



EntropiaPlanets presents

ENTROPIATIMES

DECEMBER 2010

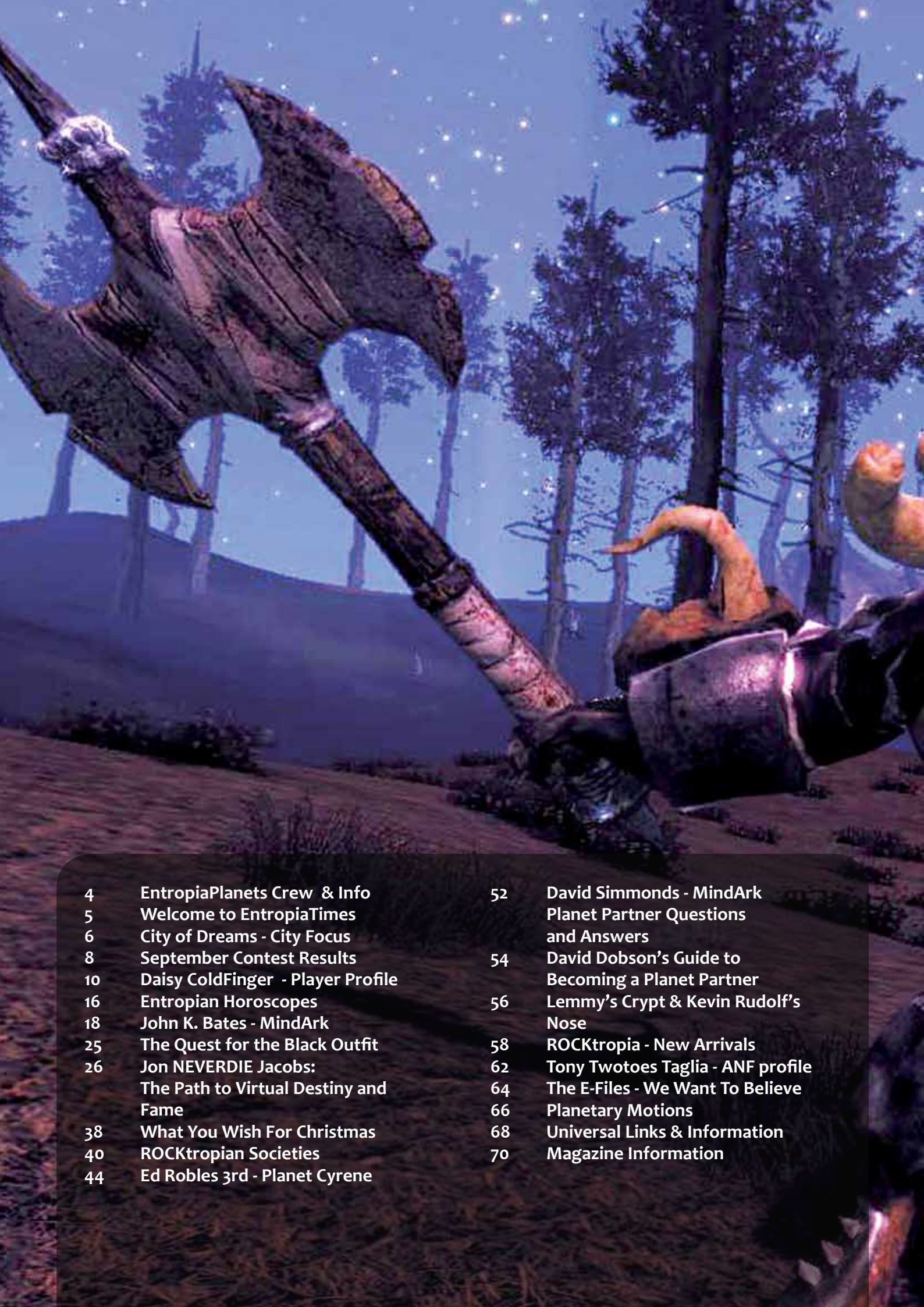
ROCKtropia - Interview **Jon NEVERDIE Jacobs**

Ed Robles 3rd
Creative Director - Planet Cyrene

How to become a Planet Partner
David Dobson, CEO - Planet Arkadia

JOHN K. BATES & DAVID SIMMONDS
MindArk

ROCKtropical Societies
Society Spotlight



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Welcome to EntropiaTimes



Dear reader,

Welcome to the second edition of the EntropiaTimes!

First of all, we would like to thank you for the overwhelming positive response to the first edition of the EntropiaTimes! When we set out on our mission to supply you with more in-depth interviews and articles, we were hoping that there would be a viable market for such a magazine, and luckily, the reaction from the community shows us that our hunch was right.

In the meantime, much has happened in our Entropia Universe, and unfortunately, we simply do not have enough space to cover absolutely everything, but we will do our best to see what we can incorporate into future issues.

During the last three months since the launch issue of our EntropiaTimes magazine:

- Planet Arkadia was announced by Arkadia Studios, which is run by a fellow Entropian, Dave Ozi Epsolon (David Dobson). EntropiaPlanets was chosen as the forum environment to first publish the news about the new planet.
- SEE Virtual Worlds announced their intention of starting a planet based on Universal Monsters and Van Helsing.
- The remainder of Club NEVERDIE was sold to John Foma Kalun for a whopping 3,350,000 PED (\$335,000 USD), breaking the previous record set by the Crystal Palace sale, and on both of these occasions, EntropiaPlanets was the first to cover these historic sales!
- Planet Calypso started its Harbinger Event.
- MindArk implemented a new VU that enables participants to only download the content for the planets they need, rather than having to download several GigaBytes of data for planets they do not plan on visiting.
- First Planet Company's Frank did not win any trophies.
- Next Island launched its iPhone/iPad application called Next Island: Origins, which is an interactive game related to the prologue story leading to the discovery of Next Island, and subsequently gave away redemption codes for free downloads of the application exclusively through EntropiaPlanets.
- EntropiaForum sold its full database to First Planet Company for the PlanetCalypsoForum, and then made a fresh start.

As time progresses and more news becomes available, we hope to be able to provide as much coverage as possible. If you truly want to remain on top of all the news, be sure to check the EntropiaPlanets forum regularly, and keep an eye on your mailbox. If something is too good to keep to ourselves, we will ensure the news will reach you one way or another.

You probably have noticed already that we have chosen to style this edition around ROCKtropia, the second planet announced and online in the Entropia Universe.

However, rather than totally dedicating the magazine to just one planet, we also offer other interesting stories and interviews. As an example, this edition features an interview with MindArk's John K. Bates, Planet Cyrene's Creative Director, Ed Robles 3rd, and CEO, David Dobson from Planet Arkadia. We are planning similar themes for other planets as they come online, where the majority of the magazine content is focused on one single planet, while at the same time presenting other interesting interviews and stories, along with our usual entertaining bits and bytes.

Thank you for taking the time to read our magazine. As with the launch issue of the magazine, it is possible to order printed copies as well. Check the forum for more information on how to get your hands on a copy of the EntropiaTimes. Take it with you when you commute to work, or show to your friends who are wondering what this Entropia thing is you keep talking about.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all! We hope you enjoy the magazine!

*Dalas, GeorgeSkywalker,
Karv, Lykke, MindStar9,
Narfi, RAZER, safara,
Tass, TheMZ and Peter*





City of Dreams - Facts

Planet	ROCKtropia
Continent Area	City of Dreams
Estate	Land Area
Longitude	136229
Latitude	84842
Height	237
Auctioneer	Yes
Storage Facility	Yes
Ad Terminal	Yes
Manufacturing	Yes

Repair Terminal	Yes
Society Terminal	Yes
Trade Terminal	Yes
Revival Point	Yes
PVP Ring	Yes
Automated Gun Turret	Yes
Global Adscreen	Yes
Broadcaster	Yes

Read more about City of Dreams in EP Wiki

City of Dreams

City Focus

By Narfi

It doesn't matter if you are logging onto ROCKtropa as a brand new avatar or traveling there from another planet, a visit to the City of Dreams is a must. There are towers dedicated to all the major artists represented on ROCKtropa. A glass cage for PVP practice sits just outside the city circle, and a dance club complete with upper VIP area within the hub of the city. There are roads perfectly designed for the race enthusiast, and secret caves and passageways to explore.

New players logging onto ROCKtropa find themselves at the teleport in the center of City of Dreams. They are instantly greeted by a flurry of activity as vampire and android Vixens run around the area, while traders shout advertisements for their goods. There is usually an experienced player or two standing at the steps of the club answering questions and helping direct people in their first few moments in the game. Some are hunters or miners just in from a run, but others thrive on the joy of helping, and tirelessly stand there for hours giving advice and direction. Often a sweat team can be located near the teleporter, or on the road in front of the PVP Ring.

“ There are towers dedicated to all the major artists represented on ROCKtropa. ”

If you look around you will see tall towers in all directions, some with elevated walk ways between them. If you go towards any of the towers you will see large posters displaying pictures of the artist that the tower is dedicated to. There are towers for Motorhead, Kevin Rudolph, and Cheri Moon, as well as others. There is even a tower dedicated to Neverdie the virtual pop star and man behind the dream of ROCKtropa.

What do people like more in their free time than drinking, fighting and dancing? The City of Dreams offers all of this and more. With miners supplying an abundance of cocktails, inhibitions are released. The blood flows in the PVP ring, and dancing in the Club doesn't stop until noon the next day, if that.

The road system in and around the city is phenomenal. You can drive to any of the nearby teleports just by following the highway that goes right through the middle of the city. I would highly recommend that anyone visiting ROCKtropa for the first time give the circuit a good run. It's a great way to pick up the extra teleporters on your map, but also a relaxing and beautiful experience as well.

There isn't anyone playing the game that doesn't enjoy exploring from time to time and finding new and cool looking places hidden just out of reach of the bustle of Main Street.

There is plenty of this on ROCKtropa as a planet, but you can even find stuff right in the middle of the city! Is that a cocktail sitting on the bar or a secret lever revealing a hidden room or passageway? There are signs leading to a path through the mountain towards the Wet Wolf sweat camp. There is a labyrinth of caves in the mountain next to the city with beautiful pools and waterfalls of pink water. Watch your step though, that loose rock doesn't quite look natural.



The City of Dreams sums up all the hopes and dreams of every resident of ROCKtropa, the music, the beauty, the camaraderie, even the violence. Maybe one day some of us will hit the music charts and a tower will be built in our honor. Maybe some of our names will be placed in stars on the sidewalk. Even if none of this happens, each of us will have the memories of when we were pioneers of a brave new world.

“ Often a sweat team can be located near the teleporter, or on the road in front of the PVP Ring. ”



WANTED YOUR OPINION

In the September EntropiaTimes magazine issue, we had a contest where you could win a [Valkyrie MK1](#) if you helped us out with your opinions on both EP and ET. The contest was:

We would like to know your opinion about our new magazine, EntropiaTimes. What is good, what could use improvement, and what are your suggestions. How can we create a better experience and what would you love to read about?

1.

We would also love to hear your opinion about our forum EntropiaPlanets.com. The forum is fairly new, but has been developed fast in its short lifetime. You can help us make it better by sharing your suggestions.

2.

There are two prizes to win, one for each opinion.

We got a LOT of replies with awesome ideas and suggestions and it was very difficult for us to choose two winners. But no mercy, we had to choose one for each category, and so we did.

We wish to thank all of the contributors who participated in this contest. Your opinions are very important to us because it helps us make our magazine and forum a better experience for you. We will evaluate suggestions and look at options available for improvement.

You are always welcome to send us your ideas and suggestions – send an email either to admin@entropiaplanets.com or lykke@entropiaplanets.com.

Thank You!

WHO WON A VEHICLE??

Category 1 winner

[Derid](#) is the winner of a car for his great contribution to the contest. Some of the highlights of his long and very thought out contributions follow:

Magazine graphics

"I guess it is due to the size of the document that some of the graphics were a bit toned down. This is understandable, but would be nice with a bit higher settings on the graphics and using a harder compression (not sure if it is possible). Something that cut a bit in the eyes, were pictures that had a white box with sharp edges in the middle of it with some text in a standard font. This is something I would do when I create stuff, and it sadly does not look that good. I am sure you guys can get it to match the pictures better instead of using a white box background and use some basic font in black. Try to get it to melt in a bit more, perhaps not use a background at all but a text with a nice font and a good color so you see it well, even without a background."

Magazine content

"Theme is a great idea also, as you used in this issue, cars! Really gives it some flavor. Maybe should have added it as a question to all the people you have interviewed and so on. Like a conclusion question. "What's your favorite ride?" with a picture of them in front of their car, or if they don't have one, in front of their dream car. I would also have loved some info on cars in general. I have no clue about them as it is. How much do they cost to run? Repairs etc? Well, I know a little, but love some "tests" that you can give some numbers on or something."

Category 2 winner

[Salix Sol](#) wins a car for his very useful contribution to the contest concerning EntropiaPlanets forum. Here are a few highlights from his great reply to us:

Forum content

"I'd love to see extremely rapid in game news summaries. Even if it isn't reported in detail, a banner at the top of the page that certain registered users can modify quickly, and update important news. Ideally, within 15 min of a Hydra being spotted, there is something available to read that isn't surrounded by troll comments, misinformation, etc. So if someone thinks something big is happening in game, they can go straight to a form on EP and submit it, and any EP staff online can review it immediately, and update the front page."

Forum usability

"I like that so far information appears on EP promptly, easy to find and fairly organized, i.e. the missions in the wiki, and in game news. So I think this is something EP can carry on with, and strive to excel in, keep the wiki up, make it clear where all the information comes from, and have the appropriate discussions about the information, separate from the information itself."

What else was said ...

Here are a few quotes taken from the other contributions we received. There are a lot of great ideas, comments, suggestions etc. - and we can share now, that a few of the suggested changes have been made. One example is that we cleaned up the forum after the last magazine was published, and now have fewer forums with a more efficient structure. We also changed a few things in the magazine - wonder if any of you will notice!

About the magazine

The case of the .PDF version, it would be helpful to explain how to set up the viewer to enjoy the magazine as it was designed. Setting display/two up and show cover page during two up works wonders.
- Manny Calavera

More links! Even in the .PDF, they help bring out the interactivity. You might want to consider linking to the pictures for someone to download them in their original size if they like them. It's a bit more work, but it makes a difference.
- Manny Calavera

We got the vehicles introduced yes, all exiting (not for me personally) but try not to fill too many pages with photos of colored/textured vehicles. This was a bit too much / an extreme.
- Rhizosis

I don't like the Q&A. I know we get more info this way, but I prefer to read it in a more story-kind of way.
- Harmony Bella Simpson

Although paper folding and so on is not meant for me! I LOVE the idea! There are some scarily creative people out there! Fun article!
- Rhizosis

Magazines usually begin with some short stuff... regular columns, pages which contain small articles, fun stuff... the light bits, which get you to read. Say a regular column "Expert tips," or "Ask the Nun" or something silly like that, or perhaps the E-files. It's entertaining, yet hidden somewhere in the back.
- Jerry Wollo Wollongong

A work of fiction would be a great addition as well. Either single short stories or an ongoing serial.
- Narfi

The interviews were superbly done and looking forward to seeing many of them in your issues. Maybe follow one person up in a few later issues, what has happened since last time and so on.
- Derid

The topics seem to go from heavy information for veteran players to subjects that were more related to us nubs running around in Entropia. From this I got a good impression of the magazine and like that there is a little "theme" about cars in the edition.
- Derid

About EntropiaPlanets.com

For me the relatively small number of active users (~250) just shows that it's quality over quantity.
- Nutrageti

I think this is something EP can carry on with, and strive to excel in, keep the wiki up, make it clear where all the information comes from, and have the appropriate discussions about the information, separate from the information itself.
- Salix Sol

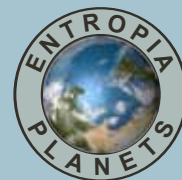
I like the feeling of hard work that can be felt when browsing through the pages on EP.
- Nutrageti

There is a HUGE list of sub-forums on EP. Can't you organize it somehow not to be such a long list when you come to the forums? Just have a few fora, with subfora, with perhaps subfora?
- Jerry Wollo Wollongong

Possible it would be nice that EP would eventually become almost the one site you need to go to to get important information.
- Salix Sol

A minor thing on EntropiaPlanets.com that could improve: I believe the starting page has way too much information, maybe you could lose a few panels?
- Harmony Bella Simpson

I really liked the idea behind an integrated tracker and how your statistics would show up beside your forum avatar.
- Narfi



THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING



Daisy A-2-O ColdFinger

I am in the City of Dreams, Rocktropia 2010. The sun is down and there is a party raging outside, but up in the VIP lounge at Club NEVERDIE I sense danger. Something is not right, and I can feel it...

Daisy *'shoot 'em all'* ColdFinger

meets Lykke 'dies a lot' TheNun

By Lykke

Suddenly the lights go out in the room, the door creaks open and a cold breeze rolls in over me. It's pitch black, and I can see movement in the dark as the door closes on its own. I say nothing, better safe and silent than ask. It is coming closer, "I am Daisy ColdFinger..." As I hear the voice I winched in my seat.

"I am here for an interview" the voice whispers behind me. I jump up and turn around, the lights flash on and off, on and off. "Sit down," a loud voice trembles out. I turn around and there she is ... "Daisy ColdFinger ... at your service, Nun," she says with a devilish grin, clearly eye-balling me with her smokey eyes.

I gather up my courage and sit down, pretending not to succumb to whatever it is that has enveloped me. I pull myself together because I know I have to get this done. I brought with me a lot of questions asked from other Entropians, and as I look in Daisy's direction, I wonder if I need to point a rifle at her head while asking the questions, but I'm sure her rifle is bigger than mine, and I don't want to make a fool out of myself.

Should I have worn black? Perhaps that would have been more suitable - but this day I went for red ... blood red!

Daisy of course is having Scotch, but I ask for a lemon juice. I just have to keep my mind straight, and the finger on the trigger - but mostly for the sake of 'what if,' as in ... 'what if this is NOT not PvP...?'

As we sit across from each other, Daisy's hawk eyes glare into mine, are they blue or are they green? They become small while she obviously is wondering if she should hit me in the knee or in the forehead!

But this time, I am the first to shoot ...

“Daisy ColdFinger... at your service, Nun,” she says with a devilish grin, clearly eye-balling me with her smokey eyes. ”

"What is your full in-game avatar name," I ask with a very humble tone of voice, and Daisy replies: "I am (recently changed to) Daisy A-2-O ColdFinger. Daisy was random; A-2-O stands for 'Adapt 2 Overcome' and ColdFinger as in trigger finger. I'm originally a South African living in the UK."

"So, out with it, how long have you really been playing Daisy," surprised by my renewed courage she replies: "Was actually just looking for an immersive virtual platform with potential to be more than just a game. Found EU by chance in 2010. Six months in game and playing the ba-Jesus out of a lot of people who would never have guessed it lol."

I was curious to know what brought a girl like Daisy to ROCKtropia. "I read up a bit as days gone by with Caly and what I missed. ROCKtropia has fresh legs and better odds for me with all the potential that the Caly guys had in the early days, but better because it ROCKS. So it seems a natural choice. Besides I'm cool with rock, so it's all aces with me," she grins a big grin and I feel pushed back down in the deep chair.

