



The Museum Of Gaming Newsletter

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Museum Update

With the recent news that five Lancashire museums are to be closed and a further five are having their funding removed it is a good time to reassess how the Museum of Gaming will be developed.

If museums are to survive in this harsh environment then I feel they have to head towards the inevitable and adopt a more business like attitude. The Museum of Gaming will have to be run as a mostly self sufficient organisation and look for revenue streams that will keep it as independent as possible. It will run as any other business but with charitable outcomes and not for the benefit of any individual. I believe that it is now time to move the project forwards.

Due to these fundamental changes I decided to delay the AGM until the structure of the museum is more clearly defined.

Phil Robinson
Director & Curator

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Our retro game development project

Making money for the museum was never going to be an easy task, we raise a little through writing magazine articles but at the moment there is certainly more going out than there is coming in. One project to help fund the museum's activities is our retro game development project which is being run under the name Psycatic Software.

We are developing products for the collectors market and have three games for the SEGA Megadrive and SEGA MegaCD currently in progress. These are being developed using the museum's original PSY-Q development kit with some extended libraries.

It's been a long journey but the development side of Psycatic is now in place and we can produce new titles for the old hardware. There is also a growing market for modern versions of SEGA hardware that can be used with the original cartridges. The goal was to create a completely new product with no recycled parts and we now have a complete manufacturing process in place.

INVASION

A playable history of Space Invader type games.

The museum's first game is now ready to ship and we have a pre-orders for almost all of the games we have in stock. The first game is a limited print run collector's edition called *Invasion*. The idea was to create a playable history of space invader type games but to begin with we created a new version that had some bonus additions. This version was completed in 2014 so is called "Invasion 2014" on the cartridge.

The cartridge contains six different versions altogether. A "Classic Arcade" mode which is a nostalgic representation of the original 1978 arcade version. "Cosmic Invaders" is a representation of a bootleg arcade board from 1979. "VCS Invaders" is in homage to the Atari 2600 edition from 1980. Then there are two hand-held versions. In 1981 hand held games used LED's to give you action on the move so we made a "Galaxy 1000 LED" version. Finally there is the "Destroyers LCD" mode inspired by an LCD version that was built into a calculator in 1982.

As a final bonus we added a two player challenge mode to Invasion 2014. This allows you to go head to head playing a simultaneous cooperative game where you try to gain as many points as possible. That's a lot of Space Invaders to squeeze into a single megadrive cartridge but I'm very happy with the results.



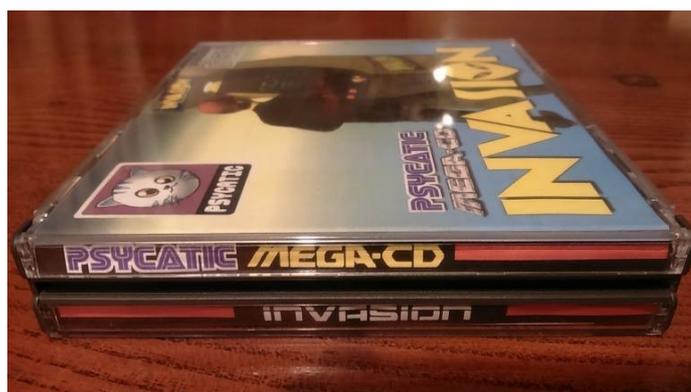
The collector's edition fresh from the factory.

With the cartridge finally produced we created a MegaCD version too. It may seem like a easier method of production but there are still issues to overcome. For a start it's not just a case of copying the ROM data onto a disc as the MegaCD works quite differently. The executable part of the ROM is limited in size so any graphics and audio data has to be loaded from a separate sector of the disc.

This means the disc has many tracks and when combined with the fact that the CD's need to be duplicated at single speed (1x) it puts production out of the hands of many commercial CD companies. Another issue is that the CD's can not be made region free like the cartridges can. The only solution to this is for us to include three CD's in each box, one for each region (Europe, Japan and USA).



Newly manufactured Invasion retail box



The collector's edition of the MegaCD (prototype)

Producing a collector's edition means we are sticking to a very limited print run of just 100 copies of the cartridge and just 50 Mega-CD's. Each copy of the game has a "genuine" hologram with the serial number and also comes with a certificate of authenticity that has a matching sticker. The certificate is signed by the developer too. There are just a few copies left before the limited edition runs out but at the time of writing they are available from the website: www.psycatic.com

Archive News

New items entering the archive



SEGA Megadrive prototype board, 1994

Let's keep with the SEGA theme for this archive update. We've certainly added a few nice SEGA related items. The first of which is this Megadrive prototype cartridge made by a company called Superplay Systems in 1994. The board supports 2mb or 4mb but has four 512k Toshiba TC574000AD-150 UV EPROMs mounted.

This board is flashed with "Skeleton Krew" an isometric game written by Derby based developer Core Design in 1995.



Skeleton Krew by Core Design, 1995

We have also added a second prototype board made by Advantech Inc. in 1994. This is a much taller board that contains the six EPROMs one of which is a Toshiba similar to the last board but most are Texas Instruments 27C040 512k. The board is flashed with Primal Rage by Probe Entertainment published by Time Warner Interactive in 1995.



Primal Rage 1995.



Advantech Genesis Prototype Board, 1994

Finally we have added SEGA's first console to the collection. The SG-1000 is the predecessor to the SEGA Master System and was released at the same time as the Nintendo Family Computer (Famicom). The system was not available in the UK so this is a Japanese version but it is complete and boxed.

This version (SG-1000 II) was released in 1984, which was the the dawn of home computers, so the system also came with a keyboard attachment that was used in some games.

A new archive room

We are looking to create a new archive room as space is becoming a big issue and we need more room to adapt and build the project. The biggest problem with creating a new museum is that it needs lots of space as cheaply as possible. We are looking for somewhere big enough to have a dedicated archive room, a retro games room and an exhibition area. This is a lot to ask and it is going to be difficult to fund the museum during the early stages but we have to find a way!

The archive will be also be used for: Open day events, exclusive Friends of the Museum events (see below), retro game nights, exhibition previews, meet the curator talks, local interest group talks and fund raising activities.

Giving the museum a dedicated home will allow us to start building income and expand the museum resources but it will also allow us to better deliver our charitable outcomes. It will open the archive up to the public and make it available to anyone who wishes to view our collections.

Friends of the Museum of Gaming

Early in 2016 we will be starting a group called "Friends of the Museum of Gaming" where anyone interested in our work can join for an annual fee of just £15 per year. Membership benefits include:

Membership card

Opportunities to meet curator, see behind the scenes and handle museum objects

Invitations to all our exhibition previews

Discounts on any chargeable museum activities

Regular information about the projects progress, events and activities

10% discount on items sold at the museum

Christmas social event



SEGA SG-1000 mkII, 1984.

This is a great example of the SG-1000, both the console and the keyboard are in their original packaging and boxes with all the included leaflets.

There are also five games on cartridge Star Jacker, N-Sub, Monaco GP, Lode Runner and a Japanese sports game. The previous owner runs the "Nostalgia Nerd" YouTube channel and featured this console in one of their posts.



SG-1000 & SK-1100 boxes.

You can view this at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=52Y33X6YGmQ

MUSEUM INFORMATION

Website:

<http://www.museumofgaming.org.uk>

Social Media:

<https://twitter.com/museumofgames>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/museumofgaming/>

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