

COIN CONNECTION

Atari Unveils New Games at International Shows

Atari welcomed the new year by exhibiting at two international shows in Europe in January. The annual Amusement Trades Exhibition, held in London from January 12-15, was a large and very successful exhibition, with operators and distributors from all over Europe in attendance. The ATE was held for the first time at the Olympia. Atari products were exhibited and demonstrated by the two Atari distributors for the U.K.: Music Hire Group and Ruffler & Deith.

The high point of the show was Atari's introduction of two exciting new video games to be released later this year.

Red Baron™ is Atari's latest combat challenge. The player is a WWI fighter pilot searching the skies for the enemy. The horizon tilts and shifts as the player maneuvers the joystick.

The flight simulation is so authentic, the player will think he's actually engaged in a classic WWI "dogfight", with enemy biplanes and observation blimps appearing on the screen to shoot him out of the sky. The reality is further enhanced by Atari's unique QuadraScan™ "3-D" screen graphics and exciting sound effects. Red Baron is a true flying sensation, a new challenge that will be available in both upright and sit-down cabinets.

Atari's other new entry is Warlords™, a new cocktail video for one, two, three or four players. It's a game of medieval defense and conquest. Players must defend their king, defend castle walls and destroy the enemy warlord. With the aid of his power stone the player can "catch" a fireball and redirect it, aiming it at the black knight's castle opposite him. As player skill increases, the game responds and provides more player challenge, increasing the number and speed of the fireballs. A newly redesigned cocktail cabinet provides com-

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Atari Ireland

Atari is always looking for ways to better serve its distributors. As a result, a few years ago it was determined that our European market would benefit if Atari opened a plant in Europe. After much consideration, the Republic of Ireland was chosen as the site for this new facility. The plant has now been in operation for two years, and is prepared to handle a good portion of the manufacturing and distribution of Atari games to the European

market. We thought you might want to know a little bit more about the Atari factory in Ireland.

Atari Ireland began production of video games in Tipperary in November of 1978. When market demand for successful products such as Asteroids, Missile Command and Battlezone increased dramatically, the plant's production rose correspondingly. All cabinet models (upright, cocktail, and Cabaret™) have been manufactured in Tipperary. Atari Ireland actively pursues the policy of sourcing

components from local vendors, and presently they get cabinets, harnesses, power supplies and plexiglass in Ireland.

Since September of 1980, Shane Breaks has served as International Director of Marketing. Atari Ireland has purchased a home for Shane and his family, which will also serve as Atari's International Marketing office, a service seminar center for distributor technicians and a general amenity for Atari employees.

Atari Ireland now also has a full fledged Customer Service

group which will supply all parts to the company's European distributors. Field Service has two highly qualified electronic engineers who conduct schools in the latest Atari technology all year at the distributor offices.

The plant's location in Tipperary is in the Limerick region of Ireland, where many U.S. and European electronics companies are presently setting up factories. Tipperary is near Shannon Airport and Waterford port, giving it access by air and sea to its markets. Atari Ireland regularly ships to

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Atari Ireland continued

Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark.

To improve its internal efficiency and thus provide a better service to its customers, Atari Ireland has just purchased its own IBM 34 computer system. One of the first items to be entered

into the computer files will be the company's spare parts inventory.

As our European market continues to grow, and as we continue to add more distributors to our international list, the Atari Ireland facility will play a larger role in supplying games and services to Europe.



The President's Corner

In many ways 1980 was for us a most remarkable year. In the face of climbing interest rates, the on-again-off-again recession, and downturns in many areas of the economy, our industry experienced perhaps the most successful year in its history. I really can't remember another period when every individual level, operator, distributor and manufacturer, agreed on just how good business was.

The reasons, as now accepted, are three-fold. It all started with the new technology manifested by Asteroids™ and Space Invaders. We have a more varied mix of locations today, including chains (restaurants, super-

markets, discount stores, convenience stores, etc.) and more multi-unit locations including some very sophisticated arcades. Lastly, and to my mind most important, the actual number of people playing coin machines has multiplied in the last two years at least three times. And this incredible growth in the player base is predicted to continue.

Looking ahead to the new year, with our expanding commitment to engineering and new technology, we intend to retain our position as the leader in the industry and to do everything we can to propel it to even greater heights of achievement.

