



# United Coders

PRESS RELEASE  
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## **DRAGON'S LAIR® UP FOR GRABS ON SONY PSP! LEGENDARY ARCADE GAME SEEKING PUBLISHER**

Dragon's Lair®, the world's first full-animation laser disc video game - debuted in 1983. The game features Dirk the Daring, a rather clumsy knight that must make his way through the castle of an evil wizard to save the beautiful Princess Daphne. The game's visionary team of creators (Don Bluth, Rick Dyer, Gary Goldman, John Pomeroy and Chris Stone) was astounded by the public's overwhelming enthusiasm and witnessed lines as long as several city blocks as people of all ages waited to play the game. Currently, Dragon's Lair® is one of only three games on permanent display at the Smithsonian Institution (the other two are Pac Man and Pong).

United Coders, developers of the Nintendo DS version of the game, are currently putting the final touches to the Nintendo DS version, and is currently seeking a publisher for a version of the game on the Sony PSP. In exchange for funding the development and intellectual property cost of Dragon's Lair® for Sony PSP, the publisher will be granted the global publishing rights for the format. United Coders expect to begin development of Dragon's Lair® for Sony PSP in February with a release date of Christmas 2008 on the platform.

The story of Dragon's Lair® is classic: *"Dragon's Lair®: The fantasy adventure where you become a valiant knight, on a quest to rescue the fair princess from the clutches of an evil dragon. You control the actions of a daring adventurer, finding his way through the castle of a dark wizard, who has enchanted it with treacherous monsters and obstacles. In the mysterious caverns below the castle, your odyssey continues against the awesome forces that oppose your efforts to reach the Dragon's Lair. Lead on, adventurer. Your quest awaits!"*

According to Hans Olsen, the Executive Producer and Lead Programmer on Nintendo DS and Sony PSP, the PSP version will feature – like the Nintendo DS version, two distinct modes of play:

*"From a players perspective you can choose to play an arcade accurate version simply called Arcade mode, or you can opt to play the more unique Director's Cut mode. The Arcade mode is exactly what its name implies; a genuine arcade accurate version of the 1983 arcade game with LEDs for scores, featuring the same semi-randomness of the scenes being played. The Arcade mode was implemented to maintain the current hardcore fan base of Dragon's Lair®, which is quite large in numbers, and naturally also because never before has there been an arcade accurate version on any handheld. The Director's Cut mode is very different. One difference is that the Director's Cut mode features 5 lives instead of the typical 3 lives for Arcade mode. Another difference is that Director's Cut mode features extra scenes, such as a scene where Dirk the daring has to cross a drawbridge and avoid getting killed by tentacles. This video footage existed in 1983 but was never used in the North American version, only in the European version of the arcade. In Director's Cut mode, this is always the very first scene you play, as it gives a nice introduction to the player beginning the adventure. The laserdisc from 1983 had a lot of video footage that was never made available to the player in 1983. All this extra footage is now available in Director's Cut mode, and the amount is quite substantial. Another important difference is that back in 1983, the game played somewhat "semi-random"; some scenes, such as the falling platform, was played no less than 4 times during a single game play session! To new players who has never played Dragon's Lair® before, it's highly confusing that you need to play the same sequence over and over again, and unlike Arcade mode, the Director's Cut mode is based on a more linear adventure approach where the scenes are not really played semi-random, but rather in a specific sequence carefully conceived and invented by our Technical Producer, Dave Hallock, who is, without doubt, the worlds leading expert on Dragon's Lair®. Dave Hallock is also one of the few people who has ever reversed engineered the original ROMs, and improved flaws in the original game from 1983. But this is only the beginning! In addition to an extra scene, more video footage, more lives, and more logical scene sequencing, the Director's Cut mode also features a unique scrolling castle showing new players how they are currently progressing throughout the adventure to save princess Daphne. In Director's Cut mode, you don't play to achieve the highest score; scores doesn't exist in Director's Cut mode! You play to save the princess, and the game play experience for a player who has never played Dragon's Lair® before will love the unique Director's Cut mode. In Arcade mode you have the old-school audio effects, while in Director's Cut mode we have added more "modern" audio effects to the game. Director's Cut mode is also the only mode featuring the unique Sony PSP features. To summarize, the Arcade mode is for the hardcore fan who wants to play the game from 1983 – unedited from 1983. Director's Cut mode is aimed at new players more familiar with the Sony PSP as a*

handheld, but no prior experience to Dragon's Lair®, who seeks an arcade adventure experience featuring fantastic visuals and unique controlling mechanisms ", Olsen concludes.

