



## The Intellectual Arcade

A Concept Paper / Proposal

### Introduction

Almost everyone enjoys an arcade -- it's hard not to. In addition to the overall atmosphere of fun and enjoyment, there is a game for everyone, no matter what your style or preference. There are games of chance, games of skill and many combinations in between. Some games are solo, but many are competitions that you play against your friends. You win prizes. You play again and again trying to beat the game, win the doll, impress your date. You may even come secretly and practice, so that you can perform when the pressure is on. You remember the games fondly – and many of the individual battles – for your entire life.

We at games2train can make all this happen – and more – on the *intellectual* level, with content that is meaningful to your learners, in any field. Moreover we can make it highly flexible – adaptable in only hours to any subject matter, population and language. Finally, we can extend the arcade, through the power of technology, to people's daily lives when they are no longer at the facility, whether through their computers, PDAs or cell phones.

We can do this in a phased and continuously improving process, at a cost that is reasonable, and provides great value to the Host Institution.

### Welcome to **MINDPLAY!** \*

*(\*this can be any name you choose)*

The sign over the door flashes **MINDPLAY!** The intriguing lighting draws you in. A background beat full of energy immediately gets you pumping. You see flashing signs in colored lights (unbeknownst to you, specially programmed for your group in an instant) announcing games like "The Battle of the Brains" , "Are Your Sure?" , "Crisis!" , "Fill the Pipeline" , "Staff up!" , "Debug!" , "Do or Die" , "Ship-it!" , "Risk Your Team" , "Lead 'em" , "Truth or Dare?" , "Alien Challenge" , "Get on Board" , "Fight For Your Team" , etc.

In the center is a continuously running game show with a virtual emcee and handheld controllers – you can stand and watch or join in any time. You check it out, and are surprised to find that the questions are about what you are learning! You grab a controller...

Looking around, you notice lots of attractive, semi-open “pods” to climb into -- some single player, some networked. Inside each, a large computer screen with a game being displayed. Above, more screens with the names of the high scorers. “Hey wait” you think, spotting a familiar name at the top of the list. “I just met that guy – I bet I can beat him...” There’s plenty of room for spectators around the pods, and some pods have drawn crowds, cheering a player on. Some have lines of players eagerly waiting their turn to try their skill. You notice the sign-up boards for later slots, and you reach for your pen or electronic device to sign yourself up.

Almost all the pods contain games with customized content that reinforces, enhances, and applies precisely the material and skills you are learning. Some games are solo, some are one-on-one, some are networked; all are ranked. “Wow!,” you say out loud, without realizing it. “This is great! What a great way to learn!” “Isn’t it?” says a participant of the opposite gender standing next to you.

Walking around together after exchanging greetings, you discover that some of the games are persistent massive multiplayer games – the content-filled equivalent of the popular “EverQuest” and “Asheron’s Call” on the Web, but with names like “InventorQuest” or “MADventure,” related to what you are learning. After watching for a minute, you remark to your new friend “I could get hooked on that!”

In some pods you find commercial games requiring various related skills, such as *Sim City*, *Roller Coaster Tycoon*, or a bicycle, horse, car, kayak or airplane racing simulation. “I’m really good at that game,” you say. “You think you’re better than me?” says your companion. Each of you scrambles into a pod...

### **Extract the Violence, Keep the Fun**

While the games in *The Intellectual Arcade* are full of action – as well as reflection – none are violent, and the different games appeal to a variety of generational and style preferences. Many are sports- or casino- themed, from tennis to golf to soccer. The women in the groups appear as excited as the men – in fact they are anxious to beat them!

People stop in for a minute, or stay for hours. Many tournaments are running concurrently. Some are over in minutes, some last all day, some run for days.

Some games have self-selected teams playing, some are tournaments among teams set up in advance. Some games are continued on players' laptops, PDAs and/or cell phones in the players classrooms, dorms or homes. Many can switch between several languages at the click of a button.

Prizes and recognition come in several ways. High score tables. Live one-on-one and team tournaments. Electronic currency and betting. Breaking par. Some talented or lucky players may even earn credits towards future tuition.

