



Issue #4 - November 2017

BrisbaneByte

HAND OF FATE

Our first impressions
&
Win 1 of 3 Steam Keys
- Page 5 -



Win a double
weekend pass!

- Page 3 -





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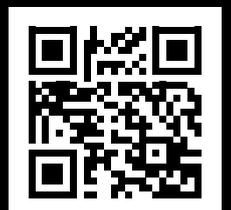


Created by Scott Beeby

QLD's Quarterly Gaming Mag

BrisbaneByte

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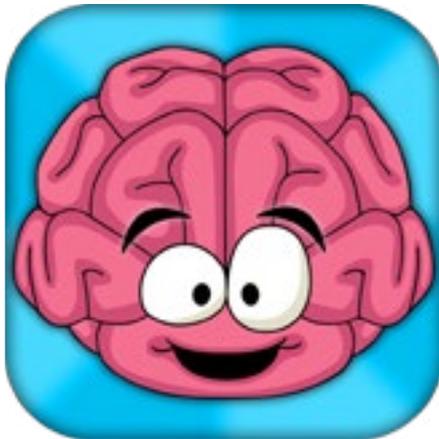
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Recently Released: Mobile Games

Page 1

MIND CONTROL



Propel your disembodied brain through 25 levels to unravel the secrets of a strange, alien facility and be reunited with your lost body.

Cost - Free



GALLERIA



Help save the art gallery in this colourful puzzle platformer as you control three characters, each with their own unique abilities.

Cost - Free



WEEKEND AT THE HIMALAYAS



Fling the corpse of Lord Cockfoster as high as you can while avoiding mountain goats, birds, bats, spikes and uneven terrain.

Cost - Free



DRUNKEN HEROES



Go on an adventure while you're out drinking using this adults only app to complete quests and more to get you properly smashed.

Cost - \$1.99



MONSTERS OF MAYHEM



Wage war against your friends in this tile based strategy game. The setting and aesthetics create the stage as you battle it out for the win.

Cost - Free



SMACK DASH



Smack Dash is a perfect pick up and play mobile title. The satisfying gameplay and variety of challenges will keep you coming back for more.

Cost - Free

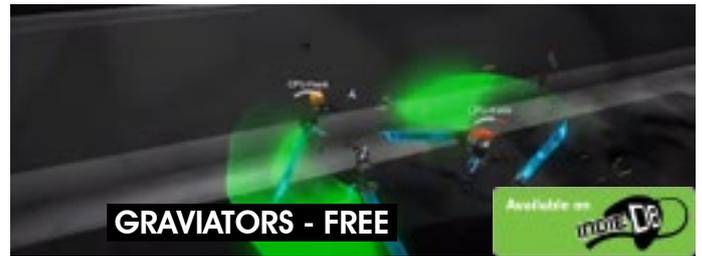


Recently Released: PC Games

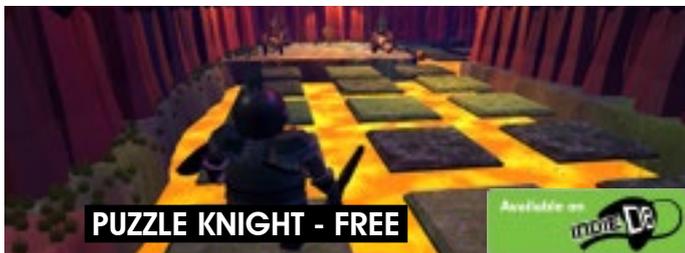
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Play as the Grim Reaper's only son and combine your powers to escape the seven circles of hell in this free boss rush title.



Enter the Graviators arena where you control your gravity and your fate. Be quick or be dead as you fight to be victorious.



You control Sir Morpheus, the world's most dimwitted yet enthusiastic knight. Solve puzzles and beat the holy snot out of those goblins.



This puzzle adventure game features some pretty cool technology. Warp time to your needs and explore the mysterious world within.



Race your mates in this Speedrunners-esque 2D battle racer and use the provided pickups to make sure you are the last blob standing.



