

## Failure Case for ENTR200 Class Discussion

Based on <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acclaim> accessed 12/13/07



**Acclaim Entertainment** was an [American video game developer](#) and [publisher](#). It developed, published, marketed, and distributed [interactive entertainment software](#) for a variety of [hardware platforms](#), including [Sega's Genesis](#), [Saturn](#), [Dreamcast](#), and [Game Gear](#), [Nintendo's NES](#), [SNES](#), [Nintendo 64](#), [GameCube](#), [Game Boy](#), [Game Boy Color](#), and [Game Boy Advance](#), [Sony's PlayStation](#) and [PlayStation 2](#), [Microsoft's Xbox](#), and, to a lesser extent, [personal computer](#) systems and [arcade games](#). Since Acclaim Entertainment's 2004 demise, the Acclaim brand and logotype have been purchased and are now used by [Acclaim Games](#).

### History

Founded in 1986 as a [Delaware corporation](#), Acclaim maintained operations in the [United States](#), the [United Kingdom](#), [Germany](#), [France](#), [Spain](#), [Australia](#), and [Japan](#). In its first years, Acclaim was exclusively a [video game publisher](#), either farming out the creation of its video games to [external developers](#) or localizing existing video games from overseas. But as it grew, it purchased some independent studios, including [Iguana Entertainment](#) of [Austin, Texas](#), and [Sculptured Software](#) of [Salt Lake City, Utah](#).

The name of the company was picked because it had to be alphabetically above the co-founder's former place of employment, [Activision](#), and also had to be alphabetically above [Accolade](#) (another company formed by ex-Activision employees). This was a common formula for picking names of new companies that were founded by ex-Activision employees (the founders of Activision used this formula when they left [Atari](#)).

Many of Acclaim's products were licensed titles: games based on [comics](#), [television](#) series (including [wrestling](#) shows) and [movies](#). They were also responsible for the [ports](#) of many of [Midway's](#) arcade games in the early-to-mid [1990s](#), including the [Mortal Kombat](#) series. They also published some games from other companies that at the time of publication didn't have an American branch, such as [Technos Japan's Double Dragon II](#) and [Taito's Bust-A-Move](#) series.

The waning of the arcade game industry, coupled with some poor sales and public enthusiasm from several key titles led to the eventual loss of many of their licenses. One result of this was their late [refactoring](#) of the Dave Mirra's Freestyle BMX series. Late into development, semi-nude, [nude](#) and Porn content (e.g., [full motion video](#) of strippers and nude female riders) was added in hopes of boosting sales. However, like most of

their other contemporary titles, [BMX XXX](#) sold poorly and was derided for its trashy content and porn gameplay. Dave Mirra himself publicly disowned the game, stating that he was not involved in the decision to include nudity. To add to that, their arcade game *Batman Forever* had poor sales also due to poor gameplay.

A less significant aspect of Acclaim's business was the development and publication of [strategy guides](#) relating to their software products and the issuance of "special edition" [comic magazines](#), via [Acclaim Comics](#), to support the more lucrative [brand](#) names.

During Acclaim's decline towards bankruptcy, they made several infamous business and marketing decisions. One example was a promise to UK gamers that a 500 pound prize would be awarded to up to five winners who would name their baby "Turok", to promote the release of [Turok Evolution](#). Another was an attempt to buy advertising space on actual tombstones for a [Shadowman](#) game.

The company also had a history of shady dealings with its employees. Roughly two years after its 1995 acquisition of the Salt Lake City-based Sculptured Software, during which it offered Sculptured Software employees what looked like iron-clad contracts and stock that would be vested over the course of the contracts, it abruptly laid off about half the company, violating its own contract terms. The lay-off, however, came so abruptly that the employees had to choose between taking a reasonable severance package (whose terms altered several times during the initial weeks after the layoff) and not suing, or taking a number after a number of other creditors to sue and losing the severance package. (Personal communication from Paul G. Webb, a mid-level manager caught in the lay-off.) In 2007, one of numerous class action suits filed on behalf of stockholders was won, allowing some of these employees the chance at least to realize a return on some of the stock that had been vested.