Each day the equivalent of a "maillot jaune" is awarded, and worn proudly to signify the wearer is that day's leader in the "***Arcade Rally.***"

In addition to merely playing and competing, many of the games ask players at some point to *create and input new challenges for others* – with the goal being to stump your friends or colleagues with a question or case problem you know, that you think they won't. In this way new content comes into the games constantly from all of the participants in every session. It is fed into a set of constantly growing databases which keeps the games alive, realistic, and up-to-date.

***The Intellectual Arcade's*** games extend beyond the physical Arcade as well -- into classrooms, dorms, and even homes. Some of the games actually call players on their cell phones unexpectedly at any (reasonable) hour for input or a decision. In fact some continue to do this even after the visit ends, as many participants elect to be part of ongoing games that keep them attached to the Institution and draw them back for additional visits. Alumni tournaments are an ongoing and big deal, reported regularly in the Institution's alumni newsletter.

And all the action in *the Intellectual Arcade* is broadcast around the Institution – and to other sites around the world – via live Webcasts.

### **Behind the Scenes at *The Intellectual Arcade* – The Structure**

There are two basic concepts supporting the structure of the *Intellectual Arcade*: flexibility and renewability. They are implemented by designing and building everything to be as modular and programmable as possible. Not programmable in the sense of requiring programmers, but rather programmable in the sense that all signs, game names, questions, tasks challenges and other content can be created, changed or pulled from databases as needed, in a very short time, by the Arcade Master and his or her staff. In some sense the *Intellectual Arcade* is just a huge "template" "engine" or "frame" for a variety of intellectual content presented in a game environment and format.

Are there two different programs running sequentially at the Institution? The Arcade master can switch the arcade from being totally about "Topic A" to being totally about "Topic B" (or any other theme previously programmed) at the input of a variable.

Is a new subject being offered? the *Intellectual Arcade* allows the Arcade Master and his/her staff -- working electronically with subject matter experts around the world -- to input totally new content in only hours.

Are multiple courses running at once? The Arcade can be programmed to offer games on different subjects in different areas, or the entire arcade can be switched over instantly at each classes' break time.

Both the content *and* the games are renewable, since they are, in most cases, structurally "loosely linked." This allows either one to be renewed or replaced whenever it becomes obsolete or "shopworn" without changing the whole structure. Unlike a Disneyland with its big fixed hardware installations, the *Intellectual Arcade's* flexible software can be updated extremely quickly. As conditions and game technologies evolve, the *Intellectual Arcade* remains continually state-of-the-art.

### **The Games of *The Intellectual Arcade***

The games in the *Intellectual Arcade* are of a wide variety of sorts, including tournaments, adventures, simulations, role-plays, and more. Some are templates already available, some are new templates developed by Games2train to solve new, generalizable learning problems, and some are (potentially) specific or proprietary to the *Intellectual Arcade*.

Among the games will be a mix of:

- Single player, two player, and multi-player tournaments. , which are
  - *Question-Based*
  - *Task-Based*
  - *Behavior-Based*
  - *Case-Based*
- Single and multi-player *simulations* and *persistent worlds*.
- Off-the-shelf and modified off-the-shelf games and *tournaments*.

## **Content Input, Update and Change**

The design goal for the *Intellectual Arcade* is to put as much of the “content” of the *Arcade* as possible under the direct, rapid control of the Arcade Master.

The “content” for the games ranges from the names of the games (and other messages) appearing on the programmable signs, to the questions, tasks, scenarios, cases, and models inside the games, to the graphics that are seen in the games, to other customizable parts of the games, such as reference materials, or photos of participants.

There will be a series of easy-to-use Content Editors provided for the Arcade Master to use to create, update, modify and change content, and facilitate the online participation of the institution’s content experts around the world. These Editors will feed the modified content directly into the games. These types of Editors already exist in Games2train’s product line.

There will be appropriate databases used to store and retrieve content, databases which we expect to grow, with constant user input, to sizeable proportions. There will be “instant pre-sets” of content so the Arcade Master can quickly switch between previously created content “packages.”

All graphics and sounds used in the games will be kept outside the game code and will be modifiable separately and individually by the Arcade Master. This will allow for the easy inclusion of any logos or other graphics as appropriate.

An additional exciting option is to include special pods with cameras that take players’ digital pictures and immediately insert them into the games.

