

24 cents and 25 cents a share — including items.  
Some investors had hoped Nokia

phones during the third quarter. With nearly 200 million phones sold overall, Nokia remains in the in-

“The hot (Nokia) products aren’t going to be there in the fourth quarter,” Hoffman said.

# Game Ads Flourishing At Orbitz

## New Free Gaming Site

### Online travel business ‘amazed’ by success of video game marketing

BY DOUG TSURUOKA  
INVESTOR’S BUSINESS DAILY

Orbitz has got game. The travel Web site started using cute online games in its advertising nearly five years ago. Now it’s gone further by launching a free gaming Web site, OrbitzGames.com.

The site lets players win prizes, including free vacations. It also links with Orbitz’s main travel site if they want to book a deal.

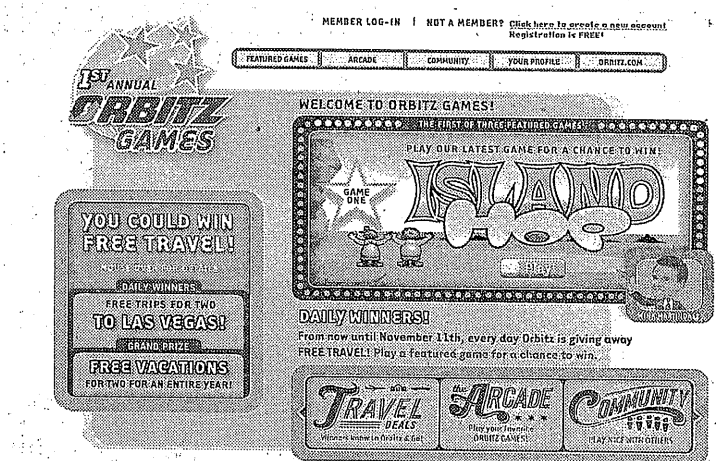
OrbitzGames features exclusive games, as well as an “arcade” where consumers can access all of Orbitz’s online games from the last five years.

The site also boasts community features, which let players find out what others are doing on the site.

The company — owned by travel services heavyweight Cendant<sup>CD</sup> — says the new game site is a surprise hit. “We’re amazed,” said Randy Wagner, Orbitz’s chief marketing officer. “Over a million and a half unique visitors have used the site since we launched on Sept. 21.”

The big turnout is expected to drive travel bookings for Orbitz, making the games a valuable marketing tool. That success might prompt other online travel firms to offer similar sites.

Orbitz decided to launch the game site after it saw how long people were spending on its ad games. Those games take the form of pop-under windows, which appear un-



## The OrbitzGames site lets visitors play a range of video games for free.

derneath the main window when Web surfers visit a site.

Pop-under ads are often seen as annoying on-screen clutter. By offering simple games — without requiring users to buy anything in return — Orbitz was able to suck in users.

“When I heard people were playing our pop-unders for 3.5 minutes, I was intrigued,” Wagner said. “Marketing today is all about engagement.”

So far, players are spending an average of 10 minutes each on OrbitzGames.com, Wagner says.

And they’re recommending the main Orbitz travel site to others. Visitors to the game ads have sent 1.8 million tell-a-friend referral e-mails over the last year, the company says.

A poll for Orbitz by research firm Ipsos Public Affairs found lots of overlap between consumers who play online games and those who book travel on the Web.

Ipsos found that 44% of all consumers play online and personal computer-based games, while 50% book travel online.

The Orbitz game site currently features two games with prizes: “Island Hop” and “Where’s My Hotel.”

With “Island Hop,” players have to catapult a cartoon figure through the air to reach a series of islands.

Their score depends on not splashing into the water.

Daily winners through Nov. 11 are eligible to win a free trip for two to Las Vegas. These winners can also compete for a grand prize — a year’s worth of free weekend trips, including airfare and hotel stays — that will be decided in November.

The most popular game on the site right now is the billiards game “8 Ball,” says Orbitz spokesman Brian Hoyt. “Island Hop” is No. 2.

The company sees the game site boosting its brand recognition — especially with younger consumers, who like the site’s community features.

Those features let players create their own profiles and read the profiles of others.

Users can also find out how many people are on the site and what games they’re playing.

Orbitz ran its first online ad game, “Pluck the Chicken,” in 2001. The idea was to get a chicken to roll over and lay a golden egg. The egg cracked opened to reveal the name “Orbitz.”

Since then, Orbitz has run dozens of game ads. Some of the more memorable ads include “Sink the Putt,” a minigolf game, and “Swing for the Fences,” a baseball game.