



# Mobile Entertainment Analyst

In-depth coverage of the wireless entertainment business

## Unleashing the GameBoy: Nintendo's Wireless Future

by Justin Hall

Nintendo's GameBoy series of devices has sold more than 160 million hardware units, making it the gold standard for portable gaming. But Nintendo hasn't joined the wireless party - no integration with mobile phones, no long-range multiplayer solutions. The company's experiments with short-range wireless are just beginning.

So it would seem that Nintendo is more of a curmudgeonly toymaker, proceeding steadily through the world it understands and not branching out into the risky world of synergies and new technologies. It has firmly staked its claim in the pre-teen living room and in the

youth portable market, and it's sticking around there.

But as portable gaming moves online, into devices that may also share personal productivity or music-playing software functions, Nintendo risks being relegated to a smaller and smaller youth audience. In this article, we examine Nintendo's history and future prospects for innovation in mobile and network gaming.

### History of the N

Nintendo was founded in 1889 in Kyoto, Japan. The company made playing cards for a Japanese game called *Hanafuda*. Nintendo had

some early success when increased gambling created a demand for its cards. Nintendo grew steadily, slowly innovating its business model. In 1959, it licensed Disney characters for its playing cards. After starting up a taxi company, an instant rice business and a love hotel with little success, Nintendo founded a toy and game division in 1969. Soon, this group was developing gaming devices, like the arcade machines popular in the United States, and distributing its own version of *Pong* in Japan.

The company's first international success was the Game & Watch series. A single simple game with

Endorsed by the



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## Women and Mobile Content

by Elizabeth Biddlecombe

"Technology is a girl's best friend," proclaimed US industry group the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) at this year's Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas.

No doubt. What is more questionable is how friendly the technology industry is to women.

It was sneers all around as this female reporter and two other women stood in front of the CEA's 'Techgirl' display of gear, which had been selected as designed and marketed specifically with women in mind.

"I wasn't very impressed. It seemed like they'd picked products either because they were pink, looked feminine or had something to do with families," recalled Colleen Wheeler McCreary, who had taken a break from her recruiting job at Microsoft to indulge her love of technology at CES.

Perhaps it was just the juxtaposition of this tiny voice for female consumers drowning in the vast sea of maleness that makes up the biggest consumer electronics show in the world. Booth babes are more conspicuous than either female consumers or technology professionals at these shows.

That there wasn't an equal number of fit young booth boy babes for the heterosexual female attendees is another small reflection of the industry's disinclination to woo a sector it should neither ignore nor patronize.

A CEA study released at the show found that women are involved in 89% of all consumer electronic purchase decisions. "There are plenty of gadget girls," it reported, but "the female consumer is less enamored of gadgets and technology for its own sake."

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# Short Messages

by Jill Bruff

## A Profile of the Cell Phone Gamer

Close your eyes and picture the mobile gamer. Do you think of him as a hardcore gamer - a guy who's played hour after hour of PlayStation 2? Now that gaming has come to his cell phone, does he just have to have it? Or maybe you picture a woman playing a retro game like Pac-Man or Tetris while she's waiting for the bus?

Most people assume that it's one or the other; either gamers consumed by all gaming or mass consumers bored in their downtime; i.e., folks who have no choice but to play a retro game for 3 to 5 minutes while they wait in line, are stuck in an airport or stuck in class. Would it surprise you to learn that the mobile gamer is both hardcore and casual, playing at home (more than 60%), playing for long periods of time (15-20 minutes) and playing frequently (more than 65% play more than once a day)?

As a person who's been in video gaming for more than a decade, I had to know who was playing mobile games. When I joined Sorrent two months ago, I quickly realized that there was no NPD, no EDI, essentially no overreaching sales and marketing data in this nascent field. Sure, there are tidbits from carriers and analyst firms here and there, but there was no comprehensive data that looked at the mobile gaming universe to uncover who these guys (or girls) are. What do they play? Where do they play? And, of course, why?

In February 2004, Sorrent and market research firm U30 Group fielded the first independent quantitative study\* to profile the US wireless gaming population. We spoke to men and women, boys and girls, teens and tweens and adults. We looked at console gamers and nongamers, customers of AT&T Wireless, Verizon, Sprint, ALLTEL and every carrier in between. Some people downloaded games. Some only played preloaded games. Some would never buy games on their phones.

**...there was no comprehensive data that looked at the mobile gaming universe to uncover who these guys (or girls) are.**

What was truly enlightening was how many mobile gamers there already were. We found that a healthy percentage of people are purchasing games for their mobile phones and are active consumers in the space. They are downloading games frequently, playing at home and playing for long periods of time.

Millions of people already have a mobile gaming platform in their pocket. Some may not realize it, but others are tuned in. They, truly, "get it" now.

## What the Data Says: Mobile Gamers Love to Play

*60% play games once a day or more*

*30% play games more than three times per day*

*More than 60% typically play games at home*

*More than 70% play for 10 minutes at a time or longer - including a subset who play more than 20 minutes (and as much as two hours) at a time*

*More than 60% are between ages of 18 and 26 and single*

*More than 50% are either Sprint or Verizon customers*

*More than 70% are sharing mobile gameplay on their phones with friends or family members*

*Most people who download games learn about them through word-of-mouth*

What does this mean? Well, to us it's a signal that though mobile gaming is still early in its evolution, there is no doubt that the interest in this platform exists.

For us at Sorrent, it's also a reinforcement that our product strategy is squarely on track. While most in the industry know Sorrent for its quality sports games, we've recently expanded our portfolio strategy to meet the gaming desires of a diverse, mass market audience. Leveraging our early lead in sports games, we are now actively expanding our product expertise in four key categories: youth culture, casual games, core videogame titles and of course, sports.

Along these lines, we have recently announced three new licenses in these other segments: Ren & Stimpy and everGirl, a new tween brand, both from Viacom, and the renowned Driver brand from Atari, which will launch simultaneously with the console games.

Of course, this research shows us that we're just beginning to truly understand the hearts and minds of mobile gamers. Sorrent's marketing team is now embarking on qualitative research to delve further and, through multiple endeavors; we will continue to get closer to our customer, the mobile gamer. ■

*\*For this study, U30 executed 742 Web-based surveys aimed at profiling the wireless gaming population in the United States. Respondents were evenly split across men and women and ranged in age from 9 to 35 years. Respondent were sampled from U30's double opted-in panel of consumers, geographically representative of the US population.*

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WGR Media Inc.  
650 Cambridge Street  
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(US) 617 621 0875

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**To Subscribe:**  
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PDF and online archives access  
\$695 per year

# Games We Like

by Avery Score

## Ninja Gaiden: A Score

The steamy love affair between ninjas and videogames just got even hotter. Tecmo's Team Ninja, a development group that knows a thing or two about sex appeal, has released *Ninja Gaiden*, the Xbox update to the much-beloved series for the Nintendo Entertainment System. The formula of fun platforming and twitch gameplay that defined the original games remains intact. What's new is a level of style and polish rarely - if ever - seen in a videogame. It is as though Team Ninja took elements from the best action games of the past few years, and combined them all in a tremendously appealing and infinitely enjoyable package.

*Prince of Persia* fans will find parallels here, in NG's numerous wall-running puzzles. Shinobi veterans will find the game's relatively high difficulty and head-chopping gameplay reminiscent of Sega Overworks' retro masterpiece. The most obvious similarity lies between *Ninja Gaiden* and the Dead or Alive series, also developed by Team Ninja (and in which Ryu Hayabusa, NG's protagonist, makes a cameo appearance) - the latter relationship accounting for the dizzying number of moves available to young Hayabusa as he battles evil ninja clans, futuristic soldiers, and the minions of Hell. Despite any debts to these games, however, *Ninja Gaiden* is most certainly greater than the sum of its parts. It will come to be known as a seminal masterpiece of 3D action, making a contribution to the genre tantamount to those of such classics as Capcom's *Devil May Cry*.

