

## I get paid to fly round the globe playing games

**THE UK computer games market is huge business. Last year it was worth a staggering £1.26billion.**

Few appreciate this growth better than Glasgow-based Iain Farrell, the games expert on Vernon Kay's Radio 1 show.

Now Iain is poised to visit Los Angeles' ultimate games show. MAUREEN ELLIS reports.

If you've tuned into Radio 1 on a weekend morning, you'll have heard of Glasgow's reigning authority on games, Iain Farrell.

Perhaps you've heard him banter with host Vernon Kay on the merits of Metal Gear Solid or quibble over the nuances of the N-Gage.

But you'd be forgiven for missing the Glasgow link.

In fact, Iain doesn't sound Scottish in the slightest.

"My accent is messed up," admits Iain.

He was born in Irvine and in his 24 years he has lived in Skye, Manchester, Devon and North Yorkshire.

"But Scotland is the spiritual home for me," he insists. "I studied at Glasgow University.

"I did Scots literature which, of course, prepares me perfectly for a career in the technology industry."

Iain achieved academic qualifications in literature, but he paid his way through university by reviewing games.

"I would get paid phenomenal amounts of money for writing about something I really enjoyed," says Iain. "I was a student and that was amazing."

The career he has forged for himself since leaving university is similarly double-edged.

On the one hand he's a web designer. Iain has edited and updated websites for a number of companies under his website banner [www.kojichu.com](http://www.kojichu.com), rather cannily meaning 'under construction' in Japanese.

He forged links with the retailers at DeCourcy's arcade in the west end and has worked on websites for t-shirt designers Twisted Generation, kitsch emporium Felix and Oscar, and sunglasses manufacturer Foster Grant.

He's happy to continue his website work, but he's looking to concentrate more on writing about games technology.

Iain is utterly dedicated when it comes to tracking down the latest technology developments.



TRIED AND TESTED:  
Irvine-born Iain reviews  
computer games for Radio 1.  
Picture: Mark Gibson



He attended the gaming BAFTA's last month in London and now he's taking his hobby even further afield - he is jetting off to the E3 expo in Los Angeles.

"This is like Cannes for gaming," enthuses Iain.

"E3 is where a lot of business goes on. This will shape the gaming landscape for the next 12 or 15 months."

The technology rumour mill has been grinding loudly for months now.

And Iain expects Sony to launch a new entertainment system, PSX, which also records TV programmes.

Scottish games developer Rock Star North is also expected to preview its new Grand Theft Auto title, San Andreas.

Behind closed doors Iain thinks Microsoft will drop heavy hints on the XBOX 2, and Nintendo may showcase ideas for a dual-screened, hand-held gaming device ("for the grown-up GameBoy generation").

"It's going to be crazy," says Iain, "full of marketing and madness.

"It's going to be a huge event and they've got a lot to shout about this year, which helps."

Anyone interested in keeping up to date on news from LA needn't wait until Vernon's Happy Hour to hear it.

Instead, simply log on to the website, [www.iainfarrell.co.uk](http://www.iainfarrell.co.uk)

The site's 'Ask Iain' facility allows you to pose a question which Iain will endeavour to answer.

Where can I buy pyjamas for my pet? is one such quandary which Iain is only too happy to research.

"I felt that the internet needed that for some reason," he says.

Iain also has some very exciting media opportunities in the pipeline - he was recently recalled for a second audition for a games TV show.

He's keeping schtum on that for now content that, for the moment, his voice is being broadcast to around four million people every week.

"I like the idea of radio, it's very immediate," he says.

"And if I can't get a gig after being recommended by Vernon Kay then there's no hope for me."

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