## **The Approach**

The *Intellectual Arcade* is an expandable and scalable concept. One can start relatively modestly, with only a few games and pods, and expand in a phased fashion, adding additional features and games continuously over time, based on feedback and demand.

Our approach includes conducting research and focus groups among the Institution’s staffers and potential attendees to cull out the very best ideas. The approach is also designed to incorporate feedback from the initial groups of

participants once the arcade opens, so that the arcade will ultimately be based on, and fulfill, real, important, demonstrated market needs.

The general steps of the project are:

1. **Planning**, including research plus an assessment of what can be used from existing games2train and off-the-shelf offerings and what needs to be created or purchased.
2. **Design** by Games2train of the physical setup and the initial game offerings, in collaboration with the Host Institution.
3. **Phase One implementation** by Games2train, in parallel with Step 4.
4. **Content creation**, by the Host Institution with Games2train's assistance.
5. **Assessment** of Phase I, collection of feedback.
6. **Repetition** of the above process for subsequent phases.

### **Host Institution's Investment and Its Return**

The investment required by a Host Institution required to make the *Intellectual Arcade* happen has three components: 1) Software, 2) Facilities & Hardware, 3) Staff & Content.

Software includes all the games, the networking, the Content Editors, the installation, and support. This is the responsibility of Games2train.

Facilities & Hardware includes the design of the facility, the programmable and other signage, the pods, the computers and controllers, and the computer screens. This is the responsibility of the Host Institution, based on the joint designs of the Host Institution and Games2train.

The Staff, to be hired or assigned by the Host Institution, includes an Arcade Master, and possibly a small and limited staff. Content creators and subject matter experts from within the Host Institution and around the world can be temporarily attached to the project as needed, but do not need to be part of a permanent staff.

The Host Institution pays software development and licensing fees to Games2train based on the scope of the project and the amount of Games2train's previous programming that can be re-used. Games2train has a large number of game templates created from previous projects that can be employed – either as is or with some additional modifications -- in the *Intellectual Arcade*. The fees to Games2train also includes design, and some amount of custom development (the extent of which would need to be determined), plus any custom networking software, setup, and an initial period of support.

The Host Institution would directly fund the facility and hardware portion out of its capital budget, and would purchase any commercial software required, such as operating systems.

The Host Institution would also assign its own staff to the project as needed.

***The Host Institution's return on its investment*** in the *Intellectual Arcade* will be realized in several ways:

- The excitement and goodwill generated by the *Intellectual Arcade* will enhance the Institution's uniqueness and appeal, helping attract people and encouraging return visits.
- The *Intellectual Arcade* will enable those who participate onsite to continue to participate in the Host Institution's educational experience after they have left, fostering a stronger connection to the Institution.
- Input from the players, the Institution faculty, and other experts into the games' content and case data bases will ensure the *Intellectual Arcade's* accuracy, freshness, and relevance to a wide variety of subjects.
- The Host Institution can use the *Intellectual Arcade* for its own training and recruiting purposes.
- The Host Institution can promote the *Intellectual Arcade* in its advertising and publicity as an example of its innovative and forward-looking thinking and methodology.

### **Next Steps**

Should a Host Institution have a serious interest in moving forward, the next steps can include 1) a feasibility study, 2) a pilot project, and/or 3) a phased implementation:

1. Games2train can undertake a small pre-project consulting engagement, during which we work with the Host Institution to scope out the project more carefully and present a complete, detailed plan and proposal for further funding.
2. Games2train can create, with the Host Institution, a temporary pilot for evaluation and testing.
3. Games2train can begin the initial phase of a larger vision, along with a plan and milestones for moving towards that vision over time.