Although *Ninja Gaiden*'s story plays second fiddle to its nonstop, balls-to-the-wall action, it is not without its intrigue. Ryu Hayabusa's father and master of the Hayabusa clan, Joe Hayabusa has left his ancestral village to train in the mountains, seeking greater

enlightenment. He has left Ryu to guard the Dragon Swords, relics from an age-old battle with the Evil Deities - creatures as powerful as they are ancient. Hayabusa village is sacked, however, by Doku, the Lord of the Greater Fiends - a race of oni-like creatures that arise from the perversion of humans who are genetically predisposed to meet such a fate. Doku looks pretty badass, and Ryu basically pansies out of an early confrontation. Unhindered and unabated, Doku grabs one of the Dragon Swords, the "evil" one, and runs off to the Vigoor Empire, a strange, East Asian country led by an equally mysterious despot, the Holy Vigoor Emperor.

What follows are the typical wacky hijinks that accompany a ninja revenge plot. After ditching the dated Ninja rags and donning a "pleather" cat-suit, Ryu meets an incredibly buxom Aryan woman named Rachel, a "fiend hunter" determined to destroy her sister, who succumbed to the evil influence of Doku, thereby becoming his right-hand abomination. For Rachel's character design, Team Ninja drew on its considerable

experience in animating bouncing breasts. Rachel enjoys long walks through futuristic tourist towns, flirting with green-eyed Ryu, and chopping off fiend heads with a war hammer. Her kidnapping, early in the game, gives you yet another reason to seek vengeance. I am reminded of a Frank Zappa song, in which the inimitable, mustachioed king of strange songs laments the theft of his "titties and beer."

**Ninja Gaiden is most certainly greater than the sum of its parts.**

*Ninja Gaiden*'s story will simply leave you guessing throughout most of the game. Why does the Vigooran Emperor show up after every major confrontation? Why is the fiend incidence per capita higher within Vigooran borders? Why does the aforementioned emperor mask his true identity with a vocoder and a Darth Vader mask? Okay, maybe the plot won't keep you guessing. Whatever. Go chop off some heads or something.

*Continued on page 14 ►*



## Women and Mobile Content

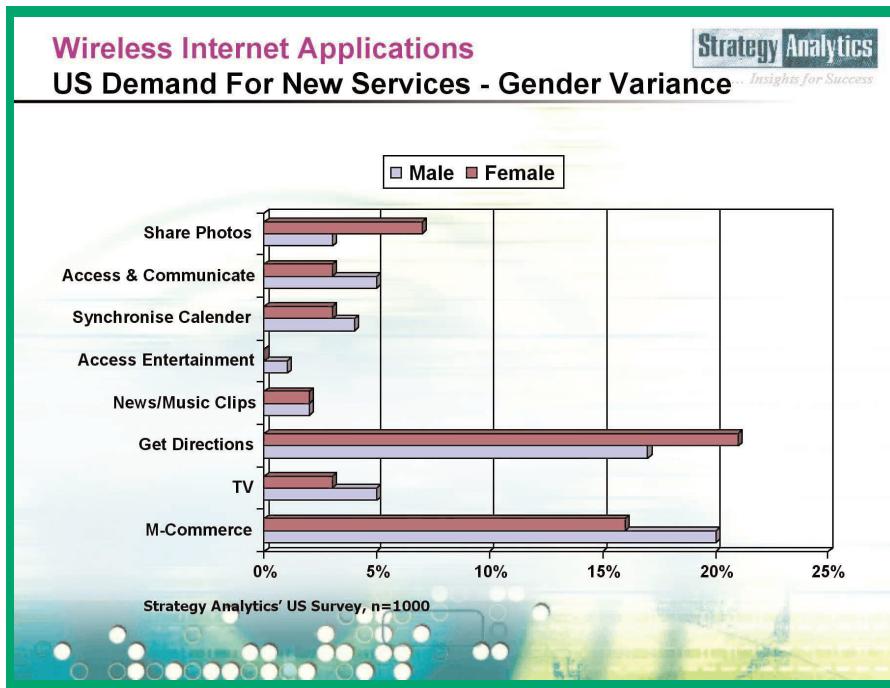
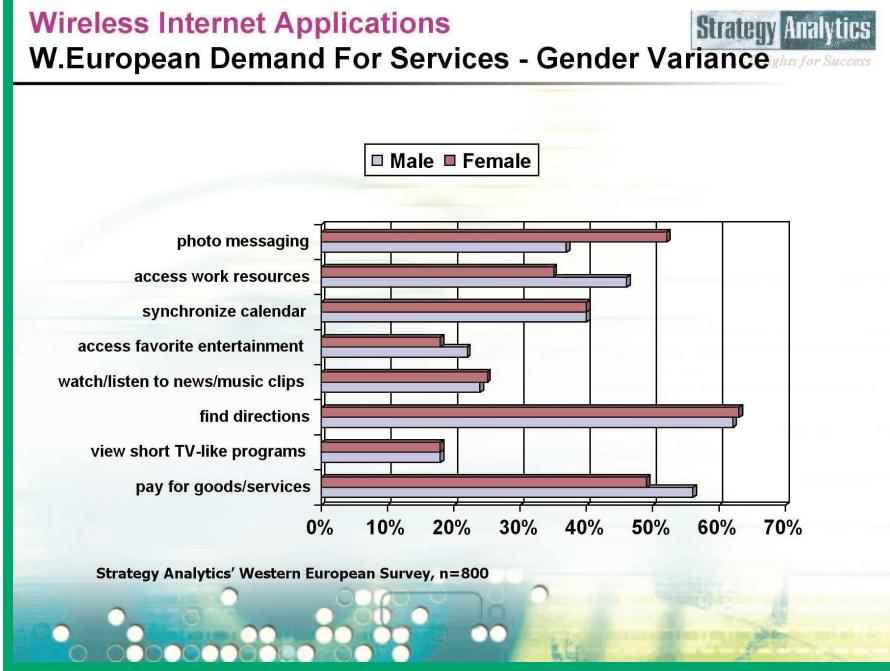
*Continued from page 1*

The research states that roughly the same amount of US women as men have mobile phones: 76% of women versus 77% of men. This parity is to be expected in a mature market, say the experts.

The CEA study finds that 16% of men have an Internet-enabled portable device or cell phone compared to

just 12% of women. This statistic tallies with Strategy Analytics research that shows US men are using more existing value-added services, such as text messaging and voicemail, than women are. However, women's interest in new services equals if not exceeds that of men.

**"I wasn't very impressed. It seemed like they'd picked products either because they were pink, looked feminine or had something to do with families"**



Research undertaken on behalf of Siemens Mobile by Europressedienst in Europe found that men were more ready overall to buy a UMTS phone than their female counterparts. But 37.2% of female respondents said they wanted to buy one, with 21.6% wanting to wait and see and 27.2% not wanting to at all. The study found that women tend to want more information before making a purchase and wait until the benefits of the device are clear.

But Strategy Analytics figures show European women and men using today's mobile data to similar degrees. Some services, such as getting directions, are equally attractive to both sexes. Others, like text messaging and photo sharing, are more popular with women, according to several sources.

But, says Nitesh Patel, senior analyst at Strategy Analytics, "Much of the content on operators' data service portfolios and its marketing are geared toward men, such as sports alerts....and mobile games, with little effort made to cater for women."

Colleen Wheeler McCreary is one of the first group of US consumers to own a smartphone – a Samsung SCH i600 on Verizon's network. "If Verizon even knew I was a woman I'd be surprised," she said, speaking for herself and not her employer. "I don't see the marketplace targeting women."

