Trivial Pursuit Encyclopedia Article

Trivial Pursuit

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Trivial Pursuit

Trivial Pursuit can be credited with creating a whole new category of board games for adults as well as an entire industry of trivia games. On December 15, 1979, Canadian photographer Chris Haney and sportswriter Scott Abbott were inspired to create the game after competing against each other in a Scrabble game. They had originally planned to call their game Trivia Pursuit until Haney's wife jokingly referred to it as Trivial Pursuit, and the name stuck. The first 1,100 sets cost $75 each to manufacture. But after selling them to retailers for $15 a game, by early 1982 Haney and Abbott were in debt. Then the U.S. game company, Selchow and Righter, became interested after hiring a PR consultant who saw Trivial Pursuit's potential as a popular leisure-time diversion. After Selchow and Righter bought the rights to the board game, 3.5 million games had been sold by late 1983. A year later, the figure had jumped to 20 million. By the 1990s, retail sales had exceeded $1 billion, and the game was available in 19 different languages and 33 countries. There has been a Trivial Pursuit television show, and the game is available on computer and on the Internet. Since its debut in 1982, there have been 40 variations of the game, and Trivial Pursuit has become an essential part of the universal language of popular culture.

Further Reading:

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