



## NEWS RELEASE

### **STORM HAWKS TAKES WING ON-AIR AND ONLINE**

**Nerd Corps Entertainment's first original series hits its global launch this week on Cartoon Network in the US, along with an innovative online destination site, Stormhawks.com, co-developed with Bitcasters Inc.**

**Vancouver, Canada (June 1, 2007)**— Nerd Corps Entertainment's first original property, the highly anticipated new series *Storm Hawks*, will soar through both the online and on-air worlds this week, marking the worldwide launch of both the series and Stormhawks.com, the groundbreaking online destination site for the show.

Following a successful Friday night sneak peek of a one-hour special episode, *Storm Hawks* will air Mondays beginning June 4 as part of Cartoon Network's new summer programming line up, where new episodes of hit shows will premiere every Monday through Thursday at 7 p.m. (ET, PT), followed by several replays through the week and weekend. But that's only the first port of call for the series, which will take off over the summer and fall on broadcasters around the world, including YTV in Canada; Cartoon Network in the U.K., France and Latin America; terrestrial broadcaster France 3 and Canadian French-language broadcaster VRAK; with many more to be announced soon.

As the central meeting place for fans of the show, Stormhawks.com will allow users to create their own virtual identities (avatars), and collect crystal points through playing different online games, answering trivia questions, and performing an assortment of other tasks. This same avatar can be used across the site—even from one game to another—allowing kids to build up their character in several different ways. The crystal points can be used for things like picking up a new vehicle for your avatar, but will have an offline life too, since kids can redeem them for real-world prizes and Storm Hawks merchandise from partners like Spin Master.

Nerd Corps partnered with Toronto-based online media firm Bitcasters on the project, which will combine some of the most innovative developments in youth-oriented online entertainment – from social networks to user generated content – so that 6-11 year old viewers can experience the action and adventure of the TV series first-hand.

Stormhawks.com will roll out in three stages over the next several months—starting with a comprehensive show info section, followed by a fun and games section featuring flash games, social networking tools, wallpapers, ring tones, and picture- and avatar-creators and much more. Kids can also make a personalized homepage, and use crystal points to collect characters, weapons and vehicles to create their own Storm Hawks squadron.

The third and biggest stage rollout will happen later in the year in the form of a new massively multiplayer online role playing game (MMORPG). Based on innovative technology provided by Australian middleware developer BigWorld, the MMORPG lets players race against, trade with and talk to their peers through a 3-D interface that mirrors the on-air world of *Storm Hawks*. The BigWorld technology allows for real-time game play between thousands of players simultaneously, and has been licensed by more than 45 companies around the world.

Taking a page from popular online sites such as Neopets or Club Penguin, networking will be a big part of the game, with areas for the avatars to socialize and trade, or to just challenge someone to a quick race. Through pre-defined, drop-down chatting, and other features, the game will comply with the Child Online Protection Act (COPA) and other best practices in respecting children's privacy online.

"We wanted to create a unique show with fun, character-led stories and adventures that would resonate with kids around the world," says Nerd Corps Supreme Commander Asaph Fipke. "As the central spot for kids to immerse themselves in the *Storm Hawks* world off-air, we wanted to make sure the online presence was as innovative and engaging, and as much fun, as possible."

"While most shows have websites, we're excited to be going so much further by building an entire universe for kids to explore", said Nathon Gunn, CEO of Bitcasters. "From racing games and duels to collecting and trading crystals with other players this online initiative promises to be one of the most engaging out there."

"When looking for a web partner, we were immediately drawn to Bitcasters for their experience in gaming and in creating an online community," adds Nerd Corps El Presidente Ken Faier. "The universe is pretty vast, so it lends itself perfectly to all kinds of interactive media where kids can spend a lot of time exploring and really extend their *Storm Hawks* experience. We're very excited about the future of Stormhawks.com and looking forward to our fans being able to have fun with it."

*Storm Hawks* is set in a fantastical world where squadrons of high-flying Sky Knights battle to protect their air turf. Five mismatched teens have found the wreckage of legendary sky knight squadron The Storm Hawks, and now, armed with transforming flying motorcycles, these punks are dog-fighting some of the nastiest villains ever to hit the skies. Too young for fear (or a pilot's license), the Storm Hawks are burning rubber and cracking rudders on a tailspin adventure that will take your breath away... or just make you lose your lunch! Launching with 52 x half hour episodes of high-end 3-D animation, the series was created by Asaph Fipke, Nerd Corps' CEO and founder.

Stormhawks.com has been developed thanks to the financial assistance of Telefilm Canada and the Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund.

### **About Nerd Corps Entertainment, Inc.**

Nerd Corps Entertainment is a full service property development and animation studio based out of Vancouver, Canada. Formed in 2002, the company's primary objective is to break free from the preconceived boundaries of 3-D animation in order to produce stylistically innovative animated projects—from concept all the way to final delivery—based on a solid foundation of great storytelling. Working in a state of the art studio with more than 80 highly skilled artists and production staff, the company is well equipped to provide creative input, expertise and execution on all aspects of the development and production of film and television properties, including promotional materials and creative services for merchandising and licensing partners. For more information go to [www.nerdcorps.com](http://www.nerdcorps.com).

### **About Bitcasters**

Bitcasters is an international media firm that produces television, Internet and gaming properties. The company's current projects include serious, casual and massively multiplayer online games such as HistoriCanada, Hollywood Tycoon and Stormhawks.com. Established in 1996, Bitcasters has helped to found several key interactive departments and initiatives at some of the world's largest media and entertainment companies and has more than 30 web and casual games to its

credit. The company is also active in technology advisory and policy development services for international governments and world leaders.

### **About the BigWorld Technology Suite**

Comprised of the BigWorld Server Software, Content Creation Pipeline, 3D Client Engine Package, Live Management Tools & Instrumentation, BigWorld Technology Suite is the only complete MMOG solution, providing all of the difficult to produce technology required to produce an engaging next-generation MMOG.

### **About BigWorld Pty Ltd**

BigWorld Pty Ltd was formed in 2002 to commercialize years of intense R&D, which started in 1999 and continues to this day. BigWorld Pty Ltd is a privately held company based in Australia that licenses its BigWorld Technology Suite middleware platform to game studios around the world that are looking to produce successful next generation Massively Multiplayer Online Games and Online Social Worlds.

### **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 innovative, 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 a web presence.

The Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund receives annual contributions of approximately \$8 M from Bell ExpressVu as part of its broadcast distribution undertaking (BDU) contributions to the industry. In addition, the Development Program is supported by the interest generated by a \$10M endowment resulting from BCE-CTV benefits. 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.

### **About Telefilm Canada**

Telefilm Canada is a federal cultural agency dedicated to the development and promotion of the Canadian audiovisual industry. Telefilm provides financial support to the private sector to create distinctively Canadian productions that appeal to domestic and international audiences. The Corporation also administers the funding programs of the Canadian Television Fund.