I clear my throat and ask: "You are a member of the society ROCK STARS. How did you meet up with Force and how is he as a society leader?" Daisy smiles again. I notice her teeth are whiter than the whitest I've ever seen. She probably uses them to blind people with before shooting. - "Well, he is the society leader so I guess it's a bit self-explanatory - lol. Force is the Original ROCK STAR. He lives it out there, and then some more in game. There is never a dull moment with Force when you are in the core ROCK STARS. No doubt Force has been a massive influence on Daisy's way of play."

I turn my papers, and feel the sweat burning in my hands. I already know the answer, but I have to ask the question: "What is your primary profession? - If a hunter or a PK'er, have you ever done anything else?" Daisy looks intensely into my eyes now, and replies: "I am... a Mercenary. My mob of choice usually back-chats me, sometimes swears at me, ducks and dives, runs and jumps, teleports away and drives fast cars or planes. I love my mob so much I camp it every day. I try for at least 10 PK kills or more every day, but yeah 'regular' mobs do get in the way sometimes. And I have to hunt to skill..." I just stare at her, and I realize I screwed up the papers I am holding. I try to smooth them out again, but fail ...

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“What are your personal goals in Entropia?” “As a devoted core ROCK STAR member my first goal is always to be all I can be for the society I am in. I am loyal to it and it to me.”

I ask her if she feels she (and others) are fair in their PK activities which prevent others from returning to their hunting teams - meaning the revive killing of those who end up at the PK teleporter after being killed by a mob. “Oh absolutely,” she nods slowly and leans towards me: “They have their mob and I have mine. It should be said however that ROCK STARS are no longer active at that teleporter and will not engage in killing there unless challenged or provoked.”

“But it has been said that ROCK STARS has required a fee at times in order to allow someone out of a PvP zone - is this true? If so, what are the details?” “Much the same way as fappers get paid to keep hunters alive, I sometimes got paid to keep those arriving at that very dangerous PvP teleporter alive. Just the same as when some riggers paid me to take care of their competition in their hunt for oil. These are and were legitimate services all in aid of protecting others by putting my own life on the line. Daisy deserves a medal, not an inquisition. LMAO ...,” her laugh cuts through bones and I just wish to get this interview over with.

“ If there is killing to be done, you better bet a ROCK STAR can smell the fear from miles away! ”

I feel insecure when I read the next question, not sure to ask, but pull myself together and ask with a voice that makes it sound as if I just ordered a cup of coffee ... “Is it part of the strategy to lure people to ROCKtropia to PK with you in order to increase population and revenue?”

“Whaaaaaaaat !?,” I fall back in the chair, my hand is glued to the gun trigger, but not a single bone in me can move: “Look, there is no doubt that what we did caused a lot of people to come up to ROCKtropia, and yes I for one... Actually hold on a second, I think I need my attorney present for this..ring ring...ring ring... ring... LMAO.”

Oh, Daisy laughed - perhaps I’m not dead meat yet ... I call the waiter and ask for a Bowmore!

“What is your overall view of the conflict that had occurred between ROCK STARS and others within the community - especially Wildman, Dilly, and others who have gone to ROCKtropia to challenge the ROCK STARS?”

“Under the guidance of Force, we are Ministers of Death praying for WAR everyday! PK is healthy, it keeps the heart pumping and the ColdFinger muscles well toned. BRING IT ON NIBS!”

I honestly don’t feel to bring anything on, as sweat is dripping from my nose and on my papers. Everything looks so messy, and I wonder if Daisy imagines how I would look on the dinner table with an apple in my mouth!

“Do you have any specific mission in mind with regard to the growth of ROCK STARS, other than recruiting? Is it just about numbers?,” an Entropian asks.

“We have never been about numbers. What we are about is an absolute passion for PK. Be it in lootable or non-lootable. If there is killing to be done, you better bet a ROCK STAR can smell the fear from miles away. And yea, we got short-term and long-term objectives, and we are doing very damn well.”

“We can smell fear from miles away’, it rings like a bell in my mind, and I think to myself that I’m doomed already, but I continue and hope Daisy will remember I’m a Nun ...

“What do you find to be best about ROCKtropia?”

“My hat goes off to Todd with his take on a lootable PvP. But hey, who knows what else he has up his sleeves? But I can tell ya’, I’d put money down that whatever comes next is gonna knock yer pants off and climb up yer leg all on its own,” Daisy replies, and I could definitely feel something crawling!

“What would you say needs improvement on ROCKtropia to make it a more appealing planet?”

“Well ROCKtropia is fresh out the box, so I believe it’s still a bit early to talk about specific improvements. Don’t forget, NEVERDIE has a great success record, so I believe we should wait and see what comes next.”

Another Entropian has a question and I apologize up front for the tone of rudeness, hoping Daisy knows it is not my own wordings: “You’re wasting your PEDs and guns hahaha”... Everything is silent for half a minute, and Daisy gets all stiff in her face:

“Well, I said it before; nothing I do is wasted. As a sponsored player I represent a brand and a cause. What I do has value to those wise enough to see it. But yeah, I do lootable all the time, just check out the videos, they are fun.”

“Can you tell us more about the sponsorship?”

“My sponsorship comes directly from Force Majeure. And yea, the sponsorship is basically to PK and use those skills to own the Beer Garden when it goes live! It’s gonna be Ubah out there without a doubt, truly EPIC - lol.”

“ You want to see me dead? Then come and try to kill me and film it yourself. ”

Yet another Entropian doesn't believe Daisy's videos show her being dead: "You want to see me dead? Then come and try to kill me and film it yourself."

A couple of minutes of embarrassing silence follows before I continue with the questions: "Why don't you do PvP or any other events," Daisy replies: "Soon enough I will, but not if it is in rings or vote-based. I like open land grab style PvP events, so yea, that I will do. Me entering a voting competition is like the devil in the church, you think they gonna pass that collection basket past me.....nooooo way man - lol."

"Whats the deal with the 'Pro Gamer' logo on your siggie?"

"Yea, I put a lot of time and effort into what I do, and I got a passion for it. I'm just fortunate enough to have been recognized for my passion for PK. So much so, that Daisy has full in-game sponsorship. Whether you know it or not, I represent a brand 'ROCK STARS' and a number of short and long term goals."

"Don't you think you're overdoing the whole PK thing just a bit?" - I look at Daisy honestly interested in the reply myself. I hope that this question at least will make her think twice when she gets tempted to place a bullet in my chest!

"Absolutely not!" - I sigh and she continues: "Player versus Player is THE MOST EXCITING part of the entire game. Keeps the blood pumping and the mind active with strategy, so it's a good thing for sure. ROCK STARS put PK back on the map, we spruced it up, dusted it off, and put that catwalk bling on it. PK is like the hottie in the corner, you're either gonna step up and claim it or sit back down and have another drink! We own it and I intend to be the best I can be at it..."

The next question is asked quickly, and I don't really think about it until after. I do not dare tell Daisy that the question isn't mine, originally, and it is obvious too, that she doesn't know either: "I want to learn to PK. Any tips since I see you do it all the time?"

I notice that Daisy's face lightens up: "Sure," she smiles wide: "The best thing besides adequate gear is being able to predict how your prey will move or react in the environment they are in. Also, if they PK, just shout 'look over there and point,' then you just run straight at them!" - I smile back at her nervously when she continues, "OH, and of course you need to go with me after the interview to see how it's done."

Continued page 14

“ My mob of choice usually back-chats me, sometimes swears at me, ducks and dives, runs and jumps, teleports away and drives fast cars or planes. ”



I'm in shock while I'm trying to find excuses for not going! Then again, perhaps it would be good for the interview. Perhaps she is NOT that bad, but deep down a very nice person with a very nice personality? Perhaps others just misunderstand her real intentions of being a player... Perhaps she had a bad childhood? "Deal?" - she looks at me, and I slowly nod ...

"We're soon done with the interview," I inform Daisy, feeling relieved myself! "Great, then I can show you some tricks," Daisy quickly replies, looking suspiciously mysterious.

"You chip, right?" - "Is that some sort of sexy fetish I am yet to discover?" Daisy smiles: "I probably spend more time than most in game which means I get to PK all day long and skill (green dots and mobs). I might look into chipping when the gains get slower."

"You seriously never accepted the Oil team invites?"

"Nah, they know when I'm there and that I'm going to PK the crap out of them, and I'm not gonna stop. So the invites keep coming. Kinda reminds me of how people suddenly become religious for the first time and pray just before they know something is about to go down. Either that or they are trying to make a pact with the devil who wants a bigger cut," Daisy grins again ... blinding me with her teeth ... as I say a silent prayer to Lootius!

“ I might look into chipping when the gains get slower. ”

"Last question here, Daisy," I nearly feel joyful knowing we're almost done: "Come on, tell us. Are you a guy or a girl." I smile at her - perhaps for the first time in the interview, as she replies: "Yeah, that question comes up quite a lot when it shouldn't - LOL... enough said!!"

I stop here, because when Daisy says 'enough' it's clearly 'enough.' We finish up our drinks and she asks me to teleport to **Fleshers Corner**, bringing a nice gun and perhaps a tagger. I do as she says, still convinced, that she might not be that bad after all.

I meet her at Fleshers Corner and she asks me to run a little with her! Don't worry she assures me, I will do the best I can!

I try to run after Daisy and suddenly I see her standing with her back to the sun. She's nearly just a shadow but as I walk closer I can see her white teeth in the dark and her grin gets bigger and bigger!

OH is that the sun or... I feel blinded...

ooOooOoo ...



Cold Facts about Daisy

Name: Daisy A-2-O ColdFinger

Society: ROCK STARS

Time of Playing: 6 months

Favorite profession: Hunter (PK)

Favorite place in game: PVP

Favorite mob: YOU

Read more on www.neverdie.com

“ She’s nearly just a shadow but as I walk closer I can see her white teeth in the dark and her grin gets bigger and bigger! ”

Mining Tools & Amps Narfi Hungry Willem

P1a(L) M1a(L)
P2a(L) M2a(L)
P3a(L) M3a(L)
P4a(L) UL1(L)
H400(L) UL2(L)
P5a(L)
HL6(L) cb5(L)
cb13(L)
S30(L) cb19(L)
S40(L) Apis(L)
S50(L)
BL1000(L)

ROCKtropia's
Own
Gunrunner

Sweat
Fruit
Stones
Ore
Enmatter
Residue
Mob Parts
Dragon Parts
Shotguns
Axes
ESI's
etc.

Buying and selling on a daily basis through my booth and p2p. Trasporting goods between planets on request. Find me in the City of Dreams or pm me on any of the forums. Username Narfi.

Visit Booth #2 @ The City Of Dreams

ROCKTROPIA



Marco

(August 23 - September 22)

DON'T CRY, Marco. All you need is just a little PATIENCE, and perhaps a bit of effort, and maybe you will see PARADISE CITY soon. Don't let the NOVEMBER RAIN get you down, and don't reminisce on the lootless YESTERDAYS. Why not LIVE AND LET DIE, and look forward to the lootless days of tomorrow.



Boorum

(September 23 - October 23)

Hang on one second, Boorum. YOU WERE not MADE FOR LOVING ME! Despite being armed with a mighty tool, the handheld wrench of reality is back to slap some sense into you. And by the time you awake, you will notice its wielder also emptied your PED-card.



Pop Dragon

(October 24 - November 21)

Breathe FIRE, do not drink WATER, and BURN everything in sight. Surely there is loot in that studio over there. I mean, you tried looking everywhere else. And remember not to run in straight away if the roof, the roof, the roof is on fire.



TskTsk

(November 22 - December 21)

LEARN TO FLY, TskTsk, because Winter is best spent near the equator. But once you get there, you'll find out that even with your bow maxed at 10/10, it is still possible to not breakeven when you shoot unsuspecting noobs from the air.



Merp

(December 22 - January 19)

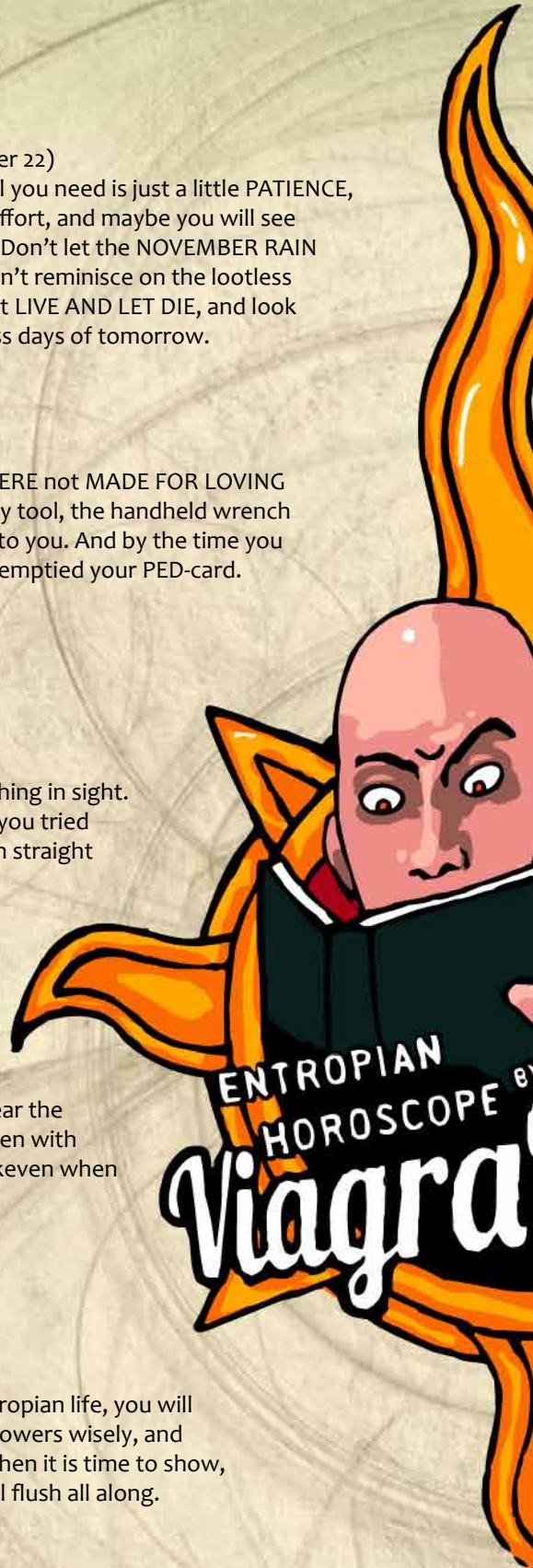
This quarter, in the poker game of Entropian life, you will be dealt the ACE OF SPADES. Use its powers wisely, and ante up accordingly. Unfortunately, when it is time to show, you'll find MindArk was holding a royal flush all along. Better luck next time!



Thorafoid

(January 20 - February 18)

Now now, FOXY LADY. You always expected to rake in money by the bucketloads, but unfortunately, that did not quite work out. Instead, you're stuck to sweating newbies. Perhaps you should consider a career as a groupie instead?





RipperSnapper

(February 19 - March 20)

These are strange times, RipperSnapper. The best possible advice for you is to ignore the SMOKE ON THE WATER, and to focus on sinking your teeth into the ankle of some noobs.

Worry not if they do not carry any loot. Few of them ever do, but at least they are easy prey.



Werewolf

(March 21 - April 19)

Uh oh, Werewolf. You truly know the fit has hit the shan when there is a BAD MOON RISING. There is no point in howling this time.

Just accept loot stinks, and eat a few Marcos while hoping things will look up for the next quarter.



Cornoantaron

(April 20 - May 20)

Like a true WOOLY BULLY, you are all puffed up for Winter by donning your Winter coat. Lucky, too, as the warm swirls of loot will unfortunately not be able to keep you very warm for long during this period.



Feffoid/Maffoid

(May 21 - June 21)

While the Feffoid part of the couple summons some lightning, the Maffoid half is simply THUNDERSTRUCK after discovering that Lootius decided not to shine down on him this quarter around. The end result is a mangy set of mutants, faintly smelling of burnt hair.



Goki

(June 22 - July 22)

Your antennas do not seem to be able to feel much loot this time of the year, Goki. Just keep in mind that what counts is love, and NOTHING ELSE MATTERS. Of course, that is always said by those who do lots better than you, loot-wise.



Kerberos

(July 23 - August 22)

Do what you do, Kerberos, and run. For instance, RUN TO THE HILLS. There's a period of bad luck and worse loot approaching, and perhaps high on up you will find a relatively safe haven.





John K. Bates

Business Development & Platform Evangelist
for MindArk PE AB



By MindStar9

When the name John Bates is mentioned, those who know him smile, because he has one of the most infectious personalities that just draw you into his realm of enthusiasm for life itself. He is a skilled professional with extensive leadership experience in marketing strategy and implementation, information technology, business development, and sales. His excellent client relations and team management abilities, along with advanced communication and public speaking skills are only a part of the arsenal that make this multifaceted, energetic, and enthusiastic individual a highly sought after public and motivational speaker.

John's experience is quite broad, and his expertise in business development, marketing strategies, new client acquisition, trend recognition and virtual worlds, I am sure, are only a few of the many reasons that he became associated with the MindArk organization. He is responsible for business development and public relations initiatives throughout North America. As MindArk's US representative, John speaks with the media and at conferences and other events for MindArk and Entropia Universe all over the Americas and the Pacific Rim.

Creating and executing marketing strategies and business partnerships is only a part of expanding Entropia's reach to a new and greater population of gamers and virtual world enthusiasts. John oversees the overall US business development for the Entropia Virtual World Platform, as well as negotiates potential alliances, brand development, and much more. It is no wonder then, that John has earned himself the title of Entropia Evangelist, but is quick to say now that the title has changed to Entropia Platform Evangelist.

Many of us have experienced the positive energy of John's dynamic personality in one way or another, and know firsthand how motivating being in his presence can be, so when I caught up with him recently for this interview, it didn't surprise me that his responses to the questions I asked were delivered with his signature enthusiasm.

Question

How long have you played in MMO's and what games in particular?

Response

I come from a background of virtual reality, in particular online virtual reality/games. I played some MUDS back in the early 90's. And, as the Director of Online Services at Virtual Vegas which was arguably the first entertainment site on the Web, no real gambling, just fun Vegas themed games for points - the first virtual currency, if you will! I was a part of the beta tests of numerous technologies from RealAudio to VRML (virtual reality modeling language, an early 3D technology for the web in which we started time, ask me about it sometime).

I was not the biggest gamer when I came to Entropia Universe. In fact, I notice that a lot of other Entropians often don't come from a typical MMO or gamer background. I think it is a plus for me to be something of an outsider as it gives me a different perspective from which to communicate to new potential players and partners. That said, I have grown to love EU and all the friends I have made there.

Question

What is your official title with MindArk? Are you an actual employee, or contracted as an outside representative of MindArk?

Response

I am a consultant to MindArk, but I am about as close to an employee as possible. It would be a real hassle to have operations in the US for just one employee, so I am considered both a contractor and MA, and I am happy about it. I feel like an employee in the good ways, and MA is definitely my main client.

I am also a part owner of Goldstar.com and I coach the CEO there in Public Speaking and Media Training, which I do for other select executives, as well. I also work with a truly disruptive company that manages Google Adwords campaigns and is easily taking clients from all the current leaders in that space, and I work with a company that is bringing radical transparency to the credit card processing space. However, MA is far and away my favorite and main client.

Question

Did you discover Entropia Universe first before connecting with MindArk, or the other way around?

