

How to... become a media tycoon

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HOW TO... become a media tycoon

Reckon you can put together a better magazine than us, then? Here's how to go about it – with a few examples you prepared earlier.

by Jonathan Davies

Putting a Nintendo 64 magazine together is excellent fun, if rather hard work. In fact, if our office was a bit bigger we'd invite you all to join us. Instead, though, why not try creating an N64 fanzine of your own? Loads of N64 Magazine readers already have, and we've included the best ones here to inspire you.

Fancy it, then? Here's what to do...

DOING THE WRITING

As you'll soon discover, there's more to putting a games magazine together than just playing games all day. But that's definitely the most important part – the finest magazines are always put together by people with

a real passion for whatever it is they're writing about. So before you start work, make sure you know your subject matter – Nintendo 64 games – inside out. That way you'll be able to fill your fanzine with information you've discovered yourself, rather than just copied from other sources, which always makes for a more entertaining read.

Then, well, it's really up to you. Even if you're sure of your spelling and grammar it'd be worth getting someone to read through your work before you commit it to print – readers will pick up on the tiniest of mistakes (as we're only too aware of here at N64 Magazine). And a few jokes always help.



We write N64 Magazine on Apple Macintoshes using a word processor called Nisus. It's absolutely terrible – your words keep disappearing off the bottom of the screen. Get something else, we certainly should.

GETTING IT ONTO PAPER

The most time-consuming part of the operation is taking everything you've written and turning it into something resembling a magazine. To do this you could use anything from an old typewriter to a multi-thousand-pound PC, although obviously the better you can make your fanzine look the more appealing it's going to be to potential readers.

If you're using a typewriter or word-processor you'll need to resort to the old cut-'n'-paste method. This involves printing all the text out, chopping it up into strips and gluing it to the page, sticking the pictures around it. Even real magazines were produced like this up until about ten years ago. It was a messy business.

Much more efficient would be to get your hands on a PC or Macintosh with a sophisticated word processor or, better still, some desktop publishing software on it. This will allow you to design the pages on the screen, pictures and all, and print it all out ready to go into the photocopier. You'll also be able to have much more fun with titles, logos, icons and things.

PRINTING IT

If you've got a printer, and you're not planning on selling many copies of your fanzine, you could just run off everything on that. For larger print-runs, though, this'll take ages and use up loads of ink. Better would be to find a photocopier somewhere.

Ideally you'll have a parent or friend handily placed in a photocopier-equipped and liberal-minded office. You might have to slip a few quid into the biscuit fund to cover paper costs, but otherwise your overheads should be minimal. Failing that, you'll have to pay a visit to your local photocopying shop. It'll



Will and Paul design our pages on Macintoshes using Quark XPress software. When they're not playing GoldenEye 007, that is. Tsk.

probably be called something like 'Kopy Kwik' or 'Pretty in Print' or something.

SELLING IT

So you hold in your hand several pieces of paper, neatly stapled together. Now all that remains is to get people to buy it. Friends and family will undoubtedly be eager to support your burgeoning publishing enterprise, but, unless you're unusually popular, they'll soon run out. That leaves you with two courses of action: getting your fanzine into local computer games shops (which shouldn't be too hard if you ask nicely) and selling it mail order. The latter will require a little advertising – look for magazines that print free reader's ads. And, of course, don't forget to send a copy to us here at N64 Magazine – if it's any good we'll be sure to tell everyone about it.

We've all got to start somewhere

Although he's done his best to hide the evidence, Jonathan, N64 Magazine's own editor, began life on a fanzine of his own. It was called Spectacular, and was all about – yes – the Spectrum. His puns haven't improved since. (I'm so embarrassed. – Ed)



TIPS FOR A FINER FANZINE

- The best fanzines find a 'niche' – a new angle to approach the N64 from. Concentrating on import games, say, or retro gaming, or being 'angry', or your local N64 scene. This works much better than trying to copy professional magazines, and covering the same news, previews and reviews as them.
- Although it's tempting to go haywire with typefaces (or fonts), the results will be much more readable if you stick to one or two. We have to restrain Wil sometimes. (*That's not true. – Wil*)

- Screenshots will be a problem, as not only do they look rather messy when they're photocopied, but they're difficult to get hold of in the first place. To take your own you'll need either a camera and a steady hand, or a computer with a built-in video capture card. It's probably easier to use ready-made ones. You're welcome to snip the odd one here and there from your N64 Magazine collection.
- Don't expect to make millions straight away. Fanzines rarely make a profit, and it'll probably be a struggle just to break even. Think of it more as a labour of love – and a possible springboard to a glorious career in publishing later on.

