive and make every metallic one shine beautifully, with the vehicular and trackside detail combining to create an amazing environment. The result is a game that delivers a stunningly detailed, near-photoreal racing experience on a grand scale. ■



Clive Moody, producer of TOCA Race Driver 3

"NVIDIA's advanced shader support and development tools have enabled us to take our vehicle lighting to the next level.

Utilizing per-pixel lighting techniques enabled us to bring out the fine detail in our models while giving us the power to improve their overall lighting and realism."



THE WAY

TimeShift

The state-of-the-art first-person shooter that will stand the test of time

Publisher: Atari Developer: Saber Interactive Release: April



On the move: *TimeShift's* character and object animation is further enhanced using an in-built physics system.

Beautiful but deadly: *TimeShift* builds on its innovative time-traveling game system with an equally original collection of weapons. Each delivers a devastating graphical punch.

Close encounters: The custom-built Saber 3D engine makes the most of GPUs with Direct X9 support, utilizing advanced effects like parallax lighting to build up world detail.



Time to get serious: Depth and detail in the environments, coupled with fantastically innovative technology, means *TimeShift* is here to stay.

Innovation in videogaming is a rare commodity, and something that should be treasured in the world of the first-person shooter. This is undoubtedly why the critics are making such a big deal about the release of *TimeShift*, a title that bends time itself as it breaks new ground. The game's hero of the hour is Colonel Michael Swift, a man sent back to 1911 by the US Government. He returns to the present

"...slow down, stop or even reverse the flow of time, to manipulate the fourth dimension and defeat enemies."

day to discover the world has changed beyond all recognition and that he is now an enemy of the state. And so begins a deadly game of cat and mouse, as Swift attempts to restore natural world order.

What really sets *TimeShift* apart from the rest of the pack is the fact that as Swift journeys through 11 intense missions he has a little more than cool weaponry up his sleeve. Encased in a time-traveling exoskeleton, he can slow down, stop or even reverse the flow of time, to manipulate the fourth dimension and defeat enemies and, therefore, gain access to otherwise inaccessible areas of more than 30 uniquely Steampunk-themed levels.

Saber Interactive, the development team behind *TimeShift*, has taken a radical approach when it comes to the game technology powering the innovative action. In addition to all the latest mapping techniques, which help deliver highly detailed textures and model detail, the Saber3D engine also boosts cool parallax-lighting effects to add even greater depth and detail to the environments within the gameworld. Furthermore, Saber Interactive has included an in-built physics system and an 'Active Matrix AI' behavior simulator, ensuring that the in-game enemy animations and behaviors are equally impressive and state of the art. ■

Full Spectrum Warrior: Ten Hammers

Publisher: THQ Developer: Pandemic Studios Release: March

From the innovative Pandemic Studios comes an ambitious sequel to the award-winning squad-based action combat game, *Full Spectrum Warrior*. The original broke new ground and now *Ten Hammers* is pushing it further with fresh features, including the ability to go inside buildings, set up sniper team positions, protect hostages, and take command of additional fire teams. Online gamers can take advantage of the multiplayer mode, battling with fellow soldiers in a range of new head-to-head and team-based missions.

Full Spectrum Warrior: Ten Hammers introduces twelve new levels of urban warfare, with detailed environments, where players lead their infantrymen. Taking control of squads as diverse as UN Coalition Forces and the US Rangers, players have access to a new choice of weapons, vehicles and equipment, all based on real-world



technology. Blending squad-based combat and real-time 3D action with even greater precision than its predecessor, this is one of the most evocative and ambitious military titles ever developed for the PC. ■

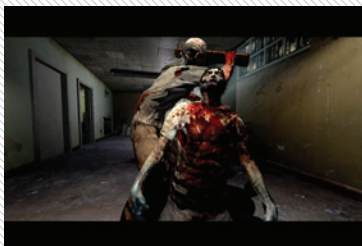
This means war: Design and technological innovations abound in this high-tech sequel *Full Spectrum Warrior: Ten Hammers*.

Case study: *Condemned*

Publisher: Sega Developer: Monolith Productions Release: April



Condemned to coolness: Monolith shows off its talent for combining bleeding-edge 3D visuals with cinematic themes and relentless gameplay.



From legendary publisher Sega and Monolith (the studio behind the incredible *FEAR*), comes a game that succeeds where so many others have failed, delivering shocks, scares and blood by the bucketload. Effortlessly evoking a sense of dread that will be familiar to fans of movies such as *Seven* or *Saw*, *Condemned* casts the player as Ethan Thomas, an FBI agent whose relentless pursuit of serial killers leads him into the darkest of depths.

Viewing the world through Ethan's eyes, the cinematic elements and clever game mechanics increase the tension to near-unbearable levels. Monolith has also worked hard to fully immerse gamers in the gritty, near-photoreal world of urban decay, with next-generation lighting, mapping and filtering techniques all used liberally.



Advanced physics and intelligence systems also flesh out the blend of detective work, exploration and high drama. A glorious and twisted creation, *Condemned* is a nightmare come true for mature-minded gamers looking for genuine thrills rather than the same old mindless, seen-it-all-before shoot-'em-up action. ■

"A glorious and twisted creation, Condemned is a nightmare come true for mature-minded gamers."



THE WAY

The Lord Of The Rings: The Battle For Middle-earth II

The saga continues in EA's latest evocation of the war against the dark forces of Sauron...

Publisher: Electronic Arts Developer: Electronic Arts Release: March



They say all good things must come to an end, but for the millions who fell in love with the world of Middle-earth, that's no longer the case. Thanks to a brand new deal, Electronic Arts has not only gained the rights to develop a new sequel to its best-selling title *The Battle For Middle-earth*, it is also now able to incorporate fresh elements from Tolkien's original books, alongside key characters, places and scenes from the movies.

What this means for gamers is the ability to dig deeper into Tolkien's much loved and richly detailed world, to journey to previously uncharted territories, and to engage in an even more diverse range of battles between good and evil. There are no fewer than three brand new factions (Elves, Dwarves and Goblins) to control or fight against, each with its own unique strengths and weaknesses, its own unit types, and its own technologies.

As well as imbuing the game with a completely new flavor, the addition of these races also opens up exciting new corners of the Middle-earth map, with legendary locations such as Mirkwood the Misty Mountains and Dol Guldur now home to spectacular empire-building and cataclysmic battles. The conflict now extends beyond the shores of Middle-earth, with navy battles at sea adding a new dimension to the conflict (and giving Electronic Arts the ability to show off some particularly cool water

Before and after: Impressive as *The Battle For Middle-earth II* looks with standard video acceleration, the game engine really comes into its own when powered by the latest generation of GeForce processors. Check out all that extra detail in the second image, and those amazing water effects!



simulation technology), while the single-player campaign adds a whole new story that takes place in the Northern lands. And of course with new lands come fearsome new creatures, spectacular new spells, and even the ability to turn the war on its head by gaining control of the One Ring...

