

**\$10,000 up for grabs for the first bot that plays like a human**

The **2008 2K Bot Prize Contest** will take place on 17<sup>th</sup> December at The University of Western Australia. The contest aims to create a perfect computer game playing bot – a bot that you can't pick from a human player. It has attracted an international field, with teams from Australia, the Czech Republic, the United States, Japan and Singapore competing in the final.

Australian game development company 2K Australia (creator of the award-winning BioShock) is providing a cash prize of \$7,000, plus a trip to their Canberra studio for the team that creates a bot that fools a panel of expert judges into thinking it is actually a human player. The judges include artificial intelligence experts, game developers, and a champion game player.

A “bot” is a character in a computer game that is controlled using artificial intelligence. Bots are common in combat games. The very best of them act a lot like a human player: they run, they hide, they make surprise attacks - they even taunt the other players with well-chosen words and gestures.

Bots that play like humans make a game more fun. A bot that never misses or makes a mistake is frustrating to play. A bot that always does the same things is predictable and boring to play, and easy to beat. But it's not easy to make a bot play the way a human does.

While the contest is about fun and games, there is a serious side too. More human bots could help make a game a commercial success. Bots are also used in realistic simulations of military and security scenarios (but then they're called “intelligent agents”). A bot that adapts to different opponents and can learn to play different games as well as a human can would be a breakthrough in artificial intelligence, with far-reaching consequences.

The Bot Prize contest is part of the 2008 IEEE Symposium on Computational Intelligence and Games, which will run from 15<sup>th</sup> December to 18<sup>th</sup> December. Full details of the contest can be found on the web site at [www.botprize.org](http://www.botprize.org).

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