The SixtyFortean Times

A chunky A5 volume, The Sixtyfourteen Times is entirely the work of Stockport's Daniel Nowell. "It's written, edited and put together completely by myself," Daniel says, "and it's something of which I'm immensely proud."

And so he should be. Issue one consists mainly of reviews of the N64's software catalogue, but there's also a pull-out 'Bernard the Tamagotchi' supplement about Japanese culture, some record reviews, a list of lines-that-sound-a-bit-rude from Star Wars and Ten Good Reasons Why You Should Avoid Mortal Kombat Trilogy.

Daniel certainly knows his N64 games, and has crammed every square inch of paper with information and opinion. *Super Mario 64* comes off best, inevitably, while the spittle is almost still wet on the *Cruis'n USA* review. We suspect he knows a bit less about mah jong than he lets on, though.

Best bit: (On *Cruis'n USA*) "If I had my way I'd have kicked her out of the door while driving down the streets of San Francisco long ago."

● The Sixtyfourteen Times costs £1.50 from Daniel Nowell, 73 Oakland Avenue, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5RD.



N64 Play

Regular readers will undoubtedly recognise the phrase 'Andrew Mills of Londonderry'. It turns out that Mr. Mills' talents aren't limited merely to *Pilotwings* photos and *Mario Kart* records. He's also found time to put together a full-colour fanzine which includes two free colour posters and a *Mario Kart* sticker.

Assisted by Steven Adams, his deputy, Andrew has compiled an exclamation-mark-packed tour of N64-dom. Issue 3 includes reviews of *Mario Kart 64*, *ISS64* and *Mortal Kombat Trilogy* (which gets off lightly with 7/10), as well as a probing

interview with Dave 'The Games Animal' Perry and an intriguing 'stability' survey in which *Turok* comes off best and *Wave Race 64* gets a pitiful 3/10.

£2 might seem a lot to pay, but it'll be nothing to those who can't get enough of Andrew.

Best bit: (On Andrew himself) "HAI HAI HAI HAI! I... AM... THE... BEST!"

● You can get hold of N64 Play by sending £2 to Andrew Mills at 2 Roe Gardens, Irish Street, Londonderry, Northern Ireland BT47 2HT.



Famicom Go!!

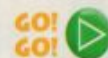
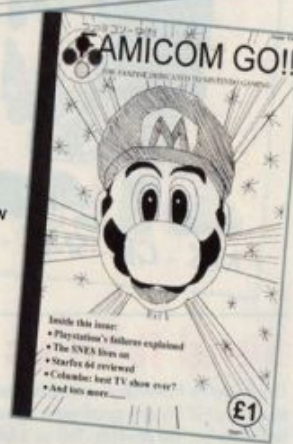
We nearly called N64 Magazine 'N64 Go! Go!', and really wish we had after reading Tekin Suleyman and John Robinson of Manchester's slim but admirably opinionated fanzine. "It could have been a lot bigger if we hadn't taken so long," Tekin says ruefully, "but we ran out of time. I had to move to Manchester to go to university."

Mario Kart 64, for example, takes an unprecedented 7/10 beating for being rubbish in one-player mode, while there's a whole page encouraging people to give *Pilotwings 64* a try instead. There's also a SNES vs N64 feature in which the SNES comes out on top for having more games, which seems a bit harsh given that the N64's only been around for a year.

Smudgy, photocopied screenshots are thankfully absent here, replaced by Wil-rivalling drawings by Tekin. And, in something of a coup for fanzines, Famicom Go!! appear to have persuaded Michael Caine to write a page for them. "Oi, you! Put that bloody spear down!" It must be him.

