= Sneak King =

Sneak King is an advergame title from Burger King for the Xbox and Xbox 360 video game consoles , released in 2006 . Burger King sold the game with the purchase of value meals . Players take control of Burger King 's mascot The King , in a stealth food @-@ delivery themed game that spans four unique levels based on Burger King 's own commercial advertisements . Sneak King is one of three titles released by Burger King and developed by Blitz Games as part of five week promotional campaign between November 19 and December 24 , 2006 . Blitz Games was chosen to develop the games , originally for the online Xbox Live Arcade , but this was later changed to a single disc that would run the game on both the Xbox and Xbox 360 consoles .

Development of the project was closely tied to the other two games , and Sneak King 's development was directly led by Burger King . The game started as a tile @-@ based puzzle game , but quickly became a Spy vs Spy @-@ style caper until Burger King made design choices that removed conventional hazards and competition elements in favor of a stealth game with no human opponents . Sneak King did not win critical acclaim and its reviews often reflected its unusual design elements , but the project was a financial success and resulted in millions of units being sold . Collectively , the games ranked amongst the top 10 best selling games of 2006 . Burger King 's Russell Klein would attribute the three game project as being the driving force behind the company 's 40 % quarterly sales increase .

= = Gameplay = =

The player takes control of The King , the mascot for Burger King , who is tasked with sneaking around while delivering Burger King meals to hungry people . Sneak King 's gameplay consists of four levels to explore : the Saw Mill , Cul @-@ De @-@ Sac , Construction Zone , and Downtown . Each level features a unique map with 20 challenges to be completed . There are two game modes , free @-@ play mode and challenge mode . Free @-@ play mode occurs whenever the player is not currently undertaking a challenge or after the player changes levels . In this mode , the player can freely explore the area without noise or sight detection and use the minimap to see unlocked challenges and non @-@ player characters (NPCs) .

In Challenge mode , the player must sneak around and deliver food to hungry NPCs . Hunger is indicated above thought bubbles which float above the heads of the NPCs . An NPC with a burger icon over their head is able to be given food , but they will lose their appetite if spotted by the player . NPCs move around the map in a set pattern and have a narrow cone of vision to detect player . Erik Brudvig of IGN described this narrow cone of vision as being similar to those of Metal Gear Solid . NPCs can also detect the player by excessive noise , the amount of sound a player is making is indicated by a noise meter . Challenges can be failed if a player alerts NPCs to their presence . Successful delivery of an item requires sneaking up behind an NPC or surprising them from a hiding place . Points are awarded based on how hungry a character is , the player 's stealth and proximity to the NPC and style points on delivery . When presenting food , a Flourish meter appears which quickly fills and empties , requiring a timed button press . The higher the flourish meter , the more style points . Each level has 20 associated challenges and fulfilling half the challenges on a level opens the way to the next level . Once all 80 challenges are completed , an alternative costume is unlocked . Gamerscore is rewarded for achieving certain goals or style on the Xbox 360 version .

= = Development = =

The origin of three Burger King @-@ themed Xbox Games , including Sneak King , began when senior executives from Microsoft and Burger King met at Cannes to accept awards for their I Love Bees and Subservient Chicken advertising campaigns . Microsoft and Burger King 's executives decided to produce Xbox games that would take place in Burger King @-@ themed context that would not be reduced to blatant advertisements . Blitz Games Studios would become involved in the project after Blitz Games Studios ' co @-@ founder , Philip Oliver , discussed an interest in

producing Xbox Live games with Microsoft 's Xbox Live Arcade portfolio manager , Ross Erickson . Oliver 's interest was hampered by a lack of funding , but Erickson agreed to notify Oliver of any leads on advertisers looking for product placement . A week or two after that , Oliver received a call from Erickson about Burger King 's interest in creating three games . In the fall of 2005 , Blitz Games entered into talks with Burger King and the development began in February 2006 .

The development originally began as downloadable Xbox Live games , but Burger King soon announced that they wanted the games to also be playable on the Xbox . This would require distribution of the games in boxes instead of digitally because original Xbox console platform was not able to access Xbox Live Arcade . With physical distribution in mind , Burger King wanted both the Xbox and Xbox 360 versions of the game to be available on the same disc . For the project , Blitz Games assigned two project managers for the games , Chris Swan and John Jarvis . Swan and Jarvis held daily conference calls with Burger King and Microsoft 's Xbox division throughout the development period . In order to better work together , Blitz Games showed Burger King the development process for a previous game , from " first the black and white sketches , then the color concepts , environment blockouts , texturing and lighting , and finally the results on screen . " By showing an example of their workflow process , Blitz Games hoped to bridge the presentation gap between the companies could potentially " cripple the project . "