Response

I was introduced to EU and MindArk by my friend Michael Terpin, whom I had worked with before, and whose company was doing PR for EU at the time. It was right after the confusion regarding Neverdie acting as an ambassador and the not so nice back and forth about that. Michael asked me if I would consider meeting MindArk as he felt my services would be a good fit for them. Like most people, when I heard the whole story I just didn't fully believe it at first. I thought that if it were for real though, it would be one of the coolest things of which I had ever heard. So, via Michael Terpin, EU snuck up on me and connected me with MindArk.

Question

When and where did you first connect with MindArk, and how did you become the US rep?

Response

I met the guys, including David Simmonds and Marco, in Marina Del Rey, California in mid 2006. I had recently decided I was going to bring a whole new level of being valuable to everything I did. So, I really did my research about EU and MindArk and then spent some time thinking about what I could bring to the table.

At the same time, there was some nasty stuff on various blogs about MindArk and I wasn't sure what I thought about it all. Now, my mother is German, so I have spent a lot of time in Germany. I also took off for a year and went surfing all around Southeast Asia and then came home through Europe and Scandinavia selling sarongs and silver jewelry to fund that leg of my trip. So, I had a feel for Scandinavians and for people from other countries and cultures, in general.

And, once I had met the team, it was pretty clear to me what was going on - some smart, but dorky, Swedes get misunderstood and then utterly grilled for it. America and Sweden are very different - and I just fell immediately in love with the team and the project. I was really happy to feel good about MindArk and I was very jazzed about the prospect of working with them.

Funny story, one of the guys, who is incidentally no longer with MindArk, asked me why I thought I was qualified to fill this position for MindArk. Since I had really, deeply done my homework and thought about it, I looked at him and said, "Well, I think I am about the best person available for this job, actually." He looked at me in total shock and almost swallowed his teeth, I think.

In Scandinavia, that is just an outrageous thing to say about oneself! I went on to explain my background and how excited I was about the possibility of working with MindArk, and admitted that they were one of a very few, if not the only company in the world, who could so perfectly use the disparate experience I have and really make use of me too.

It took a while for MindArk to make up their mind, and I was on pins and needles for a couple of months, but then one day David Simmonds called and we were off to the races as they say. From my point of view, it's an excellent collaboration. I feel very fortunate, and I still thank Michael Terpin on a regular basis for the introduction. It changed my life for sure.

Question

Where did the title Entropia Universe Evangelist come from?

Response

In the software industry it's a pretty standard term. Guy Kawasaki started it, as far as I know. He was the Evangelist for Apple. He would get people excited about developing for the Apple OS and just generally get people excited about Apple. "I need a witness," you know? It's not religious, but outside the software industry people don't always realize that, to my chagrin!

For my part in it, I have nearly always ended up being the Evangelist, or doing the Evangelist function in the companies I have worked with. I have made sacrifices to do this, but I only work for companies in which I really believe and my natural expression is to 'evangelize' things I love. Ask me about my Vibram Five Fingers running shoes for another angle on it! (I don't work for Vibram, but I sure love my shoes!)

Question

As one who is responsible for business development and public relations initiatives throughout North America, who are your targets with regard to bringing EU to their attention?

Response

I think that currently what you see already is a good predictor of the future. I met Creative Kingdom at the first Virtual Goods Conference in 2007, and their planet is coming online soon! I'm extremely excited for that to happen, I have to admit! And, Arkadia's CEO is someone I know quite well and respect tremendously, through working with him at the events I have attended in Australia. Next Island, Michael Jackson, and Universal Monsters point to one direction in which we're going. We're also in the process of laying out more targets in other realms.

Continued page 20

I think it's an exciting time since everyone is really starting to clue into the power of online games. That makes me think that no matter what I think in terms of who we're going to bring in during 2011, there will also be some unexpected, good surprises, too! I also want to chime in here on how excited I am about the Beladcom planet.

I am clearly an optimist. I also work on being a realist. And, I believe that engagement, global engagement like the kind that is available in online games and virtual worlds like Entropia Universe, is a key factor in mitigating the current tension, and building useful bridges between the Arab world and the Western World. So, just for the record, I believe that our industry and specifically, the Entropia Universe Platform, really can and really does play a part in world peace.

Question

What type of marketing strategies do you employ, and which ones do you feel have worked the best to introduce Entropia Universe to a greater population of gamers?

Response

Something that I am still struggling with is how to categorize our participants. It would be easier to market and find new players if there was some clear similarity, but I have yet to find it! Lots of EU participants haven't played other MMOs, there is a wide age variation, a large geographic variation, and so on!

We did have a huge year of marketing Planet Calypso in 2008. We went to lots of consumer-focused shows like EforAll and GenCon. We also went to CES, to Australia, SXSW (South by Southwest) and so on. Although we got a ton of press, several awards and a new level of respect in the industry for that, it was really tough to tell at the end of the day how much it helped grow our actual player base.

Now, I think it was very important and set us up for success longer term, but short term it was difficult to say. At this point, as the plan has always been, we're looking to the planet partners to do the actual consumer facing marketing, and we think that with the planets that are coming out, and with each more targeted market focus, we'll see a great increase in the participant base throughout the Entropia Universe in the coming years. If anyone has some really good ideas about planet partners and/or ways to reach potential participants, I do practice beginner's mind, and I know that I am not above some good new ideas!

Question

Are there certain Expos and Conventions that seem to fare better than others, and if so, which ones?

Response

I am a real fan of SXSW (South by Southwest). It's not only gaming focused, but I do think it is the best Interactive/Internet conference going these days. It's a great opportunity to reach the thought leaders in the overall Internet Industry and to see and be seen by the real movers and shakers. It's where Twitter was launched, and the year the iPhone came out, AT&T towers blew up (no really) all over Austin because of the overwhelming amount of iPhone users that came to town for SXSW. I also like that there is a concurrent Movie and Music conference, so it's good cross pollination too.

Question

How many of the planet partners known today have you had a direct hand in bringing to the universe?

Response

So far my one big score is Creative Kingdom. I played a part in bringing in others (or at least not scaring them off) like Next Island, and I like to think David at Arkadia likes and respects me. I'm currently dealing with all of the requests from the US that come in via the website, and David Simmonds, Christian Bjorkman and I are working together on the big picture vision.

Question

It's been a while since MindArk has had a display area at any of the Expos or Conventions, other than your presence at the three in Australia that Deathifier handled on his own. Why did MA back off from being a presence at these gatherings, and will they be attending any in the future?

Response

Admittedly, MA has been really quiet, and being the guy whose job is dependent on talking, it's been hard for me! As everyone knows, the CryEngine development just meant that for a long time we had very little to say besides, "we're working on it!" Now, there is the transition for me of going from being used a lot in the consumer facing role to being focused on the Business to Business role of bringing in Planet Partners and communicating about the Entropia Universe in a way that appeals to both new potential players and more specifically to people who would be good Planet Partners.

Question

Is the fact that MindArk has now created an Entropia Platform that includes planet partners the reason there isn't a more aggressive marketing strategy in place – meaning – they are leaving it up to the individual planet partners to develop their own player base and market EU?

Response

That is correct. It has always been the plan, which is why over all MindArk has never marketed Calypso as aggressively as it might have. It is another example of how MA thinks diversity is good and important. As the universe grows with the diverse people that these different Planet Partner marketing campaigns are going to bring in it will benefit everyone. I explain it like this: We want to have a record collection, and as much as we like the Rolling Stones, if our collection is all by the same band it's just not as exciting as if we have some Rolling Stones, some Zero 7, some Beastie Boys, some Haydn, and so forth. That goes for the different marketing efforts, too.

Question

Does MindArk have any type of future marketing or advertising strategy in place for expanding the presence of Entropia Universe, other than your hard working self?

Response

The main marketing MA will be doing for EU is to assist the Planet Partners. I anticipate that I will be supporting a lot of the marketing events that our Planet Partners in the US and Australia attend. I already have events on my calendar in December and January and I anticipate that will be ramping up quickly in 2011.

I think the very most effective marketing though, is done by players. People who love Entropia Universe and tell their friends about it and then assist them in figuring it out are a huge asset, I believe. I have a special love of people who give new players genuine assistance, hand out beginner guns and stuff, and I have to believe it must be pretty fun and fulfilling to do that, too. Going forward MindArk's marketing and advertising will be largely focused on potential Planet Partners and on supporting current Planet Partners.

Question

What type of speaking engagements and media interactions have you done that has brought EU more into the minds of the gaming world?

Response

Lately, as you alluded to, things have been a bit slow. I haven't spoken for a while at a game focused event. However, I recently spoke at the first ever Immersive Technology Summit here in Los Angeles. That event felt a lot like the Internet events of the early 90's. Not totally full, but all the heavy hitters are there and you feel this energy that suggests you're in the right place at the right time, if maybe a tad early. But, it's coming. That presentation went pretty well.

People continue to be blown away by Entropia Universe. As you know, the story I get to tell is pretty awesome. So, I feel like my job is to be as good as the story I have to tell! Apparently it went well since I was recently invited to speak at the MindShare Los Angeles event on Thursday, November 18th, 2010. The organizer of MindShare called the guys at ImTech and asked if they knew of a good speaker for his event and apparently they gave me a high recommendation.

Question

Are you actively looking for more potential planet partners in the US – and if so – can you reveal how many may be interested?

Response

That is definitely a big part of my job. At this point there are a few that I am having preliminary discussions with, but I anticipate 2011 is going to see a lot more activity in this realm.

Question

You also deal with brand development – can you share what types of companies, or brands that you feel would fit well within our universe, and why?

Response

Well, for me, first and foremost, it is very important to bring in brands that understand what is going on in the Game and Virtual World space and who bring something worthwhile to the table. I'll say it just 'cause so many others already have, but Coke Island is just not compelling, or interesting in my book - at least not in EU.

That said, I think there are some very cool brands out there that are getting it in a big way these days. One thing I like is the idea of dropping real world loots in-game. We did that a while back with NVIDIA graphics cards and I think that's just cool. I'd like to do a lot more of that going forward.

Something that takes some explaining is that we have a deep economy, so you can't just come in and sell everyone a pair of running shoes or something like that. We need to integrate into the economy in a way that fits. As well, a lot of the Planet Partners will also be working on this angle and I think this will be a question I will have a lot more to say about in a year or so.

Question

Are you involved in any type of internet marketing as it relates to EU, and if so, what?

Response

Not currently. Oh, wait, I post cool news on my Facebook page! ;)

Question

What type of current trends do you see in the gaming industry?

Response

Well, after several years of being mocked and derided for being Free-To-Play, I see a complete shift to Free-To-Play happening. So there, right? :) The growth of what is called Social Games (like Farmville on Facebook) is also silly to ignore. I heard someone decry them recently saying that Social Games aren't social, which made me laugh pretty hard since it is true, at least in one sense.

However, these companies are raking in the cash, and although I think Flash-based 'social games' aren't going to remain interesting forever, the companies are amassing big chests of cash. That said, I think it's a very, very good thing for MindArk that people are getting their feet wet in games that have a social component since we know that MMOs are the original social games in the digital realm.

I believe we'll be picking up a lot of the folks who want a deeper engagement and more fun, and who are now turned on to games. We just need to reach out for them. To that end I believe everyone will be happy to know that we've got a much faster initial download planned and I think that things like Calypso Gateway and the various missions communicate MindArk's commitment to making it easier to make one's way into the Universe.

Question

With regard to EU, are you targeting any specific age group? If yes, then why?

Response

Thirteen (13) and up, but no specific age group of which I am aware.

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Question

Do you coach MindArk at all with regard to interaction between developer and player base? You are an incredibly dynamic person, and fully understand the importance of communication – why do you think that MindArk distances itself from the player base as much as they have?

Response

When I see a place where I can potentially make a difference in this realm I will jump in with both feet. However, I don't have a codified relationship in that arena. I do really love the player base and communicating with them, even when they tear me to bits like they so often do. I have given some informal coaching to MindArk in that realm. The biggest thing for me is that underneath every complaint is a commitment. I always look to see the commitment. There is an art to knowing when to listen to the player base and when to stick to your guns as a developer too.

Since I am not in the office on a regular basis I am not privy to the day to day thinking of Planet Calypso's community team. We've got more going on there than we used to have! And, I know that at least some of the 'distance' is caused by fear of the Alan Greenspan effect. When Marco talks he has the power to move markets and he doesn't want to do that.

That said, I think this will be an area of increased scrutiny going forward and I for one believe this is a very, very important aspect of any MMO. I am friends with a guy who was on the original team at ImaginNation Network, aka Sierra Network, way back in the early days, and he regaled me with stories about how fantastic that community was and how important community relations are. In fact, the players took management on a cruise every year! Now, there's an idea! ;)

Question

More planets are coming online, and it seems that the pace will increase soon with regard to this – does MindArk have adequate staff to support the needs of the planet partners in this respect? Some in the community have speculated that there might be a future bottleneck if you will, and an example given is that ROCKtropa doesn't have its blueprints as yet – not that this is related, but still questioned.

Response

There is no question in my mind that ROCKtropa has suffered a bit for their pioneering role. Say whatever you will about Neverdie, but he's a visionary and I respect that about him tremendously. And, it's not lost on MindArk that smoother is better. Also, I think it's worth saying here in relation to everything we're talking about, that I have full confidence in MindArk. I genuinely believe in both their goodwill and their basic competence as an organization. I've been a part of a lot of companies, and MindArk continues to impress me with their abilities, despite the inherent difficulties. There will be more hiccups along the way, but we've learned a lot, and I know we're committed to implementing those lessons going forward, as well as better anticipating what will keep things moving smoothly and successfully for all involved.

Question

How much flexibility do you have with regard to your initiatives to develop business? Does MindArk set guidelines with regard to what areas of the gaming industry, or otherwise, to approach?

Response

I feel very fortunate in that I experience a great deal of flexibility in my work with MindArk. That trust is sacred to me and I appreciate and honor it. I like all the support and guidance that I get, particularly from David Simmonds, with whom I work most closely. He has a profound understanding of the Entropia Universe and I value working with him a lot. His vision for what's possible keeps expanding my own and I love being inspired like that.

Question

Have you found it difficult at any time to get your foot in the door to at least introduce EU?

Response

Of course! Back when I started I didn't realize how disdainful (read: how fearful) the average game companies were toward the Free-to-Play companies like us. If I gave free reign to my inner jerk I would just get up and say "nyah, nyah, nyah" at every game conference I attend today. I guess it's pretty human to want to say, "I told you so!" However, I'll restrain myself to saying it here and not everywhere. It's not sporting and doesn't really help.

But, it is extremely gratifying that the wave of Free-to-Play that I predicted out of what I learned working with EU is definitely hitting hard now. Since MA hasn't been a huge advertising spender it's harder to get seats on panels and invitations to speak at the various conferences. I anticipate we're going to roll with that and things might change in the future. Once I do get in the door though, watch out. We really are one of the most exciting things going on in this realm.

Question

What are your future plans with regard to "spreading the word" as our EU Evangelist?

Response

You mean after the cruise you all take me on? I'm currently working on some exciting projects for MindArk that will hopefully roll out to all the planets and make it easier for people to move from playing for free to experiencing the benefits of being able to spend a few PED on themselves. We've also got some strategy and conversation sessions planned with regard to Planet Partner outreach. And, as I said, I believe I'll be doing a good deal of support for various Planet Partners going forward. I'm excited to step out of center stage and take a supporting role at those events.

Question

I'm assuming your marketing strategies will be to market the EU platform as a whole, but do you see yourself ever doing something specific with regard to planet partners – like campaign for them individually in any way as a result of their specific themes?

Response

I do hope to have a fairly big role in supporting our Planet Partners. I like the idea of having them look good and win their games. Some Planet Partners may want my help, or benefit from it more than others, but I want to play wherever I'm needed. In this realm I give myself the title: Vice President of Everything Works. So, anyplace I can make a contribution to everyone's overall success I'm game!

Of course, having worked with David at Arkadia before, I hope I get to do some things with them. I also love the gang at Cyrene, and I hope for some reason I have to visit them in Thailand! And, David Post has been utterly indomitable in shepherding NextIsland, the guy is so committed and I really respect that, so I am excited about supporting him. And, the other planets all thrill me too, so I guess the short answer is that I certainly hope so!

Question

What is your overall impression with regard to where MindArk has brought EU over the past 4 years that you have been a part of the operation?

Response

That's a big question. I think that we've grown quite well despite not marketing ourselves very aggressively. Although I have had my share of difficulty because of it, like everyone else, I love that we took such a bold move as to implement the CryEngine.

Our one planet Universe has doubled to two planets, and many more are in line to appear, some very soon. And, the world has shifted around us in ways that I believe strengthen our position. I also think that we've matured as a company and continue to break totally new ground in what we're doing. I love my VTOL and my car and my boat and I love that they're relatively affordable and what they imply for the future.

Question

Do you think that they could have done anything different that would have been more beneficial for them, as well as the player base?

Response

Hindsight is always 20/20! Well, gee, I don't think there is even really a hindsight way that we could have made the CryEngine implementation faster and/or easier, but if miracles could be had in hindsight that's where I'd want one. I think it was an important step, and in a way, I guess that it was actually very necessary, but dang, it turned out to be hard and time consuming beyond our wildest expectations. Part of me wishes that we had focused harder and spent more on marketing, but in the overall strategic view I'm actually totally on board with how we're going about everything. I like that MA can be long-term strategic and not sell out the future for some short-term gratification.

Question

What is your impression with where MindArk is heading currently – and where do you see Entropia Universe in 5 or even 10 years from now?

Response

Well, let's just project out that we have a bunch of planet partners, many of whom have successfully marketed their planets and we've gone from our current registered user base of about 1 million to 5 million? or 10 million? What if we had 10 million registered users and our GNP was 10x what it was in 2009. That's a GNP of \$4.2 Billion a year. Can you imagine how much fun it would be with all those planets, all those people, and all the things MindArk could be implementing if our cash flow was in that range?

My experience with the Internet suggests that on the technological side we'll probably have a much more immersive, pervasive interface, lots more connections between the physical and the virtual worlds, and there will probably be some surprising, and currently unexpected or even unimagined aspects which we'll incorporate that will be awesome.

Will we meet on the Holodeck and run around Treasure Island? Will I be able to set it up so that Mining and Hunting are also aerobic exercise if I want them to be? How many people will be making their entire living in Entropia Universe? What new friendship features will we have? What other kinds of cool ways to collaborate and communicate will we have? Will Entropia Universe play a part in keeping people in touch during a global calamity? Will the next Jagger and Richards meet each other on Rocktropia? Will someone have an earthshaking insight out of playing on Calypso and transform the whole world? Maybe!

From a business perspective we have big plans and that means we have to constantly be upping our game, making our offerings better and better and most of all pleasing, surprising, challenging and gratifying our community, you, the inhabitants of the Entropia Universe!

Thanks for the chance to share some of myself with you. It's an honor to be a part of such an unabashedly cool endeavor.

Make no mistake, John Bates is a visionary of his own, and when it comes to forward and future thinking, his messages are very thought-provoking. Despite any glitches in the matrix that we as Entropians have experienced, John builds hope that tomorrow's next best thing in our universe is just a reach away.

John has a coolness factor all his own, and it will be interesting to see just what the Entropia Universe future holds, and whether we will definitely be able to answer the questions he posed.



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Shades of Fashion

The quest for the Black Outfit!