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Games2train is tremendously excited by the **Intellectual Arcade** concept, which we are uniquely qualified to design and execute. We look forward to working with those forward-thinking Institutions and administrators who see **The Intellectual Arcade** as a breakthrough enhancement that they would like to incorporate into their Institution's structure and programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Prensky  
Founder and CEO  
Games2train

For further information:  
Phone: 917-826-6965  
E-mail: [marc@games2train.com](mailto:marc@games2train.com)

*Marc Prensky is an internationally acclaimed thought leader, speaker, writer, consultant, and game designer in the critical areas of education and learning. He is the author of Digital Game-Based Learning (McGraw-Hill, 2001), founder and CEO of Games2train, a game-based learning company, and founder of The Digital Multiplier, an organization dedicated to eliminating the digital divide in learning worldwide. He is also the creator of the sites <[www.SocialImpactGames.com](http://www.SocialImpactGames.com)>, <[www.DoDGameCommunity.com](http://www.DoDGameCommunity.com)> and <[www.GamesParentsTeachers.com](http://www.GamesParentsTeachers.com)>. Marc holds an MBA from Harvard and a Masters in Teaching from Yale. More of his writings can be found at <[www.marcprensky.com/writing/default.asp](http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/default.asp)>. Contact Marc at [marc@games2train.com](mailto:marc@games2train.com).*



## About



Games2train is the brainchild, creation, and passion of Marc Prensky, President, CEO and Chief Creative Officer of the company. Marc is the author of the critically acclaimed *Digital Game Based Learning* (McGraw-Hill, 2001) and is a noted authority in the learning and training fields. Marc's background includes masters degrees from Harvard Business School, Yale Graduate School and Middlebury in France, teaching at the elementary, high school and college levels, working as a professional musician and Broadway actor, plus six years each at Boston Consulting Group and at Bankers Trust Company, where he created what is now Games2train in 1995.

Games2train stands out in the world of corporate training for its ability to marry the fun of playing a videogame or computer game together with all the information needed to accomplish training objectives – the Digital Game-Based Learning approach.

Games2train's mission is to provide a more effective solution to education, training, marketing, and communication by bringing the engagement of video games and computer games to as many educational and business processes and markets as possible, in order to "make the boring fun."

The company offers solutions in the form of Web/Intranet Single Player Games; Web/Intranet Multi-Player and Multi-Team Games; Mobile Games (Handheld and Cell-Phone); Classroom Enhancement Games; and Custom-Designed Games & Videogame Tutorials. All Games2train games allow customers to create and change their own content.

On the following pages you will find a Fact Sheet, a list of games created for specific business problems, a listing of types of simulations games that have been (or could be) created by games2train, and a compendium of what people have said about Marc Prensky's book, *Digital Game-Based Learning*.



## Fact Sheet

- Founded** 1995.
- Founder** Marc Prensky. An internationally-known leader and speaker in the field of business learning, Marc is the author of *Digital Game-Based Learning* (McGraw-Hill, 2001). His work has been cited in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *Fast Company* and many other sources.
- Philosophy** *"Business has lots of content, but no engagement. Games have lots of engagement, but no content. To make training that people want to use, we have to put the two together, especially for things that people must know but are not motivated to learn on their own."*
- Business** Games2train combines computer games and business content into a new "Digital Native" approach to learning. The company designs and sells business training solutions in the form of Internet, intranet, handheld, wireless and CD-ROM-based business training games and game templates. All products enable customers to insert their own fully-customized training content. The range of game styles runs from solitaire, to board games, to TV quiz games, to classic arcade games, to 3D video games (minus the violence). Games2train's products engage employees of all ages.
- Customers** Well-known companies in a wide variety of industries, including American Express, Avon, Bank of America, Blue Cross, Charles Schwab, IBM, JP Morgan/Chase, Nortel, and Reuters.
- Approach**
- Accelerated, Effective, Question and Task-based Learning
  - High Engagement Through Games
  - All Content Created by and Easily Changeable by Customer
- Products** **Digital Game-Based Learning** and training, in five product lines. All allow customers to enter and change the content on their own.
1. **Web/Intranet Single Player Certification Game Templates.** .  
*Conversations, The Challenge, Are You Sure?*
  2. **Web/Intranet Multi-Player, Multi-Team Game Templates.**  
*Knowledge Tournament: Can You Beat the Grid?*
  3. **Mobile Game Templates ( for Handhelds and Cell-Phones).** *Idea Mogul!*
  4. **Custom-Designed Solution & Videogame Tutorial Templates.** *The Monkey Wrench Conspiracy, Straight Shooter!*
  5. **Classroom Enhancement Game Templates.** *e.g. Battle of the Brains*
- Technology** C++ , Java. All games can be single or multi-player, and integrate multiple platforms such as the Internet, intranets, CD-ROMs, handhelds (Palm Pilot, GameBoy), and wireless (e.g. cell phones & pagers).
- Web Site** [www.games2train.com](http://www.games2train.com)



## Business Problems / Game Solutions

### Business Problem

### Game Solution

**To get employees in different “stovepipes” to collaborate and share knowledge**

**Knowledge Tournament** A multi-player, multi-team Web-based game in which everyone in an organization competes in regularly scheduled, time-limited contests requiring broad, multi-function knowledge.