—Joe Robbins

The Cabaret™. Another First from Atari

The Cabaret cabinet. It's another first in a series of firsts from Atari. The Cabaret is a "mini" cabinet designed by Atari to optimize floor space and maximize profits. The Cabaret takes up less than four square feet of floor space, so it's ideal for locations where space is limited. In fact, the Cabaret may be your key to opening new locations in restaurants and lounges, theater lobbies or anyplace where people have free time.

Operators requested that we design a cabinet that would fit in a minimal amount of space and still have the exciting game play features of a full-size upright. Atari engineers came up with the Cabaret. It was the first "mini" cabinet on the market and its applications are endless. The Cabaret fits in many places where you could not put a game before. It's a great way to use "dead" floor space. And it's a great profit-maker, too, with games like Asteroids™, Missile Command™ and Battlezone™ all available in the Cabaret cabinet.

What's more, Atari's Customer Service department



now offers full-color decals which can be applied to the side panels of the Cabaret cabinets.

The Cabaret. It's the latest way to make your space work for you.

Marketing Expansion

Frank Ballouz, Atari's Director of Marketing, has announced the appointment of Mariann Layne as Marketing Services Supervisor. In this position, Ms. Layne will have responsibility for trade shows and sales promotions, and will coordinate advertising and publicity programs related to marketing of Atari products.

Ms. Layne comes to Atari from the San Martin Winery, where she was National Public Relations Manager. She is also currently attending Santa Clara University, studying for a Masters degree in Business Administration.

In making the announcement, Frank Ballouz stated: "We are pleased to have Mariann join the Marketing



department. Her previous communications experience will be a tremendous additional asset in her new post with Atari." Laura Burgess, previously assistant to Frank Ballouz, has become Ms. Layne's assistant.

Star Tech Survey Results

This month's Tech Tip comes from Star Tech magazine, which recently printed the results of a reader survey. The survey asked readers the following four questions: "Which amusement machines are easiest/most difficult to service?"; "Whose machine do you feel most comfortable troubleshooting?"; "Which manufacturers, in your opinion, design their products with service in mind?"; and "Who in your opinion, seems to ignore the service aspect?"

Atari's videos came out on top as the most easily serviceable, and readers also felt most comfortable in troubleshooting Atari videos. The survey also revealed that 92% of the operators surveyed felt that Atari does design their video product with service in mind. Some of the reasons cited for reader's positive attitudes towards Atari videos were the detailed service manuals and schematics which are easy to understand, the use of quality PCBs and just plain better quality control.

Thank you, Star Tech readers, for putting Atari on top.

Did You Know...

The younger a person's age, the more likely it is that they have played a coin-operated game at least once in their life. Thirty-five percent (35%) of the persons 55 and over, 57% of those aged 35-54, 76% of those aged 21-35, and 86% of those aged 13-20 years old have played a coin-operated game.

This is another finding from an Atari study conducted by Consumer Response Corporation in 1980. Nearly 1,100 households were randomly dialed to comprise the national sample.

Operators of the Eighties January Profile: George Hamilton, Jr. Oaklyn, New Jersey

George Hamilton, Jr. is certainly one of the most innovative, enthusiastic, and highly professional operators in this industry. With 29 years of experience, he is a powerhouse of information and creative concepts. Much of his success with his company, Terminal Vending, can be attributed to his progressive attitude. George sums up the industry as "a forward moving business which commands changing with the needs and demands of the marketplace. From one week to the next, one must be prepared to initiate new ideas. To move ahead in this industry you have to live it."

Terminal Vending is one of the larger independent operating companies in the United States. Their mix of locations includes a chain of arcades along the New Jersey shoreline and just about every type of street location imaginable.

QUALITY AND AWARENESS LEADS TO TRUST...

Each of Terminal Vending's locations is serviced and evaluated as though they are their only customer. A detailed computerized system is used to monitor the activity in the locations and each one is 'graded' according to the overall potential. This information is used to tailor the product mix, rotation periods, and expected earnings level for each account.

"An ongoing objective is to upgrade locations to achieve and maintain the maximum potential for that location. Building the awareness of the location owners is essential to develop a mutual trust. Our customers allow us to use our expertise in the placement of equipment because they see positive results. In one of our bar locations, the business from the bar alone (not including the games) showed a one-third increase

due to the maximized product mix and attraction of the games," says George. Consistency in service enables Terminal Vending to guarantee a minimum collection and generally they can collect a higher percentage of the split.