Hearsay suggests the picture is different in Asia, where teenage girls have often been cited as one reason for the success of NTT DoCoMo's iMode service. Unfortunately neither NTT DoCoMo nor Korea's SK Telecom responded to requests for comment. Nor did Samsung or Panasonic embrace the invitation to talk about targeting women in the Asia Pacific region. But it is fair to say that Asian handset manufacturers have segmented their designs along gender lines, Nitesh Patel says, "There have been examples of handsets that have

included an ovulation calculator, and some that have mirrors integrated into them," he writes in an email.

Nokia does not explicitly target women, says a spokesperson, nor does Danger, maker of the Hiptop, even though it was a CES Techgirl honoree. A representative from Motorola says that women are not considered a market segment on a global level, though this can change from country to country.

Some carriers don't think it's appropriate to target women specifically. "Cell phones transcend race, gender, color, income or pretty much any other demographic," says a spokesperson from Canada's Telus Mobility.

She continues, "Do 'professional' apps only apply to men? Or do 'family-based' applications only appeal to women? Women and men have so blurred the lines on likes, dislikes and needs, that instead we focus on a wide breadth of products with an equally wide array of downloads, ringtones...price points, rate plans for users in general. Gender marketing is too '80's, too short-sighted and too limiting."

It is true that some applications hold something for everyone. For instance, Vindigo reports that location look-ups for clean bathrooms in its Vindigo 2.0 application are popular with mothers.

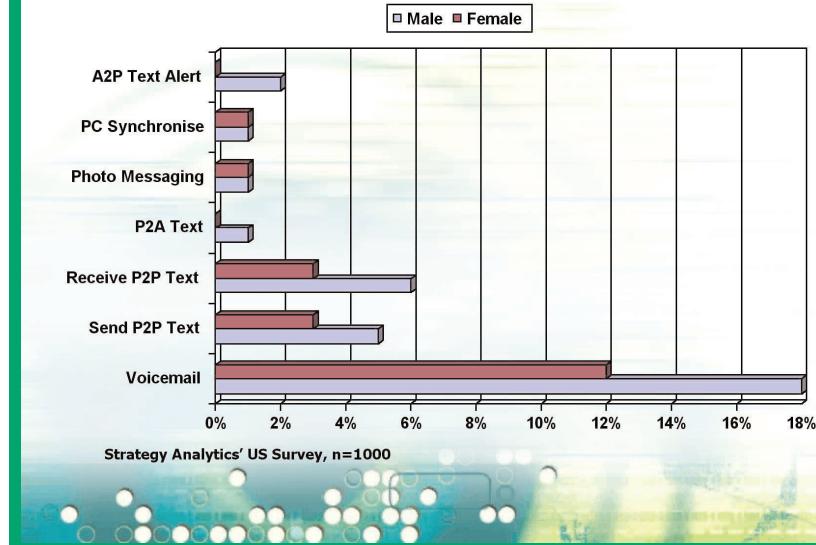
But "it is a bit naive to think that women look at content in the same way that guys do," says Hugh Griffiths, head of data products for 02 in the UK. Unlike some operators we polled, 02 is able to identify the gender of at least some of its users. This allows the company to see that men are using its Active service more than women, according to Griffiths. The operator therefore appointed a new person to acquire women-specific content.

**"There have been examples of handsets that have included an ovulation calculator, and some that have mirrors integrated into them"**

AT&T Wireless is similarly motivated. "Women as a segment is a big focus for us with mMode," says spokesperson Danielle Perry. The company recently launched Cosmo Mobile and CosmoGirl Mobile services together with Tira Studios and Hearst Corporation, publisher of Cosmopolitan and Cosmo Girl magazines. Both services include horoscopes, quizzes, daily polls, personals, ringtones and wallpaper and games.

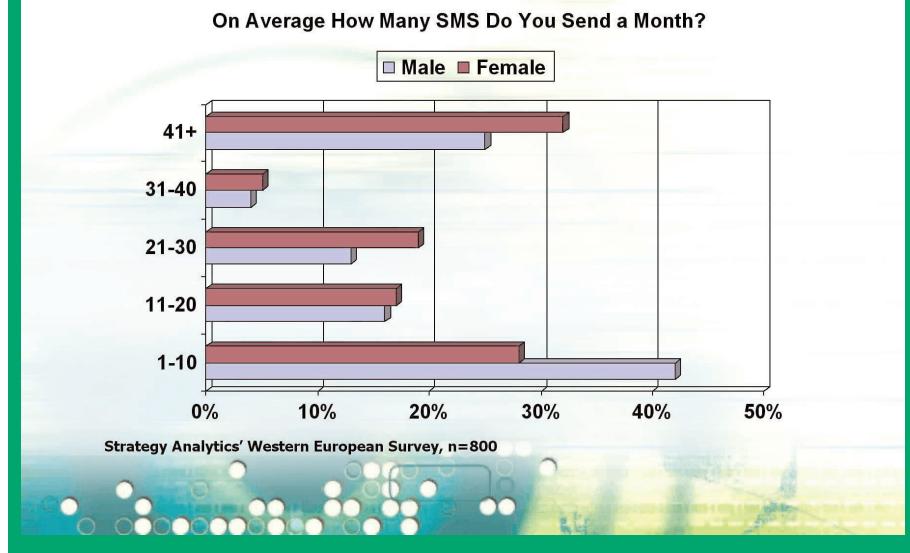
## Wireless Internet Applications US VAS Usage - Gender Variance

**Strategy Analytics**  
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## Wireless Internet Applications W.European VAS Usage - Gender Variance

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According to Gary Toste, general manager of publishing at Tira Studios, these are the company's first forays into meeting a need for female-targeted content on the mobile screen. Toste somewhat resists the idea that women don't play games. The Hearst offering includes CosmoGirl Truth or Dare - a group game for the teen market - and blackjack for Cosmopolitan readers, in which the players can use their winnings to reveal pictures of male pin-ups.

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## Nintendo

*Continued from page 1*

just a few buttons, in a slender portable device, the Game & Watch demonstrated Nintendo's ability to render simple gameplay in an affordable mobile package.

**After starting up a taxi company, an instant rice business and a love hotel with little success, Nintendo founded a toy and game division in 1969.**

Launched in 1980, Game & Watch sold widely around the world, spawning many incarnations and counterfeits. For many people, it is the quintessential early portable-gaming system.

Nintendo's first major success in electronic gaming was the Family Computer, called the Famicom in Japan and the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) in the English-speaking world. Released in Japan in 1983, and then in the United States in 1985, this console reigned the modern home videogame machine market after Atari's historic failure. The device featured 8-bit graphics and cartridge-based games; Nintendo sold the hardware on slender margins and made its money on the software sales. By 1990, more than 30 million NES units had been sold in the United States, putting them in about one-third of US homes (statistical data and stories drawn from David Sheff's *Game Over*, a history of Nintendo).

Almost 10 years later, Nintendo combined the portable Game & Watch with the Famicom, to create the GameBoy. The GameBoy was the first popular portable gaming system that used cartridges for software, which promised an expandable library of games. Released in 1989, the GameBoy had a black and green LCD screen and stereo sound. There were other competing devices that were more sophisticated and offered 16-bit color graphics, backlighting and better hardware interfaces. But the GameBoy was affordable (just over \$100), lightweight, and battery friendly. "Energy efficiency was always the hallmark of GameBoy technology," writes Steven Kent in his book, *The Ultimate History of Video Games*. "Lynx, Game Gear and TurboExpress all had better, clearer screens. Nomad, which played [Sega] Genesis cartridges, had a library of larger, more visual, and generally better-made games. But GameBoy was the most portable system, in that it could go several times longer on two AA batteries than any of the previously named systems could go on six AAs."

