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ItzaBitza
sabi

Microsoft Introduces ItzaBitza Children's Game

Together with Sabi

ItzaBitza is just the first title out of a collection of games introduced by Microsoft, designed for children age four and older, and set up to introduce a new gaming experience. Developed by Sabi, with technology licensed from the Redmond giant, ItzaBitza is a title combining interactive drawing with educational activities. Sabi co-founder and CEO Margaret Johnson resorted to the Microsoft IP Ventures program for the technology necessary to put together the game.

"Game-based education is a very exciting concept, and one that we have been interested in for many years," explained Craig Mundie, Microsoft's chief research and strategy officer. "The launch of Sabi's game is a great example of our collaborative efforts to bootstrap young companies by providing them with guidance and access to innovative intellectual property."

The technology breakthrough and design concepts behind the interactive learning game were developed by Microsoft Research. The project had incubated within Microsoft's Advanced Strategies unit ahead of Microsoft IP Venture licensing it to Sabi. Margaret Johnson, CEO and co-founder, indicated that she intended to put together more than just an open drawing tool.

Children playing the game have to read increasingly difficult demands from the game's characters, in order to perform the tasks required. At the same time, however, all drawings virtually come to life, and both the characters and the children are able to interact with them.

"We wanted to take all we had learned while incubating our game designs at Microsoft, and create a game we felt was a fresh approach to children's computer games," Johnson stated. "We see ItzaBitza as the seed of an effort in which the games children want to play provide crucial creativity and reading skills they need to succeed." Johnson revealed that she was uncomfortable with the violent themes and graphic images in today's games, and felt the need for an alternative.