By Bjorn

I spawned onto Planet Calypso on April 11, 2009. I remember my irritation in the initial moments trying to master the controls and being ignored by other avatars. It's funny to look back because now I think I was trying to talk to the Technicians and Auctioneers – lol. However, it didn't take long to find my feet and start exploring outside the walls of the Pre-VU10 Port Atlantis.

I remember the excitement when I realized I had a whole continent to explore in my decayed Colonist Standard Issue Slacks and Jumper. I ended up getting killed by an Exarosaur Young within 5 minutes and thought this was going to be a long struggle. It was bewildering that I couldn't survive 5 minutes in this game. I saw an avatar taking out the Exarosaur with ease using his Apis, but he told me what they cost and that I wouldn't have the skills. So after running about finding Swamp Camp and trying sweating, I decided to deposit 100PED. Wow, now I had something to work with. I repaired my Colonist outfit, and awesome, I was orange. Ok I guess.

But then, I remember seeing an avatar, I forget his name, wearing a white outfit, then someone wearing black. Well that was enough for me. I asked how did I get black clothing and the avatar told me I needed paint. So off I wondered to the find the auction house, worked out the Auctioneer and searched for black paint. I bought one can of black paint and could not figure out how to apply it to my clothing....aagghhh. Stupid game!, surely one can of paint would be enough to cover a damn jumper!? Then after some inquiries I got myself a Ziplex Colorator. Now, I was set! Still, no joy. I couldn't color my Colonist jumper black with one can of paint? I was really ready to quit at this stage. What a noob you must be thinking ... well I was!

Eventually I joined the old Entropia Forum and started reading. Soon, I understood from the great coloring masters that I would need at least 325 cans of black paint per field and pigment enhancers at that time due to the skill level required to use black paint. So I bought the Urban Nomad Black Slacks, then the Urban Nomad Black Jumper, then Boots! Cool I was half way there. I needed a hat though and a jacket. This would be a challenge as they were quite expensive.

In the early hours of one winter morning I saw a Black Leather Duster coat in auction, but that was it. I knew by destiny, I had to have it. I won the auction at 2am local time and couldn't wait to prepare my avatar!

Still I was missing a hat. What to do??? There were no pre-made black head items in auction, so I had to make my own. So over 6-9 months I started collecting black paint cans, the market was good around 9-10PED per can. This was a mission in itself because I needed 975 cans! Plus 900 pigment enhancers!

The day came when I finally had achieved my goal. I met LeeLoo Faith and we got to work. One male leaf beret, 975 black paint cans and 900 pigment enhancers. This was a huge gamble, my heart was pounding! Then...private message from LeeLoo...Yay! The only black beret in game!

I was complete, Bjorn Bjorn Longstaff was back in Black from head to toe! I then added Malachai Ash Sunglasses! Since then I have made a black Mastercoat with Polished Chrome edging which also looks quite cool, not quite a Storm Coat but it will do!

To all the new players, it does take a long time but you too can be dressed in black. Next mission, Shadow Armor ... which may take years to achieve!





Jon NEVERDIE Jacobs

THE PATH TO VIRTUAL DESTINY AND FAME

By MindStar9

One could say that it was inevitable that Jon “Neverdie” Jacobs would one day have a recognizable name, but perhaps not so quick to predict that it would be so embedded in a virtual world. His path to virtual destiny and fame is paved with inspirational moments that led to what is known as ROCKtropa.

EARLY DAYS

Born in the United Kingdom in September 1966, you could say that Jon’s parents had already made a name for themselves in a way. Jon’s mother (Jackie White) was Miss United Kingdom in 1962, and went on to become a leading antique doll dealer and antique doll book author. His father (Adrian Jacobs) was an infamous 1960’s financier, famous for his battles with the UK Stock Exchange, who later turned to writing fiction, and published a highly original and eccentric children’s book called “The Adventures of Willy the Wizard.”

At the time Jon was born, his father was Chairman of the 60’s UK underground indie record labels Strike Records (biggest hit was “That’s Nice” by Neil Christian peaking at #6 on the UK pop charts), and Go Records. Strike Records was based out of his father’s flat in Upper Berkeley Street, where the flat above was occupied by none other than rock legend Jimi Hendrix who used to hang out quite a bit at Strike Records (perhaps this may be why there’s a dragon on ROCKtropa named after him – I’m just sayin’). There are stories of how Jon’s mother used to ride the elevator with Jimi who joked about how Jon was always rubbing his hands together like he was going to make a lot of money.

In 1977 Jon’s parents divorced and his father moved to a flat just a few doors down from ex-Beatle Paul McCartney. Jon had reached age 11 by this time and was singing up a storm. He had left behind a traditional education to attend theatre school full-time. During this time, Jon would sometimes run into Paul McCartney on the street and force him to listen to him sing Elvis songs. There was just something about Elvis that captivated Jon, and thus perhaps the beginning of his love for rock. Jon still possesses a telegram from Linda McCartney sent from Hong Kong demanding that he return some master tapes he had cheekily stolen from their overstuffed mailbox. The mystery remains as to how he got caught in the first place, and whether he returned the tapes.

THE PATH CONTINUES

It was in 1981 in the basement of the house on Cavendish Avenue where Jon set up an Apple IIE computer with the sole purpose of engaging in an early role-playing computer game called Wizardry by Sir-Tech Software. The intense excitement he experienced playing Wizardry was akin to the excitement he felt as a performer, and there was a time when he was so taken with this role-playing that he thought seriously about getting into making games. However, his desire to pursue a movie career in Hollywood got the better of him and instead, role-playing games on computers became his guilty pleasure.



Jon would sometimes run into Paul McCartney on the street and force him to listen to him sing Elvis songs.

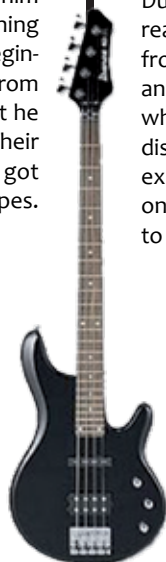
Between 1988 and 1994, Jon immersed himself in the film industry, from directing and producing a short film called Metropolis Apocalypse (Beneath the Haze) which became an official selection in the Semaine de la Critique at the Cannes Film Festival, to his first job in Hollywood writing scripts for Moshe Diamant, a prolific producer who later produced Jean Claude Van Damme’s biggest hits including Time Cop and Double Impact.

Jon tried his hand at writing and directing low-budget films, and even co-starred with Rutger Hauer’s daughter (Ayesha Hauer) in Welcome Says the Angel, which later won him his greatest reviews as an actor, but he struggled financially in Hollywood throughout the 1990’s.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

During his struggles, computer games became the only real recreation Jon could afford. He played everything from Wizardry, Bards Tale, Ultima, Might and Magic, and anything else he could get his hands on. It was in 1994 while writing the screenplay for Lucinda’s Spell that Jon discovered Tele-Arena, a BBS-based MUD. It was this experience of running up expensive phone bills to play online that triggered the epiphany that would later lead to the creation of NEVERDIE.

Continued page 28



Jon shared, “I was so broke, and the phone bills were killing me, but I was addicted to this new experience of role-playing with other people online. I started thinking, if only the gold pieces were real, and it was then that it hit me that real cash economy gaming was going to be the future.” Jon eventually hooked up with Tele-Arena designer Sean Ferrel, and this led to the development of an ill-fated graphical version that ultimately sold to Engage Online in 1995. “The real cash economy component of the game never made it past the agents in Hollywood, says Jon, “it was way ahead of its time, so I lost interest and returned my focus to making movies.”

In 1996 and 1997, Jon made a string of indie movies back to back, and it was in 1998 while bogged down with post production that he started playing Ultima Online. He became quite fascinated by the fact that people were actually trading virtual Ultima goods on eBay, and it once again reinforced his own conviction that a real cash economy MMO was the future.

In 1999 he started playing EverQuest during the first week of launch and discovered it to be even more immersive than anything he had ever experienced before. So immersive in fact, that he couldn’t really focus on his movie making and needed to come up with something that would justify his addiction, or he was going to be in deep trouble.

It was then that a surprise call came from Jean Claude Van Damme who had been impressed with all the commotion Jon had stirred up about his movie Lucinda’s Spell. Jon took this opportunity to pitch his idea about a movie based on the most famous gamer in the world called NEVERDIE, who in his vision was the Indiana Jones of virtual worlds, and who looted million dollar virtual treasures that ultimately got sold on eBay. Van Damme loved the idea, and was hyped to play the gamer NEVERDIE, so Jon wrote the screen play on spec over Christmas and New Year 2000. Jean Claude liked the early drafts, but fell out with the producer Jon was working with and the whole thing fizzled out.



“There were so few players at the time, shares Jon, “the world seemed deserted, and I had serious doubts that this indeed was going to be the ONE!”

ENTER MINDARK AND PROJECT ENTROPIA

Jon had started a website called ProRPG.com (which doesn’t exist anymore) to promote his ideas about professional role-playing, and this was when he first read an article about MindArk, a company in Sweden developing a real cash economy MMO called Project Entropia. “The moment I read the tiny blurb, the lightbulb exploded in my head, says Jon, and “I was convinced this was it.”

There was already discussion on several websites about the Entropia idea, and Jon signed on very early for the beta version of the game. He played off and on in 2002 and recalled being very wary and skeptical, but at the same time hopeful when he deposited his first \$10 USD into this beta test. “There were so few players at the time, shares Jon, “the world seemed deserted, and I had serious doubts that this indeed was going to be the ONE!”

He claims that in the early days, he didn’t really know what was going on, and the main excitement was at the Rig where a society called Coat Killers had already formed. It was there that he had earned the nickname NEVERLEARN because as much as they would kill him, he kept going back for more. He stuck with it though, and by the time Project Entropia had gone gold in 2003, he had a superb collection of great armor and weapons, including the legendary Mod FAP, the Ancient Improved MK II, and an almost full set of Shadow armor. “I can’t remember the exact date, states Jon, “but I beat T-Rex in a bidding war for Shadow Thighs that completed my set, and made NEVERDIE the first player to wear full Shadow armor.” He also says he’ll never forget the day he got his revenge when he was finally able to PK Lameth, one of the founders of the Coat Killers society.



THE VISIONARY PATH CONTINUES

It was during this time that Jon was living in Miami, Florida (USA) with his fiancé Tina Leiu and their son Taliesin, and making a movie about the Miami club scene called Hey DJ featuring many of the most famous DJ's in the world. It was then while also making records that Jon was surprised that Tina had started playing Project Entropia. He was inspired and wrote a song about her called Gamer Chick which became very popular inside the game, and he also created a fun machinima music video to go with the song. Unfortunately at the end of 2003, Tina got a flu virus that almost killed her, and during 2004 she was home a lot with very little energy, and playing her avatar Island Girl became her escape.

It was during this time that Jon started having ideas about opening a virtual night club inside the game. At the end of 2004 MindArk decided to create taxable land areas, and chose to sell off a major piece of real estate called Treasure Island. He knew based on his own playing that it could earn serious revenue, and felt that if he could turn the main castle into a night club, it would be a huge hit.

As history tells it, Jon sold all his priceless gear to raise enough cash for the auction, and even managed to put together around \$26,000 USD to fund his bid, which he says was a fortune to him at the time. He was pretty confident that he could win the auction, and was even gearing up the public relations machine to promote the club and NEVERDIE, but according to Jon, "I was pipped to the post by a 22 year old Australian gamer called Deathifier who deposited a large chunk of cash raised from investors."

Jon was disappointed at the loss of course, because not only did he lose the island, but he had sold off all his gear which was quickly doubling in value. However, he decided to hang on to his cash and wait for the next opportunity to buy something substantial.

A TRAGEDY AND A BLESSING

In February of 2005, Jon's fiancé Tina (Island Girl) succumbed to complications from her flu virus and died very suddenly. It was a devastating and bleak time for Jon and his son Taliesin, not only due to the death of Tina, but also compounded by the fact that Jon's movie Hey DJ didn't look like it was going to be making any money. "I was struggling to pay the mortgage on our little craftsman's cottage in Miami," says Jon, "and even resorted to selling an Improved MKII to a cool kid called Stryker one month to pay the mortgage."

Jon shares however, that it was also during this time that he and his son met Cheri Moon. "Out of the ashes, an incredible new relationship grew that really kept both my son and I moving forward very positively and surrounded by love." The other saving grace he states was the extremely hot US property market that found their little craftsman's cottage value increase from \$195k in 2002, to around \$385k in 2005. The initial decision was to sell the house and buy a condo on the beach, but Hurricane Katrina hit, so he decided instead to refinance the house and use the money to invest in an asteroid, and what has been known for 5 years as Club NEVERDIE.

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"There were so few players at the time, shares Jon, "the world seemed deserted, and I had serious doubts that this indeed was going to be the ONE!"



REAL AND VIRTUAL EXPANSION

By this time, Jon says he had already owned a couple of small land areas, and he could see that they were a turnkey business, so the \$100k USD price tag for the asteroid didn't scare him off. "I had learned my lesson the year before when I lost the Treasure Island auction, said Jon, "so I didn't hesitate to use the 'buy it now' button to claim the asteroid." He also shared that the fact that another hurricane was bearing down on Miami helped him make the decision.

As a result of the sale price setting a new World Record, Jon considered it a coup for everyone involved, stating that the press really jumped on the whole NEVERDIE idea and the concept of a virtual club. It was in December of 2005 that Jon and Cheri went to Los Angeles to record the NEVERDIE theme song, which they co-wrote with a young singer called Danny O'Donaghue, who has since gone on to form the band called The Script, who have become one of the best selling acts in the UK says Jon.

Club NEVERDIE opened on December 19, 2005, and Jon found himself in the company of representatives from the Discovery Channel in his home for the launch, and to film the occasion. "My gross revenue in January 2006 was \$10,000 USD," says Jon, "and I was finally earning enough cash to pay the mortgage and more." Jon also shares that by the end of August, he had recouped the \$100K USD price tag of the asteroid. It was also in the Summer of 2006 that Jon and Cheri were married in the first ever live, and legal, virtual world wedding.

The early days of Club NEVERDIE were extremely exciting and innovative, but another virtual world, Second Life, exploded in 2006 as well, and according to Jon, it stole the thunder from CND, which was growing in revenues every month. "I fought hard to keep the PR machine going, says Jon, "and invested a lot of time into trying out events at the club." He also continued writing and recording new songs about virtual life, and in 2006, recorded New VU Blues which quickly became a much listened to track. By the time 2006 was coming to a close, Cheri had given birth to their daughter Sheba on December 19th, which was the first year anniversary of the launch of Club NEVERDIE the year before.



"I didn't hesitate to use the 'buy it now' button to claim the asteroid."

Despite the success with CND, Jon stayed true to his virtual visionary path, and it was in 2007 when MindArk announced that they were going to focus on developing the Entropia Platform for Planet Partners that Jon saw his next opportunity. He really wanted to create an entire music world, complete with a professional dance battle system, which he felt could broaden the appeal of the platform dramatically.

At the end of 2007, Jon decided to move from Miami back to Hollywood to focus on setting up a NEVERDIE movie, a record label, and a 3D studio to build planets for the Entropia Platform. It was then that he signed a deal to build a time travel planet called Next Island, as well as sign Lemmy and Motorhead to have a destination in his future music world. Jon spent a lot of time meeting with major record labels in America that generated interest in the idea of a music world on the strength of which he was able to secure the capital to develop ROCKtropa.



He really wanted to create an entire music world, complete with a professional dance battle system, which he felt could broaden the appeal of the platform dramatically.

In October of 2008, Jon intentionally made an attempt to keep blurring the lines between real and virtual. “I produced and directed a live musical in Hollywood called ‘Queen of Sheba Show’ which starred Cheri Moon,” says Jon, “and told the story of a singer discovered inside a virtual world, and her escape from an abusive relationship and her rise to fame.” The show debuted at King King on Hollywood Boulevard, and featured all original songs and digital projection of avatars and virtual environments. According to Jon, many of the songs were produced by Kevin Rudolph, who at the same time, scored a massive hit of his own with Let it Rock, featuring Lil Wayne. Kevin loved the show, and also signed on to have a destination on Jon’s future music planet.

At the end of 2008, Jon had one planet in production, another in pre-production, and a major deal announced relating to a series of movie planets. “The biggest hurdle I faced,” says Jon, “was that Entropia Universe’s VU10, which would see Entropia updated to the CryEngine2, was delayed significantly until September 2009, and production on Next Island and ROCKtropa was proving to be far more painstaking than anticipated.” Despite the challenges, Jon shares that he was extremely busy putting together monumental virtual world deals in Hollywood for a third party, and things continued to still be very exciting.

In December 2009, the Neverdie music division scored its first top 5 hit on the UK club charts with Cheri Moon’s Ships in the Night. It was then, on the strength of the success of Cheri’s record, that Jon decided to sell Entropia’s infamous virtual egg for the extraordinary sum of \$69k USD to further finance the next record releases. Jon shares that the next record released was House Arrest, again by Cheri Moon, reaching #1 on the world dance charts, and opening many new doors to the music industry. This would seem to be quite beneficial toward building a music-related network, and could play a key role in the expansion of ROCKtropa.

In February 2010, the NEVERDIE studios were relocated from Jon’s pool house at the back of his home in Hollywood, California to a landmark 6,500 square foot studio in the El Capitan theatre building on Hollywood Boulevard. “We share the building with Jimmy Kimmel and Disney,” says Jon, “and as a studio, we managed to take the quality of our work to a world class level, producing a series of magnificent promo destinations for an iconic and landmark project.”

ENTER ROCKTROPICA

In April 2010, Jon said they chose to do a soft launch of ROCKtropa in order to get it out the door. “This was somewhat revealing,” shares Jon, “because all of the new systems were not yet in place to create a stand-alone economy.” The timing was also not right to push for the dance battle system, which is the fundamental original game play element for the music planet according to Jon.

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There was no denying that launching ROCKtropa in its embryonic stage proved extremely valuable to the studio's learning curve, even though Jon shares that it also revealed its shortcomings to the public. "I like to think of ROCKtropa like a baby still learning to walk," says Jon, "after all, this is not a game, but an organic, albeit virtual world." Lessons learned from the ROCKtropa growing pains, the Next Island production was elevated to a whole new level according to Jon, keeping the team at Neverdie Studios working around the clock through the second half of 2010.

In the Summer of 2010, Cheri Moon released yet another recording entitled One More Crazy Summer, which gained a lot of airplay in the UK according to Jon, and also saw the production of a music video that was picked up by many of the major music video channels in the UK as well. Also, the first promotions with the giant metal label Nuclear Blast began with the Dimmu Borgir tour in November 2010.

ROCKtropa continues to develop relationships with all the major record labels and major recording artists. Jon shares that the Entropian community will see New York rapper Juelz Santana and his skull gang crew with destinations added in the fourth quarter of 2010.

John stated that perhaps the most critical growth of ROCKtropa will be the introduction of blueprints for manufacturing, and quests, which are both planned for the end of 2010.

On this note, I began my journey of asking specific questions posed by Entropians with regard to ROCKtropa dynamics that we wanted more insight into.



A LITTLE Q & A

When MindArk announced the release of your long-awaited planet ROCKtropa, there were a lot of expectations in the community based on the pre-launch information shared as to what the theme of the planet would be.

Question

Was the initial delivery of the planet what you expected?