KNOW YOUR LOCATION AND THEN PROMOTE...

George personally spends many hours observing the type of players in different locations. "Cocktail and cabaret game cabinets are more conducive to certain types of locations and as the awareness and appeal of games increases, the mix of games and types of cabinets changes as well," notes George. He further adds, "Players today are so proficient at games. You really have to monitor them and use the options available. In the proper locations 50¢ pricing can be successful. The key is to evolutionize, rather than revolutionize the players."

Being a fanatic for using unusual techniques to promote games, George knows what works to evolutionize players. As an example, George cites, "In some locations especially where there are a lot of people sitting around, I have additional monitors mounted above games to allow remote spectator participation. People get up from their seats to see if they can beat other players scores".

In some locations they modify games for special ef-

fects to provide visual rewards for high scores or specials achieved (e.g. strobe lights and dry ice).

And as far as the future, it certainly looks bright for this operator. Without a doubt, George will continue living this industry and pursuing the right avenue to success. Thanks to such operators, this industry will grow to be even more exciting and prosperous.

Video Madness Sweeps the Media

Video games are the coming thing, according to the media. "Video madness" is what the Lowell, Massachusetts *Sun* calls it in an article in the May 29, 1980 edition. Articles have appeared in newspapers all over the country, from the *New York Times* to the *Santa Ana Register*. The *Wall Street Journal* wrote about the addictive quality of the new videos. (The articles always mention Atari's Asteroids™ as one of the most addictive games ever to come along.)

Most recently, an article written by David Lachenbruch appeared in the December 6, 1980 issue of *TV Guide*. The article once again emphasized the increasing popularity of the video game. Predicted Lachenbruch: "This is the year the video game will overtake the pinball machine as king of the arcade."*

Naturally, all of this publicity serves to attract new players to the games. And that's an advantage for all of us. If you see an article in your local newspaper, post it on a bulletin board in your game location. And send a copy to Atari, c/o The Coin Connection, 1265 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

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International Shows continued

portable seating for four for this new battle challenge.

Atari's current hits, Asteroids™, Missile Command™ and the exciting Battlezone™ were also displayed and continuously played.

Atari played a big part in the activities at the ATE. Aside from the introduction of these two new games, the company also hosted a cocktail party on January 12, the first evening of the show. Held in the Ballroom of the Dorchester Hotel, the party was an elegant affair attended by operators and distributors from all over the U.K., Europe and by many U.S. distributors.

Linda Butcher and Mary Takatsuno, Atari's Marketing Research team, conducted a Tellus™ survey of opera-

tors and distributors in the United Kingdom. Like the Tellus survey taken at the AMOA Show in November, the survey in London will give Atari valuable data from its distributors in England about Atari games, service support, etc.

From London, Red Baron and Warlords went on to Frankfurt, West Germany, for the international trade show held January 22-25. The two Atari distributors in Germany, Lowen Automaten and Nova Apparate, exhibited Atari's new and most current game sensations.

Based on the positive responses to Red Baron and Warlords, we look forward to 1981 being Atari's biggest year in Europe to date.

Promotions for Profit

ARCADE OR STREET LOCATION:

A very successful promotion idea was brought to our attention recently. This promotion idea can be used for any arcade or street location that uses a token system.

Merlin's Castle, a local game center in San Jose, California, usually sells three tokens for \$1.00. Three weeks ago, the manager implemented a Happy Hour program: on Mondays, Tues-

days, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., six tokens for \$1.00.

On weekdays, the dinner hours between 5:00 and 7:00 had traditionally been quite slow in this location. The manager of the arcade told Atari that the traffic level has nearly tripled during the times of the Happy Hour program.

Send your promotion idea to the Editor of the Coin Connection and receive a free gift from Atari.

New T-shirts and Posters

The latest items available direct to operators from Customer Service are Missile Command and Battlezone t-shirts and posters. These exciting t-shirts and posters, excellent promotional or incentive items, can be ordered by sending a


registered cashier's check or money order only (please, no personal checks) to Atari Inc., Coin-op Customer Service, 1105 N. Fair Oaks Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086. Each t-shirt is \$5.50; California residents must add appropriate sales tax.



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