(<http://www.sbclasslaw.com/settlements/Acclaim%20Entertainment%20-%20Notice.pdf>). Named in this particular suit were founder and CEO Greg Fishbach, Edmond Sanctis, James Scoroposki and Gerard Agoglia.

Acclaim also suffered multiple [lawsuits](#), a portion of them with former partners. [Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen](#) sued over unpaid royalties. [Dave Mirra](#) sued for fear of being associated with [BMX XXX](#). Another was from Acclaim's own investors, claiming that Acclaim management had published misleading financial reports.

Acclaim suffered severe financial problems in 2004, the result of most of their [video](#) and [computer game](#) titles (like [Showdown: Legends of Wrestling](#)) selling very poorly. This resulted in the closure of [Acclaim Studios Cheltenham](#) and [Acclaim Studios Manchester](#) in [England](#) and other places and their filing for [Chapter 11 bankruptcy](#) protection, leaving many employees unpaid. Amongst the titles under development at the UK studios were [Emergency Mayhem](#), and [Made Man](#).

On [1 September 2004](#), Acclaim filed for [Chapter 7 bankruptcy](#) with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court of [New York](#), which would virtually annihilate their company in liquidating all possible assets to pay off their enormous debt which reportedly tops [USD\\$100 million](#).

An attempt to reopen the Cheltenham and Manchester studios (under the new name **Exclaim**) failed due to legal wrangling over [IP](#), with both the US and UK administrators claiming rights.

In August 2005, former [Activision](#) executive Howard Marks purchased the name "Acclaim" for a reported \$100,000. In the beginning of 2006, Marks formed a new company called [Acclaim Games](#). According to a job listing for the company, Acclaim Games is aimed at the US and UK "tween" multiplayer markets.

On [7 July 2006](#), [Throwback Entertainment](#) announced that it had acquired over 150 Acclaim-published titles and vows to bring some into the next-generation.

## Valiant Comics

VALIANT

Company logo



Valiant Comics stormed onto the market in the 1990s, selling more than 80 million books in its first five years. Its characters have seen print in numerous languages across the globe and have featured in best selling video games. The Valiant universe includes [X-O Manowar](#), [Shadowman](#), [Quantum and Woody](#), [Harbinger](#), [Archer and Armstrong](#), [Eternal Warrior](#), [Bloodshot](#) and [Rai](#), along with [Gold Key Comics](#)' characters [Magnus: Robot Fighter](#), and [Turok: Dinosaur Hunter](#), among other

original Valiant creations.

In June of 1994, Valiant Comics was sold to Acclaim Entertainment for \$65 million. Acclaim renamed the line Acclaim Comics in 1996. Their primary motivation was to make the properties more suitable for use in video game development. This created notable video game successes out of the Shadowman & Turok properties<sup>[\[citation needed\]](#)</sup>.

## Bankruptcy

In 2004, Acclaim filed for bankruptcy and shut down its offices.

In 2005, Acclaim's [trustee](#) auctioned off the rights for the original (non-Gold Key) Valiant characters as part of the bankruptcy proceedings. The characters auctioned included (but were not limited to) Archer & Armstrong, Armorines, Bloodshot, Doctor Tomorrow, Eternal Warrior, H.A.R.D. Corps, Harbinger, Ninjak, Quantum & Woody, Rai, Second Life of Dr. Mirage, Secret Weapons, Shadowman, Timewalker, Trinity Angels, Troublemakers and X-O Manowar. After a complicated and drawn out process that involved numerous parties, a group known as Valiant Entertainment were recognized as the new owners of the Valiant properties, despite not being the highest bidders, with a purchase price of approximately \$1.5 million.

As of May 2006 <sup>[1]</sup> it has been announced that [Disney Interactive](#) (formerly known as [Buena Vista Games](#)) will publish a new game in the [Turok](#) series, which means [Disney Interactive](#) somehow acquired the rights to the [Turok](#) character. [Turok](#) was originally a [Gold Key Comics](#) character, which means he was not included in the deal mentioned above.

