THE computer games industry is a growing arena. In fact, the industry has grown to become one of the world's largest entertainment fields.

In 1999, it was reported that the computer games industry had passed Hollywood box-office receipts in terms of annual turnover. And the world's video games market has been growing at 20 per cent each year, totalling up to a US$28 billion (RM106 billion) industry today.

All these developments do not just translate into the creation of business opportunities, but more importantly, it opens up a new line of career for game enthusiasts in the field of computer games development.

In a move to cater to this new niche job market, FTMS College has launched a diploma in Computer Games Technology for post Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) students up to 24 years of age.

According to the college's academic head Sajilal Divakaran, the diploma programme is part of an ongoing response to changes in the discipline of computer science and its emerging applications.

"The programme provides students with a comprehensive education, skills, and learning experience in all aspects of computer games design, programming and technology," he says.

Sajilal says the programme also aims to develop professional and transferable skills in a wide range of methods and practices appropriate for the task domain of a professional computer game developer.

He says computer games technology is one of the most exciting sectors in the digital content arena.

"It's a synthesis of technical skills and creative talent, and has become a vibrant industry," says Sajilal.

The launch of game platforms like [Sega](http://search.proquest.com.zdroje.vse.cz/docview/271903892?pq-origsite=summon) Dreamcast, PlayStation 2 and Microsoft Xbox have brought computer games into a burgeoning industry.

In the past, he says, game developers used to enter the industry with little or more than an ability to learn programming and real enthusiasm for games. But today, the game industry requires much more skills, and courses like the computer games technology should play an important role in supplying the needed skills.

Commenting on the job opportunities that are available for holders of computer games diploma or degree, FTMS College's academic manager Trevor Ward says the opportunities are growing.

"Even though the computer games development industry in Malaysia can be considered still non-existent, the job is getting popular in countries like Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, the UK, and US," he says.

"As the ICT industry grows to many branches of technology, people now are more interested in getting specialised ICT education like computer games development," says Ward.

"These students can also have the opportunity to work with foreign game developers," he adds.

Ward says students taking the computer games development studies need not worry about not getting jobs once they graduate.

"They can easily enter the IT technology arena like software engineering or other technology-related jobs as they are also taught other computer studies like programming, computer architecture, Web development, computer animation, Java programming, etc," he explains.

The opportunities are not just limited to the games industry but also other areas. "Graduates would be able to suit themselves into areas such as multimedia software industry, edutainment, virtual reality, electronic publishing, interactive TV development, and multimedia authoring," he says.

Elaborating on the diploma course, Ward says it covers three years with 10 months of study for each year.

For the first year, students will be exposed to the foundation of computer studies, business, and computing. While in the second year, they will go further into software engineering, project management, and multimedia.

In year three, they will be studying three-dimensional graphics and animation, and build their own computer game as a project.

Ward adds that students who feel that they cannot proceed with the course after one year or want to move into other areas may also do so because they have just learn the basic things.

He says some of the lecturers for the course are people working in the game development industry in Singapore. "So the students will get up-to- date information and skills available in the games industry," he adds.

The diploma in Computer Games Technology by FTMS is offered at RM19,000 for a complete course, but for the first intake, the college is giving an introductory price of RM15,000.

**People**

[Ward, Trevor](http://search.proquest.com.zdroje.vse.cz/indexinglinkhandler/sng/per/Ward,+Trevor/$N?accountid=17203)

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