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Video game players have been challenging and dueling each other for years and as a matter of course, spectators and the players themselves take sides on the outcome. This ritual has traditionally been happening in living rooms, dorm rooms, and other private places. There hasn't been a readily available, simple to use, and secure way of betting on who can best who in a match of Halo 3, Madden, NBA, and the like. WorldGaming.com has come along to be the source of online gambling on gaming. They take 10% of the wager, up to \$25, and give the winner the rest. The minimum bet is \$5 and the maximum is \$1,000. All currencies are USD so they will be converted over once the player deposits money.

When WorldGaming.com was brought to my attention, I thought it would be Tournament.com all over again. I'm extremely happy to say that this is not the case. I met with Billy and Zack, the founders of WorldGaming.com and had a chance to badger them about their site, service, and business goals. For people who haven't heard of WorldGaming.com, it's a site that allows players to gamble on head-to-head matches. Since the games are skill based and not chance based (poker, blackjack, etc are mostly chance based), the service is legal in over 130 countries, including the US.

WorldGaming.com brings together the three hottest topics in current society: social networking, gambling, and gaming. Players will have the ability to create a profile, keeping some information public or private, and allowing others to comment on them. Challenges are issued with a few simple clicks and once the players accept the terms, the first match that meets the criteria will be used. WorldGaming.com gathers its data from publicly available information, so there's no need for the players themselves to report back and claim who won and who lost. It's this reason alone that sets WorldGaming.com apart from the other gaming and gambling sites out there.

Signing up requires you to enter the basic information, name, address, etc. It also lets you enter your Xbox 360 gamer tag and Sony PS3 Network ID. Since these can't be changed, they are the perfect way to track players to their consoles. Currently, WorldGaming.com only supports Xbox, Xbox 360, PS2, and PS3 but it plans to add Wii support if the publishers and studios are willing to deliver the required data. They also plan on adding Java and Flash games to give PC players a chance to win some cash. Chess, checkers, and similar skill-based games will be added first. Pure PC games, like Counter-Strike or World of Warcraft will likely not be supported because of the differing hardware configurations thus changing it from skill to chance based.

When creating an account, you select the games that you own and that you want to play for money. New games are added constantly so players can always check back for new additions. Adding and removing games is only a simple click. You also mention your availability, say weekends only from 3pm to midnight EST. This allows WorldGaming's system to create matches that will coincide with each player's availability. Each game has its own game lobby, so if you only want to play Halo 3, you don't have to filter out the other matches that are up for grabs.

Creating a challenge is extremely user-friendly and it all happens in a single window. You set the map, type of match, weapons used, rules of engagement, etc and finally the wager. For example, you can setup a Halo 3 match for \$10 and the first player with 10 kills wins. Each player will have \$5 taken from their account and put into the pot. WorldGaming.com gathers its data automatically and gives the winner the money. If players wish to practice first, they must change one of the options so it doesn't match perfectly, otherwise it will count as the match. For example, if you setup a match for 6:00pm and play at 8:00pm, and the criteria matches, WorldGaming will use that data for the results and payout the winner.

WorldGaming's system issues a challenge card to the other player. Players can pull up the challenge card, view the details and even have a private chat to sort out issues. If a challenge is rejected by either party, the creator can turn the challenge into an Open Challenge. What this means is that it will go in a list of challenges that people can just hop in and play. Once the challenge is accepted, the money is pooled together and the system waits for the results.

WorldGaming offers the ability for players to chat and mail each other. They can also add friends, view others' profiles and checkout everyone's reputation. Once you receive a message or mail, a window will popup alerting the user. All of these notifications happen in the same browser window, not in a tab or popup browser, so it's easy for the user to keep track of everything and where they are. It's impossible for a user to get lost when browsing the site, it's almost too user friendly, if that's even possible.

After matches, players have the option to leave comments on each other's profiles. They will be able to rate them, eBay style, and comment on how well, or poorly, they played. Since a player reserves the right to keep their win/loss ratio private, this will help balance out newbies challenging pros. Players will be able to see how good another player is based on their reputation, 5 little globes, and can determine whether or not they can best them in a challenge. Players that are consistent and never disconnect will have more globes. Players that lose a lot of disconnect a lot will have fewer. Some states in the US ban skill-based gambling, meaning a player cannot pay to enter a contest. WorldGaming has gone above and beyond by offering free tournaments from time to time. Their tournaments, both free and paid entry, allow up to 128 players to become the winner and win a huge cash prize. The best part of their tournament system is a tiered payout system. Some tournaments will pay \$400 to the winner and \$100 to second place, everyone else loses. WorldGaming's system is tiered percentage based winnings. Obviously, people who lose their first match will get nothing, but after around one a player can get 6% of the total winnings. After the next round, the percentage goes up to 7% and so on. This way, players will walk away with something rather than nothing.

