

An Overview Of The 2010 Triangle Game Conference

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Earlier this year, on April 7 and 8, the Raleigh Marriott City Center and Raleigh Convention Center were hosts to the second annual Triangle Game Conference ("TGC"). The TGC is sponsored by the Triangle Game Initiative, which is a trade association for the Raleigh-Durham interactive entertainment and advanced learning industries.

The TGC, together with the many market-leading video game companies and institutions located in the Research Triangle area, are a testament to the growing and robust game industry that is located in North Carolina. Not only are these companies and institutions leading the way in video game technology, but also in the development of virtual reality educational training technology and other immersive media.

North Carolina is home to major video game studios including Insomniac, Red Storm, and Epic Games; video game engine providers including Epic, Emergent, Icarus, and Vicious Cycle; advanced learning companies, including Lockheed Martin, IBM, ARI, Lenovo, and Virtual Heroes; and other reality, social gaming, and mobile game companies, including Themis Group, Merscom, Spark Plug Games, Neogence, Republic of Fun, and other up-and-coming gaming firms. In addition, North Carolina colleges and universities, such as Duke, North Carolina State, UNC, and Wake Tech are leading the way in offering programs and curriculum in video game and advanced learning technologies.

The 2010 TGC offered a very impressive lineup of speakers and over 60 individual sessions on a wide range of game topics, including session tracks on the business of games, game engines and middleware, game development, games and media, and immersive learning. Speakers included local and international industry leaders. In addition, the TGC offered a Game Development University, which was designed to help those aspiring to work in the game industry to tap into educational resources and to make connections with leaders in the industry. The TGC also featured an expo of exhibitors ranging from schools and robotics clubs to independent game developers and large gaming and technology companies.

Of particular interests to attorneys and others interested in legal issues relating to the game industry, the TGC provided legal sessions on "Avoiding Tar Pits, Quicksand, and Crocodiles: Top Ten Legal 'Pitfalls' Facing Gaming Companies," "Video Game Lawsuits – What's New," "Virtual Property - Business and Legal Issues," "International Tax Issues Facing Gaming Companies," and "Sound Games: Music Licensing and Gaming."

Over 900 people from around the world came attended 2010 TGC in Raleigh. It is abundantly clear that North Carolina-and the Triangle in particular-is emerging to be the "Silicon Valley" of gaming and advanced learning technologies.

The video game industry is big business and creates enormous opportunity for North Carolina. Revenues for video games often exceed those of major Hollywood films. In 2009, the U.S. video game industry generated revenues of approximately \$20 billion. In the coming year, the Sports & Entertainment Law Section will be exploring various ways we can embrace and help foster the North Carolina game entertainment industry. We will consider ways in which we can offer our collective legal resources to the industry, and identify opportunities for North Carolina lawyers to learn more about and to become involved with this industry. Please let our section know if you are interested and would like to help with these efforts. You can e-mail me at cramsey@brookspierce.com .

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