



February 21, 2002

Crystal Sky game to play \$60 mil "Tekken" feature

By Blake Murdoch

Following the global success of "Lara Croft: Tomb Raider", Crystal Sky has nabbed the rights to make a \$60 million film version of "Tekken", one of the most successful video game franchises in the world, in association with Japan's Gaga Communications and the game's maker, Namco.

The rights were acquired from Namco after a fierce bidding war, according to Crystal Sky president and CEP Steven Paul at the American Film Market.

"Tetsu Fujimura, CEO of Gaga, and I have wanted to make a big commercial movie together for a long time", Paul said. "I have had a long and wonderful relationship with (him) and Masaya Nakamura, chairman of Namco, for over 12 years now. The time was right, and "Tekken" was the perfect game to pursue our dreams together".

"Tekken" is a hugely popular fighting-style game played on arcade machines, platforms and PCs. To date, it has sold more than 18 million units worldwide. "The game has fun characters and is a wonderful story", Paul said. "(Unlike some other games), this has a whole style of its own and is a really fun piece that is very commercial".

Under the deal, Crystal Sky will co-develop and co-finance the film with Gaga, which also gets Japanese distribution rights. Much of the CGI effects needed for the feature will be done by Creative Visual Effects, which Paul also own.

Casting and a director are being considered, Paul said, adding that he's keen to get the film into production as soon as possible. Presales, however, are not being sought until later this year.

Said Gaga chief operating officer Kaz Tadashiki: "We are engaged in a film production business that focuses on developing films based upon video games and Japanese animation which can appeal to audiences all over the world. We are excited to develop this thrilling live-action movie with our new partners". Added Nakamura, "I recognize that "Tekken" is a first step to co-production with a foreign partner, and I expect to develop (other) titles based upon our valuable assets with Gaga and Crystal Sky".

In addition to producing its own slate, Crystal Sky has a 12-picture co-financing deal with Paramount and an association with Dimension Films. It's in postproduction on the CGI effects-laden comedy "Unleashed" as well as "Superbabies: Baby Geniuses II".