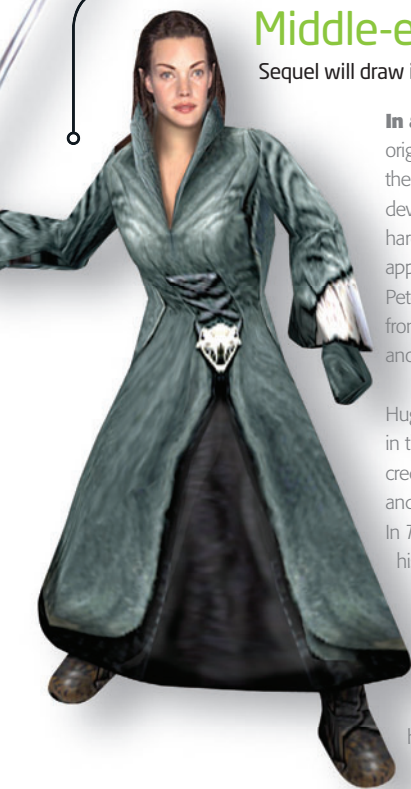
But *The Lord Of The Rings: The Battle For Middle-earth II* isn't simply deeper, wider and taller than its predecessor, it has also been significantly tweaked and enhanced. All-new enemy AI puts a challenging spin on the fighting, m  le

Bringing it on: This sequel extends further everything you loved about the original, and new technology means you are even more involved in the game.



Middle-earth With A Touch Of Hollywood

Sequel will draw inspiration from the films as well as the books, for a cinematic feel



In addition to delving into the original Tolkien books for inspiration, the *Battle For Middle-earth II* development team have also worked hard to bolster the sequel's cinematic appeal, bringing in two of the stars of Peter Jackson's movie version – one from the highly lauded art team, and another one of its key actors.

The latter is none other than Hugo Weaving, who stars as Elrond in the trilogy and whose list of film credits include the *Matrix* series and the upcoming *V For Vendetta*. In *The Battle For Middle-earth II* his commanding presence is put to perfect use, providing the voiceovers that guide players through the many missions and battles within the single-player campaigns. And of course he also reprises his role as Lord

"Hugo Weaving's commanding presence is put to perfect use providing the voiceovers"

Elrond, taking the character into new, previously unseen territory.

No less valuable is the input of John Howe, a celebrated artist whose concept work helped shape the visual style of the *Lord Of The Rings* movies. Here he helps add authenticity to many of the game's cinematic environments, as well as designing concept art for the fabled dragons of Middle-earth.

"We are delighted to have Hugo Weaving as the voice of *Battle For Middle-earth II*," says Mike Verdu,



Executive Producer at Electronic Arts LA. "He was brilliantly cast as Elrond in the movies and now his voice will help bring the game story and the world of Middle-earth to life for everyone who plays *Battle For Middle-earth II*. I am also very excited to be working with John Howe who will help us visualize key creatures in the game!"



THE WAY

>> combat brings warring factions closer together, and the improved game engine means the battles are bigger than ever before. The real-time strategy element has also been further strengthened with new tactical elements, customized hero characters, and fortresses that are upgradeable and customizable. The Living World map means it's also possible to view and shape the entire war in a way that fans of the wargame *Risk* will truly relish. A *Lord Of The Rings* experience on a grander scale than even Peter Jackson's movies were able to present, *The Battle For Middle-earth II* is a sequel like no other. ■



Empire building: This sequence shows the construction of a fortress at Isengard, in *The Lord Of The Rings: The Battle For Middle-earth II*. This sequel opens the world of Middle-earth right up, revealing new map areas and introducing new unit types and many brand-new gameplay elements.

A New Era Of Collectible Gaming

Explore even more of Middle-earth with the bonus-packed *Collector's Edition*

Forever innovating, Electronic Arts has broken new ground once again with the introduction of a second version of the latest *Lord Of The Rings* game. Created for true fans, *The Battle For Middle-earth II Collector's Edition* packs in a mountain of new content, both in the box and in the game itself. Exclusive in-game content includes an all-new fire-breathing dragon for players to take into battle, brand-new maps of locations such as Weathertop and Argonath, and even special visuals to identify *Collector's Edition* gamers when playing online.

Then there's an exclusive bonus DVD, featuring specially mastered high-definition content, including high-resolution trailers and cinematics, an entire musical score, a game and concept art collection, and a 'making of' video presentation. And finally there's also a special two-sided campaign

poster – one providing the perfect backdrop when playing for the forces of good, the other for those who can't resist controlling the dark forces of Sauron.

"We believe we've created something very special with *The Lord Of The Rings: The Battle For Middle-earth II*, and our team felt passionate about making a *Collector's Edition* that is truly special for the fans," says Executive Producer Mike Verdu. "The exclusive content including the behind-the-scenes footage, amazing concept art, cinematic paintings and sequences, the extensive soundtrack and access to the unique dragon unit adds a whole new dimension to the gaming experience."



Forgotten hero: He may have been missing from the film trilogy, but Tolkien's Tom Bombadil is alive and well, making his gaming debut in *The Battle For Middle-earth II*.



EverQuest: Prophecy Of Ro

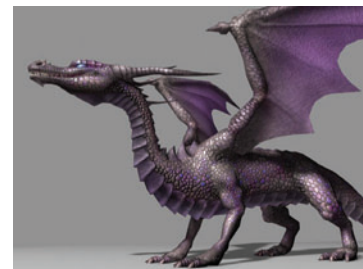
Publisher: Sony Online Entertainment Developer: Sony Online Entertainment Release: Out now



Worlds away: *Prophecy Of Ro* transforms the ever-popular *EverQuest*, introducing new lands, fresh features and finally giving gamers the opportunity to interact with the world around them.

Home to millions of gamers, the lands of Everquest continue to evolve with every passing day. And with *Prophecy Of Ro* they just got bigger and more exciting than ever. With a whole new story involving an evil new force walking amongst the gods, this expansion pack contains more than 30 new missions, 25 fresh creature types and six new zones. Character development is similarly expanded, with new spells, tasks, disciplines and even trade skills.

