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Ubisoft Acquires Tom Clancy Rights

And is developing Tom Clancy-based MMO

In a move that will cost 20 million Euro (which is around 30 million dollars) for the fiscal year of 2008 alone, French game publisher and developer **Ubisoft** announced yesterday that it acquired the exclusive right to all intellectual property that uses the "Tom Clancy" name or title. Ubisoft will have to continue paying undisclosed sums to Tom Clancy for the next two years as stated in the deal, but the agreement stipulates that no further royalties will be paid to Mr. Clancy as Ubisoft continues to use his name for videogames, books and other types of media. Tom Clancy is best known outside the gaming world for his political thrillers, which include the Cold War-based Hunt for Red October. His first foray into the videogame business was as far back as 1998 when he collaborated on the first **Rainbow Six** game with then developer Red Storm Entertainment. 2000 saw the acquisition of Red Storm by Ubisoft and the beginning of a very fruitful collaboration between the writer and the French game producer. Results include games like GRAW 1 and 2, the Ghost Recon and the Splinter Cell series. Yves Guillemot, the man who is Chief Executive Officer at Ubisoft, said that: "The future of our industry lies in our capacity to create and develop brands that captivate consumers and that present a myriad of opportunities for the full spectrum of entertainment, be it video games, books, movies or other media. The Tom Clancy brand is recognized around the world for offering exciting video games, films and books. Capitalizing on the strong franchises that we've built over the past 10 years, we will take the Tom Clancy game brand to the next level of the global entertainment industry." He then went on to reveal what this "next level" was. Surprise, surprise, it's a Clancy-based MMO! Guillemot says that the company already has the technology that is necessary for MMO development, but that a big recruitment drive is needed to get together all the artists and designers that will work on the title. The costs for the project are estimated at over 40 million dollars. It's not clear whether the MMO will just be a combination of franchises, featuring elements from games like Splinter Cell and Rainbow Six or whether a new setting will be devised specifically for the MMO. Guillemot also hinted at developments for other media to complement the MMO effort. "It will help to build bridges between books, movies and games to enhance consumer interest... our goal is to make sure they get in the Clancy universe around our products. They can play, read, watch movies or TV series, and all this will make them get more interested by that universe, and control the ability to get a lot more information on the characters and what happens and so on," said the CEO of Ubisoft. With development not even started on the MMO, it will be some time before we can see anything in the way of game concepts or gameplay, but with the Tom Clancy intellectual property behind them, Ubisoft can really go a long way.