Response

We launched ROCKtropa pretty much at the first moment it became possible to launch a new planet on the Entropia Platform. We had not anticipated so many production delays, and we couldn't afford to sit on it indefinitely.

Almost all of the little things we had asked for to give it a unique flavor were not yet possible to implement, but we thought the intensity of Zomhattan and the darkness of Lemmy's castle would prove to be enough to keep it entertaining while we added new systems. What we weren't prepared for, was the impact of the 80 PED roundtrip teleporter fee to and from Calypso, and the lack of ability to generate any kind of local economy.

The planet was launched too soon to be self-sustaining. It was like delivering a premature baby that you have to keep inside an incubator for months after. However, I think the flavor of ROCKtropa was distinct, and as we have continued to add content, it has grown more tasty, but certainly, I am itching to give a more complete picture as we add even more content.

The planet has gone through, and is still going through changes – new things have been added – including new cities like New Harlem. We added the city areas which are very important to where things are going, but they are far from finished.

New Harlem is my favorite vibe, and I love the Vixens, they are so naughty. Of course, when the male NPC characters are introduced to the urban environments, it will balance things out accordingly. But for me, the first thing I wanted to do was make sweating sexy!

Question

Is there an explanation as to why the blueprints didn't arrive with the release of the planet?

Response

The system for individual planet blueprints simply still isn't ready for Planet Partners at the time of this interview, but it is an extremely high priority system, and I hope that it has arrived by the time this is published.

Question

Will crafters be required to craft ROCKtropa-related items only on ROCKtropa, or anywhere?

Response

I think you will be able to craft them anywhere, but you will require some materials that will have to be harvested on ROCKtropa.

Question

Is there anything else in place or coming soon that will help to boost the ROCKtropa economy?

Response

Blueprints will be the beginning of our economy, because it creates a full circle – hunting, mining, manufacturing, and trading. After that, we will try to examine how to balance our economy, and then focus on manufacturing things that have a purpose on our world specifically. Finally, we will then focus on bringing new people to create some demand for the local produce!

Question

The growth of ROCKtropia has been slow, but there is certainly a group of loyal community members, and many who have formed societies. One such society, Rock Stars, has created a great deal of controversy with their PK activities. So much so, that these activities were reported as having interfered with the game play of others. Specifically, repeated revive and teleporter killings that found new players especially vulnerable to these activities.

Was this a design by intention with regard to activation of the PvP zones, or teleport features into PvP zones in particular from various locations? Also, would you give your overall view of this society as you see it?

Response

Rock Stars appear to be heavily into PK role-playing. Personally, I am not into non-consensual PK'ing. Evil Cathedral accidentally became a PvP area, and unfortunately, the fact that it is a prime revival area for Dragon hunters, it turned revival into something of a trap.

The Rock Stars love ROCKtropia, and they do want to lure others to fight them. It's not a marketing tactic, but a lot of the upcoming systems for the event system are very PK-oriented, so I think it's great that we have a PK society well established on ROCKtropia.

We like creating exciting PvP areas, and certainly may lend themselves to some of our artists. However, I don't see PvP being the main focus at all, but would like our PvP to be as good as it can be, because it will work for some of our storylines – Zomhattan was designed to be a land grab area. There will probably be more PvP zones added to ROCKtropia as well.

Question

Are you not concerned that so much PvP might actually turn people away?

Response

Yes, and I will be watching the balance very carefully.

Question

Is there any type of benefit for societies to be headquartered on ROCKtropia?

Response

I have actually deliberately not tried to market ROCKtropia to the Calypso community. Now that there are multiple Entropia Universe planet forums, I will reach out to that community. I am also open to suggestions for creating incentives for societies to make ROCKtropia their home base.

Question

ROCKtropia was billed as the music planet where people could not only enjoy real life artists and their music inside the universe, but where Entropians can have an opportunity to explore getting their own music heard, with the potential of becoming known as an artist. Are there any plans to bring the true theme of the planet into play soon?

Response

The tools to self-promote will be added gradually. We are just having to work with the system we have, but that is very much a direction you will see ROCKtropia continue to move toward. As we are able through all systems, we can twist to our own devices.

Question

With the introduction of vehicles (ground vehicles in particular), the roadways of ROCKtropia are particularly efficient for getting around the planet, even inside the cities. When ROCKtropia was designed, were the roads created in anticipation of the vehicles specifically, and will you be adding even more roadway systems or heliports as a result of the VTOL?

Response

Yes, the roadways were very much so designed with vehicles in mind, and we will always try to take advantage of the new systems MindArk adds.

Question

Will you be designing a special ROCKtropia-related vehicle?

Response

Loads of them!!!

Question

There are rumors about a VIP ROCKtropia society with real life famous people as members. Is this only a rumor, or true? And if true, do you anticipate that real life rock stars will be interacting on ROCKtropia and making themselves known?

Response

At the time of this interview, I cannot answer this question. I also prefer for celebrities to do their own revealing if they so choose. Yes, real life rock stars will be interacting on ROCKtropia with the community.

Question

Other than Motorhead and Kevin Rudolph, are there any other artists lined up to hit ROCKtropia?

Response

Yes, if you explore Zomhattan, you will see that New York rapper Juelz Santana is setting up shop. We are also working with Dimmu Borgir to promote their latest tour, and we may expand on this relationship further. We are talking to every major artist in the world as well, but we're not in a rush – blueprints are more important to us right now.

Continued page 34

Question

Will there be live streamed concerts at the Motorhead stages, or the main stage?

Response

Eventually yes, there are some cool tools in the works coming from MindArk that will support live concerts.

Question

Will there be a venue in Kevin Rudolph's section of the planet for concerts?

Response

Yes, maybe a dive bar, unless he wants to do a show in his dome while under attack from the Hendrix Dragon!

Question

Do you anticipate other artists will create a land area on ROCKtropia with a special theme?

Response

Yes, but we want to focus on the cities and more communal areas first.

Question

When will artist events start to happen, and what type of events will they be?

Response

That part of our business model will remain under wraps until we start to promote the events.

Question

Cruising around ROCKtropia, it's easy to identify the current mobs on the planet. Will there be new mobs introduced in the future that are area-specific depending on theme?

Response

Like Motorhead Guardians around Lemmy's castle and Zombies in Zomhattan, yes – but we are also focused on expanding our general population of NPC's first. We need to balance out the Video Vixens before anyone gets the wrong idea about me.

Question

City of Dreams seems to be the hub gathering place, and a place where trading takes place. It also seems to be the ROCKtropia sweat camp for new players as well. Will apartments be coming soon? Will other buildings have functionality, and will there ever be a Club NEVERDIE the magnitude of what's on the asteroid at the moment?

Response

There will be apartments available soon in New Harlem. And yes, other buildings will have functionality, particularly as we are able to introduce quests. As far as a grander Club NEVERDIE is concerned, it's possible – I haven't ruled it out.

Question

Other themed cities have been introduced as well, with some intricate details. Will these cities be self-sufficient with all amenities available, such as teleporters, revivals, storage, auctioneers, and interactive social areas such as lounges? These are fairly large cities, are you not concerned they may be more abandoned than not?

Response

We plan to add much more to explore within our cities. When quests are introduced, all areas of our cities will have some kind of function. We need a lot more citizens to create more community areas.

Question

The economy of ROCKtropia is highly dependent upon the current population and business that takes place on the planet. However, there seems to be minimal local activity with the auction, and the auction fees to purchase from Calypso don't help. Is there anything more specific planned to help secure the economic structure of ROCKtropia?

Response

I think the blueprints will make a huge difference. I also think separating the ROCKtropia auction from the Calypso auction will help a lot as well. What else will help is more of our unique game play with items that specifically apply to our world.

Question

Will you continue to run the Friday Market Place event where players can sell their loot with markups?

Response

Due to our languishing economy, we have been forced to cut back on our community development team. However, I will continue to sponsor it if I have a volunteer.

Question

There are several places with opportunities for player-owned shops or booths will that be possible in the near future?



Response

So soon ... I can smell it!

Question

People still complain that the transport fee between planets is expensive. It has been learned that this fee is a mandated amount by MindArk for all Planet Partners – can you confirm this?

Response

Yes, it is mandated by MindArk, and as I understand it – it is high so that it will be possible for space pilots to undercut the teleporter costs, and this will therefore motivate space travel. So I have no problem with the high fee, except that without space travel, we are just too expensive for the existing community to enjoy. I'm sure it will be revisited when there are multiple worlds and the system can be really tested.

Question

It is understood that planet development takes time, and not all content is delivered as scheduled. How many development people do you currently have on staff? How many are dedicated to ROCKtropia and Next Island? How many will be dedicated to SEE Virtual Worlds?

Response

We currently have 10 full-time developers who switch between planets according to schedule. We also have no other contracts to work on any planets outside of ROCKtropia and Next Island.

Question

Do you feel that Neverdie Studios being involved in the development of more than one planet will hinder at all the progression of the planets?

Response

The plan was always to handle the workload. Once ROCKtropia and Next Island are both up and running, we will figure out the formula. For us, the focus will be more destinations for ROCKtropia, and more time travel zones for Next Island. Most importantly, we need to get their economies working so that they can support full-time development teams.

Currently, we are not building planets for anyone else, and I would be very happy if these two planets keep us completely busy, because they have so much potential, and so many diverse themes to explore. However, we are based in Hollywood, and I do want to continue to help bring major iconic IP to the Entropia Platform, so I am open to opportunities and challenges.

Question

With regard to the music and recording aspect of Neverdie Studios, you are currently producing Cheri Moon's music. Will you be taking on new artists, and will this music be heard across ROCKtropia?

Continued page 36



Response

We just opened our own recording studio at Neverdie Studios, and we are working with some very cool artists, so that's something we are exploring for sure. However, as I mentioned before, blueprints and a functional economy still remains to be our #1 priority.

Question

There's no question that developing a planet takes a great deal of funding. The community is interested in knowing how ROCKtropia was funded.

Response

I sold the Atrax Egg to finance Cheri's single, and didn't start selling CND until after ROCKtropia was launched, but sold the asteroid to make sure that I have the capital I may need to keep my studio together while trying to get the new planets economies into gear.

For the first round of funding, I worked with a venture capital company who has a large group of private investors. They invested in ROCKtropia, but they are not players, so there is nothing Entropia-related to be revealed.

Question

You were recently in Frankfurt, Germany – was this related to ROCKtropia in any way?

Response

I was invited to provide the keynote speech at the GAMEplaces event in Frankfurt. I think it was pretty cool that they invited an avatar to kick off their event!!!

Question

On a final note – with so much going on, how do you make time for family life?

Response

I'm very close with my family. I'm very often distracted, but they do see plenty of me. I take my kids to school in the morning, and we often spend time on the weekends together. I believe in pursuing dreams, and I think it's good for my kids to see me work hard for my dreams!

Question

What are your thoughts about ROCKtropia going forward?

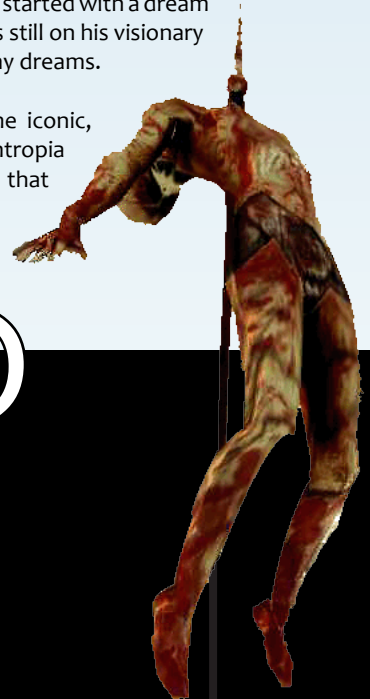
Response

Ultimately, the success of ROCKtropia will depend on the viability of the concept. I continue to believe in the genius of the Entropia Universe Platform, with the belief that virtual reality is the next great medium. I have my fingers crossed that ROCKtropia evolves and grows to be able to blossom into an extraordinary future for music and pop culture.

IN CLOSING

No one can ever accuse Jon of not being passionate about his universe, both real and virtual. He started with a dream many years ago, and to date, he is still on his visionary path to fulfilling not one, but many dreams.

The name NEVERDIE has become iconic, and not just synonymous with Entropia Universe. I would venture to bet that he is just getting started.



INFO

Read more here:

www.neverdiestudios.com

www.neverdie.com

www.rocktropia.com

www.motorhead.com

ROCKtropia in EntropiaPlanets Wiki



EntropiaPlanets

MediaCenter

(EPMC)

Every gaming community wants to be in the know, wants to be connected, wants to be entertained, and perhaps have a little fun along the way.

The EntropiaPlanets Media Center is building an EP Media Team whose primary goal is to keep information fresh and revolving, along with developing and producing events within our community that keep us active. If you have what it takes to contribute toward our efforts, then let's explore the possibilities.

We are looking for the following:

- Writers – EP Front Page; EntropiaTimes magazine (command of the English language a must)
- Graphics Artists – assist with graphics needs
- Photographers – capture EU to enhance projects
- Researchers – collect data, or scout EU locations
- Radio Broadcasting – MindStar Radio (MSR) (English only, clear speaking voice – no DJ shows)

Positions are voluntary with no pay, but there will be benefits and perks as part of the team.



CURRENT EP MEDIA TEAM

- MindStar9 – Media Manager
- GeorgeSkywalker – Writer/News Reporter
- Safara – Graphics Artist
- Narfi – Writer/News Reporter
- Marie Woodell - Writer/News Reporter

If you are interested in more information, contact:
mindstar9@entropiaplanets.com



WHAT YOU WISH...

By Santa



Mr. Huggy..

TT+ 6 PED

Cold Hunts!

Jolly Christmas Mittens

TT+ 7 PED

For Him ...



Medusa's Head Land Area
>50,000 PED

For Her ...



Thrill Seeker Party Bra

TT+ 48 PED

Thrill Seeker Party Panties

TT+ 180 PED

FOR CHRISTMAS

Dark Days!

Christmas Lantern
TT+ 1.50 PED



Fun X-mas ...

Jolly Christmas Hat
TT+ 20 PED



For The Feet ...

Calypso Elf Shoes
TT+ 3 PED



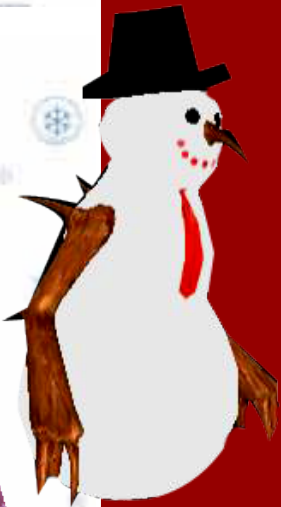
Santa!

Santa Statue
TT+ 100 PED



To Keep You Company ...

Calypso Snowman
TT+ 3 PED



Never Lonely ...

Energetic Bunny
TT+ 17 PED



ROCKtropical Societies

Society Spotlights

By Lykke



During my time of exploration on ROCKtropia, I could not help noticing all the different cultures and societies. It is definitely alive with rhythms, and a rock theme that adds to the whole ambience of the planet. The planet itself vibrates - and the societies and people contribute with their own special tone to this part of the Universe. It was time to dig in ...

It is clear, when you stand in the City of Dreams, that there are a lot of societies located on ROCKtropia. You see them dance, team-sweat the tempting dancing Vixens, heal each other, or simply just stand around in little groups chatting.

ROCKtropia was released on April 6th, 2010, and you find a lot of societies popping up everywhere in honor of ROCKtropia, or even NEVERDIE himself. Some of them are 'real' ROCKtropicalians – born here – and they would never place their feet on Calypso, perhaps not even on any of the other new planets which will spawn in time. And if they ever have to, they will not forget that ROCKtropia is their home-base, and the place they are deeply connected to.

Even though you find a lot of societies on ROCKtropia, the community seems extremely tight and close. Everybody knows everybody – and if it comes to a war between

another planet and ROCKtropia, it is quite obvious that these guys and girls will stick together – despite whatever earlier challenges they have had between societies.

During my exploration of the community on ROCKtropia, I discovered that while people for example on Calypso most of the time love their home, the ROCKtropicalians are almost fanatic about their home planet. You can tell by their avatar names, society names and the whole way they are 'acting,' that this is THEIR thing, and dare those who interfere in their business. Not meaning, that ROCKtropicalians are not a friendly people – of course you will find both friendly and helpful ROCKtropicalians in between – but they are special. And you need to be special to live here, with hardcore PvP areas, heavy rocks and tough, cold outlands filled with horrible mobs, just waiting to eat you up alive.



“ It feels great to be a part of something huge like this from the beginning. ”

*Sapeian Sap Killmore
from Fun'Ksters.*

The 3 societies and their society leaders I met were Jack Panzer Fist from Sons Of Anarchy, Ed Lguigui Ward from Secret Agents and last, but not least, Sapeian Sap Killmore from Fun'ksters. All three of them were very eager to tell their story about their societies on ROCKtropa.

Ed Lguigui Ward from Secret Agents has been playing for 3 years now. In the beginning he didn't play for around 6 whole months before he became addicted, like most of us, and started playing regularly. His society is new, as the planet, and was founded in July 2010. Today he can proudly say that Secret Agents has 10 active members - "18 members are on the list, 10 are active, but I believe some will come back." Ed Ward tells me, that he prefers not to mention one over another. It doesn't matter, really - they are all the same team. But he also adds, that you never know who role-plays their position in society. "In a few months, representative people may change/evolve for many reasons, including everyone's real life," he explains with a wink and ends by saying, that you will meet them for sure, if you visit ROCKtropa.

Sapeian Sap Killmore has been playing for 4 years and is the society leader of Fun'Ksters. He founded the society in October 2010 and has already reached 25 members. "ROCKtropa is just rockin'," he tells me with a big grin. "And it's so new and it feels great to be a part of something huge like this from the beginning." Sapeian helps the ROCKtropa community to grow larger every day, as he is also doing a lot of work on www.neverdie.com (the official forum for ROCKtropa).

Jack Panzer Fist has only been playing for a couple of months, but already found the motivation to form his society, Sons Of Anarchy. The society already has 32 members in such a short lifetime, but they still need to settle down, Panzer explains: "Well, there are a lot of societies but a lot of them are just a bunch of people. Our main goal is to set up a society which is different on ROCKtropa. I'm kind of a metal head and I really like the atmosphere and music up here!" Panzer tells me further, that the ultimate mission is to make a society more or less closed, inspired by the real life Masters of Ceremonies. At this moment the most important thing for the society is to evolve and develop a steady base.

Ed continues, "I was in a well-known society alone on ROCKtropa and began to think that ROCKtropa had a future. Not that I was previously in the debate of the success ability of new planets, but rather that ROCKtropa is a chance for everyone to build a new story. I believe ROCKtropa is living in itself, building its own culture which would not be possible on Calypso due to the scale of things. Calypso is too big and you get a different point of view on/with others. Everyone knows everyone here, kind of."

Ed's goal for his society Secret Agents is to be able to deliver his knowledge to new players, and even more to give them the encouragement and means to explore Entropia Universe by themselves, rather than giving lessons and theories. "The goal is, if I am thinking as a guy, part of friends fixing goals, to have fun, be wise, patient," he grins "and find secrets! There's another secret goal that I can't speak of," he adds with a mysterious smile.

Sapeian tells me, that he doesn't have any real main goals other than "to ROCK and enjoy it along the way!"

