



Visa Championships - Torino 2006 Online Video Game Brings Olympic Experience to Consumers Worldwide

Winners from 23 countries to attend the Olympic Winter Games in Torino, Italy, and compete in global championship; Chances to win ThinkPad notebook PCs from Lenovo and DVD home theater systems from Panasonic

SAN FRANCISCO – Oct. 6, 2005 - In a new and dynamic approach to its Olympic marketing program, Visa International today launched Visa Championships - Torino 2006, a challenging, free, online video game and international competition in which players from 23 countries compete in three virtual Olympic Winter Sports to win a trip for two to the Torino 2006 Olympic Winter Games and a chance to be crowned global champion.

Visa Championships - Torino 2006 challenges players to master three Olympic Winter Sports online: Bobsleigh, Giant Slalom (Alpine Skiing) and Snowboard Cross (Snowboarding). Similar to an athlete's buildup to the Olympic Winter Games, players must progress through multiple preliminary rounds and then compete in a national competition. In each country, the player with the lowest combined time across all three sports will travel to Torino, Italy, as a guest of Visa to attend the Olympic Winter Games and compete head-to-head against the other country winners on February 15, 2006.

The preliminary rounds begin on October 6, 2005 and the national competition runs from November 15, 2005 through December 15, 2005, in all countries. Only players who are legal residents of the participating countries, have registered, posted times in all three sports to the leader board, and are at least 18 years of age by 23.59 GMT on December 15th are eligible to win prizes.

"Visa is the first Olympic Sponsor to use the Internet to deliver the excitement and thrills of Olympic competition to consumers around the world through an online video game," said Tom Shepard, executive vice president, Global Marketing Partnerships and Sponsorship, Visa International. "As a forward-looking organization, we are constantly looking for innovative ways to provide incremental value to our cardholders. As the leading Internet payment brand, we recognized the potential of online video gaming to raise awareness of our Olympic sponsorship while providing a fun and entertaining means for consumers worldwide to engage with our brand."

The game incorporates unique, interactive features such as Visa-sponsored Olympic athletes, from the Team Visa and Gold Medal athletes programs, who will provide coaching tips to players. At the start of the game, players receive a virtual Visa payment card with preloaded Visa sponsorship funds that can be used to purchase virtual performance gear. Additional virtual funds are earned by placing in the top three for each event. The coaching tips, which players receive for placing First, Second or Third in each run, and virtual gear can improve player performance and lower race times.

Visa is working closely with two Olympic Sponsors, Lenovo and Panasonic, who will provide technical expertise and prizes at the national and international levels. Lenovo, the computing equipment supplier of the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Torino and the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, will award its new ThinkPad Z60m wide-screen notebook PCs to all runner-up national winners. Lenovo will also work with Visa to design and stage the global championships in Torino, with the final competition taking place on ThinkCentre A52 desktop PCs.

Panasonic will provide high quality DVD home theater systems for the national winners, and HD plasma televisions and AV equipment to the global championships in Torino. As a TOP Sponsor of the Olympic Games since Calgary and Seoul in 1988, Panasonic has contributed to the Olympic Games by providing professional broadcast equipment and support for the coverage of events around the globe, and by designing sporting venues where live audiences can enjoy the sights and sounds of the games with huge video screens and professional audio systems. Panasonic is a TOP Sponsor for both the Torino 2006 and Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.

Visa Championships - Torino 2006 incorporates advanced game play features such as character development and persistence, by which players can retain and improve race times and gear, plus power, agility and speed skill points across play sessions. The online video game also incorporates localized elements for each participating country, such as language, Team Visa and Gold Medal athletes who provide coaching tips, a virtual payment card in their national currency, and national flags.

The 23 countries participating in Visa Championships - Torino 2006 are Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay, the United Kingdom and the United States. The game is available in 13 languages - Chinese, Croatian, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Kazak, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Ukrainian. The Visa Championships - Torino 2006 game and competition rules are available at www.visa.com/visachampionships.

About Visa Championships - Torino 2006

The Visa Championships - Torino 2006 online video game is a first from Visa as part of its Olympic marketing program. It is a challenging, free international competition in which players from 23 countries compete in three virtual Olympic Winter Sports to win a trip to the Torino 2006 Olympic Winter Games where they will take part in the global finals of the game. Key dates include:

- Preliminary rounds - October 6 - November 14, 2005
- National competition - November 15 - December 15, 2005
- Global Finals competition - February 15, 2006

National winners and their guests will arrive in Torino on February 13, 2006 and depart on February 16, 2006. In addition, to competing in the global finals, each winner and a guest will be hosted by Visa at the Torino 2006 Olympic Winter Games, and will receive airfare and lodging for two, scheduled meals and tickets to two Olympic events for themselves and their guest.

Only users who are legal residents of the participating countries, have registered, posted times in all three sports to the leader board, and are at least 18 years of age by 23.59 GMT on December 15th are

eligible to win prizes. In addition, users must select the same country in which they reside to be eligible for prizes. Details and rules of the game are available at www.visa.com/visachampionships.

About Visa

Visa connects cardholders, merchants and financial institutions through the world's largest electronic payments network. Visa products allow buyers and sellers to conduct commerce with ease and confidence in both the physical and virtual worlds. As an association owned by 21,000 member financial institutions, Visa is committed to the sustained growth of electronic payment systems to support the needs of all stakeholders and to drive economic growth.

For more information, visit www.corporate.visa.com.

About Lenovo

Lenovo creates the most innovative products and services in the personal computing industry. Lenovo engineers, programmers and scientists from five laboratories in China, Japan and the United States focus on research and development that solves customer problems and improves productivity. Lenovo is Technology Equipment Sponsor of the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Torino and the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, providing notebook and desktop PCs, servers, storage and other computing equipment.

For more information, visit www.lenovo.com.

About Panasonic

Best known by its Panasonic brand name, Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd. is a worldwide leader in the development and manufacture of electronic products for a wide range of consumer, business and industrial needs. Based in Osaka, Japan, the company recorded consolidated net sales of US\$81.44 billion for the year ended March 31, 2005. The company's shares are listed on the Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, New York (NYSE:MC), Euronext Amsterdam and Frankfurt stock exchanges.

For more information, visit <http://panasonic.co.jp/global/index.html>.