

Search for PHOENIX HOMES in the local MLS.



- Complete Home Details with Addresses
- Multiple Photos • 360° Virtual Tours
- Sold Homes Data



Phoenix 59° Tucson 59° Flagstaff 41° Traffic | Weather

News | Sports | Money | Entertainment | Families | Health | Food/Home | Yes | Travel | Photo/Video | Español



SEARCH SPONSOR

marketplace

- » JOBS
- » AUTOS
- » REAL ESTATE
- » APARTMENTS
- classified
- local shopping
- newspaper ads
- coupons
- phone book

money & tech

Headlines

Careers Info

Your Money

- ▢ Stocks of AZ
- Interest
- ▢ Market Diaries
- ▢ Stock Indexes
- ▢ Mutual Funds
- ▢ Industry Groups
- ▢ Market Screener
- ▢ Portfolio
- ▢ World Markets
- ▢ Currencies

Housing Market

- ▢ Listings
- ▢ Home Sales

money & tech

» Print This » Email This » Most Popular » Larger Type » Smaller Type » Subscribe to The Republic

Peddling to video-gamers

Mesa firm sees new market for cycling therapy product

Jane Larson

The Arizona Republic Feb. 10, 2005 12:00 AM

Burn fat and build muscle while playing video games?

It's not a pitch from a late-night infomercial. It's finally possible, thanks to a new product from a small Mesa company.

Three Rivers Holdings LLC last month introduced the GameCycle, a hand-cranked stationary cycle that powers a Nintendo GameCube. The GameCycle was designed to help paraplegics build their upper-body strength, aerobic capacity and motor and cognitive skills.

advertisement

One of the common therapies for such patients is hand-cycling, in which users propel a stationary or three-wheeled cycle with their arms and shoulders instead of

Related

Three Rivers Holdings LLC



Business: Develops products that help people with disabilities.



Headquarters: Mesa.

Founded: 2000.

Full-time employees: 6.

2004 revenue: \$1.2 million.

Web site: www.3rivers.com.

Email alerts

Enter your email address to get Daily Business Update (Mon - Fri) newsletters.

- Home Values
- Mortgage Rates
- Mortgage Calculator

**Tech/Computing**

- e Tech Main
- Mac Column
- Video Games
- Kim Komando
- Gear
- Advice
- Sites

**Columnists**

**AZ Economy**

**The Republic 100**

**Arizona Business Gazette**

**PR Newswire**

- AZ Releases
- Press Releases

**En Español**

- Empresas
- Negocios



seems to allow people to be mesmerized for hours, and combine it with the exercise environment, now you have that challenge."

Three Rivers went to Nintendo Co. Ltd. to license its popular game box and interface it with hand-cycling equipment. It designed the GameCycle from the ground up with wheelchair users in mind, Boninger said.

And by aligning with a game developer like Nintendo, Three Rivers can take advantage of new games but won't have to develop them itself, Boninger said.

Three Rivers was named Innovator of the Year in the start-up category at the 2003 Governor's Celebration of Innovation. With the GameCycle, it is introducing its first product that has appeal to the home market, too.

The idea of combining exercising and gaming is just starting to turn into a niche industry. This year's Consumer Electronics Show was the first to feature a fitness-themed Cardio Play Zone, in which six companies introduced products designed to get gamers off the couch.

Among them was Cycle- Score, a cycling/video-game combination invented by students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Their product differs from the GameCycle in that the MIT group is building its system to work with existing commercial exercise bikes, and they are designing their own games to better match an exercise pace, project manager David Ebery said. The CycleScore is also about a year away from commercialization, he said.

Like CycleScore, the GameCycle includes software specially designed to link the

their legs. But as anyone whose exercise equipment has morphed into a clothes rack can attest, stationary cycling can get old fast.

"One of the reasons people don't exercise is because it really is boring," said Ron Boninger, president of Three Rivers. "So if you take the gaming environment, which

**News as it happens**

- Chandler man close to buying Vikings
- Taser shares fall as news reports question safety
- Low mortgage rates make time right for refinancing
- Mercedes, bowing to animal rights, offers no-leather option
- New Tucson resort dazzling **more »**

**usa today money**

- Ousting CEOs often boosts stock price
- To start up here, companies hire over there
- Sara Lee biggest company (for now) with female CEO
- ADD drug, pulled in Canada, stays on market in USA
- Dell's quarterly revenue up 17%

**stock quotes**



**Market Summary**

Symbol Lookup

exercise equipment to the video-game box.

The faster a user cranks the GameCycle, the faster the car in the video game goes. Users control the car's turns, not with a joystick but by twisting and tilting the GameCycle's handgrips. The GameCycle's resistance also can be adjusted to make it easier for beginners or harder for advanced users.

The GameCycle also can be hooked up to another unit so patients can compete against their able-bodied friends.

"It's fun, and it makes that exercising go a lot faster," said Jennifer Longdon of Phoenix, who is undergoing therapy at Banner Good Samaritan Rehabilitation Institute for a spinal cord injury.

Longdon, 44, says she is not a video-gamer but was amazed by how she worked up a sweat and by how quickly time passed on the GameCycle.

"It plays just like a regular game, except I have to work at it," said Brian Mazoyer, a physical therapist assistant at Good Samaritan who is using the GameCycle with Longdon and other patients. He expects the GameCycle to be especially popular with younger patients who are already interested in video games.

Three Rivers and Good Samaritan have received an \$850,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health to conduct a 30-patient test to determine if the GameCycle makes patients more inclined to exercise.

A smaller, preliminary study showed positive results, Boninger said.

Three Rivers introduced the GameCycle last month at the International Seating Symposium, a conference for physical and occupational therapists held in Florida. It was a hit as attendees competed to have the fastest time on the auto-racing game, Boninger said.

The Shriners Hospital for Children in Sacramento has purchased 12 GameCycles. The complete GameCycle sells for \$4,950. Users who already have Nintendo GameCubes and screens can get the hand-cycle and software part of the system for \$3,950.

**Special offer:** Get 3 months of The Arizona Republic  
home delivered for the price of 2!

**top jobs**

POWERED BY  
REPUBLIC  
**careerbuilder**

---

**SATELLITE DISH HOME  
THEATRE INSTALLERS**  
Premier Home Technicians

---

**BI-LINGUAL  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
COUNSELOR**  
Correctional Services  
Corporation

---

**Sales Person**  
Kalamazoo Materials Inc.

---

**ENERGY ENGINEER**  
Fry's Food and Drug

---

**Property Manager**  
KITCHELL  
CONTRACTORS

---

All Top Jobs  
**About Top Jobs**

---

**SITE MAP** [azcentral.com main](#) | [news](#) | [sports](#) | [money](#) | [entertainment](#) | [family](#) | [health](#) | [food & home](#) | [photo/video](#) | [shopping español](#) | [weather](#) | [classified](#) | [jobs](#) | [autos](#) | [real estate](#)

---

**CUSTOMER SERVICE** [terms of service](#) | [contact The Republic](#) | [subscribe to The Republic](#) | [Newspapers in Education](#)  
[The Republic in your community](#) | [about The Republic](#) | [jobs at The Republic](#) | [jobs at KPNX-TV](#) | [about KPNX-TV](#)

---

**PARTNERS** [USA Today](#) | [Gannett Co. Inc.](#) | [Gannett Foundation](#) |  Network Member

---

**Copyright © 2005, azcentral.com. All rights reserved.**