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Arcade Machine Secrets Revealed Report

DAN: I'd like to welcome everybody to the call today. My name is Dan Hatfield, and today on the call we're going to be revealing some arcade machine secrets, and we have some absolutely amazing information to share with everybody on the call. Tonight, specifically, what we're going to be covering are some of the insider tips to saving big money on making your own arcade machine; how to dust off some of your old equipment and your computer equipment and put it into new, exciting use. We're going to talk about the truth behind multiple old games and how you can use them all on the same arcade machine, and we're going to talk about specifically how to go about doing that. We're going to talk about how to create your own image of supreme coolness with your own arcade machine, which is obviously important to all of us. We're also going to take a brief inside look at the highly profitable business of building and selling arcade machines, both online and offline.

So, tonight on the call who I have with me is Mr. Jimmy Paige. He has quite an extensive tech background in both on building computers, building arcade machines, and on the software end as well. So, what I'm going to do is I'm going to have Jimmy go ahead and introduce himself real briefly, and then what we're going to do is just ask some questions of Jimmy as our expert on the call tonight, just try and reveal some of these secrets so that we can all better understand arcade machines and how we can be using them ourselves. So, why don't you go ahead, Jimmy, and share with us a little bit of your background.

JIMMY: Thanks for the intro, Dan. First of all, I would like to say hello to everybody on the call and think I'd first give you a little insight on my technical background. I went to school actually for computer engineering, learning how to build a computer and manage computer networks, and I actually became a Microsoft certified systems engineer. Don't worry; you don't need that title to be able to build an arcade machine, by the way. For the past couple of years I have been involved with building arcade machines. It's really been awesome, and I just wanted to share my knowledge on that with all of you. And that's basically a little bit on my background.

DAN: Actually, Jimmy, we appreciate that. What I'd like to do is just -- I know the first thing that we usually talk about or when I first talked to you about arcade machines, one of the questions I had was just really to better understand what engine powers today's arcade machines and how people can use some of their equipment to actually get started right from home.

JIMMY: Well, if you think about it, it's really a mystery as what's inside the machine and what's running the machine. I mean, if you go to the old arcade and see the old arcade games, what's inside those are basically old motherboards. And what used to run the systems back then is the ram actually used to be on the motherboard and everything used to be hooked up to that. But today it's as easy as picking up an old computer and -- I sure as heck, when I first got started had a lot of empty computer equipment lying around that I didn't use anymore -- and what people can just do is just dust all that off and put it to some good use.

DAN: Actually, so basically what you're saying is if anybody has some old PCs lying around, those are the main ingredients so to speak that would go into an arcade machine.

JIMMY: That is the mystery component of today's customer arcade machines.

DAN: Excellent. Excellent. Okay, well, the other thing that I wanted to talk about with Jimmy on the call tonight is the fact that, you know, I was under the misconception until speaking with Jimmy that arcade machines basically only have one game in them, and one of my life goals was to have my own Street Fighter II Turbo in my house, which, you know, is a bit of a joke, but the more I think about it, I thought it would be pretty cool. But anyways, we were talking about that kind of jokingly, and Jimmy was actually talking about some of the things that arcade machines today are capable of playing, and the various different games. So Jimmy, why don't you go ahead and share with us what exactly arcade machines are capable of playing today.

JIMMY: Yeah, some of the things I was mentioning to Dan was if you go to the arcades today the machines basically have one game on it. Like, it'll have the Mortal Kombat Game or they'll have a racing game, or you know, a Tetris Game or something like that. But I want to bust that myth, and if you create your own custom arcade machine the amount of games on it is basically limitless. And you can have thousands and thousands of games on there if you do it the right way.

DAN: Excellent. And Jimmy, you were mentioning to me when I was talking to you a little while ago about that stuff, and this may be a word that people on the call today may not be

familiar with, but why don't you go ahead and explain how the emulator works and what exactly it is. How it works and how people can use it to their advantage.

JIMMY: Okay, so basically what the emulator software does is it runs on your PC and it enables you to play the old style arcade games on your computer and it makes it -- basically what it makes it do is it makes the computer think that it's an actual arcade machine, and basically you can play thousands and thousands of games. Also, what people don't know is that they can also play their PlayStation games on there, their Game Boy games on there, Xbox games, and it's all run through the special emulator software.