And the GameBoy had a single killer app: *Tetris*, the famous geo-

metric stacking puzzle from Russian designer Alexey Pajitnov. *Tetris* was the first wildly popular portable gaming experience: devilishly challenging, hypnotic and persuasive. Tchaikovsky's "Dance of the Sugarplum Fairy," a tune so familiar from so many dispersed emanations, would be forever transformed, a precursor to the modern ringtone.

*Tetris* was included with many of the GameBoy units, and it featured head-to-head play with a cable. While there had been plenty of two-player mobile devices, this was the first instance of two separate portable gaming machines being linked together for multiplayer play (according to Leonard Herman's videogame history *Phoenix*).

**By 1990, more than 30 million NES units had been sold in the United States, putting them in about one-third of US homes.**

## Cuddly Cockfighting

Since it moved into electronic gaming, Nintendo has established a few strong brands and memorable characters. A mustachioed plumber in red overalls named Mario is one of the timeless icons of gaming. Nintendo continues innovating gameplay around him and his supporting cast of characters. From a few 2D pixels to a well-rounded 3D character, Mario has remained quite cuddly, always cute, seldom challenging.

The same could be said about Nintendo's other memorable characters. Link from *Zelda* is a pre-teen adventurer. Samus from *Metroid* is powerful, tempered by her [her?] bubble-shaped armor. Donkey Kong is a raging monkey,

## Stat!

### ARPU of European Carriers (In Euros)

Carrier	3Q01	3Q02	3Q03
Bouygues		36.5	41.6
Orange (France)	32.9	31.7	31.4
SFR		40.6	40.7
E-Plus		23.1	24.3
O2 (Germany)	26.3	28.0	29.5
Vodafone (Germany)	26.4	25.0	26.0
TIM	27.9	27.9	28.5
Vodafone (Italy)	27.7	28.8	29.6
Wind	20.0	19.6	22.5
Amena	27.1	29.0	31.3
Telefonica		28.5	28.6
Vodafone (Spain)	30.8	31.2	30.7
O2 (U.K.)	29.4	29.4	32.0
Orange (U.K.)	30.7	31.8	33.3
T-Mobile (U.K.)		29.7	29.8
Vodafone (U.K.)	34.7	34.6	36.7

*Source: Yankee Group, 2003 Wireless/Mobile Europe Carrier Tracker*

All of the company's characters reflect a Japanese cartoon sensibility - large features, easy expressions, non-threatening art.

but too cute to be scary. Nintendo gave him a family and a series of misadventures involving little more threatening obstacles than bananas and cartoon bombs.

All of the company's characters reflect a Japanese cartoon sensibility - large features, easy expressions, non-threatening art. Many companies trade on this aesthetic, but Nintendo's work is especially youth friendly.

Nintendo's strongest recent brand is definitely *Pokémon*. *Pokémon*, short for Pocket Monsters, is a single and multiplayer masterpiece - playing alone allows you to collect a small army of cute creations that could do battle in multiplayer moments. Trading and dueling are integral to the game. Think of it as cuddly cockfighting.

Brought to the company by an outside developer, Satoshi Tajiri's Game Freak, *Pokémon* appealed to Nintendo as a way to urge more head-to-head play over GameBoy units. Two different varieties of the *Pokémon* cartridge encouraged player collaboration and competition, if players wanted their own complete set of 151 creatures. Successive versions of the game introduced new creatures, always maintaining this focus on portable multiplayer. The GameBoy became the home base for a giant children's entertainment franchise that would soon sprawl across movies, TV, comics and playing cards. At the heart of *Pokémon* lay kids dueling with their GameBoys. As *Tetris* did for the original GameBoy, *Pokémon*

defined the latter-day GameBoy market. In 1998, nearly 10 years after the first GameBoy and the first color portable handhelds were released, Nintendo released its GameBoy Color unit, and *Pokémon* helped it sell well into the millions.

The GameBoy is an omnipresent toy for children in the developed world. Nintendo's characters and brand are well entrenched through its army of tiny gamers. This image of Nintendo as toymaker to the world clashes with the maturing game industry. *Grand Theft Auto III* was the blockbuster game of the last few years and featured the type of free-wheeling, sociopathic violence Nintendo has never permitted on their consoles. But these franchises are like an anchor that is weighing Nintendo down as it reaches for a gaming audience that has become increasingly mature.

The mobile audience is a perfect case in point. Nintendo created modern portable gaming with GameBoy. These devices are practically stapled to the foreheads of some children. But there's another class of mobile gamers - you can see them on the airplane, playing *Solitaire* or *Bejeweled* on their laptops. They don't search far for games, and they don't demand a very complicated gaming experience. They're looking for something easy to play, a break from work.

Nintendo may have some of the world's best game developers, particularly Shigeru Miyamoto, designer of *Donkey Kong*, *Zelda* and *Mario* games. But these games demand attention, afternoons spent exploring a new world and a fun play space. The mobile gaming experience is typically much more disjointed. The games that live on the mobile phone contend with other applications: calendars, music players, buddy lists, chat, and phone calls. The connected portable is not a device built solely for the luxuriant pleasure of uninterrupted hours arranging your armies to liberate a land with *Final Fantasy Tactics*. Connected portables seem

## Stat!

### AT&T Wireless vs. Cingular: pre-merger grudge match!

	AT&T Wireless	Cingular
2003 Full-year services revenue:	\$15.659 billion	\$15.5 billion
2003 Fourth-quarter services revenue:	\$3.9 billion	\$3.9 billion
Fourth-quarter services revenue growth from 2002:	4.4%	5.6%
Total subscribers:	22 million	24 million
New subscribers, 2003:	1.06 million	2.1 million
Total mobile applications:	297	231
Average application price:	\$4.13	\$4.43
Total mobile games developers/publishers:	128	77

Sources: <http://www.attwireless.com>, <http://www.cingular.com>, WGR's Wireless Content Tracking Service(tm) <http://mobenta.com/wcts>

to best support games that take place in a few stolen moments, in the context of your buddy list and other life functions.

Perhaps these games are integrated with the other functions of your machine, like some of the early

**Satoshi Tajiri's Game Freak, *Pokémon* appealed to Nintendo as a way to urge more head-to-head play over GameBoy units.**

mobile multiplayer games now emerging that use buddy lists, location and Internet connections to make fun between friends. Perhaps Nintendo can find the right mix of *Tetris* and *Pokémon* to glue us all to our machines.

*Continued on page 10 ►*

## Women and Mobile Content

*Continued from page 5*

Hugh Griffiths at 02 cites anecdotal evidence that only one-fifth of mobile game players are women. He adds the commonly held view that women prefer puzzles and board games to men.

Is this because women don't like games or the games available don't float their boat? According to Matthew

Roland, US general manager of game developer Gameloft, the company's target demographic is "essentially male at this point." He adds that the company's portfolio for this year will include more female-oriented titles to take advantage of a "huge" and "untapped" pool of casual female gamers.

### "Women as a segment is a big focus for us with mMode"

Flow's MiniFizz universe - already launched on Proximus, Turkcell and Orange UK - is expressly designed for young women. MiniFizz is a universe populated by a range of female characters. Aside from wallpapers, the first application to be launched is MiniFizz Mission, an adventure story delivered piecemeal over a mobile phone. A game called MiniFizz Avenue will launch in April. The protagonist has to get to a meeting with a maximum of self-confidence. She must try to avoid wasting time by talking with the characters she meets en route, though some, like the womanizer, top up her self-confidence levels while still slowing her down.

"These are a different type of character than those who are always running around with a gun shooting everybody up," says Sabine Allaeyns, co-owner and creative director of Flow. "They fill the gap between the American action hero and the Japanese manga style."

By the same token, Allaeyns says, MiniFizz doesn't try to meet a girl's needs by "being pink, putting hearts everywhere and offering dating services." It does try to satisfy girls' greater appetite for a story line and variation compared to boys, avoiding the repetition that boys have a greater tolerance for.