Investigate the case of your missing lover Nancy as you work your way through the noir setting of World War II era New York.



Taking the concept of a simple match 3 game and flipping it on its head, Alchemy Punch is a surprisingly addictive and fun to play game.



Take charge of the Soviet's new super tank as you defend against the advancing Nazis in this World War II setting.



Supanova Comic Con & Gaming is on again, **November 10-12**, where the worlds of film and television, fantasy, comic books, anime, sci-fi, cartoons, books, gaming and collectables comes to life!

There's something for everyone, including 'cosplay' (costume-role play), fan clubs, musical performances, creative master classes, celebrity Q&As, wrestling, tournaments, competitions and an expo full of shopping possibilities.

Celebrate your fandom and meet some of our Supa-Stars, such as the legendary **Stan Lee** (Marvel Comics), **Millie Bobby Brown** (Stranger Things), **James Marsters** (Buffy the Vampire Slayer) plus many, many more!



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It's completely free to subscribe and winners will be drawn on the 3rd of November.

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Pictured below is Jack Crnjanin who you may know as one of the faces of New Games Plus, from various YouTube videos spanning the better part of a decade, or as one of the hosts of Brisbane's own Zed Games on 4ZZZ.

I had the chance to sit down with Jack and pick his brain about the industry in general and how he sees it from his perspective. Being in the media and having a background in marketing provides Jack with a different angle to look at things compared to what we normally hear from developers.

It was apparent from the moment we started talking that Jack was very enthusiastic about the topic. He also came across as a very focused and ambitious individual, an opinion he dismissed with a laugh.

We spoke about how the media presence within the games industry in Brisbane is incredibly small. In this very niche area it's estimated that only one or two dozen people in total occupy the space (this publication included). Compared to Sydney who has Kotaku and the juggernaut that is Melbourne, Brisbane simply doesn't measure up.

2017 has been a monumental year for the Queensland games industry with Hand of Fate 2, Forts, Hacknet, and Defiant Development's Kim Allom winning trophies at the recent Australian Game Developer Awards. Without a local presence however, it can be difficult to get the national and international media hype building unless you're already an established name.

Jack and I also broached the idea of government funding in Brisbane. Enter Screen Queensland, the government agency who's purpose is to grow the screen industry in this state. Last year they held a panel with some of the state's biggest names in the games industry to field questions and ideas they might have moving forward. Since then they have followed through with perhaps half of what was spoken about, which is by no means a small feat but it could be more.



The growth of digital games in QLD benefits everyone involved, from investors to creators to consumers. The multi-billion dollar industry is only going to grow in the coming years as screens are used more and more. I would love to see QLD be a big part of that and I know Jack would too.



Speaking of media in Brisbane, as well as all around Australia, the October/November issue of Gametrader's Live magazine is available to read now which includes:

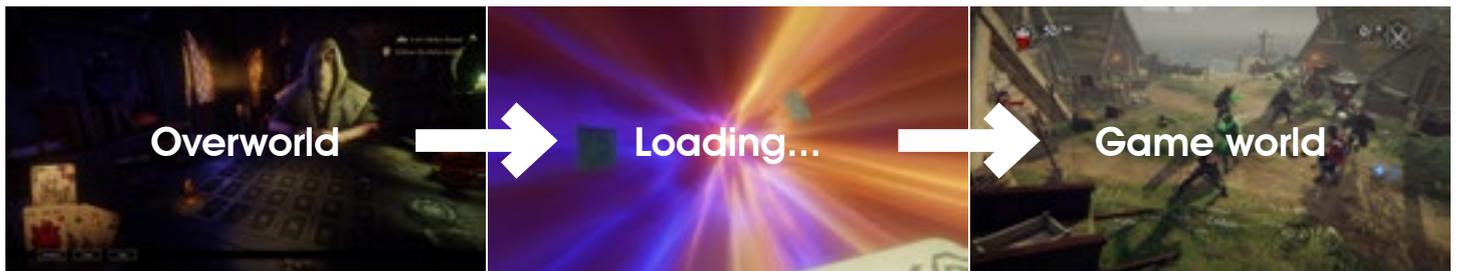
- An interview with the Director of Blade Runner 2049, Denis Villeneuve
- Free tickets to go see Blade Runner 2049 and Jigsaw
- Tabletop & collectable card games
- Cosplay, photography and more!

