

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Semper Fi

There's a new wargame in the works featuring the U.S. Marine Corps. Called *Semper Fi* (what are the odds of that?), it is a turn-based strategy game sporting three different campaigns, fifteen different stand-alone scenarios, and a host of equipment and gear that accurately reflect the composition of the U.S. Marines when they go into action around the world. Using a hexagon grid, the game is typical of most traditional war-games, but the subject matter is certainly unique, as few computer war games have taken the Marines as their subject matter. Campaigns set in every type of terrain, from deserts and jungles to Arctic wildernesses, will test all but the most battle savvy commander, and formation sizes ranging from a single company to an entire battalion give some variety in terms of scale. The game has fairly light system requirements, requiring only a 486 and 16MB of RAM, though Windows 95 will also be necessary. *Semper Fi* is from Interactive Magic.



We're looking for a few good wargamers, says Bill Stealey, as his company unveils *Semper Fi*, a new USMC wargame.

Seven Kingdoms

Trevor Chan — the developer of *Capitalism* — is back, with a new strategy game called *Seven Kingdoms*. The game branches out from Chan's business-oriented roots, being a real-time strategy game combined with elements of *Civilization*. Your goal is to lead one of seven civilizations — Mayan, Persian, Viking, Norman, Chinese, and

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Gunfight at the 3D Corral

3Dfx sues Sega for breach of contract

Graphic chips maker 3Dfx recently filed a massive, multi-million dollar lawsuit against console-maker Sega for breach of contract. At issue: Sega's decision not to use a custom 3D graphics chipset developed by 3Dfx in Sega's next generation of console gaming machines. Sega chose instead to go with a competing design from NEC.

"Sega terminated our contract without justification," says Greg Ballard, president and CEO of 3Dfx. "We lived up to all of our commitments, yet they terminated the agreement. It's a clear breach of contract." 3Dfx is also concerned that Sega will share 3Dfx's proprietary work with NEC. The suit alleges in full: breach of contract; interference with contract; threatened misappropriation of trade secrets; and unfair competition.

Sega terminated the deal with 3Dfx on July 22, choosing instead the PowerVR 3D chipset co-developed by NEC and VideoLogic. 3Dfx's suit claims that Sega



3Dfx was developing a custom 3D graphics chipset for Sega.

breached the terms of the contract without justification, failed to make assurances to protect 3Dfx's confidential material, and that NEC deliberately induced Sega to break the contract with 3Dfx.

"[The lawsuit] really has three components," says Andy Keene of 3Dfx. "The first component is that we had a valid contract that we lived up to. We were executing under the terms of the contract we had, and Sega breached the contract. They basically canceled the contract, in our

view, without cause.

"During the development process, you cast significant information back and forth. We have sought assurances from Sega that that information was being appropriately treated given the difficulty with the contract. To date, we haven't received assurances from Sega that that information is being adequately protected."

Sega responded with the following public statement:

- Sega takes exception to 3Dfx's allegations of improper conduct;
- Sega is an investor in 3Dfx, and it would not be involved in any activities that would disclose 3Dfx's proprietary information;
- Sega has strategic partnerships with numerous entities and, in the course of the relationships, receives proprietary information;
- Sega has always respected the proprietary rights of its partners and expects the same treatment in return;
- Sega plans to aggressively defend itself against 3Dfx's complaints. The company will not comment further on this lawsuit at this time.

The Horror... the Horror

Sierra at work on Gabriel Knight III

Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned. That's the dramatic subtitle of the next game in Sierra's Gabriel Knight series, the third installment of which was announced in August.

Supernatural investigator extraordinaire Gabriel Knight finds new mystery as he descends into a rural European village for a little rest, only to find himself up to his chin in the occult yet again. This time around, the designers are promising to add even more mystery elements (there will be a whole slew of suspects for Knight to investigate, Agatha Christie-style), but without sacrificing any of the occult plot elements of the previous. And in fact, Sierra says this story will have even more spine-tingling chills and supernatural elements than before.

The game is also using a

new 3D engine, called the G-engine, custom-built for *Gabriel Knight III*. According to Sierra, "it allows you to interact with intelligent, lifelike characters, who have fluid animations as never before seen in a real-time game." And yes, the full-motion video is gone, returning Gabe and friends to their animated roots. But unlike the first game, which was your standard 2D graphic adventure, *GKIII* has a true 3D world.

Although Sierra isn't saying much about the plot, it's been revealed that Knight encounters a mysterious Prince with a new infant son and a dark family secret... but it can't be lycanthropy this time

around, because that was the story behind *Gabriel Knight II*. So what, Vampirism perhaps? A history of weak ankles? We'll let you know as soon as we find out.

The game is due to be released in the summer of 1998.



Gabriel Knight III will feature animation rather than full-motion video.