Best bit: (on *Super Mario 64*) "Arguably the greatest moment comes when the player dives into the irresistible looking water on the sunken ship level. The subtle change of music accompanied by the sheer jaw-dropping splendour of the aforementioned ship almost brought me to tears, and probably would have done if the surprise hadn't already been spoilt by countless magazine reviews."

● Famicom Go!! costs £1 from Tekin Suleyman, TF/G/4, Owens Park, 293 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 6HD.





GameZone

Want to know how to make your *Wave Race* rider say a rude word? Or what the latest coin-ops are? Or what's going on on the PlayStation? You'll find all these things in *GameZone*, which is good, because most fanzines just provide stuff you'll already have read in *N64 Magazine*.

GameZone is also neatly laid out and very readable, with the reviews broken down into short sections rather than just rambling on for pages. And it eschews screenshots in favour of some drawings by Art Director Lucan Monks. The rest of the team consists of Editor Darren Bolton and Staff Writer Roger Santen.

Although the PlayStation is included in GameZone, it doesn't tend to fare too well. "You may notice we're extremely biased towards the N64," Darren assures us. "Or not biased, exactly, it's just that we speak the truth, and the truth is the N64 is miles ahead of the PS." The only worry is that their favourite PlayStation game is *Worms*.

Best bit: (On Wayne Gretzky's) "Because I don't like ice hockey, I love this – if you know what I mean."

● GameZone is yours for £1 and a first class stamp from Darren Bolton, 6 Manby Road, Immingham, N.E. Lincs DN40 2LE. Or you can subscribe to six issues for £5.



'NAM

fter four years of job worries, university trauma and job insecurity, the old 'NAM team decided they were ready to try again," announces Dave Smith, 'NAM's editor. Indeed, you may have come across 'NAM before, as it featured in the pages of N64 Magazine's ancestor Super Play.

'NAM's come along a bit since those days, though. It's now put together on a PC, and its pages overflow with desktop publishing trickery. Everything's in neat boxes, and there are illustrations and icons as far as the eye can see. The *Mario Kart* review in particular looks smashing. SNES games are also

covered, with in-depth reviews of *Super Mario RPG*, *Kirby Super Star* and *Tetris Attack*. Aside from all these reviews the fazine includes a huge feature on the last E3 show (although the team admits, "No. We didn't go"), a guide to various ways of connecting your N64 to your telly, and an excellent *Tetris Attack* playing guide.

"NAM have also managed to get their magazine into the shops, overcoming that common fanzine stumbling block. "We have support from those great blokes at New Generation Consoles who sell our magazine at their shop and lend us review games," Dave says. An inspiration to us all.

Best bit: "He drives a converted large sized scooter and loves numeral '3' more than anything."

● For a copy of 'NAM', send £1.50 and an A4 s.a.e. to David Smith, 24 Dradishaw Road, Silsden, Nr Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 0BH.



N-Form

The fanzine dedicated to anything Nintendo – past and present,” runs the line under N-Form’s logo on its cover. And it certainly is, with N64-related pages comfortably

outnumbered by articles about the most obscure Nintendo bits and pieces from the past. Anyone remember the official NES cleaning kit? Or *Illusion of Time* on the SNES?

"I've been a fan of Nintendo for the last decade," says James Fry, who's put together N-Form single-handed. "And

I can therefore share a wide range of knowledge on anything that's happened between now and then." And share he certainly does. Although you don't get the thickest fazine for your £2, it's great to read about games that the rest of the world forgot about years ago, and which would be well worth keeping an eye out for at car boot sales, church bazaars and antiques fairs.

N-Form looks smart and is brimming with restrained enthusiasm for Nintendo history, even if 6/10 for the still-great SNES *F-Zero* seems a little tough.

Best bit: (On Kid Icarus for the NES) "To get to the final stage of the game with infinite lives, enter this code: 8uuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuu."

● For a copy of N-Form of your own, send £2 to James Fry at 30 Jennings Field, Flackwell Heath, Bucks HP10 9ND.

Send it to us

Once you've finished your fanzine, why not send us a copy? If it's any good we'll spread the word to the rest of the readers. Tell us a bit about

yourself and how you've put the magazine together, and don't forget to include details of any money/stamp requirements so readers can

get hold of a copy. The address to send your creation to is: Fanzine Farm, **N64 Magazine**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.