Hand of Fate 2 First Impressions

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Brisbane Byte was lucky enough to receive a preview code to try out Hand of Fate 2 before it's launch on PC, PS4 and Xbox One on November 7th. We're only allowed to talk about the first couple of hours in the game, but if you were a fan of the first installment of the now-franchise, you're in for a treat!

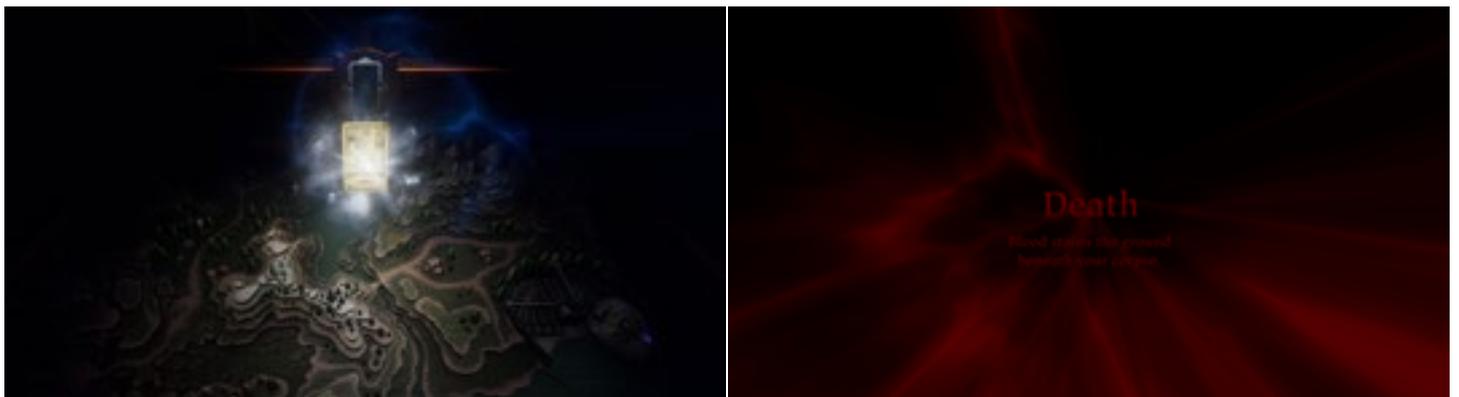
The first thing you'll notice the moment you load up Hand of Fate 2 is the huge step up in production value. Hand of Fate 1 was by no means a visually unappealing game but it simply doesn't hold a candle to Hand of Fate 2. Everything seems a little sharper, textures are more refined, and as weird as it sounds the loading screen heading into battles might just be the most beautiful part.



There have been a ton of quality of life improvements over the game's predecessor. The UI has had a massive overhaul with a much cleaner result. Enemy alerts during fights convey the message of what's about to happen in a clearer context and the presentation of text in the overworld has had enough subtle changes to add up to a more modern look.

The overworld map is no longer a chest of cards with a boss at the end of each one. There is now a 3D table with almost two dozen challenges to complete that reveal themselves as you travel through the world.

Perhaps one of the most welcome changes is the new player customisation feature. You can choose to play as a male or female character. There are four ethnicities, 5 hair styles per gender, and 4 clothing colour palettes. That's a total of 160 possible player combinations!



All considered, my time with the game after these few short hours has been joyous to say the least. I haven't even had a chance to dig into the companion system yet, so I look forward to seeing how that ties into the storyline. If you're still reading this then I don't need to tell you to buy Hand of Fate 2 when it comes out on November 7th because you're already going to. You won't be disappointed.