**To get employees to read, learn and follow crucial policies and procedures**

**Straight Shooter!** A customer-oriented first person 3D game in which players search for potential clients, who buy only if they are convinced the players know their stuff.

**To get technical employees to switch from familiar software to a new program**

**The Monkey Wrench Conspiracy** A space-based first person 3D game in which players save the galaxy by using the new software to defeat the evil Dr. Monkey Wrench.

**To certify employees’ knowledge of company and government regulations**

**The Certifier** A collection of up to 8 “classic” games where players can choose to get certified in their own favorite game style.

**To enable employees to communicate better with colleagues and customers**

**Conversations** A game where employees compare models of humorous but true “bad” conversations with truly effective “good” ones to work on communicating more effectively.

**To encourage employees to evaluate, share, and use others’ ideas**

**Idea Tycoon!** A game in which players vie to share, collect, and use the best and most valuable ideas from around the company.

**To get employees to read and understand the information on an internal website**

**Pick-It! et al** Positioned as a “front-end” to the site, these games allows players to quickly check their knowledge and see only the information they don’t know.

**To excite employees in the corporate classroom**

**The Battle of the Brains** A sports-based game in which the instructor enters questions appropriate for (or created by) the group, and teams compete in real time to answer them.

**To train employees who can’t read or understand the language (e.g. in fast food)**

**No Words** A game in which players answer key behavioral questions through animations – no listening or reading is required.



## Business Problems / Simulation Game Solutions

***You can have a game that's not a simulation and a simulation that's not a game, but when you get one that does both, it's a real kick-ass situation.***

- Elliott Masie

### Business Problem

### Possible Simulation Game Solution

*(note: these can be combined)*

**To help clients understand the data behind a particular methodology** (e.g. time- based competitive analysis)

#### **Realistic Data-Gathering Simulation Game.**

Players encounter data just as it would be in the "real world" through interviews, site visits and analysis of existing reports. Analysis is external to the simulation. (e.g. *Time Out!*)

**To help clients understand and use a particular methodology** (e.g. strategy development)

**Problem-Solving Simulation Game.** Players are given one or more specific questions to answer and learn to use the tools for doing this through built-in coaching. (e.g. *Strategy Co-Pilot*)

**To help clients understand and explore the issues, risks and opportunities in potential future scenarios** (e.g. deregulation)

**Scenario-Based Simulation Game.** Players explore a set of pre-chosen scenarios for necessary conditions, probability, and available options. (e.g. ???)

**To help clients understand and explore the "what if" impact of strategic assumptions and variables** (e.g. investment, economic changes)

#### **Assumption-Based Simulation Game.**

Players control a "mixer board" of assumptions and variables they can vary in order to observe the power of each, base on an underlying model. (e.g. *Sim Health*)

**To allow clients to practice competing and forming strategic alliances** (e.g. industry modeling)

#### **Competitive / Cooperative Simulation Game, or "War Game."**

Players compete individually and/or in teams, forming and breaking alliances as needed to win or reach particular goals. (e.g. *Telesim*)

**To help clients understand and control a closed dynamic system, or complex machine** (e.g. Sim City, airplane simulator)

#### **Closed System Simulation Game.**

Players fly an airplane, or run a plant, city or other closed system, in order to learn how to use its resources most effectively. (e.g. *Sim Refinery*)

**To help employees acquire and enhance a skill through practice and confronting unexpected situations** (e.g. using financial derivatives to hedge risk)

#### **Task-Based Simulation Game.**

Players implement choices over time, either in discrete time periods or continuously, based on changing data. (e.g. *HEDGEmanager*)

What readers are saying about  
***Digital Game-Based Learning***  
**by Marc Prensky**