Originally Blitz Games had a staff of fifteen working on the original project , but this grew to nearly 80 people after Burger King increased the contract and budget for the games . The task of producing two different versions of the games were made easier by Blitz Games ' production toolchain , which had built @-@ in compatibility for Xbox . Blitz Studios ' developers were able to adjust the game with appropriate hardware coding that had already been previously developed by the company . Blitz Games extended their development cycle by two months : one month due to challenges in production , and the other because Microsoft agreed to " fast track " the games through the Quality Assurance process . The development period concluded after three months , with the completion of all three games and the production of two million units of each game .

Burger King and Blitz Studios split the creative process up for the three games . Sneak King is the game that Burger King had creative control over , and which was envisioned based on the King commercials . Oliver stated , " Sneak King is derived by them , purely from their commercials . It was basically ' here 's our commercials , we have to have a video game around them . ' They threw in all their ideas , and we made it work . " Originally , Sneak King was designed as a tile @-@ based puzzle game , but it soon evolved into a Spy vs Spy caper with multiple Kings who are " trying to out @-@ deliver one another while laying traps for their enemies " .

Burger King 's creative control over the game impacted its development defined as a set of rules . The first rule was that there was only one King character . In response , the developers had the idea of the Xbox avatars playing the game and finding the crown to become the King . This idea was rejected by Burger King who said players could not become the King . The developers ' next idea was to have one person be the King and the other players lay traps to interfere with his deliveries , but this idea was again rejected by Burger King because the King could not be exposed to any danger . With the usual hazards and competition elements of the video games removed , the developers decided upon a stealth format with no human opponents . In order to better capture the accuracy and authenticity of the King 's movements , the King was flown to Britain for motion capture for the game 's production . Blitz Games ' Edward Linley described Sneak King as the riskiest game concept of the project because it " is the appearance and antics of the King himself that give the game its humor and life ; without him , the game simply wouldn 't work . Until we had the finished King model and motion capture in the game , we couldn 't be certain the concept would gel . Fortunately , the moment he went in , we knew we had created something truly unique . " Sneak King 's programming code consists of 60 @,@ 000 active lines with another 43 @,@ 000 developer comment lines . The game 's instruction manual does not include a list of credits .

= = Release = =

Sneak King is one of three promotional Burger King @-@ themed releases for North American

winter 2006 . The other two games are Pocketbike Racer and Big Bumpin ' . The Burger King exclusive marketing run was from November 19 through December 24 , 2006 . The games were available for $ 3 @.@ 99 with any purchase of any Burger King value meal . In January 2007 , the marketing firm Crispin Porter + Bogusky stated that more than 2 @.@ 7 million games were sold in the promotion . It was reported that more than 3 @.@ 2 million copies were sold , although Sneak King distinct sales were not given , in Game Developer 's April 2007 issue .

= = Reception and impact = =

GameSpot 's Jeff Gerstmann gave it a 5 @.@ 8 out of 10 and although describing it as weird and poorly made , he concluded that " Sneak King is a one @-@ trick pony that is an interesting curiosity with a subversive sense of humor . " IGN 's Brudvig noted that the game 's US $ 3 @.@ 99 price point made it the cheapest Xbox Live game . Although noting the presence of game @-@ breaking bugs , he said the budget game was worth purchasing because of its food delivery dances . Brudvig also noted that the graphics were impressive for the cost of the game , but the interactive maps were found to be quite limited and environmentally sparse . X @-@ Play rated the game as one out of five , but noted that " [t] his is the game that really got the buzz going about BK 's whole foray into gaming , thanks mostly to screenshots of the Burger King hiding in a garbage can , lying in wait for what appeared to be a college @-@ age woman walking toward him . Stalking in the name of great taste . " Kate Macarthur of Advertising Age noted that , " Burger King 's Sneak King video game for Xbox may not have won rave reviews , but gamers still bought more than 2 million copies . "

The immediate impact of Sneak King on Blitz Games was a financial boost . This allowed the company to improve its technology , and partially funded the company 's Blitz Arcade . Collectively , sales sufficed to be ranked amongst the top 10 best selling games of 2006 . Story wrote , " Using Xbox data on game use , the Burger King game equates in time spent to more than 1 @.@ 4 billion 30 @-@ second commercials [.] " Including Sneak King , the success of the project was noted as a key part of Burger King 's 40 % increase in sales during the quarter . It was affirmed by Russell Klein that Burger King attributed the majority of that success to the game project .