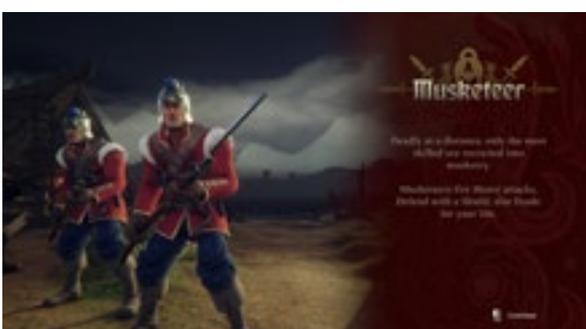
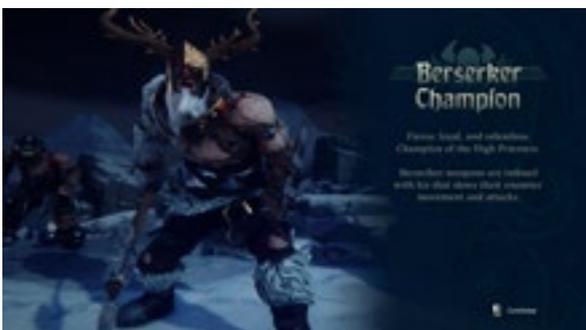
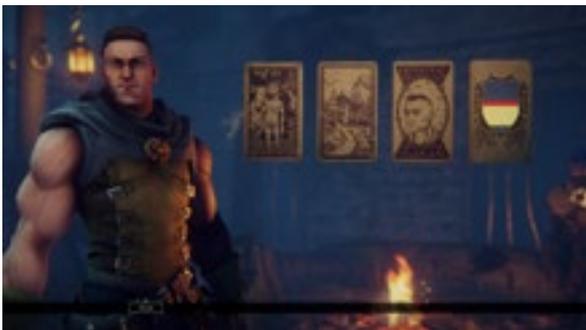
Want to
WIN
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Thanks to our friends at Defiant Development, we have
3 Steam codes to give away. To enter the draw, all
you have to do is subscribe to Brisbane Byte at this link:

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Hand of Fate 2 First Impressions



Cafe de SOYTY

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COMICS

FOOD & SWEETS

GAMES & ARCADES

135 SANDGATE ROAD, ALBION

[f](#) [i](#)

Community Noticeboard

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Board Games Café and Bar

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SERIOUS GAMES SHOWCASE

University of the Sunshine Coast is putting on their annual games showcase this month. November 17 between 6 - 9pm.



GAME DEV TYCOON?

This news came completely out of the blue, but 2012's Game Dev Tycoon is finally coming to iOS devices on November 28th with an Android release following shortly after.

THE "BEET ME UP" BURGER AT SUPER COMBO IS A TKO

The video game themed burger joint in Bowen Hills has added this behemoth to their menu:

"100% premium aussie beef patty, crispy bacon, oozy egg, juicy beetroot, tasty cheese, onion, crispy lettuce, fresh tomato, tangy tomato sauce all served on a deadset delicious brioche bun. Come on mate, you gotta try this burger ay. It's a bloody beauty! Available in store for a limited time only!"



THE "BEET ME UP" BURGER

SHH...

We hear that a former Ski Safari developer, who is no longer with the original studio, is currently working on a new project. We can't wait!



ASSAULT ANDROID XBOX?

One of the best Aussie games from 2015, Witch Beam's Assault Android Cactus, is coming to Xbox One and Xbox One X on November 7th! 4K/60FPS of buttery smooth gameplay.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY XEN GAMEZ!

For the past two years, card and board game fans in the Kenmore area have been going to Xen Gamez to get the latest releases and take part in the store's competitions. This month they celebrate their 2nd anniversary since opening, so Happy Birthday Xen Gamez!

SUN 10 DEC

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It was a over a year ago I shipped Astro Attack on iOS and Android. The game was met with critical success, a great Apple feature, and healthy number of downloads. I supported the game for about 6 months post launch, but after a dwindling return on investment (both time and money), I decided to take a break from being a part time indie developer.

Now that I'm winding up my next project, I've decided I'd take some time to reflect on some of the lessons learned while creating Astro Attack.

