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BigPond encouraging online piracy

The most anticipated online game of 2008, *Pirates of the Burning Sea*, will be distributed free of charge to Australian fans by BigPond from 27 February.

Pirates of the Burning Sea, tipped to be one of the biggest online games ever, will be available for download from BigPond's GameArena (<http://pirates.gamearena.com.au/>) and gamers can pre-register to download it or secure one of the 100,000 DVD copies of the software.

BigPond is also giving *Pirates of the Burning Sea* players a free seven day trial subscription with on-going subscriptions for the game starting from \$15.95 per month.

BigPond Group Managing Director, Mr Justin Milne, said making the game so easily available, and for free, demonstrates BigPond's commitment to gamers.

"We're dedicated to bringing the very best in digital entertainment to fans and we have used our leading position in the online games community to secure this unique opportunity for Australian gamers," Mr Milne said.

"BigPond is the only place to get a free copy of the sensational *Pirates of the Burning Sea* so we expect the discs to be as popular as a rum ration on a pirate ship," he said.

Set in the Caribbean in 1720, *Pirates of the Burning Sea* is a 'massively multiplayer online role-playing game' or MMORPG in which players live life on the virtual high seas captaining their own ship and developing tactical fighting skills as they interact with thousands of other players from around the world.

Pirates of the Burning Sea has been in development since 2002 by Flying Lab Software, the team behind the critically acclaimed 'Rails Across America'. Flying Lab Software developed technology to give *Pirates of the Burning Sea* incredible graphics, including the reflective, pixel-shaded ocean and dynamic shadowing on characters and ships.

CEO of Flying Lab Software, Mr Russell Williams said, "We are delighted to be working with BigPond to bring *Pirates of the Burning Sea* to Australian fans. We are looking forward to welcoming Australian gamers to the online *Pirates* community and we're sure the hype will be at fever pitch by the time we launch.

BigPond Members receive a 20 per cent discount off the on-going subscriptions of the game. Most BigPond broadband customers can download and play the game without affecting their plan's data usage.

Telstra Media Contact:

Craig Middleton
Tel: 02 8236 4372
Mbl: 0400 931 772

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