



February 21, 2002

Gaga weighs major investment in live-action **TEKKEN**

By Mamiko Kawamoto

Japan's Gaga Communications is in talks to co-produce a live-action feature version of Namco's hit game *Tekken* with Namco and the US production Crystal Sky Entertainment.

Currently in pre-production, *Tekken* is scheduled to go before the cameras in April 2003 and be released worldwide in 2005 at a reported overall budget of \$60m.

"Given the success of *Tomb Raider* which generated, \$130m on a production budget of \$100m, we and our partners feel comfortable putting \$30m-\$40m into the *Tekken* project," said the Gaga spokesman Hidehiro Yoshioka. "We want the film to be a *Matrix*- and *Tomb Raider*-like action entertainment."

The project is part of Gaga's plans to expand into film production targeting the US and the European market. The company distributed Crystal Sky's *Eternity* in 1990 and has had a close business relationship with the company ever since. Crystal Sky is currently negotiating for name Hollywood directing and acting talent.

Although Gaga intends to secure *Tekken* distribution rights for Japan, the company has not yet decided whether to invest into the project. Given Gaga's flop with *Final Fantasy*, which generated \$8m (Y1 billion) at the Japanese box office after its September 15 2001 release on 259 screens, the company is carefully reconsidering its film investment strategy. Now in its fourth edition, the battle game *Tekken* has sold 14 million units worldwide.

Meanwhile, Gaga will also distribute the 3-D animated feature *Axis*, co-produced by Le Studio Canal Plus and Chaman Productions, which is scheduled for completion later this year. Currently in production, \$35m project will be released together with a game from Namco in the summer of 2003 in the US and Europe and in the autumn of 2003 in Japan, the earliest.