Prophecy Of Ro also offers a number of new features that put a whole new spin on life in the online world of Norath. In particular, three key additions change the way players can work together or battle against enemies. Magical 'spheres



of influence' can now be used to thwart enemies or aid allies, a new trap system makes it possible to deceive opponents, and – most radical of all – a destructible object system now means full interaction with the game world. Doors can be bashed in, walls can be knocked over, and even whole towers can be destroyed! A parallel universe indeed. ■

Case study: EverQuest II: Kingdom Of Sky

Publisher: Sony Online Entertainment
Developer: Sony Online Entertainment Release: Out now

EverQuest II: *Kingdom Of Sky* provides an ideal entry point for newcomers to the best-selling massively multiplayer online role-playing game, thanks to the inclusion of the full version of the original *EverQuest II*. (Existing players can download the expansion only in digital form at a slightly reduced price.) And, in every way, this is much more than a basic add-on, bringing the experience of dragon battles to the game world for the very first time – an addition that ties in brilliantly with *EverQuest II*'s exciting new player-versus-player combat system.

Kingdom Of Sky also pushes the concept of character development to new heights, with a new 'achievement' system of skills, abilities and specialization offering even greater character individuality. Increased level caps for characters, artisans, and guilds provide the opportunity to wield more power than ever before. And of



Looks and brains: The visually stunning *EverQuest II* takes flight in *Kingdom Of Sky*. In addition to new character development features, new creatures and even more adventure zones, *Sky* makes the most of the new player-versus-player battle system using dragon combat!

course there are also new creatures (25 in all) and treasures, with 10 new adventure zones encompassing everything from lush jungles to forgotten temples, floating islands to monster-infested dungeons. All rendered beautifully, thanks to gorgeous artwork and a cutting-edge game engine with real TWIMTBP appeal. ■



"The visually stunning *Kingdom Of Sky* makes the most of the new player-versus-player battle system by introducing dragon combat!"



THE WAY

Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Legend



The first lady of videogaming makes a triumphant return

Publisher: Eidos Developer: Crystal Dynamics Release: Spring

Hey good lookin': The game's heroine has been drastically upgraded in *Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Legend*, with a natural skeletal structure, realistic texturing, detailed facial features, and more fluid motion.



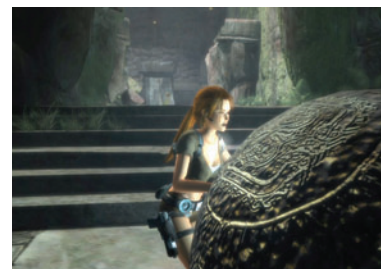
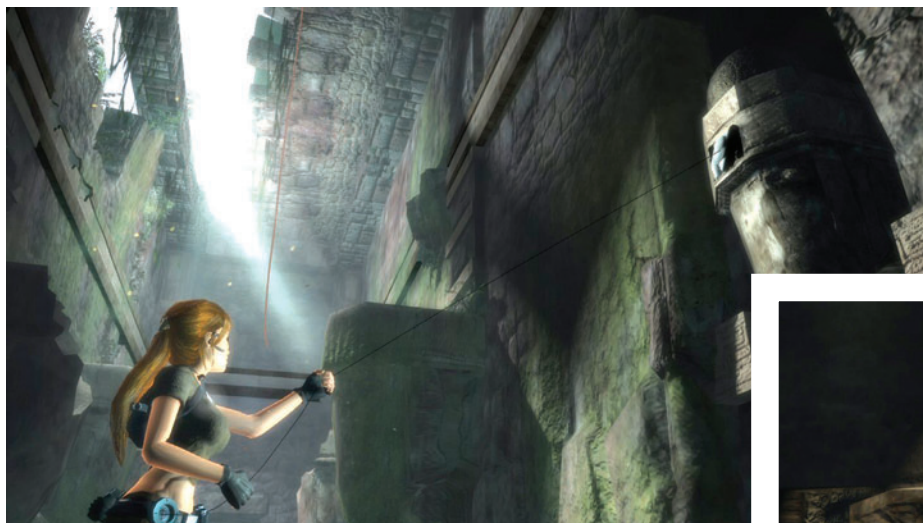
Who could have guessed that the gun-toting, ponytailed adventurer who made her debut in a game for the Sega Saturn console way back in 1996 would become such a world-famous figure? And who could have known that her adventures would win multiple awards and hit combined sales of more than 30 million? Transcending the world of gaming in a way that no other character ever has, Lara Croft has starred in two major motion pictures, numerous adventure novels and comic books, appeared in magazine photoshoots and even been created in action-figure form. And now, at long last, she's ready to return to the world of gaming in an all-new adventure from original creator Eidos.

Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Legend returns to the roots of the series while simultaneously pushing forward. The result is a game that completely revitalises the *Tomb Raider* experience, cleverly balancing the familiar with the innovative to create something that will appeal to long-term fans and newcomers alike.

Key to this dual approach is the fact that Eidos' own Crystal Dynamics studio is handling coding duties for the very first time in the series. This development team has been hard at work for more than two years, developing a new game engine and implementing a wealth of new features and innovative ideas.

Before designing this all-new adventure, the team at Crystal Dynamics embarked on

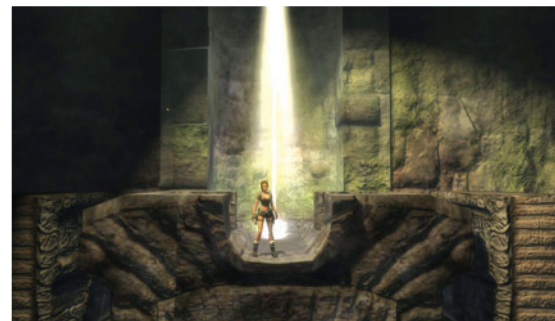




a quest of their own, one to 'rediscover' Lara Croft. This soul-searching mission led them to replay all six *Tomb Raider* titles, re-read every game review, call upon past consumer surveys, conduct new research and listen to opinions and requests from gamers. Armed with this wealth of information and an open mind, they were then ready to build a whole new kind of *Tomb Raider* game.

Such a fresh approach has, naturally, worried some, who feared that this new development team would cast aside all that

Gamers will immediately appreciate a control system that's more refined and intuitive than ever before. Thanks to a new dynamic animation system, Lara is constantly on the move, navigating the environment with fluidity and grace as she seamlessly interacts with every surface, deals with every obstacle, and pulls off every move in her expansive repertoire. Physics also plays a major role, enabling gamers to improvise their own solutions to the many challenges. And with Lara's physical prowess combining



Lara herself has never looked better (keen-eyed gamers will also notice she's had a highly impressive structural makeover), while the environments are never less than astonishing. Beautiful game art, high-detail texturing and numerous 3D effects lend the levels a truly organic appearance, and atmospheric lighting completes the picture to give every scene a uniquely cinematic glow.

