

Arkadium, IDGA and Local No.12 Come Together To Bring a Massively Multiplayer Social Game to GDC 2010

BackChatter, the open source social game, lets players' bet on popular tweets during the conference

San Francisco, CA – March 9, 2010 – Arkadium (<http://www.arkadium.com>), IGDA (<http://www.igda.org>) and Local No.12 (<http://www.localno12.com>) today announced the launch of BackChatter at GDC 2010, March 9-13, 2010. BackChatter tests players' trendspotting and industry smarts by challenging them to anticipate what the most tweeted topics of the conference will be. To get started with BackChatter players follow the game with the tweet "follow bcgame" once and then direct message their predicted topics before each session begins. More detailed information is available at www.backchattergame.com.

"While there have been Twitter games launched in recent months, the platform has been primarily used as a way to market games, not play them," said Eric Zimmerman, Local No.12 game designer and co-author of Rules of Play. "BackChatter is a Twitter-native game that uses the platform both as the field of play and the mode of interaction. It's a new way to play."

In BackChatter, players place bets on words that they predict will be popular in tweets about GDC. Points are scored every time someone else tweets those words, with the added twist that the value of the word decreases when more people predict the same trend. The players that score the most points each round and across the entire game win prizes such as \$100 gift certificates.

"Conference attendees expect GDC to offer more than just run of the mill sessions. BackChatter turns the conference itself into one large social game experiment" said Kenny Rosenblatt, CEO of Arkadium. "We are excited to be working with Eric again and to see how the game plays out."

For almost a decade, NYC developer Gamelab created large-scale social games designed for GDC. Now that the company has shut its doors, Gamelab co-founder Eric Zimmerman has joined forces with Mike Edwards, Colleen Macklin, and John Sharp to continue the tradition of GDC game experiments. They call their collaboration Local No.12.

Local No.12 is open-sourcing the code for BackChatter. This means that anyone will be able to create and host a BackChatter game for any conference. BackChatter is being released as an open source project under GNU GPL 3.0 and Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 licenses. Together, these allow other developers to run and expand the game as they keep their versions under the same licensing agreements. For more details, visit www.localno12.com.

About Arkadium

Arkadium is a premier game solutions developer for the casual game and advergaming markets. The company's growing archive of Flash-based and custom game solutions currently reach millions of people through some of the most popular online destinations and corporate branded sites on the Internet. For more information visit: <http://www.arkadium.com>.

About the International Game Developers Association (IGDA)

The International Game Developers Association is the largest non-profit membership organization serving individuals that create video games. The IGDA is committed to advancing the careers and enhancing the lives of game developers by connecting members with their peers, promoting professional development, and advocating on issues that affect the developer community. For more information on the IGDA, please visit www.igda.org.

About Local No. 12

Local No.12 is an experimental game collective. Veteran designers and technologists, the members of Local No.12 came together to invent new forms of emergent social play. Members include Mike Edwards, a programmer with a background in design and anthropology who serves as research faculty at Parsons the New School for Design; Colleen Macklin, designer and coder who teaches and runs the social game lab PETLab at Parsons; John Sharp, a graphic designer and game designer who teaches at Savannah College of Art & Design in Atlanta; and Eric Zimmerman, independent game designer and co-author of Rules of Play. See our BackChatter postmortem at South By Southwest a few days after GDC ends. More info: www.localno12.com.

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