

Indy game developer Insomniac Games announces 'Nocturnal Initiative'

by *Bend_Weekly_News_Sources*

Ratchet & Clank and Resistance: Fall of Man Creators Kick Start Industry-Wide Tech Sharing by Providing Free Source Code, Tips and Tutorials

SAN FRANCISCO - Independent console games developer Insomniac Games, creators of the multimillion-selling Ratchet & Clank and Resistance franchises, today unveiled a tech-sharing initiative dubbed 'Nocturnal' in which it will share elements of its technology source code and presentations free of charge with the worldwide development community.

"The Nocturnal initiative is designed to encourage greater communication and information sharing among the development community because it will ultimately enable us all to create better games at a lower development cost," said Mike Acton, engine director, Insomniac Games. "And, in the end, it's all about making great games."

Nocturnal is being deployed in separate phases. The first phase, Insomniac's "R&D" site, launched in August 2007, and has been updated every Wednesday with new presentations, research and articles since. Phase two will be launched shortly, and will open some of Insomniac's source code under a liberal open-source license. Source code will be documented and downloadable from a wiki at (<http://nocturnal.insomniacgames.com/>). Insomniac will further support Nocturnal by releasing additional source code, research and presentations in the future.

"We feel that the time has come to share what we have learned, and learn from others to improve our solutions to the common problems that present themselves when making a game," said Geoff Evans, an Insomniac senior tools programmer who helped develop and launch Nocturnal.

Insomniac is allowing developers to use elements of its proprietary third-generation PLAYSTATION3 (PS3) tools chain source code for any purpose, for free. Source code makes up the technological building blocks that drive software development. It is often closely guarded by companies as they create their technology. However, this has led to many functions and pieces of code being re-written time-and-time again, wasting resources across the industry and ultimately affecting consumers' gameplay experiences.

"We see Nocturnal as a long-term project that may be valuable for those who want to develop similar technology as us, but without the same effort we needed," Acton explained. "We also believe Nocturnal may be valuable for our fans to gain insight to our production processes, while communicating our ideas with a larger group gives us the opportunity to generate feedback on our approaches and ultimately improve them."

Insomniac Games is the first studio developing a third-generation PS3 title with its work on Resistance 2. The company's second-generation title, Ratchet & Clank Future: Tools of Destruction, was acclaimed for its CG-movie-quality graphics upon its release in 2007.

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