A real blast: With the game engine providing support for real-time per pixel lighting, shadows and normal-mapping, the *Tomb Raider* world has never looked so lifelike.

Less a sequel, more a complete rebirth for the entire series, *Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Legend* is set to make gamers worldwide fall in love with the gun-toting action girl all over again. ■

"...the team at Crystal Dynamics embarked on a quest of their own, one to 'rediscover' Lara Croft..."

made the *Tomb Raider* games so exciting in the first place. But such fears are immediately eased by the news that Toby Gard, the original creator of the Lara Croft character, has been on board as senior designer – she couldn't be in safer hands.

Packed and loaded

Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Legend takes gamers right around the globe as our heroine heads off in search of an ancient English artefact and battles against forces led by a nemesis long thought dead. The adventure takes Lara back into the sort of environments that made her famous – through ancient realms, down to dangerous tombs, into jungles and up into snowy climes. And thanks to the highly developed game engine it all looks and plays beautifully.

gunplay with graceful movement more effectively than ever, the run-and-gun gameplay is dialled right up to maximum.

And it's not just guns that give Lara the edge. She can also call upon a huge arsenal of equipment, from magnetic grappling devices to binoculars, and from torches to frag grenades. Each opens up further possibilities for exploration and combat, while the inclusion of water and fire add further complexity to the lush environments.

A true TWIMTBP title, *Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Legend* also sets a new standard in terms of visual fidelity. Easily the best-looking game in the series so far, it utilizes a massively increased polygon count and a wealth of per pixel lighting and texturing effects to bring this latest story vividly to life.

A Croft Original

A potted past of the aristocratic antiquarian



Despite her lofty social position as the

Duchess of Saint Bridget, Lara's six adventures have seen her suffer frequent tragedy. Aged 20, she survived the plane crash that killed her fiancé, the Earl of Farringdon. Lara herself was also buried a few years later, once by the collapse of a ruin and again by an aunt who believed that she had perished inside the rubble.

Disowned by her family, she's been accused of murder and lived as a down and out in Paris. But with *Legend*, her troubles are only just beginning...



THE WAY

Auto Assault

Get behind the wheel of a death-dealing hotrod in this large-scale multiplayer experience

Publisher: NCSOFT Developer: NetDevil Release: April



Fired up: Five years in development, *Auto Assault* is ablaze with next-generation graphic effects – all the better to bring the spectacular battles and explosive missions to life.



Nice body: High polygon counts and cool shader effects could make you unduly proud of your collection of high-tech vehicles in *Auto Assault*. Until another player smashes them into pieces, that is.



Cruise control: You'll never drive alone in *Auto Assault*. Head online and you'll find yourself battling against hundreds of fellow motorized mercenaries.

Big bangs: The destructible environment means gamers can literally bring the house down in the groundbreaking TWIMTBP title *Auto Assault*.

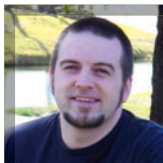
Put away the magical chain mail and cast aside all thoughts of orcs, dwarves and goblins. *Auto Assault* is a completely new kind of massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG), where hi-octane combat and vehicular destruction rule supreme. Set in a post-apocalyptic world where three factions fight for survival, this is a game where big wheels and cool driving

are as integral to the experience as big guns and a sure aim. From supercharged motorbikes through to heavyweight tanks, gamers can build up their own unique collection of killing machines, then further customise them with hot wheels and cool weapons.

Needless to say, the fact that *Auto Assault* majors on vehicular combat means this is a multiplayer game with true mass appeal. The depth of a true role-playing game there under the hood if you look closely, but this is a real pick-up-and-play experience. And it's also devilishly fast. There's barely time to stop and admire the scenery in this high-speed, hyper-violent world, so it's just as well that the designers have included integrated voice communication so players can communicate without taking their eye off the road.

In development for some three years, *Auto Assault* has also evolved into something of a technological marvel. Online gamers might be familiar with the way the open-ended game world blends freeform interaction with structured missions and objectives, but with the acclaimed Havok physics engine being used for the very first time in a MMORPG, the sense of immersion is unprecedented.

Here, every vehicle handles in a unique and convincing way, every battle leaves its scars on the landscape, and even the changing weather has an effect. And, of course, explosions and other cinematic effects are really very cool indeed. From the destruction of entire buildings to the graceful arc of enemy drivers blasted out through the windshield of their vehicles, this game is pure destructive poetry in motion. ■



Richard Iggo, senior marketing manager, NCSOFT

"*Auto Assault* is the fastest, most destructive MMORPG ever, featuring fast-action car combat in a post-apocalyptic setting. It combines the best of first-person shooter games, action games and role-playing games to create a truly new experience in massively multiplayer online gameplay."

Darkstar One

Publisher: Ascaron Entertainment Developer: Ascaron Entertainment Release: Out now

Created in collaboration with renowned science fiction writer Claudia Kern, *Darkstar One* takes gamers to the other side of the universe, where a young fighter pilot finds himself caught in the middle of an epic war.

Held together by a tightly plotted narrative, *Darkstar One* succeeds in hooking the player right from the start – and with even more solar systems to explore, artefacts to locate and upgrades to buy, the scale

soon becomes mind-boggling. And all the while encounters with the six primary races provide further complexities, along with the ability to play one side off against another and turn the war to your advantage. Gamers even get to choose their profession – you can earn credits on bounty-hunting missions, by trading, carrying out escort missions, transporting goods or even indulging in a little piracy in the backwaters of space. Even heroes have to make a living, after all. ■



Final frontier: As the evil Thul break apart a fragile intergalactic alliance and tip the entire universe into war, only the quick-witted and sure of aim stand a chance of surviving and prospering in the graphically stunning universe of *Darkstar One*.

Holger Flöttmann,
CEO, Ascaron Entertainment
"NVIDIA's groundbreaking GPUs and first-class support during the development of *Darkstar One* have enabled us to bring out the very best that is currently available in the field of 3D graphics."

Case study: Tortuga - Two Treasures

Publisher: Ascaron Entertainment Developer: Ascaron Entertainment Release: May



Pieces of eight: Featuring spectacular water effects, interactive use of light and shadow and characters brought to life using motion-capture techniques, *Tortuga - Two Treasures* recreates all the splendor, swordplay and seaborne action of 18th-century piracy.



How about a relaxing holiday in the Caribbean? Better still, how about a swashbuckling journey into the pirate-infested waters of the islands back in the turbulent 18th century? Effortlessly blending historical fact with intense action, *Tortuga - The Two Treasures* follows the adventures of Thomas 'Hawk' Blythe and his voodoo priestess partner, Sangua, as they sail the seas under the command of the notorious Blackbeard in search of legendary treasure.

