



For immediate release

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## **WRC TO BE THE SUBJECT OF INNOVATIVE VIDEO GAME CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT**

North One Sport, global Promoter for the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC), has agreed a technical cooperation to investigate the feasibility of real-time rally gaming. The consortium, including iOpener Media and Black Bean Games, will explore a new interactive gaming concept for the WRC based on real-time positioning data.

iOpener has been developing real-time high-accuracy positioning data in interactive applications since 2007 and, in conjunction with North One Sport, has secured the cooperation of Gulf Horizon Group, chaired by Mr. Saeed Mohammed Saeed Al Badi. Black Bean Games, publisher of the upcoming official WRC console game, will also support the project with further technical expertise provided by their in-house production studio Milestone.

The partners will work together to collect a continuous stream of positioning and telemetry data from the cars competing on WRC rallies. This data will then be applied and tested in a step-by-step plan aiming to deliver a gaming experience that is consistent, reliable and accurate.

“This study should take us a step closer to our goal of allowing WRC fans anywhere in the world the opportunity to become part of the action,” commented Simon Long, CEO of North One Sport Ltd. “Using the internet they would be able to compete in the rally on the same stages against some of the best drivers in the world. If this test is successful then we hope in the future to crown our first virtual rally champion.”

iOpener CEO Andy Lüring added, “Together we aim to configure North One Sport’s systems and iOpener’s patented technology to capture high accuracy live action GPS which can then be integrated into the next generation of WRC video games. These games will allow fans to drive, co-drive, manage or simply watch the WRC from the heart of the action.”

“At Black Bean Games, there is always a great motivation to be at the forefront of innovation so we can change the shape of gaming. We choose revolution over evolution and believe this strategic partnership will allow us to set a new benchmark in the future of the motorsports gaming genre. We will be able to deliver a unique and realistic gaming experience featuring exclusive opportunities and a technological breakthrough. This is definitely part of our medium-term development program that could become an integral part of the WRC games,” commented Virgilio Bixio, CEO at Black Bean Games.





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**Editorial notes:**

**About WRC**

The FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) is an epic motorsport adventure featuring some of the world's greatest drivers. In 2009, WRC was aired on 264 broadcast channels in over 120 territories worldwide achieving a total audience of over 570 million viewers. The 2010 WRC Calendar consists of 13 individual rallies and features real cars on real roads, with teams and drivers locked in a dramatic race against the clock. North One Sport is the global Promoter for the FIA World Rally Championship. For more information visit [www.wrc.com](http://www.wrc.com).

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**About iOpener Media**

Award winning iOpener Media is a young, dynamic company headquartered in Aachen, Germany. Backed by venture capitalists, the company is shaping up to become the leader in providing and facilitating real-time data into a wide spectrum of applications. Through its patented technology, including satellite navigation systems, this range extends over games, driver training, and visualization. iOpener is active in the video games and motorsports industries with aims to expand into other genres e.g. flight simulators and educational games.

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**About Gulf Horizon Group**

UAE based Gulf Horizon Group (GHG) is engaged in partnerships focusing on developing projects locally and internationally across a variety of sectors including finance, real estate development, medical, education and community awareness. GHG uses its expertise in the financing of business development to organize the right team for each project to ensure success and complete client satisfaction. GHG and Partners currently comprises 28 companies involved in sharing the development of Abu Dhabi and other Emirates projects. With its partners, GHG aims to contribute to the development and prosperity of business, society and culture of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates with strategies that compliment the vision, and projections of the Abu Dhabi Government on long term plans for small and large scale projects.

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**About Black Bean Games**

Established in 2003, Black Bean Games is the publishing label of Lago S.r.l. and part of the Leader Group. Leveraging 20 years of market expertise and knowledge, Black Bean Games' strategy concentrates on original IPs and strong licenses to create unique videogame experiences. With a focus on racing, family and lifestyle genres the portfolio includes the SBK® license alongside NewJ Fitness First and NatGeo Quiz.

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**About Milestone**

Founded in Milan in 1996, Milestone S.r.l. is the largest Italian developer and became part of the Leader Group in 2002. Milestone is recognized worldwide as the leading Italian developer of interactive entertainment software specialized in racing videogames such as the SBK® Superbike World Championship series. An obsessive desire for quality combined with an elaborate attention to detail define the company trademarks and philosophy. Milestone is developing products for current and next gen platforms: PS2, PSP, Xbox360, PS3, PC as well as for interactive television. [www.milestone.it](http://www.milestone.it)

