



Canadian Trade Successes 01-06

A GAME IN WHICH EDUCATION ALWAYS PREVAILS

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23 YYZ
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Key Quotation:

"With the support of the Department of Canadian Heritage's Trade Routes program, we've been able to attend conferences and trade shows in potential markets. That exposure has resulted directly in new business." says Andreas Ua'Siaghail

Story details:

If electronic games have a long way to go before they truly reflect the moral issues of the real world—and Andreas Ua'Siaghail believes they do—his company's award-winning software, Pax Warrior, is certainly closing the gap.

Originally conceived at Habitat, the Canadian Film Centre's new media lab, Pax Warrior is an online strategy game, based on real events, in which players are asked to make exceptionally difficult and complex decisions that have serious consequences. It is designed to encourage students, aged 14 and over, to think critically about world events.

Pax Warrior places students in the role of the UN Commander General in charge of UN forces in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide. (As most Canadians know, Canadian Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire held this position.) At that time, the Commander General had limited options and had to make tough decisions as the political situation became increasingly volatile.

Students engage with audio, imagery and text to gather information and then make decisions about this complex situation. They then discover the consequences of their own decisions.

Launched by Toronto-based 23 YYZee Inc., Pax Warrior confirms a growing belief that in the near future, serious games will be regarded as valuable, even indispensable, learning tools. "We truly believe that interactive games-based-learning is the future of education," says Andreas Ua'Siaghail, the company's president.

"With Pax Warrior we're providing a new, original and completely different way of teaching history in schools, one that really engages young people."

23 YYZee sought outside help to find markets for its innovative learning software and found it with Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. The Trade Commissioner Service provided them with intelligence on market opportunities. Pax Warrior was chosen by the Canadian industry to represent Canada in the e-learning category at the 2005 World Summit Awards. It did not disappoint—here, Pax Warrior received recognition as best in e-learning for the entire North America-Oceania region.

Trade Routes, the Department of Canadian Heritage's initiative to expand international markets for Canada's arts and cultural sector, was also pivotal in 23 YYZee's growth. "With the support of the Trade Routes program, we've been able to attend conferences and trade shows in potential markets. This exposure has resulted directly in new business," says Andreas Ua'Siaghail.

Today, Pax Warrior empowers students to think critically about complex world issues in classrooms across Canada, Africa, the U.S. and Europe, and the orders just keep coming in. Emerging from a recent conference session, Andreas Ua'Siaghail discovered some 500 emails enquiring about licensing Pax Warrior.

As the success of Pax Warrior grows, Andreas Ua'Siaghail and his colleagues at 23 YYZee are already looking ahead. While the subjects of their next interactive games are hush-hush—the United Nations and the International Criminal Court are drawing some attention—they're confident that they will move electronic gaming one step closer to reflecting the moral issues and complexities of our world.