McGraw-Hill 2001. [www.twitchspeed.com](http://www.twitchspeed.com)

**"An indispensable resource..." "Refreshingly pragmatic. "**

— Michael Schrage, Professor, MIT Media Lab, in *strategy+business*, August 2001

**"Marc's book is a must read for both educators interested in interactive educational technologies and also for game developers looking to maximize the social impact of their work."**

— Will Wright, designer of *Sim City* and *The Sims*

**"A wonderful and thought-provoking book. Prensky's book is full of great information for anyone who is thinking about developing games to help train their staff. It is chock full of examples, links to great games, and strategies .... Highly recommended."**

— David Strom, consultant and editor, *Web Informant*

**"This is a breakthrough book.... Marc Prensky has written a must read book for our field!"**

— Elliott Masie, The MASIE Center, Editor, TRENDS e-Letter and Learning Decisions

**"Marc Prensky may have set out to write a great book about digital game-based learning programs, but he ended up writing a great book about the social anthropology of learning and the future of the workplace. ... The meat of this book comes in the chapters Prensky devotes to how learners have changed and why education and training have not. **Every corporate trainer and schoolteacher in America, if not the world, should take a break right now and devour these fascinating and disturbing 50 pages.**"**

— Skip Corsini in *Training Magazine*, May 2001

**"The book is a must read."**

— Randy Hinrichs, Microsoft Research

**“Extremely interesting.”**

— Donald Norman, President, Unext

**“Consider this Prensky’s wake-up call to the training profession...I consider this book to be a powerful tool. ”**

— Deanne Bryce in T+D (Training & Development), June 2001

**"For many (sometimes initially skeptical) workers, game-based learning is proving the most engaging and effective means of acquiring new knowledge and stimulating new thinking. They think it's great, since they are learning and enjoying themselves at the same time – an unprecedented combination. And for young adults entering the workforce – who I call the ‘Net Generation’ – that have been bathed in bits from an early age, this type of digitally-based intensive and interactive learning environment is now obligatory. Marc Prensky's book is a great introduction to this subject."**

— Don Tapscott, Chair of itemus inc. and co-author of *Digital Capital: Harnessing the Power of Business Webs*.

**“A terrific read! The book is an important entry into the canon of literature on digital media, education and technology, and corporate training.”**

— Luyen Chou, CEO, Learn Technologies Interactive, Inc.

**"A ‘must read’ for business managers and HR directors as well."**

— Mark Bieler, EVP, Human Resources, Bankers Trust Company

**“The book is excellent -- well researched and beautifully written. A must read for every education and training professional!”**

— Sharon Sloane, President and CEO, WILL Interactive, Inc.

**"Marc Prensky’s prescient book tells us how to get there from here."**

— Don Johnson, Office of the Secretary of Defense, The Pentagon

**"Very well done and quite informative."**

— Barbara "Bobbi" Kurshan, EVP and Chief Education Officer, bigchalk.com

**"[The] writing is among the most lucid and persuasive in this field."**

— Alison Andrews, researcher at Interval Research, Discovery Channel, Usable Products, and Organic

**"Scholarly yet remarkably readable. If you are in any way interested in gaming and training -- or if you're just interested in where training is going to be headed in the next 10-20 years -- you should very definitely read this one ... His book makes a fabulous and scholarly but remarkably readable case for the confluence of gaming and training in the years to come. And Prensky has managed to make it interactive by tying in a Web site ... and actually incorporating contests and games into the text of the book. He practices what he preaches."**

— Miriam Lawrence, Horsesmouth

**"It gave me many hours of great enjoyment... a very strong case for why game-based learning will see strong growth in the future. I also enjoyed all the examples sprinkled throughout the book -- they helped make it all come alive."**

— Eilif Trondsen, SRI Consulting

**"The book is already beginning to have an impact on the mindset around here."**

— Paul Trapp, Pfizer

**"The book shed light on things I suspected, but never heard anyone talk about."**

— Julie Jordan, Instructional Designer

**"This book really fired my imagination with the potential for using games as a way of imparting educational material. What made it all the more interesting was reading about those organisations who had already successfully taken this route. Loads of examples and links to game designers. This book is a "must-read" for anyone involved or interested in creating engaging, interactive elearning."**