So what other content is appropriate for a woman's eye? Despite the fact that it, like other T-Mobile properties, focuses on the youth market rather than women, T-Mobile UK has a "For Women" section in its t-zones portal. Applications include "Gossip and Fun", "Sexy Guys", "TV Soaps", "Girly Shopping" and chat. It also includes horoscopes, repeatedly mentioned as being female-friendly. A spokesperson from KDDI in Japan added Fortune Telling to its offerings. Back in the UK, Hugh Griffiths at 02 wants to add more sports, fitness, gossip and dieting applications to Active, to bring in the women punters.

Fashion is another topic. One company that is addressing this among the teen market is smartskin-creator Wildseed. The company has teamed with fashion companies Hot Kiss and French Kitty to deliver phone skins as well as relevant content such as ringtones.

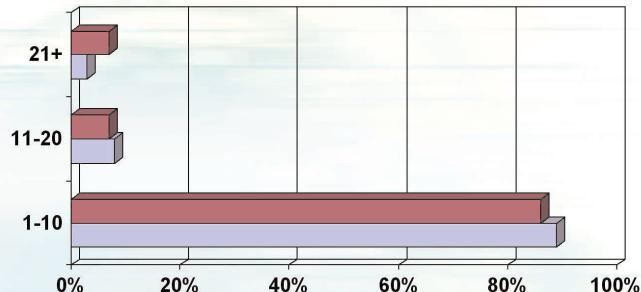
"We get very different feedback from girls and boys," says Cindy Smith, VP of marketing. "Girls demand more

#### Wireless Internet Applications W.European VAS Usage - Gender Variance

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##### How Many Times A Month Do You Text Third Parties? e.g. radio, TV shows

■ Male ■ Female



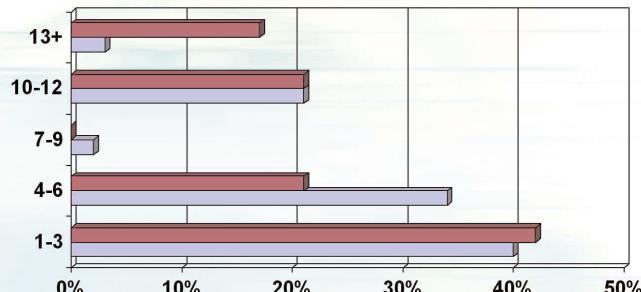
Strategy Analytics' Western European Survey, n=800

#### Wireless Internet Applications W.European VAS Usage - Gender Variance

**Strategy Analytics**  
... Insights for Success

##### How Many Times Do You Send Or Receive A Picture Message?

■ Male ■ Female



Strategy Analytics' Western European Survey, n=800

**Screenshot 1: Cosmo Quiz**

- Are You a True Friend?
- Are You Fun to Be With?
- Are You Good in Bed?
- Are You Ready to Settle Down?
- Do You Take Risks in Love?

**Screenshot 2: What's New**

- In the Magazine
- New In Wireless

**Screenshot 3: Daily Horoscope - Libra, January 08, 2004**

Unpredictable Uranus might send you a sexy surprise you can't refuse—you lucky girl!

**Common Navigation:**  
Cosmo Home, mMode Home, Help, Add to My mMode, Share Page, Options, Back.

efficiency. They want to make sure things are easy to use. They won't play with something as long." Crucially, she adds, "All our research shows that a girl will buy a lot more skins than boys." Some girls even said they would like to buy as many as 10 different skins to coordinate their phones with their outfits.

A segmented approach is of value, as is one that doesn't rely on pre-conceptions. For instance, Colleen Wheeler McCreary cautions against assuming that small is good for every woman. "Most of the women I know carry a purse so a bulkier device is okay," she says, adding that bigger keypads make for easier use.

**"These are a different type of character than those who are always running around with a gun shooting everybody up"**

Another assumption up for debate is whether women are early adopters. Executives from Danger and from Vindigo uphold reports that women's usage of their respective products has lagged behind men. And the CEA research reports that "women perceive themselves as being less self-sufficient" with new technology, with just 46% saying they enjoyed the challenge of figuring out high-tech gadgets compared to 68% of men.

But the same research also states that at 30% a similar number of US women consider themselves early adopters, as do men, and half are confident in their ability to understand electronic gadgets.

These percentages are only likely to increase as today's teens mature. MEA asked Cindy Smith at Wildseed whether the young girls she'd talked to were early adopters.

"Absolutely," she said. "More than people give them credit for. Some even carry a couple of phones." ■

## Nintendo

*Continued from page 7*

### New Gaming Models

Some of Nintendo's recent games have illustrated a possible path for mobile gaming. *WarioWare* is a case in point, a perfect combination of casual gaming and depth that could create loyalty and buzz on a mobile platform. The game is structured around rapid play sessions. Call it short-attention-span interactivity. Games are already designed for distraction, but this game trumps them all. *WarioWare* is built from more than 200 so-called "mini-games" that require maybe only one or two buttons to press to play, and the play session lasts just five seconds.

*WarioWare* defies the conventional game wisdom of being courteous to the players and giving them time to understand the game. Instead, games are hurled at players faster than they can understand. Each round of play, a player must learn a new interface. Some games hark back to the Game & Watch days: catch falling objects, navigate a

***WarioWare defies  
the conventional game wisdom  
of being courteous to the players  
and giving them time to  
understand the game.***

paper airplane between barriers on the left and right side. Other games involve cutting a piece of steak with a knife by rapidly rocking the direction buttons back and forth.

And *WarioWare* is cheeky, irreverent. Your score is kept in a toilet bowl, your lives are counted by toilet paper. It's mature without being violent or sexual. The game has quirky art direction: line drawings, clip art, pieces of other games. For people raised with a multiplicity

## Stat!

### Top 10 Phones by Apps and Carriers

Phone Name:	Apps Available:	Carriers:
Motorola T720(CDMA)	486	Verizon, Alltel
Motorola T730	419	Verizon
LGVX 4400	363	Verizon
LGVX 6000	293	Verizon
Audiovox CDM-9500	279	Verizon, Alltel
Samsung SCH-A530	260	Verizon
Nokia 3650	230	ATT, Cingular, T-Mobile
Samsung SPH-A500	215	Sprint PCS
Motorola i95cl	209	Nextel
Motorola i99cl	208	Nextel

Source: WGR's Wireless Content Tracking Service(tm) <http://mobenta.com/wcts>

of media and videogames, *WarioWare* celebrates short-attention-span chaos.

*WarioWare* seems like the perfect game for mobile phones. It's disjointed, like much of the mobile play experience can be; a few stolen moments. Some of the gameplay in *WarioWare* takes place in a mobile phone frame. It's decoration only, but it can't be ignored - this is the closest Nintendo has come to making mobile phone content. And *WarioWare* suggests that the company would likely excel in that medium.

Multiplayer is supported within *WarioWare* - two players can share a single small GameBoy, each with a single button to press at the right intervals. It's utterly simplistic gaming, but the bombast and quirkiness of it are appealing.

*WarioWare* is a perfect best-case scenario for Nintendo's future in mobile gaming: a well-executed gameplay innovation that seems completely obvious after the toy-maker did it. The company turned its expertise and a mild bit of mature sensibility to make a game product attractive across genera-

tions. This is innovative software, only playable on the GameBoy Advance. So with all its innovations in software, what innovations in hardware might Nintendo offer?

### Testing Poké**mon** Wireless

Nintendo has an arrangement with Motorola to provide a proprietary 2.4GHz short-range wireless adapter for multiplayer on the Game Boy Advance. Versions of *Pokémon FireRed* and *Pokémon LeafGreen*, released in Japan in February 2004, shipped with special adapters permitting up to five players to enjoy the collectible card game together. *Pokémon* has been phenomenally successful over the years; losing some ground recently to *Yu-Gi-Oh*, another similar youth market collectible card game. Both *Pokémon* and *Yu-Gi-Oh* are social experiences, where players gather to collect and trade cards, and play their matches. Both games exist in card and video game form; it's not clear that a wireless adapter is a slam dunk, but for kids on the schoolyard, the chance to make wireless with their GameBoys should be appealing.

