

Westminster Media Forum Keynote Seminar: The state of play - next steps for the UK video games industry

Timing: Morning, Thursday 22nd March 2012

Venue: Central London

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chairman's opening remarks**
Jim McGovern, MP for Dundee West, Treasurer, All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Computer and Video Games Industry
- 9.05 - 9.15 **The UK gaming sector - leveling up**
How is the UK's industry faring against competition abroad? Analysis of emerging revenue streams and funding options, including the rise of co-productions and use of IP as an asset for merchandising and wider exploitation.
Dr Richard Wilson, Chief Executive Officer, The Independent Game Developers' Association (TIGA)
- 9.15 - 10.00 **Game change - emerging revenue streams and business models**
How are downloadable content (DLC), in-game advertising and new methods of payment - such as pay-to-play and micropayments - changing the economics of the games industry? What has been the response of gamers to digital distribution, use of micropayments and other emerging methods of revenue generation - where are their limits? What are the opportunities for the industry to harness mobile specific technologies, such as location-based play and direct mobile billing, to generate revenue? How far are production houses successfully exploiting the opportunities for cost savings and structural change created by digital distribution - what lessons can be drawn from other established online content industries, like music? What effect will the next generation of consoles - Wii U and Xbox 720 - and services such as OnLive, have on developers - will the overheads and R&D in working with new architecture and hardware lead to greater consolidation in the industry as smaller production houses struggle to compete?
John Houlihan, Editor in Chief, Computer and Video Games
Nicholas Lovell, Director, GamesBrief
James Brooksby, Chief Executive Officer, doublesix
Jack Wallington, Head of Industry Programmes, IAB (Internet Advertising Bureau)
Questions and comments from the floor with **Dr Richard Wilson**, Chief Executive Officer, The Independent Game Developers' Association (TIGA)
- 10.00 - 10.10 **The UK games industry and the challenges of the next decade**
What is needed for the UK games industry to regain its competitive advantage?
Ian Livingstone, Life President, Eidos and Chair, Computer Games Skills Council, Skillset
- 10.10 - 11.00 **Delivering future talent and stemming the 'brain drain'**
What are the talent needs of the games industry? Are college and university courses producing graduates with the skills to strengthen the industry? How do STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) graduates perceive a career in games and are the paths to employment clear and open? Do IT lessons in schools contribute towards the talent pool effectively? To what extent is the brain drain of experienced British video game talent to the US and elsewhere affecting the competitiveness of UK firms? Is new talent filling the gap? What can the industry do to retain talent?
David Braben, Founder and Chairman, Frontier Developments
Paul Durrant, Director of Business Development, University of Abertay Dundee
Juan Mateos-Garcia, Creative Industries Research Fellow, NESTA
Teresa Sutton, Head of Communications and Public Affairs, STEMNET
Questions and comments from the floor with **Ian Livingstone**, Life President, Eidos and Chair, Computer Games Skills Council, Skillset
- 11.00 - 11.05 **Chairman's closing remarks**
Jim McGovern, MP for Dundee West, Treasurer, All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Computer and Video Games Industry
- 11.05 - 11.30 Coffee
- 11.30 - 11.35 **Chairman's opening remarks**
Rt Hon Don Foster, MP for Bath, Co-Chair, Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Policy Committee for Culture, Media and Sport
- 11.35 - 11.55 **The UK's place in the international games market**
What is the UK's international standing in the video games market, in financial terms and in how its content and production houses are regarded? With R&D costs as well as production costs on a similar scale to that of the movie industry, what options are there for developers to finance their work and maintain cashflow - for example by utilising their IP before a game's release date? Is the value of IP being effectively exploited - e.g. merchandising and brand partnerships such as that involving Rovio? Does more need to be done to prevent successful UK franchises - such as Tomb Raider, Grand Theft Auto and Total War - being lost to larger development houses; do the independent producers need the likes of Activision, Vivendi, and Take Two to take franchises to the next level?
Sean Dromgoole, Director, Some Research
Jenny Tooth, Director, Angel Capital
- 11.55 - 12.55 **International comparisons - Canada, Ireland and the UK**
What can the UK learn from the experiences and public policy approaches of counterparts in Canada and Ireland (as recently reassessed by Forfás, Ireland's policy advisory board for enterprise and science) to better promote and nurture domestic production? With enhancements to the R&D credits rates and initiatives such as the EIS (Enterprise Investment Scheme) set out in the Government's 'Plan for Growth', but the much discussed tax credit unlikely in the current economic climate, what are the next steps for public policy? How should UK developers respond to the progress made by international competitors? What effect would greater international co-operation and co-production - used extensively in television and film - have on the domestic production; what are the challenges in setting up such arrangements?
Ian Kelso, President, Canadian Interactive Alliance
David Sweeney, Chief Executive Officer, Interactive Games Association of Ireland (IGAI)
Andy Payne, Chairman, The Association for UK Interactive Entertainment (UKIE)
Questions and comments from the floor with **Sean Dromgoole**, Director, Some Research and **Jenny Tooth**, Director, Angel Capital
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chairman's and Westminster Media Forum closing remarks**
Rt Hon Don Foster, MP for Bath, Co-Chair, Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Policy Committee for Culture, Media and Sport
Thomas Raynsford, Senior Producer, Westminster Media Forum