

COMPUTER GAME LETS KIDS REPLAY, REWRITE CANADIAN HISTORY **HistoriCanada aims to change future of Canadian history for 100,000 kids**

May 31, 2007 – Media firm Bitcasters aimed to change the future of Canadian history today with its launch of HistoriCanada, the world's first Canadian history computer game.

An extension of the best-selling computer game Civilization III, what Time Magazine called the "best strategy game ever created," HistoriCanada lets players replay, relive and even rewrite Canadian history. Now Bitcasters plans to give the game away to 100,000 12-18 year olds.

"For too many Canadians, our past is a foreign country. By giving young players the visceral experience of replaying history, HistoriCanada could very well be the solution to the 'history deficit' facing Canada today," said Dr. Thomas Axworthy, HistoriCanada co-creator and Chair of the Queen's University Centre for the Study of Democracy.

He added, "Where traditional teaching tends to focus on the 'what was' of history, HistoriCanada takes a more interactive 'what if?' approach. The result is a proven, powerful way to demonstrate not just what happened and when, but why history unfolded as it did."

The first of its kind, HistoriCanada is on the leading edge of the emerging 'serious game' sector; games designed for educational, professional and even medical applications.

"Games may be today's dominant entertainment medium but, as we're demonstrating with HistoriCanada, they're also powerful tools with practical, important social purposes," said Nathon Gunn, HistoriCanada co-creator and CEO of Bitcasters. "HistoriCanada is going to change the way young Canadians look at history, and give them a whole new appreciation for their country's past."

In HistoriCanada, players control of one of Canada's early European or Aboriginal civilizations, deciding everything from where to settle and what crops to harvest, to when to wage war or make peace. It features the sophisticated social, economic and military simulations of Civilization, as well as the game's proven appeal and award-winning design. In fact, Civilization III comes included with every copy of HistoriCanada, thanks to the generosity of 2K and Firaxis Games.

"For a serious game to be effective, it has to be fun and appealing. With HistoriCanada, players won't even realize they're learning a thing," added Gunn.

Bitcasters is currently seeking a title sponsor to fund the final stage of the project, giving the game away to 100,000 young Canadians. Negotiations are underway with some of Canada's most recognized brands in retail, technology and financial services.

HistoriCanada was produced by Bitcasters with the financial support of Telefilm Canada, in partnership with Historica and Canada's National History Society. The game is rich in multimedia Canadian content, including an in-game version of the Canadian Encyclopedia, the popular Historica Minutes video series and a soundtrack featuring performances by acclaimed Canadian musicians Donald Quan, Patricia O'Callaghan and Brian MacMillan. Bitcasters also vetted all aspects of the game through a panel of Canadian historical and cultural advisors including Stéphane Lévesque, Ron Robert, Richard Neilsen, Francis Back and Rosa John.

For more information and print-ready visuals, visit www.historicanada.com/page.php?sid=373.

About Bitcasters

Bitcasters is an international media firm that produces broadcast, Internet and gaming properties. The company's current flagship projects are serious, casual and massively multiplayer online games: HistoriCanada, Hollywood Tycoon and Stormhawks.com. Established in 1996, Bitcasters helped create the first interactive entertainment divisions for some of the world's most recognized international broadcasters, and has more than 30 web and casual games to its credit. The company is also active in technology advisory work and policy development for international governments and world leaders.

For more information

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