"The best thing in game is ROCKtropa as a whole," he continues: "My main profession for example, is just to look good and be classy all the way." He starts laughing and wraps up: "Our society is built up by rocking individuals who just love the game."

Panzer thinks the best in game is shotguns, but then again, he's a hunter. "I did visit Calypso, but only for shopping! I came right back up to ROCKtropa," Panzer tells me. Sapeian never personally visits Calypso (he spent 4 years on Calypso before joining ROCKtropa), but Fun'Ksters does have members who go there to mine from time to time. Ed, on the other hand, chose to visit Calypso once a week, more or less, when he needs to shop, because the travel fee costs less than the item fees in auction.

Continued page 42

"I'm kind of a metal head and I really like the atmosphere and music up here!"

*Jack Panzer Fist from
Sons Of Anarchy.*

Continued page 64

Fun'Ksters uses City of Dreams as their headquarters – but both Sons Of Anarchy and Secret Agents are still looking. Panzer tells me that they are waiting for estates to be released and then will grab what they can.

Ed believes humor is very important in the society, “When I come back from a hunt with a nice HoF in the pocket, I often don’t hit T but fly my UFO (VTOL, but the society calls it UFO because it’s shorter) to the city. I tell the guys I have a whip in my storage, I swear you!” he laughs and continues: “After I’ve done my thing at the auction, crafting terminals, you know, I go back to my UFO and often they have been hiding it, making me crazy,” Ed is nearly tipping from laughing now and the other two stare at him. Obviously all members are on the guestlist and can fly his vehicle.

Sapeian keeps staring at Ed and says calmly: “Cant really think of anything funny as such, but the best times we have in the society are every time we are together...” Sapeian smiles a warm and friendly smile which makes you all warm and fuzzy inside, and makes me wonder when he will burst out with Kumbaya!

Panzer tells me they need a nice office for the society. First of all the society really needs to expand with more experienced players, but those are unfortunately hard to find since most are very loyal to their societies: “It’s really hard to start up a society from the very bottom,” he says with a wink.

Sapeian informs me, that it’s good to have a web page: “You can find us at www.funkyshores.co.uk,” he says and points out, that it’s still under construction.

Ed believes the main difference between ROCKtropia and Calypso is the scale of things: “It can take time to adapt to the change of the map size, mob distribution and so on. You can’t think the same way on both planets or you don’t understand the way to surf the big wave if you’re used to small ones, if you get what I mean...”

Sapeian also believes there’s a difference between the two planets: “The same difference which is between a Snable-snot and an exotic dancer?” he laughs big time, and doesn’t seem to be able to stop: “or like the difference between mining up some Oil or a Pina Colada?” He grins even more but then gets more serious: “There are huge differences in that respect, but the main difference I feel is the whole attitude. Everyone on ROCKtropia seems so willing to help new players and work together for a brighter future.”

Panzer shrugs: “The whole atmosphere is different. I love for example the dark, post-apocalyptic atmosphere when you wander around the zombie areas.” Panzer continues: “Personally, I will probably stay on ROCKtropia. But if my society members wish to migrate, I guess we then have to set up a new chapter...”

Sapeian also clarifies: “Well, I for one have made my home on ROCKtropia, but I will plan to visit the other planets when they arrive, of course. I am an explorer, it is what I do! But no doubt that ROCKtropia is my home forever.”

Ed nods and explains: “I myself decided to stay on ROCKtropia, but will visit other planets. The teleporter prices will decide how I will jump between them, but I think most of us will have our main base here on ROCKtropia. We are all fans of NEVERDIE, especially when he begins to dance like crazy at City of Dreams while girls are been sweated dry around the teleporter,” Ed laughs.

“ ROCKtropia is a chance for everyone to build a new story. ”

Ed Lguigui Ward
from Secret Agents.



I met Katherine, who is a member of yet another society on ROCKtropia, Temporal Destinies, in front of Club NEVERDIE in City of Dreams. Behind her stands a member from Fun'Ksters, Addison Cubble Clark.

Sapeian laughs with him and adds: "I can't speak for everyone of course, but if you're not a fan of NEVERDIE, then you don't know him and the work he does." I'm thinking by myself he means other work than sweating those poor girls around ... but don't say anything.

My interview with the 3 society leaders is almost over, each of them can't stand still anymore – their society members need them for events and some are already toddling around us, waiting for them to be done. So I decide to wrap it up and ask them if they have any good advice for other Entropians who wish to start up a society on ROCKtropia.

Sapeian replies: "Well, to start a society for the first time, be open, honest, polite, and respectful. Also be mindful of other cultures and do not be disrespectful. As long as you follow those rules you can't go wrong." Ed doesn't have any good advice as such, but says it's the good idea of starting up that will carry the society. Panzer replies with a huge grin: "Beware of ROCK STARS," the others agree with a smile, and Panzer continues: "You're all free to look me up if you have some experience and aspire a leading role and a vote in the future of a newborn society... oh and ROCK STARZ RULEZ." We all laugh, and I'm sure he just says this with the hope to get mercy next time he meets them in a PvP area.

I leave them to their business, and my conclusion is what I started out with: The ROCKtropical societies are a proud bunch, very attached to ROCKtropia and the culture. Sub-cultures are spawning, and no doubt the ones on ROCKtropia are very special. It will be interesting to see how this develops the next half year with all the new updates on the planet.

As I turn around and head to the teleporter, Sapeian suddenly shouts after me: "HEY, ROCK ON!" – and I sure will.

Thank you all for taking the time to be a part of this interview. I wish you and all other ROCKtropical societies the very best in your future exploration of the planet.

Planet Cyrene

Ed Robles 3rd

Managing Partner/Creative Director
- Digital Scryers LLC

By MindStar9

As an accomplished screenwriter and creative film maker, Ed Robles 3rd has turned a lifelong passion for the online video game industry into a rewarding career. His inspirational and visionary journey began with his great grandfather and continued with his father who set the bar high as one of the world's most renowned conceptual architects and co-founder of Creative Kingdom International. It is no wonder then that Ed was drawn to entertainment as a career goal.

EARLY INSPIRATIONS

As a child, Eduardo Robles 3rd was constantly immersed in the world of film, animation and entertainment. "Some of my earliest memories were of seeing my great grandfather in photos with my favorite cowboy John Wayne," shares Ed, "and Clark Gable from my Mother's favorite film Gone With The Wind." He states though, that most impressive to him at the time were the pictures with Walt

Disney, the man who was responsible for Mickey Mouse and Disneyland. Coming from a long line of talented and creative individuals, Ed's grandfather qualified for a position at Disney Studios, and thus, Ed's lifelong passion for entertainment was set in motion by Walt Disney who presented his favorite animation as a child.

SETTING A COURSE

Ed studied film directing and screenwriting at the American Film Institute (AFI) as a young adult. He went on to pursue music and sound engineering at Cypress College under Grammy nominated and platinum selling producer Joe Gallo. Ed immersed himself in music theory and producing at Icon Collective in Los Angeles, a specialized school that has continually turned out top musicians and DJ's. He also delved into poetry, creative writing and psychology at Orange Coast College in California, and is slowly pursuing a Masters in Philosophy as time permits.



Creativity is well embedded in Ed's DNA, and certainly proven to be a lifelong goal. "Even my first two jobs were working as a movie usher," says Ed, "and at a large book retailer in Orange County, California where I was surrounded by art." Ed's creativity with film and entertainment is eclectic, and after film school at AFI, he spent several years traveling the United States documenting the import drag racing scene in the early 2000's. His travels took him from Hawaii across several U.S. states all the way to Florida. His footage has been used in several Import DVD videos sold across the nation and worldwide, as well as in television commercials and the top Import Scene fan sites.

AN INVITE TO CREATIVE KINGDOM

After the import film documentation, Ed was asked by his father to help with the newly-created Creative Kingdom Records music label. The label went on to produce hit musicians and music videos in South Africa. According to Ed, the musicians at CKR were the first South African national musicians to reach number one on the charts in a country dominated by U.S. musicians.

After the music label was up and running, Ed joined the Creative Kingdom animation studios and returned to writing where he produced several scripts for children's animation. His work has been broadcast on Thai and Korean television networks, and deals are currently in the works to bring them to the U.S. After helping to develop CKA's animation division with IP development and new IP creation, Ed's desire to create another documentary took over.

A MASSIVE STEP

Ed has known about Massive Multiplayer Online games (MMOs) since Ultima Online started gaining a good following, but didn't begin to play online games until EverQuest was on its third expansion. "I had friends who were very active in MMOs, but I was one of the last to join," says Ed. Before EverQuest, he shares that he was very much into role-playing games, and loved the storylines from them. "When I discovered that MMOs were like RPGs but with a human element," Ed said, "I was hooked." He states that since EverQuest, he has sampled most of the major games out there, which are too many to mention, but shares that he played a very high level Shaman in EverQuest, and ran a successful end game guild in World of Warcraft.

It's a grand day when you can take your favorite hobby and develop a business out of it. After interviewing several top leaders in the MMO game industry, Ed was approached by MindArk's John Bates at a virtual goods summit at Stanford University in June of 2007. "I was filming a documentary on MMOs and was meeting up with one of the heads at SOE (being such an EverQuest fan)," says Ed, "and I guess my questions got John's attention." He further shares, "We started speaking after their panel and set up a meeting in Los Angeles the next month where I met Marco and Carl from MindArk." Although the documentary that Ed started was never finished, the chance meeting with John Bates ultimately led to a partnership between MindArk, Creative Kingdom, and Ed's own newly-created game company Digital Scryers.

I was curious as to where the name for the new company came from and Ed offered this explanation: "A Digital Scryer would be someone who is able to see into the future of the

digital medium. A scryer in medieval times was usually a sort of alchemist who would look into special crystals and speak with angelic beings inside of them. Only those who are pure of heart would then be able to converse with the angels, who would then tell them what the future holds. It is also where the angelic writings were derived from back in medieval times."

He thought it would be a clever name since he was staring at LCD's (Liquid Crystal Displays) all day, and also feels that he can see what the future holds for the digital medium. However, he is quick to say, "No, I do not think I speak with angels in my monitor-lol."

Prior to signing on as a Planet Partner, Ed and another writer and level designer experienced Entropia as players for a while without depositing. They wanted to learn the game from a newbie's perspective prior to considering making any deposits. They focused on sweating, hunting and mining at first, and then took what they learned and made some initial deposits. After a while, they had further talks with MindArk and decided they would move forward with the platform. Then after becoming a Planet Partner, they continued to explore all the different features the game had to offer, as well as become familiar with all of the systems.

Ed shares that the concept for Cyrene started back when he was a freshman in high school. He began writing short stories and just pursued the storyline. Over time, he was influenced by different books and movies to the point of having a long evolved version of the storylines he had written in the beginning. It seems that philosophy and psychology have had the greatest impact on the whole storyline according to Ed, and perhaps why he continues today pursuing a Masters in Philosophy.

While Ed is deeply entrenched in writing storyline for Cyrene, he shares that there are currently 5 writers on staff who each focus on different aspects of the game and lore. Ed has set an outline that they follow, and must adhere to certain facts that define the Universe. He does share however, that they are in the process of working with other writers, but will be more detailed on this via the website.

Cyrene has been in development now since 2008, but Ed doesn't remember the exact date when the official contract was finished. There is a full-time staff of 36 (including Ed), but staff could increase or decrease depending on needs. "At any given time," says Ed, "we can have anywhere from 30 to 60 people working on the project." Ed states that it all depends on needs, which change from month to month, but also shares, "The great thing about working with CKI is, that we can pull talent from the different departments that include 2D art, 3D art, Graphics Layout, Website, Music and Sound FX, our iPhone game team, Sandbox, CG, Architecture design, Writers, Level Designers, Marketing, Animation, Administration, Information, etc."

At this point in the interview, I wanted to present direct questions that came from the Entropian community in hopes that it may give us more insight into what to look forward to with Cyrene.

Continued page 46

Getting Specific

Question

Do you plan to launch Cyrene as a fully developed planet with a whole continent or continents, or only a portion of land mass completed when initially released?

Response

The initial release will be staggered, and depend on how fast the player's progress. Some areas will be too difficult to get to and need to be unlocked through different player interactions, but they will be there. Others will be released along with world events, and the size of the land area will depend on how successful the players are.

Question

How large will Cyrene be in map areas?

Response

We are constantly adding, but I can tell you we will not release an area until it has a sufficient amount of activities. I don't want to release large areas that do not serve an actual purpose, and would rather spend our time focusing on getting the ones we do have finished up and polished.

Question

Will Cyrene feature a dedicated gateway for beginners?

Response

We will definitely have a short start area for new players to learn the basics, but it will be small and suited more for tutorial game play. We want the players to start enjoying the main areas right away.

Question

You've given us Chapter One in the Cyrene storyline at EntropiaPlanets.com – will we be seeing anything further prior to Cyrene coming online?

Response

We will be rolling out many storylines, especially as we get closer to release. We have many vehicles set up for this process, as there is a whole Universe we are creating, and that requires a lot of fun lore to share.

Question

Will participants on Cyrene merely be observers with regard to storyline, or will they have an opportunity to affect storyline as it develops through interactive play?

Response

The history of Cyrene is written, but the future will very much be up to the players. We will be having events that will directly change much of Cyrene and its future. Although the story arcs are set similar to a pen and paper adventure, the players themselves along with their involvements will progress the story along. After a certain set amount of time, certain ages will become the past and the game will have evolved. I feel it's important to set history down and make sure the players always have a fresh new set of goals to pursue.

Question

You have indicated that missions will be a part of Cyrene – can you tell us how many missions might be available at launch, and whether the missions will relate to the storyline? Also, how involved might the missions be?

Imperium Troops inside a bunker



Response

Our missions are very story driven. Players will choose different chains of missions and each will unlock other sets, and permanently lock others depending on what path the player chooses. Choices the players make will have meaning and consequences for the player. It's something we will be stressing highly before the launch and in game. I believe that much like life, our choices need to have consequences, even if they seem trivial at first. And due to the fact that we will constantly be adding and changing missions, the players will truly get to know themselves as time goes on

Question

With regard to the storyline – will there be two or more sides, as in good vs. evil, and will each side have its own storyline? Also, if players can pick a side, will there be certain social consequences defined by game mechanics?

Response

The players will have 5 initial factions to start with. At first there will be missions to help any of them out but as the player progresses the choices get more defined and the player will have to choose a stricter path depending on their belief of how their character lives on Cyrene.

Question

With regard to Cyrene-specific items – can you give any insight into what types of items these might be, and – will these items be able to travel to other planets and be used, as is the case between Calypso and ROCKtropia presently?

Response

Unfortunately, I cannot comment on this at this time.

Question

With a mining system in place – will we see unique ores and enmmatters on Cyrene that may relate to the crafting of Cyrene items?

Response

Yes, we will have our own unique items required to craft on Cyrene.

Question

Will blueprints be available for crafters upon launch to help get the Cyrene economy started?

Response

Yes, we will have a starter set of prints, but the rest must be earned through missions and events.

Question

Are there any professions other than those already available on other planets that may be unique to Cyrene?

Response

There are plans for this currently but it is too early to go into detail.

Question

Do you plan to develop cities as vibrant communities with players able to own all sorts of properties within them, or will the Cyrene team adopt a more urban sprawl approach with various colonies of player-owned architecture far outside of the established towns?

Response

Due to the storyline aspect of the game it's too early for me to release this info, but that statement in and of itself I think says a lot.

Question

Outside of the usual professions like hunting, mining, and crafting – will there be Cyrene-specific clothing, and perhaps accessories available for tailoring, coloring, texturing?

Response

We have plans for this but it's too early to discuss.

Question

What can you tell us about Cyrene that would appeal to a new inhabitant?

Response

I think more than anything Cyrene is about the stories and secrets it has to share. How they are revealed will be up to the player and communities that form around Cyrene. Along with that we have a very amazing set of artists who have crafted a magnificent set for these stories.

Continued page 48



Question

What will make Cyrene uniquely different from other planets in the Entropia Universe, and how many of these aspects will be present at launch?

Response

Unfortunately it is too early and outside my control to make this announcement. We have large aspirations that I would love to share but can't at this time.

Question

While developing a planet, do Planet Partners gain some knowledge with regard to how the loot system works, or is this trade secret and information not available to planet partners?

Response

We have no knowledge as to how the loot system works. We can however make requests for MindArk's approval.

Question

When designing items, do you only design the graphics – or are you able to set it on a “weapons ladder” – e.g. which item is for newbies and which items are for ubers?

Response

We have certain levels of control, but the loot system is all ultimately in MindArk's hands. That's about as much as I can say about that for now.

Question

When creating a mob, do you get to assign its stats?

Response

Unfortunately, I cannot comment on this at this time.

Question

As a Planet Partner, do you have any control over loot, such as assigning what items can get looted from what mob?

Response

Unfortunately, I cannot comment on this at this time.

Question

Will there ever be a consideration for engaging the community in a mob creation event for Cyrene?

Response

There is currently nothing planned for this type of event but we would never rule anything out.

Question

Will Cyrene have both unlimited and limited items, or will they all be limited?

Response

Unfortunately, I cannot comment on this at this time.

Question

While we understand that MindArk manages the RCE factor across the platform, do Planet Partners have any control over setting cost to play on their planet?

Response

Unfortunately, complete information isn't available at this time, and I don't want to give you a partial answer.

Question

With regard to CryEngine2 graphics – there is question as to why they are “photo quality” – or not as good as they could be – will the Cyrene graphics artists be utilizing the full potential of the graphics engine?

Response

I believe Cyrene will be one of the most artistically stunning MMO games around, but seeing as it is an MMO, we are not currently able to fully use the abilities of the engine. This is a limit set by hardware though, not talent.

Question

When proposing a new feature for Cyrene, do you as a Planet Partner have an opportunity to “invest” with MindArk to hire more workers to get the feature fast tracked? If not, is it a “take a number and wait” scenario?

Response

Unfortunately, I cannot comment on this at this time.

Question

Do you feel that MindArk has enough staff in place to handle the needs of multiple Planet Partners? Do you envision at all that there might perhaps be a bottleneck occurring in the future?

Response

We have full faith in our partnership with MindArk. The team they have assembled has been great and we are very fond of our friends and partners at MindArk. They have a great commitment to this platform and I believe that with every month that goes by the community and the world is seeing just how much this truly epic vision is growing.

Question

Space travel will be introduced at some point in time, and I think MindArk is preparing for this – is Cyrene also preparing in some way for this system, and if so – do you envision space pirates, or is this something that may pertain to another planet?

Response

What I can answer to in this question is that Cyrene will be ready for the changes when they come. I would not read too much into this though, other than Cyrene will be ready.

Question

With your background in interactive entertainment, will Cyrene have in-world music streaming, or game-related aspects that appeal to a more social environment?

Response

Yes. ;)

Question

In your mini-bio, you mention that your mission is to create the planet based on classic elements of MMOGs – would you please be more specific in this respect as it relates to Cyrene?

Response

This statement is made with traditional MMO game play in mind. At the time it was said there was no mission system in place in the Entropia Universe but we knew it was coming.

Question

You also mentioned that the motivation is to craft a game that you think people want, but won't necessarily be mainstream – what is the new approach you say is powered with innovation and passion?

Response

While I will not mention any MMOs out right now, I do believe that many of them have become more involved in reaching the largest possible audience. This leads to watered down game play that leaves some of the more hardcore players wanting more.