— Karan Douglas, Citibank, London

**"There is so much here. It is worth the read just for all of the fabulous quotes Prensky has collected! This book will frustrate many current eLearners, support eLearning implementers, vindicate many gamers, challenge eLearning developers,**

**and anger current traditional educators down to high school teachers. Well written and researched.”**

— Clark Aldrich, Analyst Emeritus, The Gartner Group

**“*Digital Game-Based Learning* is not just pie-in-the-sky talk about what companies can gain from training disguised as a game. Author Marc Prensky talks dollar amounts and tells how to convince management of the value and get the bucks to do it. ... The book also explores the games-as-learning-tools experience of 41 companies, including Burger King Corp., PricewaterhouseCoopers, 3M Co., H&R Block Inc., Scandinavian Airlines Systems, Holiday Inn, and Cummins Engine Co.”**

— Bureau of National Affairs *Workforce Strategies*, Jan 29, 2001

**“I am currently teaching ED 559 EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER SIMULATIONS via DE/DL at Western CT State University in Danbury, CT. I selected your superb book, DIGITAL GAME-BASED LEARNING, as the required text.”**

-- John Caruso Jr., Ph.D, Professor of Education, Department Of Education & Educational Psychology, Western Connecticut State University

### **Rich, Insightful Guide to E-Learning Games**

May 1, 2001

When you set out to tell all about e-learning games, it helps to have a broad background. Harvard MBA Marc Prensky has been a professional musician, high school teacher, business consultant, corporate trainer, and creator of dozens of software e-learning games. He is now CEO of a game company. He brings to the subject an intense love that enables him to find value even in flawed efforts in this fledgling field, yet he retains the critical capacity and balanced judgment that are the hallmarks of credibility. The book provides a provocative analysis of how widespread playing of video and computer games has created a new under-35 Games Generation that sees the world through radically different eyes than their parents, who can be at best "digital immigrants." Simply transferring tell-test and "sage on the stage" teaching methods to digital media, as many e-learning companies have done, misses the point, he explains. We need to exploit the opportunities to develop new, more engaging approaches--and that primarily means games. People will learn the most technical or boring subjects if presented as part of compelling, fun games. Prensky offers scores of case studies and war stories from practitioners in the corporate trenches. He ranges from simple quiz games to intensive virtual reality simulations, showing that often simple is better, that not only the type of learner but also the kind of subject/skill to be mastered should determine the approach, and that games possess inherent advantages over simulations. He laughs at the outrageous scenarios players deliberately generate in customer relationship games. He notes with respect the capacity of deep simulations and games to draw upon the insights of communities of experts worldwide to generate cutting-edge research results that can then be parlayed into real-world management systems. And he states six



objections to e-learning games, then proceeds to blow them to bits like so many villains in a shooter game. In the book are many practical suggestions for getting an e-learning game project approved and funded as well as for how to bring it into reality. Of special value are its list of state-of-the-art games in various categories and its articulation of the advantages of each type. ... In conclusion, e-learning games are a dynamic field that is wide open to creative initiative and promises major long-term benefits. Prensky's book is a rich, insightful guide and makes absorbing reading.

— Kenneth J. Dillon, Washington D.C. (Posted on Amazon.com)

### **And e-mails from readers around the world:**

I've enjoyed your book. It was a conceptual revelation for us, and I've found that whenever I reference it in a conversation, there is a great deal of interest from people who work with ideas, and from parents, who exhibit an "aha!" response to the definition of their children as the "native speaker" twitch generation. (CA)

"Great Book!": (Hong Kong)

"After having acquired your book a few weeks ago, it has since become the office bible." (UK)

"The rave is for your book...had a lot of excellent information which I have used to make decisions...Thanks again for writing [it]. (Canada)

"I discovered your book and read it cover to cover. Your book brought together the research and compelling arguments for concepts that I already use and believe in. Needless to say, I loved it." (AZ)

"Very much enjoyed the book; thank goodness somebody's doing a great job of advocating this approach at last! (UK)

"Your new book is superb! I must tell you how excited I have become reading your new book...A great book...really great. Thanks for writing it." (CA)

"What a great book." (US)