It's a quest laced with gun battles, saber-rattling fights and some seriously snappy dialogue, while the excellent visuals evoke a time of pirate frigates, sun-kissed



lands and nail-biting combat. Bringing the golden age of piracy to life using the latest graphical and game design techniques, *Tortuga - Two Treasures* gives gamers the opportunity to indulge in wild adventure on the high scenes that would put even Jack Sparrow to shame. ■

"It's a quest laced with gun battles, saber-rattling fights and some seriously snappy dialogue, bringing the golden age of piracy to life"



THE WAY

Dark Age Of Camelot: Darkness Rising

The online world of swords and sorcery enters a new era with this expansive add-on

Publisher: Koch Developer: Mythic Entertainment Release: Out now



Land of heroes: New lands, new quests, and the opportunity to take on the role of a king's Champion are there for the taking in *Darkness Rising*, the latest expansion for the best-selling online epic *Dark Age Of Camelot*.

A lready close to a quarter of a million European gamers regularly head online to immerse themselves in the bewitching world of *Dark Age Of Camelot*. Now, with the launch of the *Darkness Rising*, the latest and most ambitious expansion pack yet, that alternative universe is set to get even more involving, action-packed, and richly populated.

Opening up a new chapter in the Camelot saga, *Darkness Rising* is designed especially for gamers whose online characters have

"Darkness Rising needs gamers to follow in the footsteps of legendary warriors such as Lancelot"

progressed to experience level 30 or beyond. It caters for this hardy brigade with an epic new story featuring greater challenges, increased danger, and incredible rewards.

In *Dark Age Of Camelot*, King Arthur is dead and the three realms of Albion, Midgard and Hibernia in chaos. *Darkness Rising* needs gamers worthy enough to assume the role of a Champion, to follow in the footsteps of legendary warriors such as Lancelot, Balder and Cuchulainn and combat the sinister forces preparing to mount an all-out onslaught on the realms.

Such heroes will find a whole new range of game features available, not least the ability to ride horses and other, more outlandish, steeds as they embark on quests and head into battle. Along the way

Champions also have the opportunity to advance through a new set of experience levels, complete with new hit- and power-points, further sub-class character options (a fighter can now learn magic as a sideline, for example) and special equipment, while those who earn the right to be called a Champion Of The Realm even gain access to a fearsome and visually spectacular range of special new weapons.

In addition to the new Champion elements, *Darkness Rising* also boosts the whole *Dark Age Of Camelot* gaming experience, upgrading the Darkness Falls dungeon and giving the capital cities of the various realms a graphical facelift that makes the most of the latest NVIDIA-supported features in Microsoft® DirectX® 9.0. ■



Matt Shaw, Mythic Entertainment

"NVIDIA GPUs provide the best visual effects and performance for *Darkness Rising*. *Darkness Rising* takes full advantage of the raw power of NVIDIA's

GeForce 7 series to maintain a high frame-rate with hundreds of high-polygon pixel-shaded characters battling it out on screen at the same time."

Empire Earth II: The Art Of Supremacy

Publisher: Sierra Developer: Mad Doc Software Release: Out now



What a lovely war: Vertex shaders, dynamic lighting and high dynamic color effects combine to give *The Art Of Supremacy* a full TWIMTBP visual polish.



Prepare for heads to roll once more, in this hotly-tipped expansion pack for action strategy simulation *Empire Earth II*. Building on the highly acclaimed foundations of the original game, it introduces a whole new set of campaigns, and the gameplay and visuals benefit from further refinements.

The Art Of Supremacy delivers a total of 15 new scenarios, spread across three campaigns that encompass the golden age of Egypt, Napoleonic-era Russia and a contemporary battle between Africa's Masai tribe and mineral-greedy corporations. Wargamers can also get their teeth into a number of classic battles, not least the famous battle between the British army and the Zulu warriors at Rorke's Drift.



Down at the gameplay level, *Art Of Supremacy* adds the ability to control group warplans, splash damage simulation, new flag and fealty systems, native tribes and even armies formed by hero characters. Three new game modes also provide fresh challenges, while a Custom Forces Editor and a full Civilisation Editor ensures that the game truly offers endless replay value. ■

"Wargamers can get their teeth into a number of classic battles, including the famous Rorke's Drift"

Case study: SWAT 4: The Stechkov Syndicate

Publisher: Sierra Developer: Irrational Games Release: Out now

Life as a member of the elite Special Weapons And Tactics task force becomes more adrenaline-filled, action-packed and deadly with the release of *The Stechkov Syndicate*. This all-new expansion for *SWAT 4* pits the elite team against a new European crime family – a ruthless gang whose takeover of the city has been swift and brutal, and whose illegal activities have flooded the streets with guns, drugs and violence.

The ongoing battle between the SWAT unit and the Syndicate spans some seven new levels, with new multiplayer levels and features including Voice Over IP, a 10-player co-operative mode, a new 'Smash & Grab' play mode, voting options, ranking systems and new character customization options. *SWAT's* famed AI is even further tweaked in this add-on pack – the bad guys will now even grab guns from bodies! Just be thankful that the good guys can now call upon an even more impressive

arsenal, from night-vision goggles to stun guns and grenade launchers to machine guns. ■



Down and dirty: The elite police unit face their biggest challenge as they battle against a vicious new Eastern European crime gang in *SWAT 4: The Stechkov Syndicate*.



THE WAY

The Electronic Sports World Cup

Gaming gets serious as the world's finest get ready to compete in the ultimate electronic sports showdown...



Crowd-pullers: "The ESWC is a real spectator-based sporting event," says Matthieu Dallon. "Competitors get to play in an arena with more than 10,000 people watching at any one time."

All to play for: Sponsored by NVIDIA, the ESWC sees hundreds of gamers from around the world (selected through a series of preliminary competitions from a pool of thousands) competing for prestigious titles and lucrative prize money.

Now in its fourth year, the Electronic Sports World Cup brings together the world's best gamers for the ultimate competitive multiplayer-gaming showdown. Set to take place in Paris from 27th June until 2nd July, it will feature 800 qualifying champions competing across seven categories. With this year's prize money doubled to more than \$400,000, this is an event every self-respecting gamer should mark on their calendar. And those who really rate their skills might even want to consider entering the preliminary heats in the hope of securing a place in the final.