I do not believe that content should be experienced just because we create it. I believe it's up to the player and societies to earn the right to see that content if they have invested enough of themselves to learn how to play as a team or be highly skilled enough to get the goal done. I think this might not be what everyone wants, but in my opinion it's what I feel the game needs, and what true players are looking for.

Question

What will your marketing strategy be with regard to drawing in potential players and populating the planet? If you have a dedicated marketing team, can you tell us a little about them please?

Response

We have a dedicated marketing team, and unfortunately that's all I can reveal, as it's their job to reveal more on their own terms. I can say that they are a great team and have released some great triple A titles. More should be out by the time this article is released. =)

Question

Where do you envision Cyrene to be within 2-5 years?

Response

This is a tough question as I am unable to see into the future, but my humble hopes are for a planet rich with people who have formed a vibrant and thriving set of communities and friendships. I see the planet itself to have revealed many of its secrets to the players, and release of the next chapters for those eager to continue the exploration and deciding the new and evolving history of the planet.

Question

Can you give an approximate time frame for when Cyrene will be coming online?

Response

This is up to our marketing team and their expertise. I can say that we are expecting a 2011 release currently. My personal preference is sometime in the Summer of 2011 but you never know how things unfold. We may need more polishing after Beta or there could be timing conflicts. These things change and change often, which is why companies seldom like to lock down a time frame.

If the team does not meet that deadline people tend to lose confidence in the creators when in reality a project this complex is a slave to many outside factors. I have seen some MMOs destroyed by the fact they announce, and another larger MMO then announces their date to conflict with the new MMO. It's tricky business, and best left to the pros.

Question

Will there be any newcomer kits or promotions at the time that Cyrene goes live?

Response

We are currently working on something but it's too early to discuss.

Question

Will there be any chance be a beta version that Entropians will be able to play?

Response

Yes, this was something we approached MindArk about and think we can provide a positive way to make everyone happy.

Continued page 50



ED PLUGGED IN

Ed is no stranger to our Entropian community, and has been very interactive at EntropiaPlanets.com, an all universe EU game website where he openly shares information about Cyrene, as well as writes a blog when he has something on his mind. His thoughts are very enlightening because they clearly give value to where his priorities are, as well as what's important to him as a developer. He has shared much with us, and it would be worth the time exploring his blog at EntropiaPlanets, but here are a few quotes from a blog entry entitled "Community Communications" written on November 14th that I think you may find quite interesting.

"Thanks to many of the social networks available, the creators are able to more readily speak and communicate with their audience. I feel that it would be a shame to not get input from people who are kind enough to share it. Much like the consumer hot lines available on packaged goods, we now have an ability to tap into what people feel are important issues."

"Some might ask, 'Why should I help? What is in it for me?' To those people I would say that perhaps they should not help. I believe helping is a fundamental reward in and of itself. It helps get your voice out on issues, and refines a product."

"I realize that I do not have all the answers and that a collective mind is much more powerful than what any one on my team or I could do. With that said, I would like the community to understand the motives for these communications with our audience and to be 100 percent clear and upfront with you all about them."

"As for my part, I will make sure that information that you decide to share with us will receive the importance it deserves. I will be upfront as to the results of that information, and champion the causes you wish to share with us."

INFO

Read more here:

www.planetcyrene.com
www.creativekingdom.com
www.digitalscryers.com

Planet Cyrene in EntropiaPlanets Wiki
www.entropiaplanets.com/wiki/About_Planet_Cyrene

All pictures are kindly borrowed from Planet Cyrene

THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT

In closing, Ed shares that the upcoming Planet Cyrene is currently the flagship and most important project for both Creative Kingdom and Digital Scryers entertainment divisions. "Planet Cyrene will serve as the Crown Jewel of my career thus far," says Ed, "and will be essential in the creation of several films, console games, graphic novels, comics, and other multi-platform games."

There's no denying that we have much to look forward to, and with Ed as interactive with the Entropian community as he is, it also looks as though we have much to discover along the way to launch day.

Zekkonian Scouts



“ I feel that it would be a shame to not get input from people who are kind enough to share it. ”



David Simmonds

Business Development & Public Relations
for MindArk PE AB



Planet Partner Questions and Answers

Plus the loot formula!

By GeorgeSkywalker

We thought it would be a good idea to have some questions answered on becoming a Planet Partner from MindArk themselves. This article is based on an interview with David Simmonds, Business Development Director (MindArk), about becoming a Planet Partner. Hopefully it will answer some questions you may have on the process and may even be the birth of a new planet.

My secondary objective was to somehow trick David into revealing the loot formula. Just dreaming about it sent my eyes into a glaze. Of course this wouldn't be easy but surely not impossible?

For my first question, I asked David if they had rejected any plans for planets and why they were rejected. I was hoping to see what type of planets MindArk is not interested in. Perhaps that would be useful information for our readers. I was a bit surprised with David's answer. He mentioned they receive one or two requests per day, anything from "Please send me your sandbox so I can build a planet," and "I have a great idea for a planet, your EU users would love it," to professional presentations from companies. Somehow I knew he would comment on the first type of applications they received, and surely enough, David goes on to tell me he dismissed those with, "if you build a planet you will need to find your own users and not rely on the current EU player base to populate your planet!!!"

I went on to ask David if a Planet Partner could request a particular system be in place before they launched their planet? David was quick to respond with, "A new planet partner (PP) can suggest new systems, if we feel this would be beneficial to EU as a whole then it could be implemented, it would be up to the PP to decide if they want to launch before or after the systems have been introduced."

From that answer I could tell David was falling into my trap. He had answered the question with a rehearsed answer. I had him right where I wanted, and at this rate I'd have the loot formula in no time. All I needed to do was ask a few more "serious" questions and then when the opportunity was right, strike!

Are there any restrictions when making a planet in terms of theme? For example could someone make a Playboy planet? Or World War 3 planet where you kill people from certain religious groups or countries?

"Diversity is what interests us, but of course certain "themes" would be rejected immediately. After all, our goal is entertainment and we believe that our 'curation' of the Entropia Universe is a very important and valuable part of our job."

If you build a planet, are you required to use ALL the systems MA offers, or can a planet partner disable certain systems, e.g. Mindforce?

"No, PP's have the tools to use all the systems, but if the system does not fit with the planet then it can be excluded if MA agrees."

MA collects money from players, this is known, but how do Planet Partners get their money? Does MA send Planet Partners a check every month, or is there some other way?

"We use the current banking system to transfer monies monthly."

David was by now in deep concentration mode. My opportunity to strike was very near!

How can a Planet Partner be certain how much their planet made? What if there is some mistake with MindArk's calculation, is there any way a Planet Partner can verify?

"This is covered in the Planet Partner Agreements."

Can a Planet Partner develop their own code for use on their own planet? For example, develop code that will track income on their planet independent of MindArk's platform?

"No. Since MindArk takes responsibility for the security of the entire system we cannot allow any external code to be implemented."

Can a Planet Partner fund extra staff at MA to get a certain system they want implemented faster? Or is there any other mechanism which allows them to pay for development of some system? If so, is the money they give to MA seen as a loan which is later repaid?

"No, MindArk does not at this stage charge PP's for any development of the Entropia Universe."

I could just imagine the headlines now. GeorgeSkywalker discovers loot formula from David Simmonds himself! Astonishing scoop of the century!

What else can a Planet Partner do to speed up or fast track a certain system at MindArk?

"Champagne works well, lol."

If someone has a brilliant idea for a planet but no funds what should they do?

"Find funding and, remember that the point is not to engage Calypso participants, but to bring a new group of participants to the Entropia Universe. Brilliant ideas from capable minds do have a way of attracting the support they need!"

Do all Planet Partners use the same support system? That is when a player files a support case on various different planets do they all go to MindArk support, or does each Planet Partner have to fund their own support section?

"At this moment in time EUSO, MindArk's subsidiary, deals with all support cases in the Universe."

Now I was having doubts. Was I abusing my reporter privileges to gain the loot formula? Was that ethical?

What if a Planet Partner wanted to offer extra support on top of what MindArk offers? Is there any provision that allows them to do this? For example, say I wanted to hire a real life policeman to

work on my planet, who would receive all scamming-related cases and process each one to bring about justice. Could this be made workable?

"No"

Do you have any general advice for future Planet Partners?

"Diversity, funding, preparation and knowledge. What audience are you going after? Why is your offering compelling to them? How will you reach them cost effectively? There are a lot of rather mundane, but totally crucial details that go into making an entire planet."

Ok, with the no answer, David had sealed his fate. I'd love to see scammers brought to justice. So by not having facilities for a Planet Partner to bring about justice in my mind made it ok for me to acquire the loot formula. The moment seemed to be perfect. David would not be expecting this. All I had to do was ask a "dumb" question and by my calculations with a Freudian slip David would reveal the loot formula. Easy right! Here comes the loot formula!

If you placed instant coffee in a microwave would it go back in time or reach speed of light?

"The popular comedian, Steven Wright, once asked 'If you put instant coffee into the microwave, would you go back in time?' His remark was funny because time travel has long been a fascination, popularized in the past two centuries through popular fiction in books by authors like H.G. Wells, and in cinema through films like The Time Machine, Time after Time, and Back to the Future I, II and III. Yet actual time travel has remained a pipe dream. Leading physicists, including Stephen Hawking have denounced time travel as 'impractical,' stating that if it were possible, time tourists from the future would have visited by now. But would they want to make themselves be known?"

"In order to even reach the speed of light you must acquire a massive amount of energy. Or, I should better say, an infinite amount of energy. Since we still have not figured out a way to do that, and it still remains a distant theory, traveling in such speed is something impossible. I do notice, however, that too much coffee does have a tendency to slow time down a bit, but I prefer lattes."

Initial indications suggest David did not reveal the loot formula. However I'd have to analyze his statement very carefully because it was highly probable the loot formula was "coded" in that statement. For example the latter statement could be reworded as, "In order to hit the big ATH you must acquire a massive amount of firepower. Or, I should better say, an infinite amount of firepower. Since we still have not figured out a way to do that, and it still remains a distant theory, hitting a guaranteed ATH is something impossible." More processing of this statement is needed.

David Dobson's Guide to

Becoming a Planet Partner

By GeorgeSkywalker

The following guide on how to become a Planet Partner within Entropia Universe is based on a second exclusive interview with David Dobson, CEO of Arkadia Studios.

Many of us who dream about becoming a Planet Partner may find this short and concise guide invaluable. Who knows, it could be the seed for a new planet - your new planet. Without further ado I'll hand you over to David.

First thing to know is that it is much harder and takes much longer than most would first assume. I'll share my experience, as it's good for EU to see more planets built, assuming they are well made and attract new players.

Quite rightly MindArk has a number of preconditions that you need to prove just to get the conversation started. These include, but are not limited to:

Write a thorough proposal - from memory, the proposal I submitted was approximately 60 pages long. It should include a good Executive Summary at the beginning to encourage the reader to read the whole proposal.

Differentiation - no two planets can have the same identity. It actually took me a long time developing a number of different ideas before settling on treasure hunting. You then need to describe in detail how it will work and how it will be different to other planets (there is a lot more to be released about Arkadia where people will start to see the differences).

Funding - how much will it cost to build your planet? I think this is an area where people may assume MindArk should tell them, but that is not the case. The cost to build a planet can vary greatly depending on what you are building, where you are doing it, etc. You then need to prove you have access to enough funding to build the planet, market the planet and operate the planet. As with any business, you should assume that you need enough cash to operate the planet for at least one year after launch, that way income in that year helps with extra marketing rather than survival.

It obviously doesn't benefit anyone to have a planet launched that then fails. Don't say you will get a bank loan, no bank will fund a business like this - therefore investors and your own money will be needed. Again, don't say you will find investors, you need to sort that out before hand, i.e., once agreement is signed, these people/organizations will commit these funds by this date.

All pictures are kindly borrowed from Arkadia Studios

Concept Art by Feng Zhu - Administration Port





HERMAN ARK 20. Brand new and not yet released anywhere else.

Market - How are you going to attract new customers to Entropia Universe. This should be done as a full marketing plan to include in a proposal.

Team - What team do you have? What skills and experience do they have? Does the team cover all the requirements to run a business (i.e., not enough just to have 3D artists). I have a Degree in Marketing and a Masters in Entrepreneurship, Melissa Dobson (Lady Missa Saint) has an MBA and is an accountant with 20 years experience - these are roles that must be filled to show you can manage the business and all the administration that comes with a company. You need to show how you will recruit the positions you don't have filled yet, do you have contacts, or need to pay for a Human Resources Consultant and advertising.

Financial Modeling - Mindark was extremely helpful in fine tuning the models, however my initial proposal included extremely detailed projections (here it helps if a team member is an accountant). You must be realistic and include everything that you will be spending money on - exactly what you will pay each person on the team for example. It's very easy to underestimate the reality of costs for equipment, software, monthly phone/electricity, etc.

“ The cost to build a planet can vary greatly depending on what you are building, where you are doing it etc. ”

Demonstrate you really understand what you are planning to do. In my case I broke down every task that needed doing and explained exactly how it would be achieved. Some might see all that as over the top, however I was determined that MindArk would say yes to my proposal - so if you want to do it, be professional and do it properly.

The process from me deciding I wanted to build a planet to signing an agreement with MindArk was approximately 18 months. I worked on this for probably one year before the first submission to MindArk, and then it took around 6 months before the agreement was signed.

I hope that by sharing what it takes to develop a planet, people can be clear on what they need to do so they can create their own plan.

We'd like to thank David Dobson, CEO Arkadia Studios for his full cooperation in the making of this article. David, as many of you know, is a long-term Entropia Universe player. A player who with sheer determination made his dream come true - to create Planet Arkadia, a treasure hunting planet. To me, it just goes to show with conviction and careful planning, you too could set up a planet. Just as MindArk may have inspired David, perhaps David's story may inspire someone else to reach out for their own dream planet.

INFO

Read more here:

www.arkadiaforum.com
www.arkadiastudios.com

Planet Arkadia in EntropiaPlanets Wiki
www.entropioplanets.com/wiki/Planet_Arkadia

LEMMY'S *Crypt*

Don't lose your head ...

By Peter

For the ROCKtropia edition of Nicole's Handbag, I picked two easily accessible items: The Rock N Roll Axe (L) and the B.A.M.F. ZK1 (L).

Rock N Roll Axe

It's an axe looking like a guitar (with only 5 strings!). No wait. It's a guitar with sharp edges, allowing not only for traditional rock star guitar destruction, but some effective chopping at the same time! My prey of choice for the test is Cornundacaudas. I'm on the 500 Corn Iron Challenge mission, and they seem like a nice mob to use the axe on.

It was just like in the old days when I used to run around the Fort Argus Corn-riddled beach wielding an axe, only this axe does almost double minimal damage, is slightly faster, and it looks cooler. As a result of the increased damage (14-28, instead of the 1x0 at 7.5-24 at my skill level), the Corns dropped easily, even if they are Dominants or Old Alphas. Longblades has not been a profession I have used extensively, so skill gains are still very decent with it, though I suspect that those who are around Level 20 Swordsman will probably not see as much advancement.

I do prefer the look of the Rock n Roll Axe over the traditional axes though, and wielding one of these babies makes one look rather menacing. The Corns, however, do not seem to be overly impressed, and rather than running away (like they should), they end up quickly dropping at my feet, minus a few of their tentacles and limbs of course.

The experience very much reminds me of the old days before the axe nerf, when skilling Longblades was THE preferred way to quickly build up skills. Now if only I could get my hands on an unlimited version of it, or perhaps one of the customized versions that the description of the axe speaks of.

For a trip down memory lane, I rate the Rock n Roll Axe (L) 4 out of 5 Lemmys.





Kevin Rudolf's *Nose*

B.A.M.F. ZK1

The second weapon tested is the B.A.M.F. ZK1. When it was originally released, it made a rather puny sound, more like the crack of a whip than the true booming sound of a shotgun unleashing a hail of buckshot into enemies. That might be fine for when one wants to hide one's activities, but dammit, we're Rockin' and Rollin' here.

That means loudness should prevail. I'll take my shotgun noisy please, and do not hold back on the reload either. Luckily, this minor construction issue has been resolved, and nowadays the B.A.M.F. truly carries the gratifying sound worthy of a shotgun.

Damage done is nothing to write home about, but then again, for Zombies, which is the intended primary target of the gun, not much is needed. It fires just as fast as the Opalo, but will do twice the damage, and with the markup on it, the B.A.M.F. is a nice little item to find in your loot window.

For Corns, I'll stick to my Riker 2, as that packs more punch, but the B.A.M.F. ZK1 is a nice beginner gun for the aspiring Zombie Hunter.

I rate this weapon a 4 out of 5 Rudolf's Noses.



Become an item reviewer/tester

Perhaps your Nicole's Handbag is containing a neat weapon, item, piece of clothing or something else you find awesome, and wish to share with the community?

The easiest way is to write a review yourself and take some nice pictures of the stats and one or two in use. Send it all to lykke@entropiaplanets.com - and attach the original pictures, please.

We will look at the review and decide if we can use it, then get back to you. Your name will of course be mentioned in the article. Another way would be to loan Peter the item (of course with collateral if it's an expensive item) - and of course, your name will still be mentioned.

ROCKtropia New Arrivals



By Narfi

When I moved to ROCKtropia this Summer it was a great new place to adventure and explore. I didn't come as a new player though, I had all of my experiences from Calypso to help me and use as a comparison for what I experienced here. The recent boom of new players triggered by the publicity about Neverdie's sale of CND made me wonder what their experiences were like first landing on the Rock-n-Roll planet.

I sat down with four new players who had first spawned on ROCKtropia and asked them a few questions. I knew Art "7thLegion" Roman and *John Conner GUNNER already, they have been playing on ROCKtropia for a couple of months now. Vorgrin Vorg Pai and FunkyT BigT Baby however are brand new avatars who had only logged on for the first time the week of this interview.

**John is already well known on ROCKtropia as the creator behind the video guides at neverdie.com, which are an extensive set of short video tutorials to help people get started in each activity on ROCKtropia.*



Narfi

How old are you, and where are you from?

7th Legion - I am 30, and live in the Russian Federation.

John - I am 34, and live in the UK.

Vorgrin - I am 42, and live in Minnesota, US.

FunkyT - I am 35, and live in Louisiana, US.

**Narfi**

How did you hear about ROCKtropia or the Entropia Universe?

7th Legion - I was looking for a game to play and found an article about ROCKtropia.

John - I was randomly looking at YouTube videos while eating a pizza and a suggested video was "Exploring ROCKtropia." I watched it and thought that it looked cool, so I downloaded the game to try.

Vorgrin - I saw the Yahoo article telling about the asteroid which sold for so much money.

FunkyT - I read a Yahoo article about a man who made a lot of money as a gamer.

**Narfi**

What were your impressions from the first few days you played?

7th Legion - I had some problems with the in-game currency. Later I figured it out. And then I wished to know about further developments of ROCKtropia.

John - This planet is so big! I got bored of sweating after about an hour so I went and printed off a Teleport map and just explored, the first time I was in Zomhattan it was so dark and spooky I was hooked.

Vorgrin - It is a bit tedious, but it's still fun and I like the skill system.

FunkyT - At this point the game is fun, but limited. After learning the basics, I will engage in the same activities for several weeks. Adversely, there are many skills and functions of the game to learn. This has kept me interested so far.

