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Exceptional Software Redefining Government, Corporate, and Educational Instruction with Never Rest Web 2.0 Game

Cutting-Edge Alternate Reality Game Delivers Experiential Learning, Guided Discovery, and Immersion

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In the spirit of Web 2.0 gaming experiments such as The Beast, The LOST Experience, Jamie Kane, and Perplex City, *Exceptional Software Strategies, Inc.*—an Information Technology contracting business located near Baltimore, MD—today announced the development of an Alternate Reality Game titled Never Rest. Adopting the belief: “Learning Does Not Sleep,” Never Rest will allow learners to perform a wide variety of experiential skills, such as collaboration, critical thinking, and decision-making, through practical application—all within a realistic, simulated environment. Never Rest will be available as a client-

customized product as well as a service, with each instance of the game based around modifiable learning objectives.

Training within Web 2.0

Never Rest introduces an innovative approach to training by delivering a safe learning environment that still mimics the real world. Learners must make use of Web 2.0 sites, cell phones, email systems, and even GPS devices to proceed through the game. Talking to other learners, finding more about what they know and how they can work together, is also essential for advancement.

“With Never Rest, learners have the chance to come home from a more traditional training environment and actually practice the skills they have been taught in a working environment,” said Tony Mangerie, President of *Exceptional Software’s mediaEdge* division. “Web 2.0 elements: wikis, blogs, social networks, are becoming so common both in the home and in the workplace. Government agencies are repurposing their analytical departments toward social networking software; Corporations are using Wikis and blogs for their documentation and communication efforts; Educational institutions are pushing for more Web 2.0 in the classroom. Never Rest uses this ubiquity to deliver a new, immersive training experience.”

Instructional Alternate Reality Gaming

Never Rest is built on the concept of Alternate Reality Gaming. Hidden clues stashed in web sites, cryptograms hidden in blog entries, enigmatic characters contacting you over instant messaging clients, an Alternate Reality Game represents modern day, community problem solving. The cryptic puzzles, combined with the social nature of the Web, lead potential players to work together to reach the game's goals: Namely, to solve the challenges thrown their way by the game's "Puppet Masters" (writers and designers who invent the storyline and puzzles for the game).

Never Rest takes the collaborative play of Alternate Reality Games and replaces the "Puppet Master" with a qualified instructor. Behind the scenes, the instructor evaluates each player's performance in overcoming the game's challenges and guides them toward the game's learning objectives. The instructor also pushes out After Action Reports, periodic briefs that detail the progression of the game and how performance can be improved.

"Performance evaluation is a critical feature in any instructional system," said Raymond Bowen, President and Co-founder of *Exceptional Software*. "In particular for the experiential learning in Never Rest, having an instructor driving the game allows for a high degree of modeling around a particular player's or team's demonstrated level of experience."

Customization and Purchasing

Never Rest will be custom-tailored to each client's learning objectives. Fortune 500 companies could request a game built around program management, or a University could have a game built around an International Politics course. Companies could also purchase the Never Rest toolset and build their own Instructional Alternate Reality Game themselves.

Never Rest as a system is planned to be released later this year.

About Exceptional Software Strategies, Inc.

Exceptional Software is a leading provider of Information Technology solutions for the government, educational institutions, and private industry. For more information, visit: <http://www.exceptionalsoftware.com>

About the mediaEdge division

Exceptional Software's mediaEdge division focuses on cutting-edge Internet multimedia development, including searchable video, multimedia asset management, knowledge management, multimedia portal solutions, computer-based training, and serious gaming. For more information, visit: <http://media-edge.com>