Now, stuff you want to think about when you're building your own arcade machine is machine type. Basically, if you have an old machine lying around, and it can't be an old Pentium I with 48 megs of ram in there; basically, I would suggest the minimum machine you want is a Pentium II with a 16 meg graphics card in there, which today's systems completely blow that out of the water. But if you're just going to be playing Pac-Man, old arcade game styles, all you really need is that Pentium II with that small video card. But if you're running other emulator software that was actually going to get into Xbox and PlayStation games, you'd want a high-end video card for that.

DAN: So, actually, they could just essentially take an updated video card and put it in an older model PC, would that work, or --

JIMMY: They could do that. There's specially made video cards for PCI slots. PCI used to be the old video slot. Now they come with AGP. If your computer does not have an AGP slot you can definitely go out there and find a nice video card that is PCI based.

DAN: Excellent. Excellent. Okay, well that's some great information. I'm actually taking some notes on here myself on that. The other thing I wanted to ask you because it's kind of a number one tip we had for everyone, was really how we can save some big money on owning your own arcade machine. What's the difference in cost between buying an arcade machine online, say, or from a dealer, and making one from scratch? I mean, obviously, aside from the enjoyment that comes out of such a thing, you know, making stuff out of the old computers, what are we looking at in cost differences and in cost savings?

JIMMY: Well, if any of you on the call have been looking around into buying your own arcade machine, if you go on eBay or any place like that, you're going to see some of the prices are pretty much out of everybody's price range. If you take a look on eBay and see some of the classic arcade games machines for sale, you'll see that some of the classic ones cost two times more as the custom-built one these days, and that could get upwards of \$5000, and \$5000 isn't something that people can just dish out these days. What you basically can do is create your own system for substantially less. And if you've got that old computer, an old monitor or an old TV, and about \$100 worth of wood and about \$150 for a set of controls, you can have your own arcade machine running thousands of games for less than \$300.

DAN: Jimmy, what I found interesting just on a side note here is, I was actually asking Jimmy about what exactly, you know, what would we need to go ahead, to go out and get to put this thing together, and he mentioned, you know, having some particle board. You can basically make your own design on the arcade machine, obviously depending on the size, because you can obviously make different size machines, right Jimmy?

JIMMY: Yeah, there's different sizes you can make, like the classic games that use a table top arcade machines where you would look down into it. Some of the old racing games did that. You can make a mini-arcade machine which would be a mini-version of a standard case these days, or you could go out for the full-blown standard arcade machine case that you would see inside an arcade today.

DAN: Okay, excellent. Now, you had mentioned that, you know, for those of us on the call that aren't carpenters, you had mentioned a lot of times what you do is you'll bring the actual design to the lumber yard or wherever you're going to get the particle board or wood, or whatever you may be using, and a lot of times they will just cut that there for you, right Jimmy?

JIMMY: Yeah, and they actually do that for a minimal charge also. Basically, if you take it -- if you're in the area of a Home Depot or Lowe's or any lumber warehouse, basically, if you give them the dimensions they'll actually cut the wood for you which simplifies the process and makes it even easier for you, so all you have to do is go home and put it all together.

DAN: And one of the things that I know a lot of people I know, you know, as far as not having a whole lot of place -- of space -- in their cramped apartments, so not only do you save money, but you can save space as well because there is a lot of different designs to the arcade machine that you can implement and whatever it is that you prefer based on the space you have available to you and your budget. So, point number four, what we wanted to talk about was creating an image of supreme coolness. Now, it's kind of funny that you mentioned creating an image of supreme coolness, but Jimmy's pretty passionate about this. What creates that image, Jimmy, when it comes to having your own arcade machine or multiple arcade machines?

JIMMY: I mean, just ask yourself the question, like, if you walked downstairs in your friend's basement or a friend's room, or a colleague's room, and you saw a custom-built arcade machine there, you would think that that person had the supreme coolness.

DAN: Now, you had also, you know, mentioned about as far as it being a conversation piece, fashionable in a gaming room, that sort of thing --

JIMMY: Oh, definitely. If one of your friends came into the room that you had this in, I mean, they would just be so jealous of you. It's definitely a conversation piece and it adds value to the room.

DAN: Yeah. And what I found pretty entertaining was one of the arcade machines that you had given away as a gift, you know, because you're just so familiar with being able to build it and everything like that. That's another thing. You know, obviously, when somebody gives away an

arcade machine as a gift to whoever it may be, it's definitely going to be the coolest gift that person receives. So --

JIMMY: Oh, that's right. I mean, I built an arcade machine and I gave it to my brother for his birthday, and he thought I was the coolest person on the earth. And then what happened is he actually became the coolest person on the earth because he let his friends in on it and he should start charging for use of the machine, you know?

