

5/2007

the **Merit** touch

From the Desk of the CEO

Merit Momentum

Customers always come first. Listen to customer needs. Develop the products that customers need. Deliver superior quality in everything we do. Help customers make money.

Merit Customer Promise

That's our Promise: from Merit to the industry. It's what drives the people here every day. It's my "North Star" to guide the company. And it's why Merit is gaining momentum.



Putting the customer first is not always easy. Sometimes customer feedback is uncomfortable to hear. Sometimes customer requirements conflict with each other. Sometimes we do not have time.... Regardless, we listen. We find a way to satisfy needs. We make the time. We do it because by making our customers the top priority, we make Merit better.

Customers tell us that software quality is para-

mount; bugs create expensive service calls. So we invested to make sure each software release is as good as possible. Customers now rave about our 2007 release, which has proven to be rock-solid reliable.

Customers tell us that great games, developed with a clear understanding of player interests, is the core driver of profitability. So we invest heavily in game development and

maintain a game catalog unmatched in the industry. Six of our ten most popular games are new or enhanced for 2007. Fresh content keeps players interested and increases coin drop.

Customers tell us that ease of service and repair are critical. So we've designed our new Aurora to have a slide-out electronics tray, and the ability to run 100% of the system with the electronics exposed for service. Plus we're delivering new diagnostic capabilities that will greatly enhance troubleshooting by our customer service team.

We intend to continue our industry leadership by delivering inno- »3

“If all the manufactures in our industry would be this diligent in protecting the quality of their products, we, your customers, would be stronger and able to buy more new product, which in turn would strengthen the manufactures.”

coin a phrase:

**DAVE WINFREY
-BULLSEYE
AMUSEMENTS**

“From my perspective, the game content in the 2007 software looks like it is shaping up to be the best release I have seen from Merit.” – Jason Rubin, AJ Amusement

Op:talk

“Earnings have been way up for us with this software. This particular location has had ups and downs, but with this software, earnings are up 50% and pretty sound.”

– Roger Westmont, Modern Specialty

“From my perspective, the game content in the 2007 software looks like it is shaping up to be the best release I have seen from Merit.”

– Jason Rubin, AJ Amusement

“I have been really impressed with Merit’s commitment to getting feedback from operators. I think the new release reflects our needs as operators better than I’ve seen in years.”

– Jeff Reed, BJ Novelty

OPERATOR TO OPERATOR ADVICE

by Chris Vecchione
of Apple Vending

1. USE YOUR ADVERTISING SCREENS

They are FREE and can be used to not only advertise your business but also endear you to the specific locations by adding THEIR ads.

2. SWITCH FORCE’S OUT WITH NEW IONS

If you can get better cost for game pricing. It’s worth the shot.

3. RESET HIGH SCORES WEEKLY

Since we began doing this as a rule, our collections have jumped around 6%... not bad for no cost. We often run into locations who resist this, but 90% of the time it’s bartenders or wait staff who do not want their high scores to be replaced. Just do it!

» OPERATOR CHOICE



Bonnie Theard of Playmeter Magazine presents Merit’s VP Sales Bob Mills & CEO Mike Maas with the 2007 Operator Choice award for Best Countertop.

Did you know that corrupted CMOS configuration on the motherboard can cause various problems?

Possible CMOS errors:

1) Serial port or USB port:

- No touch controller found.
- Fatal error, cannot access I/O board (2006 & 2007 software).
- Invalid key error.

2) Primary IDE port: (Hard drive)

- Disc boot failure or operating system not found.
- Bad Command or File Name: hard drive related issue.

3) Secondary IDE port: (CD/DVD drive)

- Loading problem: CD/DVD drive cannot be accessed.

Other:

- No modem detected.
- No sound.

To correct CMOS for Force and ION motherboards

First, try booting with DIP switch 8 on. This forces a CMOS reset to the latest Merit settings. If the machine won't boot, then try the following:

1 - Plug keyboard into purple PS/2 connector on the motherboard.

2 - On power up, press the DEL key (for ION [ASUS]: hold the DEL key) to enter BIOS setup.

