

UNIS: A Global Games Company On The Move

Universal Space Video Game (UNIS, or Unis) is every bit a 21st century games manufacturer. The amusement giant from Hongshan, China, which consistently posts successes in children's rides and redemption, as well as videogames and simulators, continues to build a global presence as a contract manufacturer, licensor and operator.

During November's IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando, FL, Unis rolled out an impressive nine new games covering a wide range of target demographics, themes and platforms. Although there can be little doubt the company is prolific, that is only part of the story.

Founded in 1993 as Universal Space Video Game, Unis, as it is known now, distributes its games to more than 50 countries. This includes its home country where it oper-

ates more than 30 FECs under the UNISLAND banner.

Last year, Unis announced construction of a new manufacturing facility in Zhongshan, a prefecture-level city in China's Pearl River Delta of the Guangdong province. When completed, the new facility will boast over 427,000 square feet of space. With the first phase of the project slated for completion by December 2014, the new facility will double the size of its existing manufacturing plant.

Not surprisingly, North America plays a key role in the company's strategy. Unis's office in Markham, ON, Canada, serves as a development center for products marketed around the world. And last year it opened up a service center (Unis USA) in Dallas.

"We're looking at a global market, but North America is the important starting point

for us," said Unis's Steven Tan. "It gives us an opportunity to test our new products and work with our distribution partners to collect feedback. This allows us to modify our games and launch into the global market."

What sells well in North America is likely to resonate around the world, Tan explained. He compares the phenomenon to Hollywood movies that appeal to a global audience. "A lot of people look to the U.S. market as an important benchmark," he said. "It's a standard for new product lines. I think good results in the U.S. can indicate global success."

Although Tan sees a high value in the North American market, he points out that it does not represent the lion's share of sales. "Our most important market is our Chinese coin-op amusement industry,"

he said. "In past years, it's expanded and contracted, fluctuated. But now I think it's on a steady growth path."

This is welcome news, especially in light of the recent agreement between videogame maker Raw Thrills and Unis. According to the agreement, Batman and Aliens Armageddon, developed by Raw Thrills, will be manufactured in China and distributed by Unis on an exclusive basis in China, as well as in a few other international markets.

As for the future, Tan sees the company maintaining its strengths in product development. "Of all the things we like to do, we like to focus on development," Tan said. "I like the licensing appeal. I understand the power of licensing. It's something we need to go into. It's something American manufacturers do on a daily basis."



Pirate's Hook Four-Player



FunFair Bash



Squirt A Gator



Frost Island



Up & Away



Congo Bongo

CONGO BONGO is a video/motion redemption game that challenges users to play bongo drums to control one of four animal characters. There are three rainforest and jungle scenes, and three skill levels. Tickets are awarded by picking up objects and winning the race.

PIRATE'S HOOK FOUR-PLAYER was developed in response to the popularity of the two-player cabinet launched earlier last year. It's a

lively redemption fishing game in a family-sized cabinet that's controlled by fishing reels with rotating handles to wind in the line.

FUNFAIR BASH offers family play appeal. A colorful redemption game, it is the first piece in the Unis Carnival Series, and is based on a traditional "fun fair" side stalls.

UP & AWAY challenges players to use air guns to blow balls into targets in order to move the two animal characters into space on

their rockets, while winning tickets as they gain altitude. This two-player piece has been designed for easy play and continual fun, encouraging repeat play.

SQUIRT A GATOR (a sequel to Ducky Splash) is new to the "Fun with Water" line. A two-player skill game, it's brightly styled and easy to install with no plumbing required. It has a brand-new incentive: Uni Vend, a "Ticket+Prize Dual Feature," that Unis will incor-

porate into a small selection of its machines in 2014.

FROST ISLAND is engineered to appeal to older children and adults. Its play action uses water guns interacting with digital graphics in a monster adventure video redemption game. Multi-level gameplay assures repeat patronage, and Unis reports that its easy-to-maintain water recycling system allows straightforward installation in any indoor location.

ALSO NEW: In 2013, Unis introduced Fruit Mania, and now the company has launched a line designed around the game's same sleek cabinet with a 47" LCD. The Xtreme Cabinet is styled to present a stunning appearance as a single unit and an even more astonishing aspect in double, triple and four-piece installations. All of the games in the line provide fully adjustable operator settings, but each has a different concept of play; choices include Ring Em, Toss Up, Cast Off and (of course) the original Fruit Mania.