For all the enthusiasm analysts express for Nintendo making games on mobile devices or employing long-range wireless solutions for multiplayer, we must remember kids on a schoolyard playing *Pokémon* are Nintendo's primary market. Kids are generally in the same place as the people they play with; if they are playing over the Internet, they are generally playing with people they know from school.

In Japan especially there are social prohibitions about introducing strangers. Multiplayer game development on mobile phones has been hampered by regulations that prevent people meeting other people in game worlds. One of the first multiplayer online games for mobile phones, *Samurai Romanesque*, provides an elaborate graphical world populated by plenty of other player-characters, but you can't talk to them.

Coming from that context, it's not surprising that Nintendo has not yet elected to support widespread Internet play. In addition, one-time game solutions like a wireless adapter bundled with the latest version of *Pokémon* is more likely to be palatable for parents who don't want to use credit card numbers to sign up their kids for ongoing services. And in Japan credit cards are not nearly so prevalent and popular as they are in the United States and Europe.

Nintendo may have a large home in the North American mind, and the GameBoy is known worldwide. But its home is in Japan - the GameCube, its primary instrument for the living room, has sold better in Japan than it has in most other places. Nintendo takes its cues from Japan and exports them worldwide.

So Japan is a mix of a nuanced wireless economy and a place with strictures governing children and online play. The wireless adapter from Motorola should be seen in that context - an experiment that

could provide the basis for future innovation. In the end, it's not about whether a device supports wireless, but what kinds of exchanges are permitted between players. A large part of the success of *Pokémon* stems from its social aspects. Nintendo is wise to work wireless into its portfolio within that mechanic.

### Broadband Watching

Long-time Nintendo-watchers have reason to be nervous about this latest device. It's terrific and exciting to see Nintendo release a short-range wireless adapter for the GameBoy Advance. But it's not clear what will come of it. After these two *Pokémon* games, will there be other titles to support the device? There's no announcement yet, and no word whether the Motorola device will be sold in other countries. So it seems like an experiment

from Nintendo, testing the short-range wireless waters.

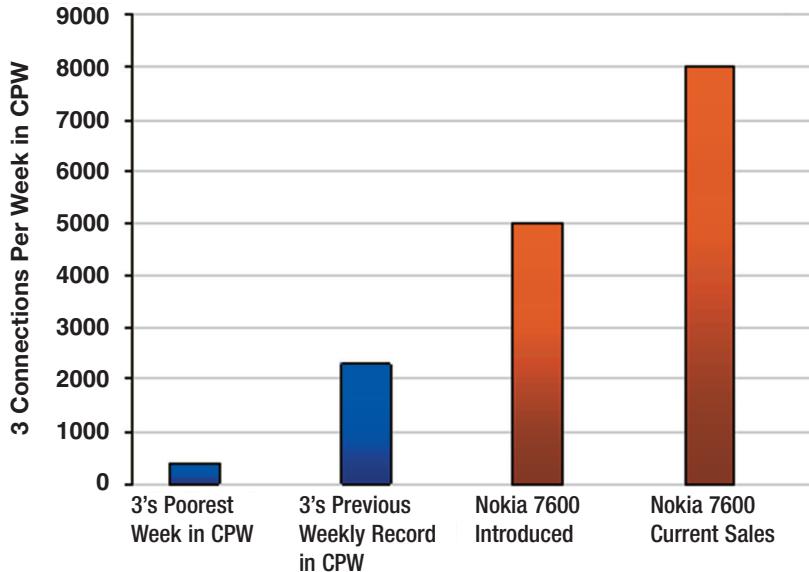
**WarioWare is a perfect best-case scenario for Nintendo's future in mobile gaming: a well-executed gameplay innovation that seems completely obvious after the toymaker did it.**

Nintendo took a tentative approach to broadband support for its GameCube. The company unveiled a broadband adapter in May 2002, with support for only one game: Sega's *Phantasy Star Online*. *Phantasy Star Online* was first

*Continued on next page ►*

## Stat!

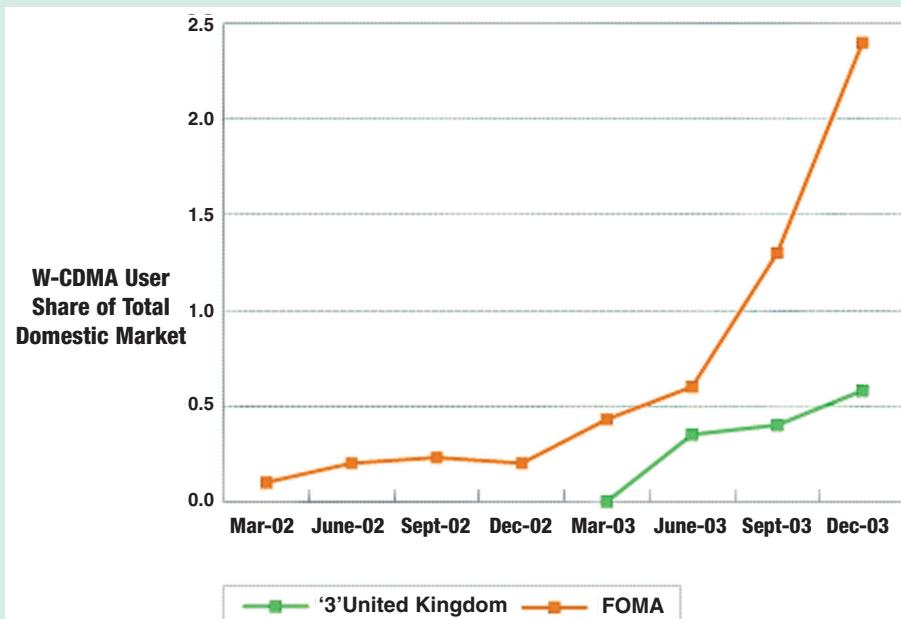
### 3 Weekly Connection in Carphone Warehouse



Source: Mako Analysis Report: 3 – Running at a Third of its Potential

# Stat!

## W-CDMA User Share of EU Mobile Market



Source: NTT DoCoMo and Hutchison Whampoa, 2004. Analysis by Yankee Group

## Nintendo

*Continued from previous page*

released with online support for Sega's doomed Dreamcast console, and the game has been made available on Xbox and PC as well.

## Perhaps Nintendo still feels burned by its first foray into online services.

After the GameCube broadband adapter was released in the United States, it was frequently sold-out and hard to get. This was a tentative rollout - two years after its release only one other game is available that uses the device: a *Phantasy Star Online* sequel from Sega.

Perhaps Nintendo still feels burned by its first foray into online services. In the years from 1989 to 1991, Nintendo developed shopping and information services for console owners in Japan (the Family Com-

puter Communications Network System). The system won more than a hundred thousand users in the era before the popular Internet. People used the system to play games, bank, buy and sell stocks, buy stamps, follow an exercise program.

This was a new initiative, a new competitive landscape for Nintendo. Hiroshi Yamauchi, President of Nintendo, wrote in the 1989 annual report: "We believe that the arrival of the high-information age has brought about a new opportunity for people to consider what vital information really is, and what information they really want. By employing the Nintendo Family Entertainment System as a domestic communications terminal, utilizing regular telephone line, and the establishment of a large-scale network which to this point has been inconceivable, we plan to provide a vital supply of information for the domestic lifestyle in the fields of

entertainment, finance, securities, and health management, to mention but a few. The network shows how the Famicom has outgrown its single purpose as an amusement system." (From "NintendOnline," an *N-Sider.com* article by Glen Bayer).

