

Hessian Ministry of Economics, Transport, Urban and Regional Development

Press Release

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Ranj Serious Games, Enter-Brain-Ment and Swinxs awarded with the European Innovative Games Award (EIGA)

More than 300 guests attended awards ceremony at Darmstadt's congress center "darmstadtium"

At the Darmstadt congress center, last Thursday night was all about computer games. More than 300 guests followed an invitation issued by Hessen-IT and the European Commission, and joined the European Innovative Games Award (EIGA) awards ceremony. At the gala event, outstanding innovations in computer games were honored. Out of the 77 proposals turned in for EIGA 2008, eleven made it to the short list and were nominated for one of the three prizes awarded Thursday night. Criteria for the jury were technologies implemented, content and usability of the games.

Top award winner "Sharkworld", submitted by Ranj Serious Games BV from the Netherlands, was awarded a € 20,000 prize. Sascha Stammer received a € 10,000 prize on behalf of Enter-Brain-Ment from Berlin Germany, for finishing second with "Somersault". "Swinxs", produced by Swinxs B.V. also from the Netherlands, came in third. Furthermore, honorary awards were handed to "Sharkworld", "Somersault" and to "Wii Fit", submitted by Nintendo of Europe (Germany).

Klaus-Peter Güttler, State Secretary of the Hessian Ministry of Economics, Transport, Urban and Regional Development, inaugurated the ceremony with a warm welcome for the guests. Afterwards, jury members Maruja Gutiérrez Diaz, European Commission, and Andre Horn, IDG Entertainment Media GmbH, and Christian Flory, EIGA Project Manager at Hessen-IT, introduced the nominated games.

In his book "Homo Ludens", the cultural historian Johan Huizinga shows that learning by playing is in accordance with our human nature, said laudator Rudolf Strohmeier, Head of Cabinet, EU Commissioner Viviane Reding: "The developers of "Sharkworld" have succeeded admirably in combining learning and playing." Klaus-Peter Güttler, who

handed over the second prize for "Somersault" to Sascha Stammer from Enter-Brain-Ment, commended the innovative game control and its motivating challenge: "Anyone who has ever tried playing pool knows the principle: angle of incidence equals exit angle. The makers of "Somersault" have succeeded in creating an innovative control on the basis of this principle thereby putting computer novices and hardcore gamers on the same level" said Güttler. The third award was handed on by Regina Halmich, multiple World Boxing Champion, and enthusiastic fan of computer games: "It is a sad fact that the percentage of obese children and young people has risen dramatically. For various reasons they spend too little time outdoors romping about - all the more gratifying that the computer game industry is moving to fix the damage" said Halmich about the "Swinxs" console.

The gala event was accompanied by "The Gypsies", a cult band from Frankfurt, Germany and moderated by "you fm" radio presenter Raffaella Jungbauer and Jochen Domenicus.

About EIGA: Hessen-IT and the European Commission had invited games developers, games publishers, publishing companies, freelancers, and young professionals to submit innovative games for the European Innovative Games Award (EIGA) until August 31st. The award came with a total prize money of € 35,000. Members of the jury were Alois Rhiel, Minister of Economics, Transport, Urban and Regional Development of the State of Hesse; Maruja Gutiérrez Diaz, European Commission; Patrice Chazerand, Interactive Software Federation of Europe (ISFE); Olaf Wolters, Federal Association of Interactive Entertainment Software (BIU); Andre Horn, IDG Entertainment Media GmbH and Malte Behrmann, European Games Developer Federation (EGDF). The awards ceremony on November 6, 2008, in the "darmstadtium", the new conference center of the city of Darmstadt, was part of the "iTEC08" conference program.

For further information, please see www.innovative-games.eu, and www.itec08.eu or contact

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