Amping up the classics.

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Meet the team behind Hasbro's latest licensed digital game, Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: Rita's Rewind.

A certain generation of gamer spent their formative years tucked away in the arcade, spending their entire allowance – and maybe any other money they could bum from their parents – trying to foil Mr. Burns in *The Simpsons* arcade game or vanquish Magneto in *X-Men*. The beloved style of classic co-op beat-'em-up games has seen a resurgence in recent years on consoles and PC – and Hasbro's digital licensing team is delivering some exciting new games that capture that nostalgic spirit - no quarters required.

That new retro style.

"Retro gaming has quickly become its own genre and has grown a lot in recent years," says Barry Dorf, Hasbro's VP of Licensing for Digital Gaming. "The requests for our classic games came on first, but when we started getting requests for taking our IP and creating new games in the retro style we started to listen."

But making retro-style games requires partners with studios that specialize in those types of games. Enter Digital Eclipse, a California-based developer with a deep history creating original games with a classic feel. According to Dan Amrich, Writer on *Rita's Rewind* , the process of striking up a partnership to make a *Power Rangers* game was pure serendipity.

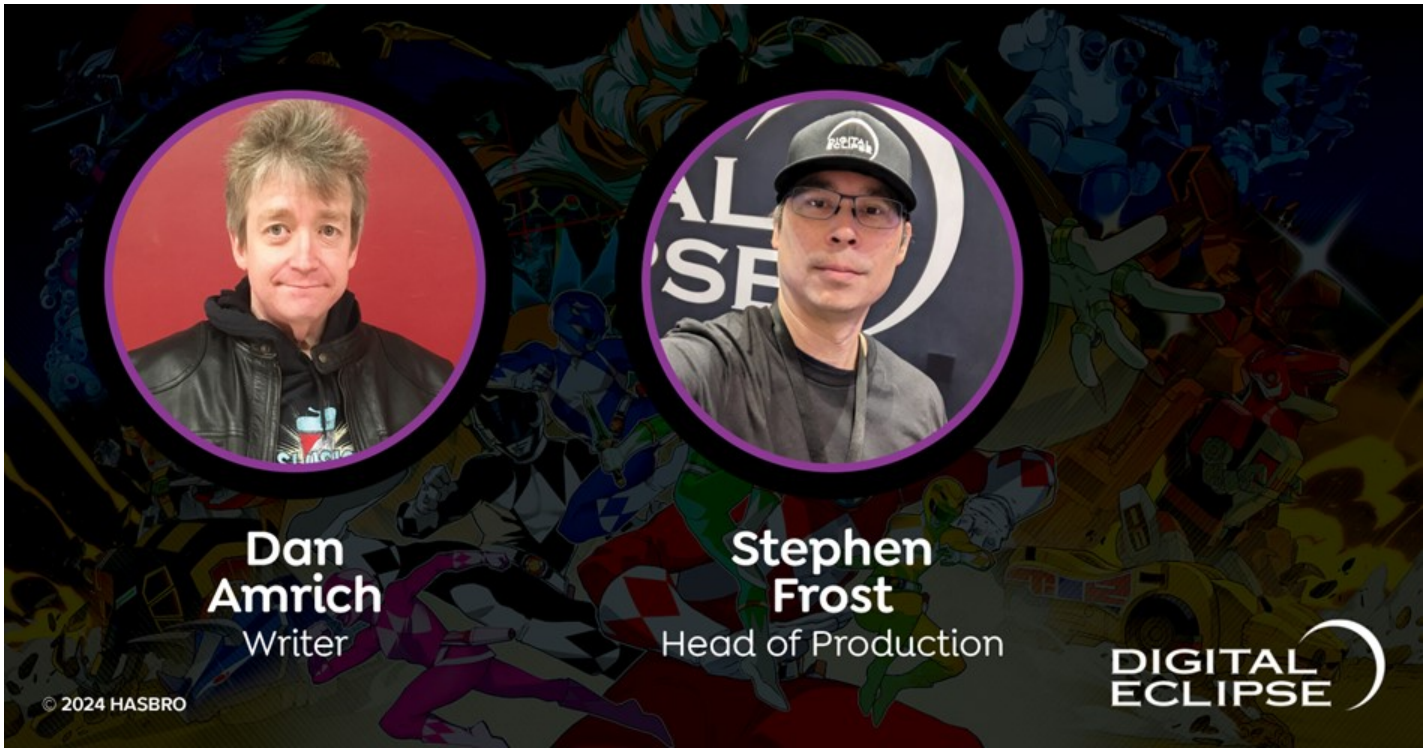
"Our studio head, Mike Mika, had been talking to Barry for a while about what kind of projects would be a good fit, and there were several suggestions that came from the studio. At one point Barry asked, 'Why don't you want to do *Power Rangers*?' We honestly thought that would never be on the table – who *wouldn't* want to do a *Power Rangers* game? It suddenly became clear that both companies had ambitions about revisiting the franchise as a 90s throwback, and after just a few meetings the greenlight was given and we were off to the races."

Staying true to brand – and fans.

Once a deal is in place with a licensee, how do you get a game fans actually want to play? According to Barry it's a case of trust but verify. "It starts at the concept stage, before the deal is signed. Do we think a developer can take care of the brand, represent it well and make a fun game? We really vet their past products, IP passion, and art styles."

For Digital Eclipse, the key was getting to the core of what *Power Rangers* stands for. "I always felt the central message of *Power Rangers* was teamwork," says Dan. "That fits perfectly with the arcade games of the 90s, which were played on cabinets with large, multiplayer control panels, usually by four friends at a time. That's the kind of co-op experience we've built *Rita's Rewind* to deliver -- gather your squad and stop Robo Rita from conquering Earth, because it'll be more fun to defeat her together."

"The challenge was more in figuring out how to squeeze in as much *Power Rangers* goodness as possible," adds Stephen Frost, Head of Production at Digital Eclipse. "Being a fan of the IP, ourselves, it was amazing to take such a fun and loved show and make it an interactive experience for other fans."



A mighty trustin' team.

Stephen also puts a focus on trust, and how creativity can only flourish when everyone involved is on the same page. “From the initial meetings through to release, Hasbro has given us a lot of trust and agency, so when it came time to telling an authentic *Power Rangers* story, they really let us run with things that would support the arcade-style gameplay. I can't wait for franchise fans to see all the accurate touches and deep references we've hidden throughout the game.”

What’s next.

Both teams also see the launch of *MMPR: Rita’s Rewind* not as an end, but as a beginning. “Post-launch, we still want to continue to improve and add to Rita's Rewind as much as possible. We definitely have a few surprises in store for fans so please keep your eyes open for further announcements,” teases Stephen.

Looking ahead, Hasbro is all-in on video games, with an exciting slate of both first-party and licensed games in the works across all major brands and platforms. Watch this space.

Rita’s Rewind is out now on PC, Playstation, Nintendo Switch and Xbox.