

Eidos to raise £50m for new games from US share sale

By Andrew Clark

EIDOS, the fast-growing computer games developer, is to raise about £50m through a sale of 7m new shares on Nasdaq, the American junior stock market. The money will go towards acquisitions and product development.

Chief executive Charles Cornwell said the company was keen to design new products for the US market. He said: "There is a certain amount of differential in taste between the US and Europe."

Sports simulations, such as baseball and basketball games, are particularly popular in America, while strategy games go down better in Europe and Japan.

The company's new game Tomb Raider is an adventure game in which the player controls a woman character. She is trying to retrieve a mysterious talisman called the "Atlantean Scion" from a South American temple. Eidos chairman Ian Livingstone is pictured with Natalie Cook, said to be the inspiration for the character.

Mr Cornwell said the company typically spent up to £2m and two years developing a game.

Eidos also hopes a Nasdaq listing will help its search for US acquisitions. Yesterday it announced it had acquired a 25pc stake in Innerloop Technologies, a Norwegian games developer, for £550,000.

Second-quarter results showed a pre-tax loss of £2.28m compared with a loss of £165,000 last time. The company has not made a profit in the six years since flotation but it hopes to move into the black in the final quarter.

The advisers for the flotation are Volpe Welly and the brokers are J P Morgan. There is no dividend.



Game on: Eidos chairman Ian Livingstone with Natalie Cook

Picture: SOPHIA FARRIS