"We actually started as LAN party organisers back in the late '90s," reveals Matthieu Dallon, President of Games Services, the company behind the ESWC. "We had so many requests from people who wanted to participate that we hit upon the idea of a World Cup, with teams from each competing country qualifying for the main event"

The event has quickly grown. "The first one featured players from 32 different countries, now that's grown to 52," says Dallon. "And we had 350,000 people involved in the preliminary stage last year."

"We choose games that are played by the gaming community, rather than for marketing reasons"

This year, Dallon expects around 40,000 people to descend on the Arena (the Palais Omnisports in Paris Bercy), while some 400 hours of television coverage are expected. "That makes the ESWC comparable to other sporting events," notes Dallon.

"This is a four million dollar project, so help from sponsors is essential," he continues. "We've worked with NVIDIA from the start, and they are the only worldwide sponsor, providing support in every single territory."

NVIDIA sees its role within the ESWC as helping contestants perform at their best: "This is the only event in the world that takes this electronic sports approach, bringing so many gamers together. We are powering the athletes taking part in these Electronics Olympics in the same way that shoe manufacturers enable 100m runners to break world records," says Serge Lemonde, NVIDIA's head of marketing for Southern Europe.

This year the prize money will be split across seven tournaments. Two of these will

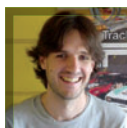
be for *Counter-Strike* gamers (including one exclusively for female teams), with *Quake IV*, *Warcraft III*, *Gran Turismo 4*, *Pro Evolution Soccer* and *Trackmania Nations* representing the other major game genres.

"One difference between the ESWC and other tournaments is that we choose games that are played by the gaming community, rather than selecting titles for marketing reasons," says Dallon. "This year we've been working with Nadeo, who have created the downloadable *Trackmania Nations*. Everybody will be starting from scratch with *Nations*, so it will encourage girls, younger people and others who might otherwise not compete."

NVIDIA's Lemonde adds: "*TrackMania Nations* uses the latest graphics technologies and can even be played in High Definition – perfect for the gamer and visually stunning for the spectators."

To find out more about the preliminary tournaments taking place worldwide, visit the official website, www.esworldcup.com. ■

Introducing Trackmania Nations



The latest in Nadeo's hugely popular *Trackmania* series has been created especially for this year's Electronic Sports World Cup. Florent Castelnerac, CEO of Nadeo, discusses the creation of this groundbreaking title...

What was the motivation for Nadeo when creating a free game for use at the ESWC?

It's taken a lot of time and money to develop this special *Trackmania Nations* edition, but it's something we consider a privilege. At the end of the day we're happy that everybody everywhere will get the chance to play the game. And if people enjoy playing it then they may go on to buy *Trackmania Sunrise*, which opens things up with additional features, modes, and special environments. So for us it's good marketing, it's an investment, and it's fun.

And how does this free edition differ from previous versions of *Trackmania*?

Trackmania Nations introduces various 'e-sport' features, including official maps to be used in the competition, dedicated

online servers, and a more advanced version of the spectator mode.

Has the game engine changed?

We've been continually developing the game engine. We wanted the game to run as many PCs out there as possible, but obviously we also wanted to take advantage of the latest technology so that it would be as visually impressive as possible for the Electronic Sports World Cup. And we've also been working with NVIDIA, adapting the code for the range of NVIDIA chipsets and really pushing the limit with the latest GeForce cards.

What graphical improvements can we expect?

This edition possesses better lighting, integrated cinematic effects, and there's less of a shiny gloss to the textures. We've also introduced a new grass rendering system, which can pretty much

handle an infinite number of blades. We can't wait for people to play it – it just looks so much more immersive and precise.

But does its status as a World Cup event game mean it's only one for die-hard race fans?

Actually it's more important for as many people as possible to get to grips with it, to make it easier for people to enter the competition. And because it needs to be entertaining for spectators it's also crucial that those not playing the game can easily see and understand the challenges faced by the drivers. So after the more complex track designs of *Trackmania Sunrise* we've gone back to simpler designs. As it's free I hope that it becomes a game everybody installs on their PC, in the same way that they always have *Solitaire* on there. ■

1. *Trackmania Nations* is not simply a demo. In fact Nadeo has created a whole new game especially for the ESWC 2006. You can download it for free at www.trackmanianations.com.

2. A new grass-rendering system adds a new organic look to the action in *Trackmania Nations*.

3. Graphical enhancements in this latest edition of *Trackmania* include more advanced shaders and a range of post-processing style effects.

4. The first game even developed specially for an 'e-sports' event, *Trackmania Nations* includes a number of special features to make it a real spectator event.



Beyond Gaming

It's not just games that benefit from NVIDIA. We take a look at three acclaimed applications that use GeForce technology to deliver seriously impressive results

1 Pinnacle Studio 10

Pinnacle's video editing software has long been a favorite for home-movie makers looking for a powerful and easy-to-master way of editing their footage as well as storing and sharing their precious memories. With *Pinnacle Studio 10* come even more pro-level features and improved performance, with all the accessibility.

Splitting the process into three easy steps of capture, editing/enhancement, and sharing, the software further simplifies things using an on-demand assistance system, while the SmartMovie feature offers true hand-holding through those potentially confusing movie-making stages, enabling users to

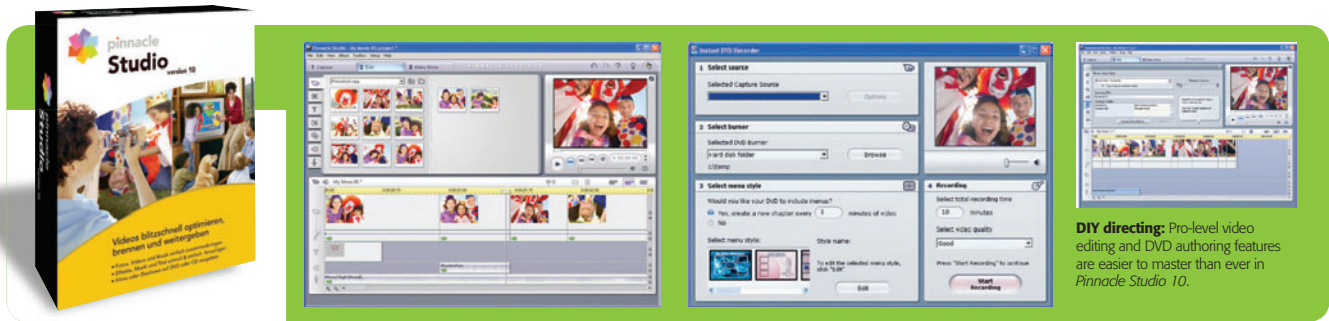
create pro-level effects, transitions, titles and add music. Tools are on hand to restore old or damaged video tapes, stabilise jerky footage, and correct poorly lit or grainy shots.