If ION (ECS) motherboard:

- 1 - Arrow over and down to LOAD OPTIMIZED DEFAULTS.
- 2 - Press ENTER. Press Y for "Yes".
- 3 - Press F10. Press Y for "Yes".
- 4 - Go to **Final Steps: 1-5**

If ION (ASUS) motherboard:

- 1 - At the BIOS setup screen arrow over to EXIT.
- 2 - Arrow down to LOAD SETUP DEFAULTS.
- 3 - Press ENTER. Select OK.
- 4 - Arrow up to EXIT & SAVE CHANGES
- 5 - Press ENTER. Select OK.
- 6 - Go to **Final Steps: 1-5**

If FORCE (ECS) motherboard:

- 1 - Arrow over and down to LOAD FAIL-SAFE DEFAULTS.
- 2 - Press ENTER. Select Y for "Yes".
- 3 - Arrow over and down to LOAD OPTIMIZED DEFAULTS.
- 4 - Press ENTER. Press Y for "Yes".
- 5 - Press ENTER. Press F10 and then press ENTER.
- 6 - Go to **Final Steps: 1-5**

Final Steps:

- 1 - The game should reboot. Unplug the keyboard.
- 2 - Shut down the game.
- 3 - Flip DIP switch 8 to ON.
- 4 - Reboot machine to load any CMOS updates.
- 5 - Be sure to flip DIP 8 to OFF after completing the process.

The correct CMOS for all the motherboards can be found at www.meritgames.com under SUPPORT, under FAQ for latest Tech 2007 notes (PDF file). Operators and Technicians: Send me your questions and I'll answer some in every issue of **The Merit Touch**.

From the Desk of the CEO

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vative high-quality products that provide strong return-on-investment for Operators. Today, in every part of the company-- Accounting, Sales, Manufacturing, Development, Marketing, Service and Support - we are listening and responding to our customers. Sometimes we do it explicitly, like when we engage members of an Operator Council for product feedback. But mostly it is through many small, indirect, but super-important day-to-day moments when a Merit employee stops to ask "What would be best for the customer?" and then acts on that

insight. Those moments add up quickly, and together are driving new momentum at Merit.

Thank you for your continued business.



Mike Maas
CEO

» HARD DRIVES and FLASH MEMORY

Hard Drives and Flash Memory: Which is better?

One of the questions operators frequently ask us is, "Why do you guys use hard drives?" Sometimes they follow with, "Is flash memory better?"

It all depends on what you want. For high-speed access to large amounts of data and graphics, like in a Merit game, the answer is clearly that hard drives are the best option. Where storage capacity, number of write cycles before failure, and data transfer speeds don't matter, flash may be better.

Flash is solid state technology and boasts the benefit of no moving parts. Because flash memory doesn't have a motor, it can also draw less power, be smaller, and weigh less than a hard drive. So where weight or power requirements are a principal concern, like in a camera or a cell phone, flash memory is a great solution. That's why Merit uses flash memory for the USB storage device we offer to clone and store machine configuration settings. We want you to be able to carry your configuration settings in your pocket, so it's a snap to pop in and out of the locations on

your route and quickly standardize your configurations. But flash memory has several important limitations, which is why it's generally not used outside certain mobile applications.

"For high-speed access to large amounts of data and graphics, like in a Merit game... hard drives are the best option."

The most important limitation of flash memory is how much information it can store. As an example, Merit currently uses a 40GB hard drive, and takes advantage of most of that space with constantly updating content and detailed games, complete with thousands of trivia questions, vivid video, eye-popping graphics, and rich stereo sound. 40GB of flash memory would require dozens of memory sticks and cost about \$1,000. At that price, we

would not be able to include the free 1-minute install Quick-Click™ drive with every Megatouch ION™ paid software update. For the money, hard drives hold much, much, much more information. More information means better games.

Flash memory also has a limited number of write cycles before it wears out. A hard drive can survive far more read and write operations than flash memory. This does not typically matter for file storage, but for running an entire operating system, this can become a problem. What's more, while flash is faster starting up and locating information, it is slower than a hard drive for transferring big files, like those detailed games with the vivid video and eye-popping graphics.

Perhaps in the future, flash technology will improve to the point where it is up to the task of running our games, in which case we would reconsider. For now, in order for Merit to continue to push the gaming envelope and deliver our graphically-stunning games, we'll stick with our hard drives. One thing is certain- we will continue to bring you the best in entertainment technology, luring players from miles around to spend their money on your Merit games.



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