For all that excitement, Nintendo was not able to get serious traction with its online services. Adults were not eager to use a toy for their banking when traditional banking services would serve. And people didn't want to tie up their phone lines. Exporting the service model to the United States failed after a limited test. The Network system uptake fell short of expectations, and it was eventually phased out.

Nintendo tried online services with each of its successive consoles, with only limited success. Accordingly, the company has taken a wait-and-see attitude toward online gaming. This seems odd amidst the current investments in online play on the PlayStation and Xbox hardware platforms. Some gamers have been frustrated that Nintendo is not embracing the broadband future.

Recently, Nintendo was set to release the next-generation *Mario Kart: Double Dash* for the GameCube. The *Mario Kart* series is fantastically popular with gamers; a fine stand-alone game, but especially enjoyable in social situations. The new version supports network play only locally - with two GameCubes in the same living room. Frustrated users have hacked a "WarPipe" system to allow the GameCube to play *Mario Kart: Double Dash*, and other games as well, over the Internet.

Releasing the broadband device without a purpose to play with it has left a number of fans and critics cold. For a company accustomed to innovating videogame design, Nintendo has not elected to push online multiplayer gaming, for the time being. While it doesn't yet see broadband as a good place for gaming between people, Nintendo has seen the potential of networks for game distribution.

## China's IQue

In late 2003 Nintendo released the IQue, an all-in-one controller/console designed especially for mainland China. Using previous-generation Nintendo 64 console technology, the IQue is designed to be an affordable home gaming device. To address fears of software piracy, game segments are downloaded at retail or over an Internet connection to a flash memory card unique to each user.

## Nintendo tried online services with each of its successive consoles, with only limited success.

The IQue presents a radical departure for console hardware makers: outreach to the developing world. Long after successor devices had become popular in developed nations, Nintendo's older consoles were coveted toys in the developing world. The IQue presents a device designed specifically for these emerging videogame markets. China is unique among those countries, due to the rapidly expanding consumer class and the popularity of broadband Internet. Today, the IQue games are primarily purchased from IQueDepot retail kiosks. Some day the games may be distributed online, reflecting Nintendo's rededication to privatize Nintendo network services.

## The Connected Portable

In the meantime, Nintendo has no public plans to pursue wide-area multiplayer, over wireless or wired Internet. Instead, Nintendo holds fast to a belief in the value of in-person multiplayer: game experiences shared by people in the same physical space.

Julia Roether, a spokeswoman for Nintendo, defended Nintendo's hesitation toward mobile multiplayer in an email: "We have always been open to exploring new and novel forms of game play. But if you offer portable multiplayer online gaming, the prospects run up against reality: How many people will stay on their cell phones long enough to play anything meaningful in a multiplayer sense? Even though this may be possible technically, is it realistic?" This is Nintendo's game-oriented approach to network and device development. Its public posture is to hold back on broadband and wide-area wireless multiplayer until the proper game model becomes apparent. This doesn't mean the company isn't experimenting, but its current priorities are different. Roether explains, "Right now, we're focused on expanding the GameBoy Advance multiplayer experience via connection to the Nintendo GameCube and next with the wireless adapter."

Nintendo has tied its GameCube and GameBoy together. A steady stream of GameCube titles have boasted expanded play if you attach your GameBoy. The small screen in your hands serves as a map or a portal to another world offering features unavailable to people playing only on their televisions. Call it the wired portable – and a smart synergy play. Nintendo's GameCube/GameBoy connection encourages players to play Nintendo at home and on the road.

Roether provided this picture of Nintendo's decidedly in-person vision for multiplayer: "In the new Nintendo GameCube game, *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles*, players can use connectivity to enhance their game play. In multiplayer mode, each player uses a GameBoy Advance to control his or her character on the television screen. Additionally, the Game Boy Advance screens show different information to each player. For

instance, when players are in a dungeon, the Game Boy Advance screens might have a map on one screen and radar showing monster locations on another. This requires players to cooperate and communicate the information to one another. *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles* is a good example of how Nintendo has created synergy between its systems and enhanced interactive fun through 'in-person' multi-player gaming."

## New Device: DoubleScreen

Nintendo appears to be keeping wireless close for the near future. It has recently announced a new device. With Sony's PSP portable gaming device coming in late 2004, Nintendo may have felt that it needed to keep up with new hardware. The DoubleScreen design is set to debut at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles in May 2004. Early reports confirm only that the device will have two separate small screens and the capacity for short range wireless play. The DoubleScreen wireless capacity is like to be something like the proprietary wireless device from Motorola. Nintendo's comments are vague, but there is little reason to suspect that the company would use something like WiFi or even BlueTooth because it would open up the otherwise largely closed Nintendo gaming systems to invasion or content sharing from other devices in the area.

**Early reports confirm only that the device will have two separate small screens and the capacity for short range wireless play.**

Still, the promise of integrated wireless, even over short range, shows that Nintendo recognizes the social gaming experience that used to be the domain of the living room is moving outside of the home, out-

*Continued on page 15 ►*

Doku looks pretty badass, and Ryu basically pansies out of an early confrontation.

## Games We Like

*Continued from page 3*

And chop you will. *Ninja Gaiden's* meat and potatoes is its absolutely phenomenal gameplay. Ryu has literally hundreds of manuevers at his disposal, a variety of weapons, and just about every cheap ninja trick you've ever come across. Combat is fluid and streamlined. Rarely will you encounter problems with the camera, which can be centered with a mere press of the right-trigger. Never will you find fault with the game's control, which, through the use of only a few basic button combinations, will send Ryu flying off walls, onto enemy heads, and into the style hall of fame.

*Ninja Gaiden* follows the action/platformer tradition of gradually unlocking abilities. You can check into a blacksmith shop in every level and upgrade each of your weapons. For example, if you were to upgrade your nunchaku, you would gain a plethora of new combos and abilities for that weapon. This is a brilliant system, as it ensures that, at every stage of the game, you'll be overwhelmed with new moves to master.

This is what leads to *Ninja Gaiden's* greatest asset - the fact that parts of the game can be played and replayed (baddies reappear when you leave a room or area), almost infinitely, and neither boredom nor frustration will ever set in. This is good, because *Ninja Gaiden's* difficulty, which would seem oppressive in any other game,

will necessitate retrying boss fights fifteen or twenty times. Surprisingly, however, this process of trial and error is completely painless. The gameplay never grows stale. *Ninja Gaiden* is like a Mozart piano concerto - every time you play it, something new is revealed to you. Incidentally, I am the *Ninja Gaiden* Horowitz.

Graphically, it is tough to find fault with *Ninja Gaiden*. Imagine *DOAX Beach Volleyball* characters in huge, outdoor environments, combating amidst a rock solid framerate, and you might begin to get the picture. The camera is nearly impeccable, and the animation is consistently flawless, except when Ryu is shimmying across a ledge. Then, he looks dumb. Ledge awkwardness aside, *Ninja Gaiden* is, unequivocally, one of the best-looking games ever made.

The third dimension is, too often, a technological accoutrement - a gimmick to be tossed on top of dated gameplay - \*cough, *Sonic Adventure*, cough.\* Not so with *Ninja Gaiden*. Ryu Hayabusa may have started his ninja days as a tiny, fledgling sprite; but his 3D debut proves that a true ninja cannot be confined to the brutal frontality of the 2D era. There's not even so much as a buggy camera - the unofficial hallmark of third-person gaming - to hold him back.

*Ninja Gaiden's* sound manages to keep pace with its visual flair. Hot electronica beats serve as a perfect backdrop for relieving enemy ninjas of their heads. The sound of steel on steel (or dragon tooth on steel, in the case of your ancestral sword) is realistic, and especially striking in Dolby 5.1 surround. Ryu's booming cries, as well as the more pitiful counterpart of his slain enemies, are equally impressive. In general, the soundtrack, while not a standout performance, is appropriate and engaging.