When a player enters a tournament, they can check out the brackets, see what player they are up against, research their opponent and check out the payouts. The next round matches will be based on the availability of each opponent, so it takes place when both players are available to play. Since WorldGaming is based on skill rather than luck/chance, players cannot wager on matches, like horse races. Countries where this is allowed will possibly have the ability to do it, but the functionality is not currently built in. Also, some games will be available in different countries, such as poker. If laws change, so will WorldGaming's restrictions.

Player to player transfer is not available; this is to prevent fraud, money laundering and 'the funding of terrorism'. Players that pay with a credit card cannot cash out with Paypal, this is to prevent fraud. When players want to cash out, they get an initial CC/Paypal refund and then a phat check in the mail. If they deposit with Paypal, they can cash out using that method. All of the data concerning the money, transfers, winnings, etc is held in one of the most secure places in Canada. To go a step further, Customer Service agents will not have the ability to refund any complaints or issues; they will have to go through a supervisor for approval. If a player is disconnected during a match, they will get the ability to contact customer service for a refund of all of the funds, the house keeps nothing. This is available once and repeat offenders may end up being banned. If a player is playing Madden, for example, and it's the 4th quarter, with 1 minute left and, he's down 41 to 7 and disconnects, it's quite obvious the disconnect was negligible and the winnings will be disbursed as they should.

Since the matches are only head-to-head, team playing is currently unavailable. It is a feature that will be available when the games support it. This means that there would be 2v2, 3v3, and so on. WorldGaming's staff talked with many publishers and studios at the GDC this year and the response was incredibly positive. This can only mean good things for WG's future.

During the 2 year development process, Zack and Billy and their entourage talked with, and hired, industry professionals from the poker industry, casino industry, online gaming industry and spoke with the Tournament.com people to see what they did wrong. They also went through every possible problem, hack, cheat, disconnect issue, customer service issue, and anything else that could mess up the system. Every time I had a skeptical question, like the player-to-player transfer, they had an answer. I left them with complete confidence in their ability and knowledge. The final question I asked Billy and Zack was what their end goal of WG. Most startups would probably say 'To be bought out by a major media outlet and retire.' I was ecstatic when they both said that they want to change the way games are played and the way games are made. They want to bring the best experience to the user with little hassle. They are diehard gamers and very easy to get along with. If you saw them at E3 or GDC, you'd think they're just another gaming nerd, and they are and they're damn proud of it.

DEMOS	PATCHES - CHEATS	REVIEWS	GAME VIDEOS
Memento Mori German Demo CID The Dummy Demo Cryostasis: Sleep of Reaso.. Legendary Demo JUTLAND Released and Demo	Call of Duty 4: Modern War.. Pure Security Patch Crysis Wars Multiplayer Ma.. Tales of Pirates Screens #.. Call Of Duty 2 Map Pack	Mirrors Edge (X360).. Skate It (Wii).. Warhammer Online (PC).. Gears of War 2 (X360).. Prince of Persia (PS3)..	Video Strip Poker Supreme .. Pro Evolution Soccer 2009 .. Alien Arena 2008 Trailer Call of Duty: World at War.. Sonic and the Black Knight..
NEWS ENTRIES		THIS WEEK'S MOST POPULAR DOWNLOADS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alien Arena 2008 v7.21 Free Full Game World of Warcraft: Wrath of The Lich King Client Shin Megami Tensei: Imagine Online Open Beta Started .. Farewell 2008! - Welcome 2009! Demon's Souls Trailer Merry Christmas/Happy Holidays!!! Memento Mori German Demo 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lineage II Chaotic Throne: Gracia Part 2 Client (client) Runes of Magic Open Beta Client (client) Call of Duty: World at War v1.1 Patch (patch) Lineage II: The Chaotic Throne - Interlude Client (client) Silkroad Online Legend III Plus v1.170 Global Client (client) Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare v1.7 Patch (patch) Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare v1.6 Patch (patch) 	

