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Play time

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PLAY TIME

In October IVE (Lee Wai Lee)'s Department of Multimedia and Internet Technology played host to more than one hundred computer enthusiasts who came together with the sole aim of creating dozens of new games in just 48 hours. As **SUMMER CAO** reports, Hong Kong's inaugural Game Jam was a thumping success.



THE MIT GAME JAM 2012 held at HKDI and IVE (Lee Wai Lee) from October 19 to 21 attracted more than 140 participants from local universities, secondary schools, local industry and overseas. The three-day competition generated 27 games, and the prize for the most creative went to a French team led by Frantz Lasorne and Nicolas Guyon, founders of Visionaires777 Ltd.

A Game Jam is a gathering of developers, artists and creatives who freely form groups and create games in a short period of time. The earliest dates back to 2002 when the *0th Indie Game Jam* was held from March 15 to 18. The *Nordic Game Jam* is the biggest event in the Game Jam calendar and the next one will take place in January 2013.


The *MIT Game Jam* was organised by game engine developer Unity 3D and representatives from the Hong Kong game industry. Its aim was to gather together talent to create games and to establish game prototypes. The Hong Kong event's theme was "Primitive Life", and participants had to create their games within two days.

The French winning duo employed the cutting-

edge technology Augmented Reality which allows interaction between digital content and the physical environment, and allows players to interact with virtual content in the real world. The iOS game that the French team designed during the Game Jam could recognise lines and dots drawn on a piece of A3 paper as elements of a map of Hong Kong, and could use them to draw a three-dimensional plan of the city on screen. Players can also navigate a Chinese dragon to explore the virtual Hong Kong.

The competition was not short of talents like Lasorne and Guyon, who are pioneers at integrating Augmented Reality technology into Apple games. And the gathering of so much IT talent for such a productive weekend greatly benefited local students and the community.

"There were over 50 participants from the industry and game developers from Europe and the US," says Aaron Yuen, a game and animation lecturer from the MIT. "Students got the chance to form groups with them, and gain precious game design and development experience from the experts.

"The co-organisers, Unity Technologies gave free professional licenses to all the participants during the Game Jam, and that is valuable to the community. The MIT Game Jam also brought in professional knowledge and experience from idea sketching to concept development, and these will help promote creative, innovative and unprecedented game development opportunities in the region." 



POSTERS FROM THE INAUGURAL MIT GAME JAM IN HONG KONG AND THE 6TH NORDIC GAME JAM IN COPENHAGEN



«ONLY WORK WHICH IS THE PRODUCT OF INNER COMPULSION CAN HAVE SPIRITUAL MEANING.»

WALTER GROPIUS