## Acclaim's labels

- Acclaim
- [LJN](#) (used since the late '80s until 1994 for Nintendo's consoles, revived briefly in 2000)
- Flying Edge (distributed Acclaim's games for Sega's systems until 1994)
- Arena Entertainment (acquired from [Mirrorsoft](#) in 1991, they also distributed Acclaim's games for Sega's consoles until 1994)
- Acclaim Sports
- AKA Acclaim (**A**thletes **K**ick **A**ss)
- Club Acclaim

## Game titles

Name	Release Year	Platform(s)
<a href="#">AFL Live 2003</a>		PC, PS2, <a href="#">XBOX</a>
<a href="#">AFL Live 2004</a>		PC, PS2, XBOX
<a href="#">AFL Live Premiership Edition</a>	2004	PC, PS2, XBOX
<a href="#">All-Star Baseball</a>		PS, PS2, <a href="#">N64</a> , Xbox, <a href="#">GameCube</a>
<a href="#">ATV Quad Power Racing 2</a>	<a href="#">2003</a>	PS2, Xbox, GameCube
<a href="#">Armorines: Project Swarm</a>	1999	PS, N64, <a href="#">GBC</a>
<a href="#">Aggressive Inline</a>	2002	PS2, Xbox, GameCube

<a href="#"><u>Batman &amp; Robin</u></a>		<a href="#"><u>PlayStation</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Batman Forever</u></a>	1995 1996	<a href="#"><u>Super NES</u></a> , <a href="#"><u>Sega Master System</u></a> , <a href="#"><u>Sega Mega Drive</u></a> , <a href="#"><u>Sega Game Gear</u></a> , Game Boy, PC
<a href="#"><u>Blast Lacrosse</u></a>	2001	<a href="#"><u>PlayStation</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>BMX XXX</u></a>	2002	Xbox, GameCube
<a href="#"><u>Bubble Bobble/Rainbow Islands</u></a>		<a href="#"><u>Sega Saturn</u></a> , PlayStation 1
<a href="#"><u>Burnout</u></a>		PS2, Xbox, GameCube
<a href="#"><u>Bust a Move 2</u></a>		Sega Saturn, Sony PlayStation, Nintendo 64
<a href="#"><u>Constructor</u></a>	1997	PC
<a href="#"><u>Crazy Taxi</u></a>		GameCube, PS2, Game Boy, Arcade coin machine
<a href="#"><u>D</u></a>		PS, Saturn, <a href="#"><u>3D0</u></a> , PC
<a href="#"><u>Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX</u></a>	2000	<a href="#"><u>Dreamcast</u></a> , Playstation, Windows PC, <a href="#"><u>Game Boy Color</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2</u></a>	2001	Playstation 2, Gamecube, Xbox, <a href="#"><u>Game Boy Advance</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>ECW Anarchy Rulz</u></a>		Dreamcast, PS

<a href="#"><u>ECW Hardcore Revolution</u></a>		Dreamcast, PS, N64, GBC
<a href="#"><u>Extreme-G</u></a>		N64
<a href="#"><u>Extreme-G 2</u></a>		N64, PC
<a href="#"><u>XG3: Extreme G Racing</u></a>		PS2, GameCube
<a href="#"><u>XGRA: Extreme-G Racing Association</u></a>		PS2, GameCube, Xbox
<a href="#"><u>Fantastic Four</u></a>		PS
<a href="#"><u>Forsaken</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>1998</u></a> (   <a href="#"><u>1999</u></a> (  )	Windows, PlayStation, Nintendo 64
<a href="#"><u>Gladiator: Sword of Vengeance</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>2003</u></a>	PS2, XBox, PC
<a href="#"><u>Juiced</u></a>		PC, PS2, Xbox, GameCube
<a href="#"><u>Jupiter Strike</u></a>		PS
<a href="#"><u>Legends of Wrestling</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>2001</u></a> (PS2) <a href="#"><u>2002</u></a> (XBOX, GameCube)	PS2, Xbox, GameCube
<a href="#"><u>Legends of Wrestling II</u></a>		PS2, Xbox, GameCube
<a href="#"><u>Marvel's X-Men</u></a>		NES
<a href="#"><u>Machines</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>1999</u></a>	PC