*Ninja Gaiden* features so many jaw-dropping scenes that you might as well invest in a drool cup and just leave your mouth agape.

Never before has a game so beautifully synthesized old-school play mechanics with new-school glitz and glam. In spite of all this, *Ninja Gaiden* is not genre defining. The game's strength is not its novelty, but, rather, its flawless execution. *Ninja Gaiden* is, rather, genre RE-defining. It takes a formula as old as videogames itself, and, into it, breathes new life. Although you'll be amazed by Ninja's sky-high production values, you'll feel right at home with its gameplay and plot. This is not to say that *Ninja Gaiden* isn't innovative. It's just not overly complex - and that's a good thing.

**Never before has a game so beautifully synthesized old-school play mechanics with new-school glitz and glam.**

Complexity is, too often, an excuse for poor execution. For a long time, gaming has been moving away from the immediacy that made the 8-bit days the golden era of videogames. The reason for this is purely technological. Twitch-gameplay is hard to recreate in a three-dimensional world, where you've got, among other issues and gripes, a camera to contend with. To compensate, developers have slowed the pace of games, shifting the balance from the fingertips to the cerebellum. This has produced some truly original titles, but left old-school gamers feeling empty. Where is the lightning-fast gameplay of yore? *Ninja Gaiden* answers this cry, heralding (I hope) a new era in action. Prepare for twenty of the most blissful hours you can spend outside a David Hasselhoff concert. ■



## Nintendo

*Continued from page 13*

side of the schoolyard. The social gaming experience is possible in an airport, or in public spaces between relative strangers who may just have a single game in common.

### Japanese Landscape

Japan is the world's first richly developed mobile economy. NTT DoCoMo used a walled-garden approach to create a safe, efficient mobile Internet for tens of millions of Japanese users, making i-mode a wildly popular mobile Internet service. Today, there are multiple carriers and multimedia phones trading signals in Japan. The tens of millions of users NTT DoCoMo brought online are eager purchasers of mobile phone ringtones and screensavers and games.

Each fall, the Tokyo Game Show provides an overview of the Japanese electronic entertainment landscape. Nearly all of the large gaming companies there had adapted their popular franchises for play on mobile phones. Namco was showing *PacMan*. Taito was showing *Space Invaders*. But there was no Java downloadable *Super Mario Brothers*. No *Mario Kart* multiplayer for mobile phones. Nintendo has never made games for the gaming hardware of other companies, and it doesn't seem to be starting anytime soon. The emergence of portable devices with more advanced graphics, sound and interface means that many businesspeople carry phones or PDAs with more gaming capacity than that of a GameBoy Advance.

Nintendo does not seem to be concerned. Roether said, "With the most popular, affordable and successful portable videogame system (with more than 160 million sold worldwide), there's really no reason for Nintendo to make games for any other company. Nobody's made a successful, portable multifunction device that competes with GameBoy in terms of game play, so

there's no need for us to fix what isn't broken."

In 2001, Nintendo announced a deal with mobile carrier KDDI in Japan to release the Mobile Adapter

But the portable gaming world is changing. It is expanding as young people raised on games grow up to play *Breakout* on their iPods. Games are built in to nearly every

**We have always been open to exploring new and novel forms of game play. But if you offer portable multiplayer online gaming, the prospects run up against reality: How many people will stay on their cell phones long enough to play anything meaningful in a multiplayer sense?**

GB, a wired connection between the portable game player and KDDI's mobile phones. Nintendo announced online multiplayer play, messaging, and browsing within a walled garden including Nintendo-approved Internet content. After the initial press release little has been heard about the Mobile Adapter GB - no signs of any runaway success or innovation on par with *WarioWare*, *Pokémon* or *Tetris*.

Meanwhile, Nokia has stepped in with its portable media player, the N-Gage. The N-Gage integrates a phone, PDA functions and a sophisticated gaming chipset. But with no definitive games, and priced above the limits of most young gamers, the N-Gage has not yet been successful. Meanwhile, Nintendo has not offered any competing product - nothing for young professionals to use as a communications or productivity tool that also offers the Nintendo brand of fun. Sony's PSP, reputedly mixing music, video and gaming, could offer the most serious challenge to Nintendo's GameBoy hegemony. But Nintendo still has a truly massive installed base to rest on, at least until one of these other competitors manages a compelling game.

Nintendo seems firmly wedded to its position as the world's best toy-maker. The company continues to occupy young fingers and to have the lion's share of portable gaming.

mobile device, and Nintendo risks lording over an increasingly small niche market of devices made purely for games.

Young people define the medium for the future, and no one has better access to young people than Nintendo. *Pokémon* was the defining media experience for many young people; Nintendo should not be counted out to manage the design and synergies to create a worthy successor. Between Nintendo's lead designer, Shigeru

**Young people define the medium for the future, and no one has better access to young people than Nintendo.**

Miyamoto, *Pokémon* and *Tetris*, Nintendo has had some remarkable successes wedding inexpensive new technology to fun game systems. In the next few years, the toy-maker may yet manage to make a home for its fun on the mobile Internet. ■

## Contributors:

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**Matthew Bellows** Matthew has worked in telecom and the Internet since 1995. Before co-founding Wireless Gaming Review, Matthew was Director of Business Development for Engage (NASDAQ:ENGA). At Engage, Matthew managed the team responsible for 4,000 advertising contracts that drove \$30 million in annual revenue. He received his MBA with high honors from the Olin School of Management at Babson College. Matthew's first job in the game industry was as a tester at Infocom, where he spent the bloom of his youth playing Leather Goddesses of Phobos.

**Elizabeth Biddlecombe** (ebiddlecombe@apexmail.com) has been writing about the telecom industry since 1997, contributing to a range of trade titles on diverse subjects. She moved to San Francisco from her native London in spring 2001 to cover the Americas for Emap's comms titles. She has a BA Hons. degree from Manchester University in English and Philosophy. Paul Skeldon

**Jill Braff** Game industry veteran, Jill Braff leads Sorrent's corporate and consumer marketing initiatives. Ms. Braff most recently consulted with Sega of America as interim vice president of marketing and as a creative director at Konami of America. She also worked with Sprint on its entry into 3G wireless gaming. Prior to that Ms. Braff held marketing positions at MyFamily.com, The Learning Company, Griffin Bacal and Nintendo of America. Ms. Braff has a B.A. from Colgate University.

**Justin Hall** has spent over a decade researching human uses of technology. Between 2001-2003, Hall lived in Japan, chronicling the emergence of mobile media and the popular cameraphone. Today, Hall lives in Oakland California, writing about video games and mobile devices, the search for intimacy and stimulation through technology. His personal website Links.net recently celebrated its tenth year online.

**Anne McLellan** (annemclellan@comcast.net) has varied experience in graphic design, specializing in publications. Anne has worked as a consultant in corporate training and development, and in marketing, for education and arts clients. She has a BA from Brandeis University, and has studied graphic design and illustration at Mass College of Art, the Art Institute of Boston and Rhode Island School of Design.

**Amy Monaghan** Before joining WGR, Amy was an editor with Forrester Research Inc. (NASDAQ: FORR). She has also edited publications for Harvard Business School Publishing, Boston Common Press, Rockefeller University Press, and Cell Press. Amy holds an MA in English literature from the University of Chicago and a BA in English literature from Wellesley College. She is not as boring as her résumé might suggest, and she rides a black Schwinn Classic cruiser.

**Avery Score** is a self-proclaimed otaku who constantly partakes in such involved, athletic endeavors as playing old-school RPGs. Avery has the looks of Camui Gackt and the mind of Yu Suzuki, and has been likened to several deities. When not providing content of truly extraordinary quality for WGR, Avery is an honor-roll student at Milton Academy.

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