InterAct Announces New Add-On System and Online Service For Nintendo 64 and PlayStation Game Consoles

HUNT VALLEY, Md., May 12 /PRNewswire/ -- InterAct(R) Accessories, Inc., a Recoton(R) Company (Nasdaq: RCOT), is set to debut the first, and only, game console add-on system that introduces gamers to their own online community, SharkWire Online. From the creators of GameShark(TM), DexDrive(TM) and other critically acclaimed console and PC gaming peripherals, comes an innovative gaming console add-on that lets gamers interact with other players, enhance their skills and have more fun in an exclusive online community.

The SharkWire add-on system is a hardware kit, consisting of a specially designed console modem, standard keyboard and phone line that connects Nintendo 64 and PlayStation game consoles to an online community designed specifically for video gamers. With SharkWire Online plugged into their consoles, gamers will have access to the latest gaming news, game reviews, strategy advice, downloadable game saves and GameShark codes. "SharkWired" gamers can also post or read comments from the online message board and enter discussion groups about specific games and technologies. In addition, SharkWire Online enables gamers to e-mail friends, classmates, relatives or anyone with access to e-mail from their own private username@sharkmail.com address.

"SharkWire Online is a product that epitomizes InterAct's strategy to deliver innovative products that enhance the gaming experience," said Todd Hays, President of InterAct Accessories. "With the introduction of SharkWire Online, InterAct steps to the forefront in the convergence of platform gaming and online capabilities. We are providing game enhancement content and a healthy peer community to gamers that don't have access to a PC."

SharkWire Online will be available for both the Nintendo 64 and PlayStation game consoles beginning this Fall. All of the software required to connect to the service is pre-programmed into the modem cartridge. The keyboard and telephone cords plug directly into the modem cartridge while the game console controller functions as the "mouse." The layout and design of the SharkWire Online site (http://www.sharkwire.com) has been maximized for easy navigation and viewing on a standard television screen. Accessing the SharkWire Online service is as simple as starting up a game -- just plug the modem cartridge into the game console, turn on the system and select an option from the on-screen menu.

To benefit younger gamers, InterAct has also designed SharkWire Online with parents in mind. Mom and Dad can control their kids' privacy and limit their access to only safe gamer-related Web sites. Hays, a parent himself, describes these features as "intelligent controls" that enable parents to offer their kids a "gentle on-ramp" to the Internet. "SharkWire Online is a cool, private, parent approved online service that provides gamers with exactly what they crave ... privacy and online fun without the need for a PC," states Hays.

SharkWire Online is built around the Spyglass Device Mosaic Web browser, and uses standard HTML, HTTP and TCP/IP protocols to access the online service. "Device Mosaic

offers us a complete market-proven browser solution that fits well with the game console environment," said Hays, adding, "Spyglass' wealth of experience in making HTML content display optimally on television screens has helped us deliver a robust and visually-appealing user interface."

InterAct has additionally partnered with D3 Networks, a game device ISP, to build and operate the SharkWire Online service, and with GTE Internetworking to provide the local dial-up via their DiaLinx(R) network and high capacity Global Network Infrastructure (GNI) backbone to support the service. "GTE Internetworking's extensive domestic and Canadian network coverage combined with our expertise with information appliances provides a solid foundation for the SharkWire Online service," said Stephen Pearson, President of D3 Networks. "Our work with GTE, InterAct and Spyglass will enable an entirely new class of user-friendly devices that allow easy, inexpensive, safe and productive use of the Internet."

"We are pleased to be working with InterAct to support SharkWire Online, it is an exciting addition to the gaming experience," said Patrick Kloepfer, director, dial-up networking for GTE Internetworking. "Increasingly we're seeing industry leaders like InterAct turning to GTE Internetworking for a high-performance, cost-effective Internet access solution, allowing them to focus on their own core strengths such as application development, marketing and customer service."

SharkWire Online will be available in all major electronic and toy retailers nationwide beginning in September 1999. The SharkWire Online add-on kit will carry an MSRP of $79.95 with a base service subscription of a highly affordable $9.95 per month.

To get a preview of SharkWire Online, visit the InterAct booth at this year's E3 (Electronic Entertainment Expo) in Los Angeles, May 13-15 located in #1400 South Hall

(InterAct Accessories, Inc. is a subsidiary of) Recoton Corporation, a global leader in the development, manufacturing and marketing of consumer electronic accessories, loudspeakers and car audio products. Recoton's more than 4,000 products feature highly functional accessories for audio, video, car audio, camcorder, multi-media/computer, home office, cellular and standard telephone, music and video game products and 900MHz wireless technology headphones and speakers. They are sold under the AAMP(R), Ambico(R), Ampersand(R), AR(R)/Acoustic Research(R), Discwasher(R), InterAct(R), Parsec(R), Peripheral(R), Performance(TM), Recoton(R), Rembrandt(R), Ross(TM), SoleControl(R), SoundQuest(R) and Stinger(R) brand names. The Company also produces and markets audio components, high fidelity loudspeakers, home theater speakers, and car audio speakers and components which are sold under the Advent(R), AR(R)/Acoustic Research(R), HECO(TM), Jensen(R), MacAudio(R), Magnat(R), NHT(R) (Now Hear This), and Phase Linear(R) and Recoton(R) brand names.

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