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Business

October 11, 2004

TOP 10 FOR YOUNG BUCKS

BRIAN BERGMAN

Focus on...BioWare Corp.

Founded by former physicians Ray Muzyka, 36, and Greg Zeschuk, 35, both lifelong video-game freaks, the maker of computer and console games has 210 employees. Since 1996, it has sold nearly 10 million games, including the hugely popular *Baldur's Gate* series and *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*.

Average employee age: 30. "Our entire workforce grew up in the video-game age," says Zeschuk, "so they understand the consumer."

Top recruiting challenge: Only nine per cent of employees are female. But that's changing, helped by more young women taking up gaming and enrolling in technical colleges.

Best perks: Free breakfast at the office, both hot and cold; 40-seat movie theatre that can be booked for family and friends; profit sharing and bonus system; free gym membership.

Special geek bonus: Everyone gets to try all the new games being developed.

Special geek bonus II: The company rented an entire multiplex for the opening of *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, for staff and loved ones. "It was one of the coolest movies I'd ever been to," says Muzyka, "because you're surrounded by your colleagues."

Secret weapon: Location. "Edmonton is a very family-friendly place," says Zeschuk. "You can go to L.A. and live the fast life, but many of our employees are at the age where they are buying houses and starting

TOP 10 FOR YOUNG BUCKS

1. Abebooks Inc., Victoria
2. MBNA Canada Bank, Ottawa
3. BioWare Corp., Edmonton
4. Komex International Ltd., Calgary
5. Radical Entertainment Inc., Vancouver
6. Algorithmics Inc., Toronto
7. Blast Radius Inc., Vancouver
8. First Canadian Title Co. Ltd., Oakville, Ont.
9. Taleo Corp., Quebec City
10. WestJet Airlines Ltd., Calgary

Note: Average age of employees ranges from 30 to 34.

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families."
Requisite foosball table? Check.



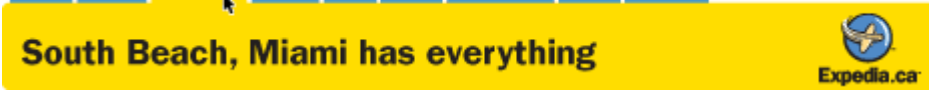
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