Pinnacle Studio 10 also provides fully integrated authoring of both CDs and DVDs, creating discs suitable for playback on any standard DVD player or compatible computer. There's even the option to create menu-enabled DVDs without having to copy the video files on to the PC hard drive first. Using the software in conjunction

with NVIDIA graphics hardware has more benefits, with the Pinnacle Liquid Edition Engine calling upon the GPU to process the many transitions and effects in real-time. Numerous resolutions and formats are supported, from cellphone feeds through to high definition. It's even possible to watch HD playback on a secondary monitor while working on footage, thus making editorial choices on the spot. *Pinnacle Studio 10* is available for \$69.99.

www.pinnaclesys.com. ■

"Numerous resolutions and formats are supported, from cellphone feeds through to high definition"



DIY directing: Pro-level video editing and DVD authoring features are easier to master than ever in *Pinnacle Studio 10*.

2 Magic Bullet Editors v2.0



Digital video is fast revolutionising both the movie-making and the television recording processes. Once, expensive celluloid and heavy video equipment made capturing moving images a slow and difficult process, but now digital video (DV) cameras have ushered in a more cost-effective, portable and versatile solution. Even moviemakers such

as George Lucas and Robert Rodriguez film using DV.

But while DV offers many benefits, what it doesn't do is capture movement and light in the same artistically pleasing way as real film. That's where Red Giant Software's *Magic Bullet Editors v2.0* comes in. Based on award-winning technology created by movie special effects studio, The Orphanage, this innovative piece

of software makes it possible to give DV footage an authentic real-film look. And now with this new edition it does the job even quicker, the new DeepColor RT render engine harnessing the power of an NVIDIA GeForce graphics processor to create film treatments 12 times faster than by using CPU power alone.

In addition to its film stock emulation abilities, as showcased by 65 presets that mimic the look of everything from *The Matrix* to *CSI*, *Magic Bullet Editors v2.0* can



THE TOOLS



Michelle Gallina, Serious Magic
"Vlog It and NVIDIA's GeForce graphics processors deliver high-speed performance to help bloggers add video to their blogs that has the look and feel of a network television newscast"

Both simplifying and empowering, it deals with all the baffling technical stuff and offers tools that blend text, video, and audio. Within minutes *Vlog It* users will be posting their own professionally composed and edited Vlog.

At its simplest level, *Vlog It* makes it possible to quickly drag and drop video clips and music. But that's only for starters. Fancy yourself as an online news broadcaster? Armed with a webcam or camcorder and using the program's teleprompter facility, it's possibly to do much more than share simple video footage. And with the inclusion of TV-style transitions and effects, it really is possibly to emulate the glossy approach used by the professionals.

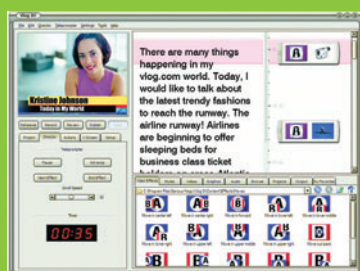
Download *Vlog It* or buy it on CD for \$49.95. www.seriousmagic.com. ■

3 Vlog It

A couple of years back very few had heard of 'blogging'. But now it's over its period as the latest internet craze, and is transforming the way people communicate online. However, right now, traditional text blogging is no longer

where it's at. Today's web-savvy user also wants to share sights and sounds.

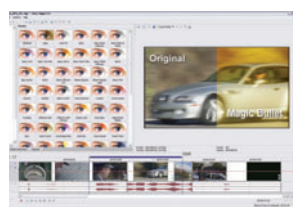
The only problem is how to deal with and combine all the different multimedia file types used to create a video-enhanced blog (or vlog). That's where *Vlog It* comes in.



It's all about you: Enter a new era of video- and audio-enhanced blogging, with Serious Magic's *Vlog It*.

also be used to clean up DV and HDV 'chroma' problems, or even dirty up footage through the addition of stylish 'damaged-film' characteristics. And because this is a tool as useful for hobbyists and independent moviemakers as it is for Hollywood professionals, it offers all the full support for such packages as *Final Cut Pro*, *Premiere Pro* and *Avid AVX 1.5*.

Get *Magic Bullet Editors v2.0* from Red Giant Software for \$395. www.redgiantsoftware.com. ■



Focus on film: Based on technology developed by a leading visual effects studio, *Magic Bullet For Editors 2* gives digital video users the ability to transform their material into film-quality footage.





THE WAY

The New High Definition Age

NVIDIA leads the way with graphics technology to power a super-sized gaming experience

Pinned down: *Quake 4* (left) will look astounding on a high-definition system.

From Hollywood to Japan, the entertainment world is buzzing with talk of High Definition. This new technology, also known as High-Def or simply HD, is set to transform the way we watch movies and television by delivering sharper, more detailed images. Already, a new generation of HD-ready television is on sale in the high street, in readiness for this bigger and brighter digital age.

But that's only half the story. For High Definition offers just as many benefits, perhaps even more, for serious gamers. Increased resolutions mean games look better than ever, with increased three-dimensional and textural detail and far greater visual precision. The new generation of games consoles are proud to boast about their High Definition capabilities. But what

you might not realise is that with NVIDIA at the forefront in this new market, PC owners are also able to take advantage of High Definition technology in gaming.

"The new PC technology from NVIDIA is gaming to new levels that gamers have only ever dreamed about," says Adam Foat, Product PR manager at NVIDIA. "NVIDIA is already working closely with game makers to make sure that games run well at these new enhanced resolutions and that their user interfaces scale gracefully."

Extreme HD Gaming with Quad SLI

Spearheading the push into the HD era is the new Quad NVIDIA® SLI™ technology. Taking its renowned SLI technology to new levels, Quad SLI makes it possible to run four NVIDIA® GeForce®

"With the latest NVIDIA GPUs, PC owners have full access to the most vivid HD experience of all"



Look sharp: *Call Of Duty 2* is one of the new HD-ready generation of console games, but the PC version should still deliver superior graphical quality.



We explain the technology behind the good looks

Jargon Buster

Antialiasing: A technique to smooth out the jagged edges sometimes visible on screen.

Anisotropic filtering: A way of enhancing the appearance of textures on objects that are further away in a 3D scene.

Graphics processing unit (GPU): A second processor in the PC dedicated to graphics, freeing up the CPU to deal with other calculations.

H.264: Also known as MPEG-4 AVC (Advanced Video Coding).

It's simply a video compression standard that offers greater efficiency than its predecessors.

