

For Immediate Release

## Raven Tales wins \$10,000 prize at iPitch 2006

**Banff, June 14, 2006** –The Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund announced that *Raven Tales Interactive* has won the iPitch 2006 award, presented today at the Banff World Television Festival. Michael Ockenden from Sandbox Games, representing the interactive portion of the entry, and Peter Strutt from Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, the broadcast partner, were the presenting team for *Raven Tales*, and will be awarded the \$10,000 development prize. Their entry was chosen by an international panel of jurors from the television and new media industries, from a short list of four finalists.

In awarding the prize, the jury cited the web site's rich graphics and how closely the universal stories of the interactive portion were tied to the television series.

Built around the adventures of Raven, the most powerful deity in Aboriginal folklore, *Raven Tales Interactive* is the companion web site to the eponymous television program, which will air on Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. Available to players in English, French or Cree and designed to introduce native folklore in a fun and educational way, the game is targeted to school age children and their families. Each game level centres around a different episode of the television show, and then levels are further broken down into mini-games, each of which highlights one major element of the story.

*Raven Tales Interactive* takes a traditional passive storytelling form and brings it into the digital age. Viewers can watch the television show, then play through the game to experience the stories for themselves and to discover new elements not presented in the series. The same characters and environments are used for both the series and the game, creating a seamless integration between the two mediums. Players learn mythology, culture and history by experiencing it in a fully 3D interactive environment.

*Raven Tales Interactive* is produced by Sandbox Games, with Michael Ockenden as the producer and lead developer. The television show is produced by Raven Tales (Alberta) Ltd. The Raven Tales characters and stories were created by Chris Kientz and Simon James, a West Coast native totem pole carver, storyteller and dancer.

### **About the Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund**

The Bell Fund provides grants to Canadian independent producers who develop and produce outstanding television content complemented and enhanced by excellent interactive content designed for digital delivery. These new media projects reflect state-of-the-art technology and are helping traditional television producers and broadcasters to discover the value added benefits of an interactive content on websites, mobile telephones, interactive television and other digital devices. Over \$38 million has been invested into more than 400 projects in the past nine years.

In addition to annual contributions from Bell ExpressVu, the Bell Fund's Development Program is supported by the interest generated from a \$10M endowment resulting from BCE-CTV benefits, as well as recent contributions from Aliant. The Bell Fund is incorporated as a not-for-profit organization, governed by an independent Board of Directors representing various sectors of the television and new media industry.

The Fund is administered by the Independent Production Fund.

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