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News from Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission March 30, 2009

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CLUB PENGUIN CONTINUES TO GROW

Kelowna-based [Club Penguin](#), the wintery online community for children that was sold to Disney in 2007, continues to flourish and grow. With its playful persona, Club Penguin has developed a global reputation as a safe online

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OKANAGAN RESEARCH & INNOVATION CENTRE (ORIC) OFFICIALLY OPENS IN KELOWNA

The official launch of the Okanagan Research & Innovation Centre's new Kelowna-based technology business incubator took place on March 27, with Member of Parliament for Kelowna-Lake Country, Ron Cannan, performing the official ribbon cutting ceremony (far left in photo.) Also on hand and shown with Cannan were Peter Haubrich, President, ORIC; Kelowna Mayor Sharon Shepherd and



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community directed in large part by the kids who play there. An example of this is the *Coins for Change* online giving campaign that ran before Christmas. The campaign allowed the virtual world's "penguin citizens" to have a say in directing how a \$1.5 million dollar donation would be divided among children's causes worldwide.



Recently, Club Penguin launched in French at www.clubpenguin.com/fr. Much of the work for the French site was done in Kelowna, although the work was supported by staff and a consultant in France to ensure an authentic French feel.

More than 150 people work at Club Penguin located in the Landmark IV building on Dickson Avenue in Kelowna.

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Gerry Salembier, Assistant Deputy Minister (British Columbia) for Western Economic Diversification.

The ORIC Innovation Centre in Kelowna opened in November, 2008, a high-technology business incubator aimed primarily at nurturing the development and sustainability of start-up, high growth technology companies. The Kelowna Centre was opened based on the successes of the incubator at the National Research Centre's Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics - Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory (NRC-DRAO) south of Penticton which was founded as a not-for-profit society in August, 2005. ORIC's mission is to create high-tech jobs and sustainable economic value for the Okanagan Valley and beyond.

The ORIC Kelowna Innovation Centre has 7,500 square feet of space available over two phases for high-tech start-up companies. This includes office space at affordable rates; meeting rooms; internet access; reception services and access to a wide range of business support services.

For further information please contact Martin Yuill, Director, Kelowna Innovation Centre at martin@oric.ca

VIDEO-GAME INDUSTRY THRIVES DESPITE DOWNTURN

Despite the doom and gloom surrounding most of the Canadian economy, the country's video-game industry continues to boom.

According to a study released Tuesday by the Entertainment Software Association of Canada (ESAC), more than 14,000 people are now directly employed by more than 247 Canadian



video-game companies. The number balloons higher once related jobs such as those in retail and transportation are included. The head count helped Canada leapfrog the United Kingdom to become the world's third largest centre for video-game development talent, trailing Japan and the United States.

[Click here](#) to read the full report.

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