High definition: A new set of display standards that produces output at vastly increased resolutions. The two common resolutions offer output at 1280x720 and 1920x1080 pixels.

High Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI):

A connection standard designed to make it easy to connect to an audio/video source, such as HDTVs, using a single cable.

Inverse telecine: A system for restoring the frame rate of film footage to improve appearance and reduce storage space.

Pixel: The smallest screen dot that can be individually altered.

PureVideo: NVIDIA PureVideo technology is the combination of high-definition video processors and video decode software that delivers unprecedented picture clarity, smooth video, accurate color, and precise image scaling for all video content

to turn your PC into a high-end home theater.

Resolution: A measurement in pixels of the number of dots on a monitor display that can currently be individually altered.

NVIDIA SLI: A high-performance technology that intelligently combines and scales graphics performance by combining multiple NVIDIA GPUs in a single system. NVIDIA SLI technology can scale both geometry and fill-rate performance for

multiple GPUs. The new Quad SLI technology enables four GeForce 7800 GTX GPUs to run in parallel, running games at the highest possible resolutions and frame rates to produce an extreme HD gaming experience.

Spatial-temporal de-interlacing:

A technique that provides the smoothest possible video output by analysing both pixel positioning and movement and filtering each pixel accordingly.

7800 GTX graphics processing units (GPUs) in tandem inside one PC. Working seamlessly together, they create the ultimate graphics processing powerhouse.

“Quad SLI is most certainly one of the most exciting developments for the PC gamer, delivering the most extreme HD gaming experience that has ever been available on a PC,” explains Chris Daniel, Product Manager at NVIDIA. When this innovative technology is combined with a PC such as the forthcoming Dell XPS 600 Renegade and the results viewed on the new Dell 30-inch flat panel, it makes true high-definition gaming a reality. “With this system PC gamers will be able to have the hottest games running at extreme HD resolutions – up to an unbelievable 2560x1600 pixels — at silky-smooth frame rates,” says Daniel. “What’s more, the image quality on these games can be cranked up with 32x antialiasing and 16x anisotropic filtering for a truly amazing gaming experience. Gamers will feel as though they really are in the game.”

Indeed, HD devices are already available, with many 20-inch displays that support 1680x1050 and 24-inch 1920x1200 displays at affordable prices today. At the top end, 24-inch displays go up to 2560x1600 resolution for about £1,200.

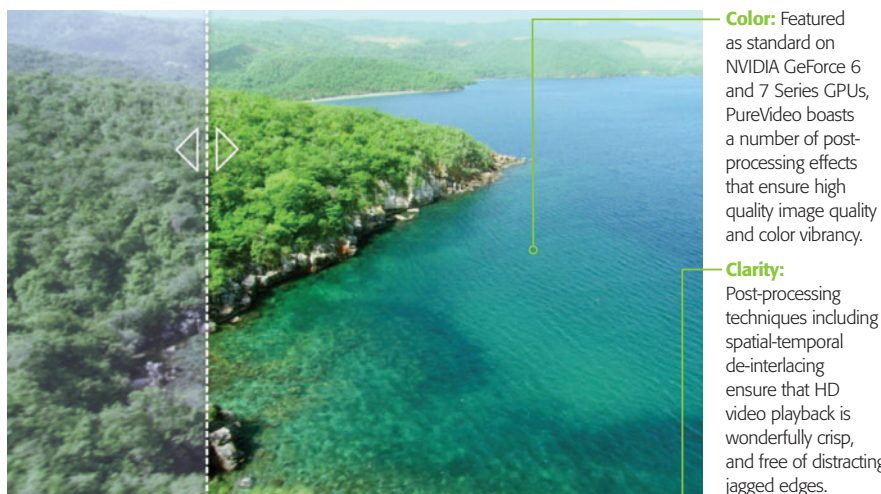
From PC to HDTV

The PC is fast becoming a fixture in the family’s living room, both for multimedia and for big-screen gaming. There it’s perfectly placed to make the most of HD, and with NVIDIA® PureVideo™ technology, already featured as standard in the GeForce 6 and GeForce 7 Series GPUs, the HD home theater experience on the PC is a reality.

“NVIDIA PureVideo technology allows users to experience superb picture clarity and precise, vivid colours across all high definition resolutions,” says Patrick Beaulieu, NVIDIA multimedia product manager. “It delivers this high-quality HD output through its dedicated hardware video processing engine and software algorithms, which enables smooth playback of HD video with minimal CPU overhead, including support for formats such

Picture Perfect

These images give some indication of how NVIDIA PureVideo can enhance picture quality



Color: Featured as standard on NVIDIA GeForce 6 and 7 Series GPUs, PureVideo boasts a number of post-processing effects that ensure high quality image quality and color vibrancy.

Clarity: Post-processing techniques including spatial-temporal de-interlacing ensure that HD video playback is wonderfully crisp, and free of distracting jagged edges.



Connection: With NVIDIA PureVideo technology, you have the ability to experience HD content.



Crispness: Spot the difference: NVIDIA PureVideo delivers a crisp, clear picture that rivals high-end home theater systems.

as H.264/MPEG4-AVC, Windows Media 9 and MPEG 2.”

Furthermore, PureVideo delivers advanced video post-processing features for the PC – including spatial-temporal de-interlacing, inverse telecine and high-quality scaling rivalling some high-end DVD players.

NVIDIA PureVideo also supports High Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI), so you can connect your PC to HDTVs with HDMI. NVIDIA GPUs powered the first fully HDMI-compliant system on the market – the

Sony’s VAIO Media Center PC.

“Over the last couple of years, the High Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) has emerged as the connection standard for both HDTV and the consumer electronics market,” explains Patrick Beaulieu. “Using a single cable, an HDMI interface can connect all HD devices, displays and audio components, dramatically simplifying home theater system installation and reducing the mass of cables.” ■

DON'T GET STUCK WITH OLD TECHNOLOGY

Make sure your graphics processing unit (GPU) has:

The Power of 3



NVIDIA® SLI™ technology—Delivers the highest possible performance and best image quality by enabling two graphics cards to run in parallel. The must have feature for performance PCI Express® graphics, NVIDIA SLI dramatically scales performance by up to 2x on today's hottest games.



Full Microsoft® DirectX® 9.0 Shader Model 3.0 support: NVIDIA GPUs provide the most complete implementation of the Shader Model 3.0 feature set including vertex texture fetch (VTF)—a key feature used in many of today's shipping games.



True high dynamic-range (HDR) rendering support: The ultimate lighting effects bring environments to life for a truly immersive, ultra-realistic experience.

Upgrade your PC to the Power of 3 with NVIDIA-based graphics cards from PNY and BFG available at Best Buy.



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