DAN: Yeah, I hear you. Actually, that brings us to the other bullet we had here for everybody on the call tonight if we have any entrepreneurs in the room, or anybody, you know, is looking at it from a hobby perspective, and that is we just want to touch on the small business potential of arcade machines out there and how people can make money by marketing these, and just exactly how much money can be made. I know that Jimmy has a few good points to share with us tonight about that, so why don't you go ahead and show us those, Jimmy.

JIMMY: Yeah, once you actually understand what it is that goes into a custom system and how much money you can actually save by building these yourself, you realize the profit potential of actually starting up a business and selling these on your own. Basically, if you can make them for under \$300 and turn a profit of \$1500 that they can be sold for, I mean, that's a great profit margin right there. And it is going to get a little higher. I mean, nobody has 15, 20 old computers lying around their house. There, there is going to be some parts involved if you're building multiple and multiple machines, but the benefit of actually selling these for, you know, four times over, I mean, you definitely get the value out of it.

DAN: Yeah, and as we were talking about this earlier, Jimmy was mentioning how you can create different product lines, whether it -- because, again you can put more than one game in these, in these systems, so whether it be for yourself as a gift, or whatever it is that you're selling, having, you know, an all fighting game, an all adventure gaming machine, being able to create different product lines based on themes or the actual exterior design of the arcade machine, to add the theme to it as well, and also the different sizes ranging from, as Jimmy has said, table-top-type arcade machines to actually, you know, a full stand up, and you can see all these different things available on eBay, and these people that know what they are doing, you know, can have a significant opportunity to make some extra money as a hobby or actually as a real full business out there.

JIMMY: And that's correct. I mean, basically the design is left up to your imagination. You can basically design a table top; you can design a new form of it. One of the ones I'm working on right now is if you see the Dance Dance Revolution machines in the arcades, you'll notice that they have the pads there and the different machine with some speakers on it. I mean, that's actually buildable for a minimal cost. If you get the pads, you get your computer and a monitor up there, and you get some old speakers going, I mean, you can build these complete entertainment systems and sell them for five times over.

DAN: Awesome. Awesome. Well, why don't -- we're going to go ahead and wrap this up tonight, but I basically, what I wanted to do is just kind of recap for everybody on here tonight, or today, or whatever time it may be where you're at when you do get to listen to this, but

basically, Jimmy, you know, you had mentioned from what I jotted down here, to really get started what you'll need is a monitor, a keyboard, and some type of computer, whether it be a tower or whatever it is that you have lying around. And what were the minimum specs again that you want in there?

JIMMY: Basically, the minimum specs I would suggest, if you're building a standard arcade machine just playing the arcade games themselves, I would suggest nothing less than a Pentium II computer with at least 128 megs of ram in it and a decent, like, 16 meg video card.

DAN: Excellent. Excellent.

JIMMY: And also, a monitor would be the easiest set up, but if you were going the TV route, if you had a 27-inch TV and you wanted to make it a little bigger, the screen, all you'd have to do is go out and buy a TV tuner card for your computer. It costs about \$15, and it would just take it to the next level.

DAN: And the other thing that we were actually getting a few questions about was controls, arcade controls.

JIMMY: Yeah. Basically, the whole setup of the machine is pretty easy. If you could setup a regular computer and plug the keyboard in, the mouse in, USB, basically, the

controls are the same. The controls are actually USB controlled, so it's basically one plug in to the computer and you're up and running.

DAN: Okay, actually, and then as far as like joysticks and that sort of thing that would go into the final design. Those are --

JIMMY: Yep, those, those are your, it's all USB. Basically, in the final design you would spec out the wood to actually drop the joystick module in there so it fits perfectly and snug, but everything is easy, plug and play.

DAN: Excellent. Well, I'm ready to get started tonight, and I just wanted to thank you, Jimmy, for coming on tonight.

JIMMY: That's not a problem; it's been my pleasure.

DAN: I appreciate having you on here, and for those of you who are listening, you know, I'm sure you've all visited www.ArcadeMachineSite.com already, but be sure to tune back in there, back into your free membership site. Be sure to share this with your friends and family. Anybody that's interested with, in arcade machines, again, this recording's free. All they have to do is go to arcademachinesite.com and go ahead and sign up, and they get instant access to it. So, thank you for coming on the call tonight or listening in with us today. And we wish you a great day.