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#### ***The origins of Dragon's Lair***

*Dragon's Lair® was one of the first laserdisc video games, released in June 1983 by Cinematronics. It featured polished Disney-like animation created by former Disney animator Don Bluth, and for the first time allowed players to control a fully realized character. Most other games of the era represented the character as a sprite, which consisted of a series of bitmaps animated by playing them in succession. However due to hardware limitations of the era, artists were greatly restricted in the detail they could achieve using that technique; the resolution, frame rate and number of frames were severely constrained. Dragon's Lair® overcame those limitations by tapping into the vast storage potential of laserdisc, which completely freed the artist, but imposed other limitations on the actual game play. Even by today's standards, Dragon's Lair's® graphics are good. The game's enormous contrast with other arcade games of the time created a sensation when it appeared, and was played so heavily that many machines often broke due to the strain of overuse. It was also arguably the most successful game on this medium and is aggressively sought after by collectors. To this day, the Dragon's Lair® game has sold more than 1,000,000 units across multiple platforms including but not limited to Commodore 64, SNES, Atari ST, Amiga, Mac, PC (floppy, CD, DVD), 3DO, DVD, Atari Jaguar and most recently a Blu-ray version compatible with the PlayStation 3.*

#### ***About United Coders***

*Founded by Hans F. Olsen, United Coders began its activities in 1987. In the beginning, the company was simply a gathering of enthusiastic hardcore programmers and pixel pushers, who developed games and multimedia applications for the Amstrad CPC, Commodore 64, and the Amiga platform. In 1993, United Coders officially registered as a company. During 1993-1995, United Coders developed and marketed a number of software applications for the Amiga - amongst these the highly acclaimed Amiga First Aid series of applications. By the end of 1995, United Coders achieved certification as official member of the exclusive Amiga Developers Support Program Europe (A.D.S.P.E). During the first quarter of year 2000, United Coders changed focus and transitioned itself into a highly specialized PR-agency focusing on servicing developers, publishers and distributors within the games and multimedia industry. United Coders offered services such as media contact, press releases, newsletters, articles, company profiles, advertisements, localization and product evaluation. By the end of year 2003 United Coders had an extensive network of industry contacts throughout Europe (Nordic in*

particular), and it is safe to say that United Coders had successfully become the leading games industry PR-agency in the Nordic region. In April of 2004, United Coders relocated to San Francisco and returned to its roots, and immersed itself into a privately owned third party contract game development studio committed to design, create and develop state-of-the-art computer games. Since relocating to San Francisco, United Coders has worked on a number of titles on PC, X-Box Live Arcade, Game Boy Advance, Nintendo DS and Nintendo Wii. Most recently, United Coders has completed work on the world famous Dragon's Lair franchise on the Nintendo DS, with a Sony PSP version to follow in 2008.

#### **About Dragon's Lair LLC**

Based in San Diego, California, Dragon's Lair LLC is a joint venture between Digital Leisure and the original creators of the 1983 arcade smash hit Dragon's Lair®. Dragon's Lair LLC is comprised of legendary animation professionals Don Bluth, Gary Goldman and John Pomeroy, as well as veteran video game creator Rick Dyer. Rounding out the partnership is multimedia industry veteran David Foster, president of Digital Leisure Inc. and the publisher of the Dragon's Lair 2D versions. Dragon's Lair LLC is committed to creating state-of-the-art interactive titles that are supported by motion picture, broadcast and toy ventures.

***If something's imaginable, we'll make it available!***

