

Videogame titan Ubisoft going green

April 19 2010, by Glenn Chapman



The offices of video game maker Ubisoft in Montreal. Ubisoft announced on Monday that it is doing away with paper manuals traditionally included with videogames crafted for play on Microsoft Xbox 360 or Sony PlayStation 3 consoles.

French videogame titan Ubisoft is intent on being a big player in greening the industry.

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The firm behind the [blockbuster](#) "Assassin's Creed" and "Tom Clancy" franchises expects this fiscal year it will spare more than 2,300 trees by eliminating six million paper manuals in videogame packages.

"Ubisoft is often recognized for making great games, but it's a special privilege to be the industry leader at saving trees," said North American president of Ubisoft Laurent Detoc.

"Introducing in-game digital manuals is just the latest example of Ubisoft's ongoing commitment to being a more environmentally conscious company."

In a move made possible with nods from [Microsoft](#) and Sony, digitized manuals will be included on disks that hold game software, according to Ubisoft vice president of operations Rich Kubiszewski.

Ubisoft in March switched to in-game manuals for titles crafted for play on personal computers in North America.

"We are taking steps to become an industry leader in environmentally conscious packaging," Kubiszewski said.

"This obviously has impacts to the environment and the consumer, both positive. No more losing the manual, and we can provide more robust content."

A skateboarding videogame made in collaboration with Olympic snowboard gold medal winner Shaun White will be Ubisoft's first console title with a digitized manual.

"It's pretty cool that Ubisoft is making a conscious effort to go green with its new video game packaging," White said. "I'm excited for my new skateboarding game to come out and stoked that it will be the very first Ubisoft game to be part of their green packaging initiatives."

Ubisoft is also shifting to using only recycled plastic for cases holding titles made for play on personal computers.

The first game shipped in Eco-Tech packaging will be a version of "Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Conviction" being released later this month.

Ubisoft said it is in talks with Nintendo to use [recycled plastic](#) packaging for titles made for play on the Japanese videogame titan's DS devices.

Earth-friendly practices in Ubisoft's San Francisco offices include providing workers with mugs as part of a ban on paper cups and using utensils and plates made from corn for easy composting.

"[Ubisoft](#) is definitely an environmentally conscious and innovative company, it is in our top line objectives," Kubiszewski said.

Shunning paper manuals and shifting to recycled, or even biodegradable, packaging are worthy objectives that need sign-on from publishers and retailers to spread, said videogame analyst Billy Pidgeon of Game Changer Research.

"People in the tech industry are aware of environmental problems but due to the nature of the business, especially hardware, intentions can be at cross-purposes with business plans," Pidgeon said.

"Being green and less wasteful is all good but can go to hell when you are trying to get the cheapest materials and production processes to get the lowest prices for customers."

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