

FOCUSING ON FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

UNIS has amassed quite a portfolio of family-centric amusement games in recent years, says Steven Tan

WHEN it comes to game design, there are few companies quite so prolific as Universal Space, or UNIS as it is known. At IAAPA last November, the Chinese company unveiled no fewer than nine new machines.

According to general manager Steven Tan, UNIS has shifted attention towards the family entertainment market – a move that has gone hand-in-hand with it establishing a North American base in Toronto, Canada.

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“Over the past 10 years since UNIS set up offices in Toronto, more and more products have been developed for the family entertainment centre environment, which is now a big market for the US,” said Tan. “Our products are now primarily designed for this area to ensure they provide value game play.”

Among the new games launched at IAAPA was a four-player version of UNIS’ popular Pirate’s Hook game, which was brought to market a year earlier and has quickly established itself as a key piece for any FEC.

“This exciting redemption fishing game has



unique tension feedback fishing reels that give you the feeling that you actually have a fish on the line,” said Tan. “The four-player cabinet offers a game the whole family can play together and the two-player gives an option for operators with limited floor space. Both cabinets have been a tremendous success for us so far.”

The US is clearly an important market for UNIS and one that has shown growth since the recession. The market is improving, said Tan, but operators remain very cautious. They are therefore keen to ensure the machines they buy perform well and can contribute to improving the overall income of their location.

For UNIS, he explained, bringing a game to market is not a process undertaken lightly. “We did a lot of research before the launch

of these machines, both in-house and liaising with distributors at two open house days we held last Autumn in Dallas and Toronto and so the reaction was in line with our expectations, but at the end of the day you can never be complacent in our industry.”

Tan’s company has a global presence thanks to its reputation for designing such quality games. Success in the US and the way it markets its products there often translates into other markets and territories. There maybe some product customisation required, such as language and software changes, but the concept will more than likely remain the same, said Tan. It speaks volumes about the ingenuity of the concepts it develops that they do indeed translate across so many different markets and demographics – true universal appeal.



SHOW PICTURES



24



25



26



28



27



29



30



31



32



33



34



35

24: The Jennison Entertainment Technologies team
 25: Embed's Ann Krull (left) and Lisa Chapman
 26: Namco Prize's Jim Wulfers
 27: James Pulford of Snapsho
 28: LAI's Theo Sanders (left), Marshall Ashdown and Allison Timberlake
 29: The Intercard team
 30: Kiran Karanki (right) and Raghunath Saligrama of Semnox
 31: Universal Space's Steven Tan (left) and Adrenaline Amusements' Francois Lachance
 32: Kevin Jordan of Nickels & Dimes
 33: John Buscaglia of Stern Pinball
 34: Dave Jackson of Laserforce
 35: Josep Tarres of Digital Centre