

Gaming competition picks just one winner, but entire industry comes out ahead

Telefilm's [Great Canadian Video Game Competition](#) has whittled its Top 10 competitors to four. *Connected.* asked some of the other six companies for project updates and asked observers about the Competition's industry impact.

Create-A-Date standalone game goes multiplatform

Hop To It Productions, Toronto, says its "post-competition" *Create-A-Date* proposal is better than ever. Without the \$250,000 available to finalists, HTIP couldn't develop "a standalone subscription model game/community," says President Susan Nation. But after reviewing expert feedback from round one, HTIP revised its business model and approached "broadcasters, potential on-line partners and angel investors (with)...an innovative TV series with a big... community/site including the game and (their proprietary online game engine) *S4Tek*. We are also finalists in iPitch at (the) Banff (World Television Festival) with *Cupid's Café/ Create-A-Date*."

33 Magnetic Inc.: attracting next-gen mobile gamers, beyond Tetris

For new media producer Gabe Sawhney, it was a very satisfying "first gaming experience" to develop and pitch *Echelon*, a sophisticated mobile game that uses "a proximity feature" to alert players when fellow players are nearby. They can then collaborate to progress in the game. Sawhney says competition feedback convinced him *Echelon* is a good idea. He learned about the gaming sector, offshore technological advances and "the complexity and limitations of the platform. Hearing about those few mobile games that have been successful and what they did differently – that was very important."

What say observers and one finalist?

Exposure for your company is "a remarkable by-product of the competition," says finalist Steve Bocska, Joint CEO, [Hothead Games](#), Vancouver. Participating allowed Hothead to achieve "polish and scale" in the use of an artificial intelligence technology called "machine learning."

Ian Kelso, President, Interactive Ontario, appreciates the jury's strong business perspective – evaluating "how marketable the idea is and the size of the potential audience." He says the event demonstrates "there is a substantial gaming community here (in Canada) with a lot of talent."

And participants in Telefilm's Canada New Media Fund consultations praised the game program's design, targeted objectives, and emphasis on marketability, distribution, mentorship and holistic development.

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