**Narfi**

What activities have you tried so far, and what did you think of them?

7th Legion - Sweating, trading, hunting, healing, mining, crafting. In my mind all of them are useful.

John - I have tried them all, I did not like crafting and mining as it was standing in one place drilling or at the crafting machine, I love hunting, it is faster paced and great fun, I have loads of guns I have acquired and a few sets of armor so I like the strategy of what you need to hunt the various creatures.

Vorgrin - I have tried sweating and thought it was boring, but hunting and trading are both fun.

FunkyT - Sweating, hunting (handguns and rifles, lasers and BLPs), teleporter, auction house, storage facility, trade terminal, healing, and probably leaving a few others out. Playing Rocktropia has been a pleasurable experience so far.

**Narfi**

What games did you play before starting here?

7th Legion - RF (Rising Force Online).

John - I am a RTS (Real Time Strategy) player so I was playing Command and Conquer for the last decade or so. Before that I played Star Craft and Total Annihilation.

Vorgrin - I played Dark Age of Camelot, WoW, Horizons, Asherons Call, BF2, and Aion.

FunkyT - Lord of the Rings Online (LOTRO)

**Narfi**

What do you think your favorite part of ROCKtropia is?

7th Legion - Freedom.

John - The community – 99% of the people I have met on Rocktropia are friendly and helpful, I often spend an hour at CND just chatting with people.

Vorgrin - I really like meeting people in game, always the best part of a game.

FunkyT - Hands down, the simulated economy is my favorite part. I find markets fascinating, and I have been saying for years real money needs to be incorporated into gaming. People have been doing it on an underground market anyway.

**Narfi**

What was your impression when you first landed at the City of Dreams?

7th Legion - Nothing except music. I like rock and always looking for something new.

John - Wow! I had never seen a game like this, I looked around and watched people sweating Vixens and people chatting on Club NEVERDIE steps. Had a run around and saw buggies speeding around. The music was also great, I am a bit of a Motorhead fan and was treated to Ace Of Spaces when I logged in.

Vorgrin - That game engine was much like Aion's.

FunkyT - The music! I enjoyed gaming to radio hits, very different. And the scantily dressed robots who say, "you got to pay me for my sweat" are hilarious. Overall the game intrigued me because it had a unique angle.

Continued page 60



Narfi

What do you dislike the most about ROCKtropia?

7th Legion - Freedom and the imbalances in game.

John - It is hard to sell items you have looted, we have some helpful traders and the flea market but unless you have rare or unusual items then it is pointless using the auction due to the fee.

Vorgrin - It is a bit tedious and it seems to require you to upload money to get ahead.

FunkyT - Lack of an introduction to the basics. If this exists it would have been nice to start with an orientation period.



Narfi

Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience since starting or thoughts on the future?

7th Legion - Not really.

John - The future of Rocktropia looks very bright. NEVERDIE and his team have loads of plans and ideas and are all very approachable if you have questions. Also try and find a society on ROCKtropia. There are a few dedicated ROCKtropia societies that will help you hunt bigger creatures and add a whole new level to the game. Finally it is an MMORPG so talk with other players. If you try and go it alone you may quickly become bored.

Vorgrin - Hope I can have fun and at least break even.

FunkyT - Again, I would encourage an orientation for newbs. There are facets of game play I know exists like societies and events I've seen advertised. However, I have no idea what they are. In addition, I see players with spaceships and hummer-like vehicles that enjoy running me over. I understand oil, mind essence, mining, and a few other key components to game play exist. At least a brief introduction would really help people like me who are just starting out to maintain interest in the game.



Narfi

What are you currently doing with your time in the game? How are you working to build your avatar?

7th Legion - Sweating, sometimes mining and hunting and chatting a little.

John - Doing Pop Dragon hunts with my society and helping the massive influx of new players on ROCKtropia, I also have a selection of various limited weapons what I am working on skilling.

Vorgrin - Trading, sweating and hunting

FunkyT - I am mostly sweating and building experience with a few weapons. I tried to venture out into other areas of game play but was killed quickly.



Narfi

What are your hopes and goals for your avatar?

7th Legion - I want to build a vehicle by my own hands. Next? Not sure, maybe "Ethereal Soul Language."

John - I set myself a few goals when I started, reach 200 health points (long way off), obtain a shadow set of armor and get myself a shop in game to sell my loot.

Vorgrin - Be successful enough to help and mentor others at a later date.

FunkyT - I hope to broaden my knowledge of game play. I have a feeling there is more to the game than sweating and shooting all day. My goal is to discover if I am correct.





Narfi

What advice would you give to the next new player to step foot onto ROCKtropia?

7th Legion - To do well in this game you will need patience, endurance, and intelligence.

John - Read up on the game and take advantage of other players' knowledge, don't try and rush things and most important don't chase big loots.

Vorgin - Make friends, be patient, ask questions and listen to experienced players.

FunkyT - Find a mentor or research the game before you play. I learned a lot watching YouTube videos, talking to players in game, and on the forums.

Conclusion

There are a few things that stood out in my mind from their answers. First is the stress on how important interaction is with other players, both for fun and for survival. Next was the need for more of an introduction or training area for the new players. That setting goals both small and large for yourself will add to the fun of the game and drive you to progress forward. Finally they demonstrated the importance of studying the game through guides, tutorials and the many forums.

These four avatars make me think the future for ROCKtropia is very bright. They seem to have a firm grasp of the research, dedication and hard work that will be required of them to succeed. These players are the future of the planet and it will be fun watching them grow along with it and its economy.



Narfi



TONY TWOTOES TAGLIA



By Lykke

I'm meeting up with Tony TwoToes Taglia – the very first newbie to be adopted in the Adopt a Newbie Foundation. Tony is 35 years old and originally from California, but since January 7th 2010, he has been setting his foot upon the ground of Calypso.

"I started playing when I heard about the auction of Crystal Palace won by Buzz Eric Lightyear," Tony tells me and continues: "After this I actually found out about the Adopt a Newbie Foundation when I was sweating around at Nea's."

How come you decided to join the Foundation, I ask him: "I needed a home, and this was a great place to start," Tony explains and continues: "I was not sure what to expect with the program, but I was definitely excited to find a great match with some great people in the society Lost Renegades!"

I wonder what Tony looked for in a society back then. "Casual social people," Tony smiles at me. "And some great experienced players, who could help me with some of the nuances in game. Philip the Tank J-Fry was also adopted shortly after, and since then the society actually adopted many ANF'ers."

Tony tells me, that he got 100% of what he was looking for in a society through the adoption.

I, among others, have noticed Tony in the public chat, because not long after he joined the game, he had extreme luck in the Universe: "Well, I pushed it really hard," Tony explains: "I started out mining and thought I would stay with that, but eventually moved into crafting, pushed it really hard again and hit the top 20 crafters on the tracker! Still not feeling I was getting all I could out of Entropia, I started hunting and hit the top 40 hunters. As I went through all these stages, Narfi and the rest of the

society were right there to help me out if I had questions," Tony smiles, and you can feel the care for the society which helped him in his early days.

Are you satisfied in game, I want to know: "Yes, although same as everyone, I believe loot should be better," Tony grins.

Seeing from a newbies perspective, I wonder if there's anything in Tony's learning period missed out – for example some info, tools, etc. that could have made the game easier for him: "Actually Lost Renegades made sure I had all the tools and information I could possibly need," Tony says: "So basically, if you get the right start and support, you can do it all. Not to mention that I have been playing MMORPG's for the last 15-20 years, so I have an idea of how to research mobs when it comes to how loot drops, statistics, etc. Next to this I pulled out information from a lot of sources, and the guides are helpful, but I felt all along, that if you're doing what everyone else is doing, you will never find your own niche in game."

"I swear the best thing in this Universe is the rush of the camera on the Global / Hof's ha ha," Tony laughs loudly. What's the worst thing then, I ask him: The worst thing about EU is that once you hit a certain level in say hunting, I started rolling over like 10k PED a day, and if you hit a bad run, that deposit button should give level ups!" I can certainly feel him there.



"Today I'm hunting and crafting, and I manage well at those, which are my two primary professions," Tony clarifies: "I learned a lot of ins and outs, and watched how things trend and what the power uber players are doing."

"But if you go back to your newbie times," I ask Tony, "Do you find it hard or easy to be a newcomer in EU?" Tony sighs and replies: "It is easy to start, but hard to stay, I believe. But everything is depending on your mindset. This game is definitely not for the weak of heart."

"I do believe the current changes in the newbie gear at the vendors and the Puny's are great for a new player to really get a feel for less money," Tony explains: "Things like this will hopefully get more people to play, and in the end, stay!"

I ask Tony if there is anything he would have done differently today if he had to start all over, but he believes he has done very well all the way, and also went through the right things to get him to where he is today. And I have to agree, he seems to have managed quite well in game and from a very early point. "Tony, do you have any advice for other newbies who might wish to join EU and perhaps also ANF?" I ask him. Tony thinks for some seconds and replies: "Learn all you can about what you are going to do. If you don't do that, you will just waste PED and end up quitting the game."

New planets are on their way and I wish to know if there's any of them Tony is looking particularly forward to: "If the planets are implemented well and work properly, I would love to head to Next Island and possibly set up a shop to stay, if only they would remove or fix the auction transportation fees!"

I am sure a lot of people feel the same about the auction fee, and it will be exciting indeed to see how the different Planet Partners will solve this one.

I have to run again, back on duty, and ask Tony if he wants a last word before I head back through the teleporter: "Narfi, our society leader and the members in Lost Renegades are all that I could have asked for, and they have all made my playtime very enjoyable. I was in a seriously accident with a semi, which kept me away for almost 3 months, so I have only had about 7-8 months playtime."

But in that time I have kept an eye on all the new planets, Club NEVERDIE and Crystal Palace. This game continues to amaze me in the way it has incorporated a real cash economy, and I look forward to what happens in the days, weeks and years to come, because, no doubt, I am here to stay."

Tony, I hope you and your wife will soon recover from the accident you have had – and I feel the Universe is blessed by getting people in with such a natural curiosity, will to fight – but not least – will to take a risk in a new world. I and the rest of the team at Entropia Planets wish you the very best in the future!



We Want to Believe ...

THE FILES



When hunting in a team,
the member with the highest
perception skills should loot
the creature to maximize the
loot.

Lootius

THE TRICK IS, TO LEAVE THE
DEAD MOB ALONE AS LONG
AS POSSIBLE, AND LOOT IT JUST
BEFORE IT DISAPPEARS...!

Note to self:
Did you already find the
secret room filled
with valuables at Chug's
Hideout??

Marco.

THE SECOND OIL RIG IN THE
OCEANS SOUTH OF TUKAR (81756,
71446) GIVES OUT MUCH MORE
OIL THAN THE ONE NEAR ASHI.

By IAN GRIGGS

A RESTAURANTEUR had
to have his lip reconstructed
by plastic surgeons after a
gang of youngsters assaulted
him last Wednesday evening.

The incident began at 8pm
in Spuds restaurant in Eden
Street, Kingston, when the
shopkeeper was about to close
for the evening.

The gang of more than ten
teenagers entered the shop
and began causing a nuisance
until the owner managed to
usher them out into the
street.

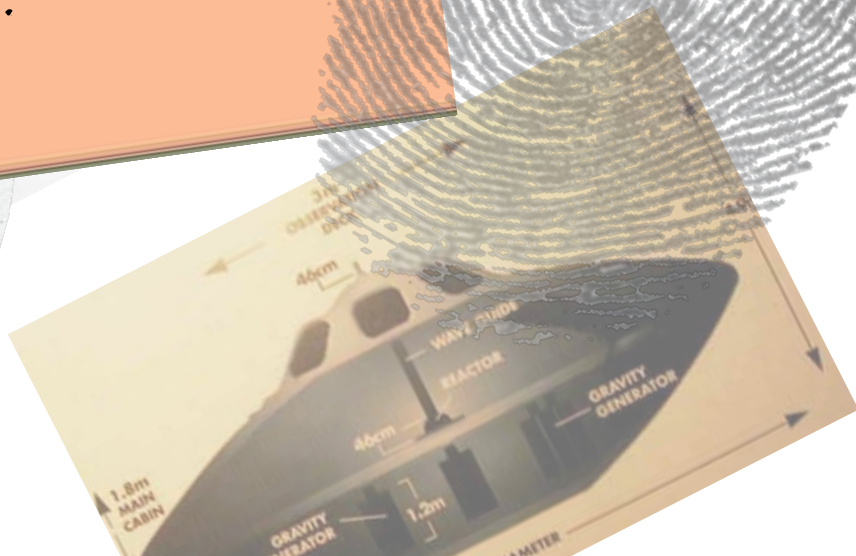
One of the youths had not
up a ketchup bottle when he
began to

most severe injury is white,
about 14, 6ft and wearing a
white hooded jacket.

The female gang member,
who struck the man on the head
and wearing a black jacket.

Another gang member is
white, about 14 and wearing a
white hooded top.

If you have
call



Chapter 1
Outside the rain was falling.
In my heart sunshine was shining.

[by mystery man]



PLANET CYRENE

Developed by: Creative Kingdom Inc/ Digital Scryers LLC

Scheduled colonization date: Second Half 2011

Planet Cyrene has been revealed to be an environment where shamanistic magical powers are pitted against advanced human and alien technology. Combining an extraterrestrial environment with classical architecture, Planet Cyrene appears to blend the boundaries between science fiction and fantasy. A major city has been identified, and was named "Janus." Further primary inspections revealed a city inhabited by outlaws (Smuggler City), and huge forests, swamps, deserts, and jungles covering the surface of the planet. One of the forests appears to harbor a big city built in the trees. The northern part of the planet is completely covered in ice.



NEXT ISLAND

Developed by: Next Island LLC

Scheduled colonization date: December 2010 for pioneers, and January 2011 for full colonization.

The groundbreaking scientists on Next Island have developed technology to enable colonists to travel through time. While modern-day Next Island is known as a gorgeous island paradise, brave explorers have been able to gather time travel crystals and travel back to visit Ancient Greece. Next Island scientists and colonists are searching for further crystals to enable visits to other points in Next Island's timeline.



PLANET ARKADIA

Developed by: Arkadia Studios

Scheduled colonization date: First Half 2011

The team at Arkadia Studios is developing Entropia Universe's first ever Treasure Hunting planet. Little is known about the planet at this stage, with more becoming known week by week as each installment of the back story is released. With 9 installments out already, we know that there has been a call for help from the Arkadians and that there is a threat from the Oratan! The planet was only recently discovered and appears to be very similar to Earth and ready for colonization.



PLANET DOTMAN

Developed by: China Recreation District

Scheduled colonization date: : To be determined

Planet Dotman was intended to primarily be a meeting hub for Han People. It was supposed to feature huge shopping areas and its main focus would be trade. Unfortunately, after the unexpected death of the CRD company's chairman, little else has been heard about the Planet, and nobody seems to know for sure if the planet exists. Rumors have it that a Vogon vessel was spotted near the planet's original coordinates. There is no reason for panic.



UNIVERSAL MONSTER PLANET

Developed by: SEE Virtual Worlds

Scheduled colonization date: not before late 2011

Not only did SEE manage to figure out a way to allow for people to have some form of eternal life, but they also came up with a revolutionary technique that allows to transform pictures into life. A first attempt for this using monster movies luckily was done on a separate planet. We say luckily, as the test apparently was successful, and the planet soon got overrun by monsters and mutants. SEE is currently culling the population of the planet to ensure thrill-seekers can start traveling over there in due time.



PLANET MICHAEL

Developed by: SEE Virtual Worlds

Scheduled colonization date: not before 2011

SEE are pioneers when it comes to cryogenic preserving of people. When the King of Pop, Michael Jackson, passed away, SEE quickly secured his body, and intends to use a rare energy field they discovered near a remote planet within the Entropia Universe to bring Michael's spirit back to life. The planet chosen was not inhabitable prior to SEE treating it with a secret process, meaning there are no hostiles on the planet. It is expected to be a planet where Michael's fans can celebrate his music and dance moves.



ARABIAN PLANET

Developed by: Beladcom

Scheduled colonization date: To be determined

One of the planets closer to one of the major suns within the Entropia Universe, this planet is yet to be named. Reports indicate the planet resembles the earthly area named Arabia, where civilization as we know it started thousands of years ago, leading to the intermediary name of "Arabian Planet." The planet is thought to have a desert feel, speckled with oases and cities.

ROCKTROPIA

Developed by: Virtual Music Worlds LLC

Colonized: 6 April 2010

ROCKtropia became the second planet that was deemed fit for human colonization. Initial scouting of the planet revealed a presence of zombies, werewolves, dragons and scantily clad women. Undoubtedly, it was the latter that formed the basis for a collective of earthly musicians to form a corporation to start exploitation of the new planet. Music is an all-around feature on the planet, which draws inspiration from the founders of the company.



PLANET CALYPSO

Developed by: First Planet Company

Colonized: 30 January 2003

Calypso was the first planet in the Entropia Universe to be colonized. Initially by the MindArk corporation itself, but later on ownership was transferred to their sister company First Planet Company. The cities on the planet were originally constructed by robots that ended up turning against their human masters. Further inhabitants of the planet include various beasts (land-dwelling, seaborne and flying), and a variety of mutants.

ENTROPIA UNIVERSE

Discovered by: MindArk

After life on Earth became unsustainable, missions were launched in an attempt to find new planets for mankind to settle. The Entropia Universe was discovered by the corporation of MindArk, when one of their search probes got lucky and ended up discovering a solar system similar to the one Planet Earth inhabits. While many such solar systems were found, none contained planets that were deemed to be suitable for colonization, usually due to the lack of a sustainable ecosystem or available resources on these planets. From discovery of the universe, it took a while before colonization could start. Rights for colonization were sold off to individual corporate entities.

ENTROPIA

UNIVERSE

MindArk/FPC

[Entropia Platform](#)
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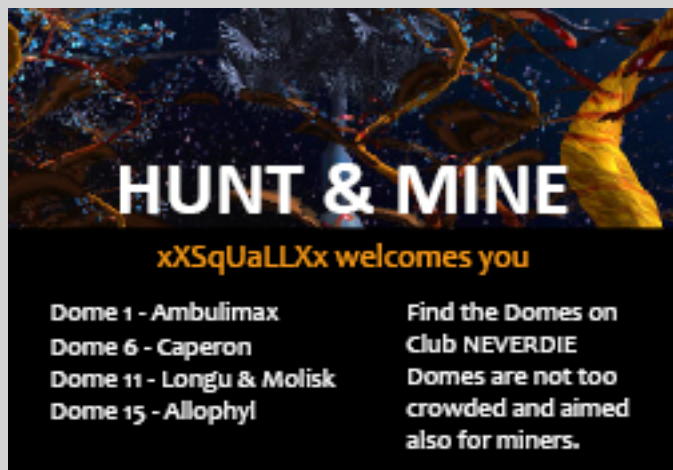
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Landowners

Realityport/CND

Treasure Island

Economy and Trading

EntropiaBay

EntropiaPlanets Classifieds

My Two Pecs

PE Auction

Others

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The online magazine contains more in-depth content, with more interesting articles than is published at the forum. By making an online magazine, we hope to reach out to a larger portion of our community, and through text and pictures, display the universe we live in.

You too have the possibility to contribute to the magazine – either by providing us with a news story idea, something you know that would be interesting to write about, awesome people you know in our universe worth mentioning, a great tool, etc.

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