Lesson 1 - Start with the core loop

Astro Attack was ready for playtesting from a very early stage in its development. The moment the game launches, the ship is shooting, and it's inviting you to play. Move the ship, enemies start spawning. The core loop is fast and obvious. I found the majority of people could pick up and play the game without me looming over their shoulder, prompting them how it works.

Lesson 2 - Make the most of your community

I was lucky enough to work with some fantastic play testers who helped shape the game into something I'm proud of. Releasing the game to the community wasn't as simple as pushing to Test Flight and posting to Touch Arcade. I needed to be very mindful of how I communicated with the play testers. The release notes would highlight three important areas of information. What has changed, what's still broken, and what I'd like them to test.

Lesson 3 - Plan for Post Release

As much as I wanted the game to be a mega hit from the start, I was mentally prepared for the launch to fall flat. I made sure to have a string of updates in the pipe to keep the ball rolling post launch. While these updates didn't keep the momentum I'd hoped for, I was successfully releasing big content updates every 6 to 8 weeks.

Lesson 4 - Optimise the content pipeline

Astro Attack was well designed to support new content, themes and gameplay features, but the content pipeline was not. Adding any new content took way too much plumbing. In future, I need to make sure getting assets in the game is as quick and easy as possible.

Lesson 5 - The game needs to make money

I somewhat idealistically stuck to a "Fun before Funds" philosophy, and avoided any forced advertising or paywalls in Astro Attack. While a noble goal, the reality is I should have spent time ensuring players were exposed to more monetisation opportunities, and that enough people were engaging with them.

Lesson 6 - Give people a reason to share

Astro had the option to share post game screenshots to Twitter and Facebook, but only a few players engaged with it. Simply having screenshots wasn't enough. I needed to focus on the 'why' of a screenshot, finding the moments players would most like to share with their friends.

I could go into more detail about how I dropped the ball on audio, or failed to maintain work/life balance, but those could be articles unto themselves. Hopefully this brief summary provides some insight into a few of the the lessons I learned developing Astro Attack, and you can avoid some of the pitfalls I fell into.



Coming Soon & Board Game Corner

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GERRYMANDER



Gerrymander is a puzzle game that teaches you how to rig an election. It has some great pixel art, writing, and a sound track to match.

SHADOWS REMAIN



Halfbrick (Fruit Ninja) are working on augmented reality games in iOS 11 with the first title being a story-based thriller about a missing son.

SIEGE BREAKERS



Siegebreakers, Halfbrick's other AR game, sees the player using their phone as a catapult to destroy castles with real-time physics.



First it was a mobile game that came out of nowhere, then it was a TV series. Now the fruit slashing franchise by Halfbrick, Fruit Ninja, is being turned into a tabletop game series.

Head on over to their Kickstarter to see the list of stretch goals they're trying to reach after the base game was funded in just 4 hours.



The Terminator 2 Board Game Kickstarter by Rule & Make was cancelled in mid-October amid comments of unclear messaging in the campaign and some issues with add ons.

Rule & Make showed off T2029 at PAX Australia and will be addressing these issues when more information is released on January 15th.



The Entropy: Worlds Collide Kickstarter is currently mid-fulfillment for backers, meaning before too long we'll be seeing the Rule & Make board game on retail shelves.

YONDER: THE CLOUD CHRONICLES



The latest update for Yonder is out. Enjoy the Halloween festival and visit Trader Jack for new items. The update also improves gameplay and localisation.

FORTS



This is the biggest update Forts has gotten so far, adding 2 new tech buildings, 6 new weapons, Chinese localisation and so much more!

THE EYES OF ARA



7 new languages have been added in this update and the Kickstarter only artbook is now available to everyone.



REVIEW BY SCOTT BEEBY

I'm at an age now where I frequently have people not-so-subtly asking when I'm going to get married and have kids. Thankfully I can just point them in the direction of Jammed Up Studios' Think of the Children as my answer because dealing with kids is incredibly hard!

TOTC has a wide variety of levels and gameplay often unique to each one. Sometimes your objective is to complete a checklist of activities while other times you're just trying to avoid your kids embarrassing you in public places.

