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D MUCH MORE

**DEAD AND
LOVING IT**
IN VIDEO GAMES,
DYING CAN BE A
GOOD THING



**THE BEST-SELLING WRESTLING FRANCHISE IS BACK
AND MORE EXPLOSIVE THAN EVER**



GAMBIT Game Lab Showcases Results

GAMBIT (Gamers, Aesthetics, Mechanics, Business, Innovation, Technology) is the result of a five-year collaborative effort between Singapore's Interactive Digital media R & D Programme Offices and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The project was conceived as a way of establishing Singapore as a core in the growing International Game Industry, and 30% of the students involved in last year's GAMBIT internship are now employed by major game companies in Singapore. For the second year running, 45 students from local universities and polytechnics were selected for an eight-week internship at GAMBIT Game Lab based at MIT. Split into seven teams, each team was given a different gaming problem to tackle. Each team also consisted of some MIT students and the teams ranged in disciplines from technical, conceptual design, art creation and game design.

On the morning of the 9th September, the local media was

invited to check out their progress at GAMBIT's Media Day event at Singapore Management University.

Seven games from seven teams were on display, ranging from Facebook-type games to the download-for-free variety. The ones that stood out to us were the Picopoke and Akrasia teams. Students from the Picopoke team were given the task to permeate games into the daily lives of those playing them. Picopoke is a Facebook game that lets you take pictures, upload it and let the community decide on what's the best. The game offers weekly challenges, in which you take pictures of people or friends or whoever you're stalking and meet the criteria of the challenges. The Akrasia team

had the challenge of implementing meaningful insights of the human condition into their game. Thus, they came up with a 2D maze game where the metaphor of addiction is portrayed pretty grim and psychedelic here. You control a two-legged thing that chases a big white creature around while collecting "pills" to stay alive. Capturing the

creature nets you points at the cost of your life, so it's up to the player to decide whether he wants to stay alive or rack up a high score.

The majority of the games are still in the developmental stage, but without a doubt, things are looking up for the future of the gaming industry on our small island.



Tecmo Leaves SquareEnix At The Altar, Run Off With Koei. Meanwhile EA Give Up On Take-Two

SquareEnix's well documented plans to purchase a majority share in rival game makers Tecmo have fallen through in a blaze of Korean drama worthy plot twists. On 29th August, SquareEnix announced its plans for a 'friendly

takeover' of Tecmo by buying a majority share of stocks in the company. SquareEnix planned to purchase the stocks at 930 yen (approximately S\$12) per share, 30% higher than market value. This was seen as a win-win by industry

insiders who have been forecasting the demise of Tecmo since President Yoshimi Yasuda's resignation in August. SquareEnix would also have benefited from Tecmo's American market share with the popular Ninja Gaiden and Dead or Alive

franchises. However, in a surprising turn of events, one week later on 5th September, Tecmo rejected SquareEnix's offer. The reason? Tecmo decided to pursue integration with Dynasty Warriors makers, Koei instead. Hurt and confused by the sudden turnaround, SquareEnix demanded answers from Tecmo regarding the change of plans. Tecmo waited a week before they sent their response, which, despite being a page long, basically consisted of 'we prefer Koei'. Following this, SquareEnix officially withdrew their offer from Tecmo. On the other side of the pond, Electronic Arts has officially given up its near 7 month long bid to takeover Grand Theft Auto publisher, Take-Two Interactive. EA and Take-Two had been negotiating in private since August after multiple well publicized takeover bids were rejected by Take-Two stockholders earlier this year. Strauss Zelnick, Chairman of the Board of Take-Two has said that his company is "actively engaged in discussions with other parties in the context of our formal process to consider strategic alternatives."