<a href="#"><u>NBA Jam Extreme</u></a>	PS
<a href="#"><u>NFL Quarterback Club</u></a>	PS, GC, N64
<a href="#"><u>Othello</u></a>	NES
<a href="#"><u>Re-volt</u></a>	Dreamcast, PS, N64, PC
<a href="#"><u>Revolution X : Music is the Weapon</u></a>	Super NES, Sega Genesis, Sega Saturn, Sony Playstation 1
<a href="#"><u>World Championship Rugby</u></a>	PC, PS2, Xbox
<a href="#"><u>Shadowman</u></a>	Dreamcast, N64, PS, PC
<a href="#"><u>Shadowman: 2econd Coming</u></a>	PS2
<a href="#"><u>Showdown: Legends of Wrestling</u></a>	PS2, Xbox
<a href="#"><u>Smash TV</u></a>	NES
<a href="#"><u>South Park</u></a>	PS, N64, PC
<a href="#"><u>South Park Rally</u></a>	PS, N64, PC, Dreamcast
<a href="#"><u>South Park: Chef's Luv Shack</u></a>	PS, N64, PC, Dreamcast
<a href="#"><u>Space Jam</u></a>	PS, Saturn, PC

<a href="#"><u>Summer Heat Beach Volleyball</u></a>		PS2
<a href="#"><u>The Simpsons: Bart and the Beanstalk</u></a>		<a href="#"><u>GB</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>The Simpsons: Bart Meets Radioactive Man</u></a>		NES
<a href="#"><u>The Simpsons: Bart vs. the Space Mutants</u></a>		NES, Master System, Sega Mega Drive
<a href="#"><u>The Simpsons: Bart vs. the World</u></a>		NES
<a href="#"><u>The Simpsons: Bart vs. the Juggernauts</u></a>		GB
<a href="#"><u>The Simpsons: Bart's Nightmare</u></a>		SNES, Genesis
<a href="#"><u>The Simpsons: Virtual Bart</u></a>		SNES, Genesis
<a href="#"><u>Trickstyle</u></a>		Dreamcast, PC
<a href="#"><u>Turok: Dinosaur Hunter</u></a>		N64, PC
<a href="#"><u>Turok 2: Seeds of Evil</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>1998</u></a>	N64, GBC, PC
<a href="#"><u>Turok 3: Shadows of Oblivion</u></a>	2000	Nintendo 64

<a href="#"><i>Turok: Rage Wars</i></a>	1999	N64, GBC
<a href="#"><i>Turok: Evolution</i></a>		PS2, Xbox, GameCube, PC
<a href="#"><i>WWF In Your House</i></a>		PlayStation
<a href="#"><i>WWF Wrestlemania: The Arcade Game</i></a>		SNES, Genesis, Saturn, Arcade, PS
<a href="#"><i>WWF War Zone</i></a>		PS, N64, Saturn(Cancelled)
<a href="#"><i>WWF Attitude</i></a>		PS, N64, Dreamcast
<a href="#"><i>Vexx</i></a>		PS2, Xbox, GameCube
<a href="#"><i>X-Men: Children of the Atom</i></a>		Sega Saturn, Sony PlayStation

## See also

- [Valiant Comics](#)
- [Turok](#)
- [Shadowman](#)

## Notes and references

1.   [1],

## External links

- [Acclaim Games](#)
- [MobyGames' entry on Acclaim Entertainment](#)
- ["Acclaim: back from the dead" at GameSpot](#)
- ["Top 10 Acclaim Games" at GameSpy](#)
- [Iup.com's list of the ten worst titles published by Acclaim](#)
- [An employee's account of the late years at Acclaim](#)