Whether you're going camping, at the airport, having a picnic or visiting the zoo, I'm sure parents everywhere can identify with the issues raised in this game. The constant threat of imminent danger at every corner and worrying what your kids are doing at this exact moment, all while trying to remember the reason you went to your destination in the first place.

Think of the Children manages to handle all of these concepts very well and in a light-hearted manner, but your experience with the game will be different depending on how many friends you have playing with you. Just like in real life, trying to wrangle six kids by yourself is next to impossible.

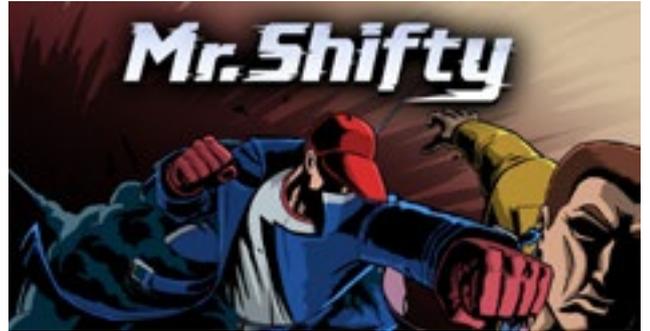
The game is available on Steam, GOG, and the Humble store for \$9.99USD. It is worth the price tag for fans of couch co-op titles such as Overcooked or anyone looking for some fun yet frustrating gameplay. A single playthrough will last around 3-4 hours, but the replayability factor is high with this one.

Mr. Shifty Post-Mortem Interview

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Mr. Shifty is a top-down beat 'em up that launched in April on the PC and Nintendo Switch. Gamespot gave the game an 8/10 while others noted the framerate issues on the Switch version. Since then the game has received multiple patches and has also been released on the PS4 and Xbox One.

We caught up with Josh Sanderson, one of the founding members of Team Shifty, to ask some questions.



Brisbane Byte: What's it like developing a game for the Nintendo Switch and how important was it to be available on the Switch near the console's launch?

Josh Sanderson: When the opportunity to do Switch came up, we definitely saw the possibility for success right away. There was a big positive buzz around the console and we knew that if we could get in early, it could help secure our chances at success. That said, the timeline was very short and we had to crunch hard to make it over the line. It is a real badge of honour to be the first Australian made game to release on Switch.

BB: What do you say to people who dismiss Mr Shifty as a Hotline Miami clone?

JS: We didn't start from a point of "Let's make a Hotline Miami game with a twist", we started with the teleportation mechanic and then made design decisions to complement the main mechanic. The top-down perspective is there in Mr. Shifty so that the teleportation is easily used by the player to devastating effect. The single-hit retry is there to reinforce the need to be mobile and agile; to shift out of danger. Mr. Shifty is really worth coming into with fresh eyes as its own game.

BB: The game development process seems absurd at times. What keeps you going?

JS: Personally, I get a lot of support from friends and family. Hi, Mum! Game teams, especially small ones, become really close when doing the hard yards on a project. The rest of Team Shifty definitely seem like family to me now. We go through the trenches of game development together and come out battered and bruised but wiser and hopefully successful on the other side.

BB: How long was development and what was the reaction internally to the launch of the game? Would you have done anything differently?

JS: We made Mr. Shifty in just over a year with just 4 of us full time on the project.

Launch was very stressful. It's difficult to know what to do exactly and the strength of the launch can make or break a company. For us, it came off the back of a crunch to get the game done and led into another to patch some bugs which also took its toll. I'd definitely be trying to give myself dedicated time to look after the launch next time if at all possible.

BB: Do you have plans on any future updates for Mr Shifty? Do you have anything you would like to plug to end the article?

JS: We're proud of Mr. Shifty as it is. If we can justify adding more to the game down the line, we still have ideas that we didn't get to put in. Enemy types and level concepts left out due to the reality of shipping are still in our source control history. I'd personally love to be able to show some of those to the world.

Brisbane Byte thanks Josh for answering our questions. This interview has been edited down for size, but you can read the full interview on our Facebook page - [fb.me/brisbanebyte](https://www.facebook.com/brisbanebyte).



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