

16 May 2008

By: Andrei Dumitrescu, Games Editor



Vivendi bets on World of Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King

## [Vivendi Sells Less, Expects More](#)

### *From Starcraft II and Wrath of the Lich King*

Two days ago, we talked about the financial results of [Electronic Arts](#), which surprised most people by selling more games but recording a loss, rather than a profit. Yesterday we talked about the financial results the PlayStation 3 maker [Sony](#) has posted for the fiscal year of 2008. And today, in other fiscal news, we'll see how [Vivendi](#), and especially its games division, has fared lately. Vivendi has announced the results for the first quarter of 2008 and it's a rather mixed bunch of numbers. On one hand, overall games sales went down by 24% when compared to the same period of last year. On the other hand, the first trimester of 2007 saw the release of an eagerly expected expansion to World of Warcraft, called The Burning Crusade, so a drop in sales compared to the entire period was less than likely. Blizzard, the main element in the Vivendi games division, a division which is set to merge with Activision later this year, saw sales of around 296 million dollars. The same [Blizzard](#) is expected to go much higher this year, as Starcraft II and the World of Warcraft expansion [Wrath of the Lich King](#) are due to be launched. Sierra Entertainment and its affiliates, Sierra Online and Sierra Mobile, managed to bring in more money than they did last year, and partly offset the fact that Blizzard did not have a big release during this period. Vivendi as a group, with Universal Music Group as a core component, managed sales of 8.2 billion dollars for the quarter, which constitutes a rise of more than 5% over the same period of 2007, while overall profits were a bit smaller. The outlook is positive for the rest of the year, with the Wrath of the Lich King expansion, of which Blizzard says "[it] is scheduled to be released in the second half of 2008" and expected to provide a boost in the sales of the games division. Currently, it is not known exactly how the merger, which should go ahead in June, is going to tamper with sales and profit reports from Blizzard and Vivendi Games in general.