

John Racioppi - Global Gaming

By Cory McCrindle, Northwest Business Centre

Despite the fact that he professes not to be much into games, John Racioppi may still end up being a player in the downtown Fort Frances business community.

Racioppi recently opened up Global Gaming, a place where people can visit to try out the latest in computer games and surf the internet. John readily admits that when it came to a career choice, this one wasn't the first one on his list. "To be honest, I went to school for architectural technology," says Racioppi, who adds "I knew nothing about gaming, very little about computers, but I'm learning as I go." John says his clients are helping him deal with the steep learning curve. "I don't really have to do too much research on what's the best game coming out, because they just tell me what to get and I just go out and buy it," grins Racioppi.

The idea for Global Gaming began when John's uncle Dave bought a new games console. Racioppi continues the story. "He was complaining about how expensive the games were, and said 'wouldn't it be nice if you could go to a place and just try everything first for an hourly fee before having to purchase it,' and from there it just took right off," recalls John.

Gamers familiar with Xbox, PlayStation and game simulators will find hours of endless amusement at Global Gaming. John says one of the interesting and heart warming things that has happen since he opened his doors is that he has watched a number of youngsters come out of their shells. "I see a lot of kids coming in here...they're passive, they're a little shy," says Racioppi, "and I think that they might have been spending a lot of time at home by themselves. Maybe the social skills aren't that great...but this is a place for them to come, and I'm meeting a lot of interesting little characters."

Racioppi says his business is set up similarly to the old-style arcades, but that it doesn't carry the same reputation those buildings had. John

says he will not tolerate any of the so-called 'shady activity' that went on in some of those settings. "This is very family-friendly," assures John, "I have people in here from six to sixty, and families coming in all the time...the rules are very strict here. If they're not followed, people are asked to leave right away." Racioppi says he purposely wanted to build Global Gaming as a place where family is welcome. He recently ran a coupon give away in the local paper, with the stipulation that the coupons had to be presented by a parent. "It brought 400 people through here that day," John reflects, "so when they walk in they go 'wow, you know what, this is family run.' And my little guy is over here playing a game, so I'm not going to have anything that's going to bother him."



John Racioppi isn't playing around when it comes to gaming in Fort Frances...

The 29 year old Racioppi says he's enjoying being his own boss, in part because it allows him the chance to utilize his architectural skills. "I like using my creative side a lot," says John, who reports that he has an eye towards expanding his business in the future. "I've been up nights...I have so many plans for the next one already, it's crazy. I

can't wait to start the next one," says an enthusiastic Racioppi. And he hints that the next Global Gaming location could be Kendra. John says he'd rather expand into smaller centers instead of big cities. "The people of the town are just happy to have it, so you get a little bit more respect for the equipment, and you get to know everyone a little bit better," reasons Racioppi. He has this advice for those thinking of opening their own business. "Don't listen to anyone around you that's negative", advises John, "If you think you can do it, and you believe in it, then you go...you'll get it done."

If getting it done on the latest computer game or surfing the 'net is your idea of fun, visit John Racioppi at Global Gaming, located at 256 Scott Street, Fort Frances.