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Western Bank (User Review)

:: By: **Henry Kong** :: Device used: [iPAQ H3650](#) :: May 18, 2001 :: [Buy this game](#) ::

Those of us who have played Bank Panic on the Nintendo Entertainment System console will at once take to [Vertex Digital's Western Bank](#). The Asian PPC game developer who brought you the wonderful [Miniature Golf](#) - which I [reviewed at PDASquare](#) - did a splendid job on this port. As you can see from the title menu and graphic manual, these people devote a lot of time in creating great-looking graphics and setting up a Western mood throughout.

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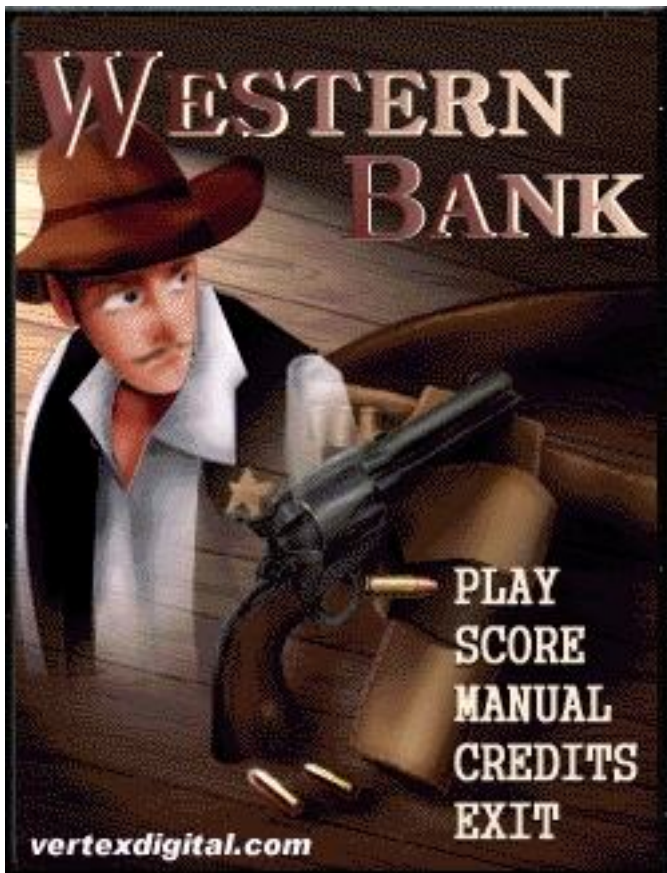
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The game starts with a level menu where you can opt to start at the beginning or jump to levels 3 or 5. I highly recommend that you start at the first level, get the feel of the game and enjoy each level as you go along. This game is lots of fun with attention-to-detail graphics, so you do not really want to miss anything.

As to the game itself, it is very simple to learn and rather challenging to master. Like the law of the Wild, Wild West, the day belongs to the fastest gun alive. Blink - bang, bang and you've bitten the dust.

You are a bank clerk keeping a careful eye on your bookkeeping and another watchful eye on the 12 elevators in front of you. Moving horizontally, you scan each oncoming car in great anticipation. Will your next visitor be a big depositor who has just hit pay-dirt or one of those dirty low-down bandits who is paying you a visit for an unauthorized withdrawal?

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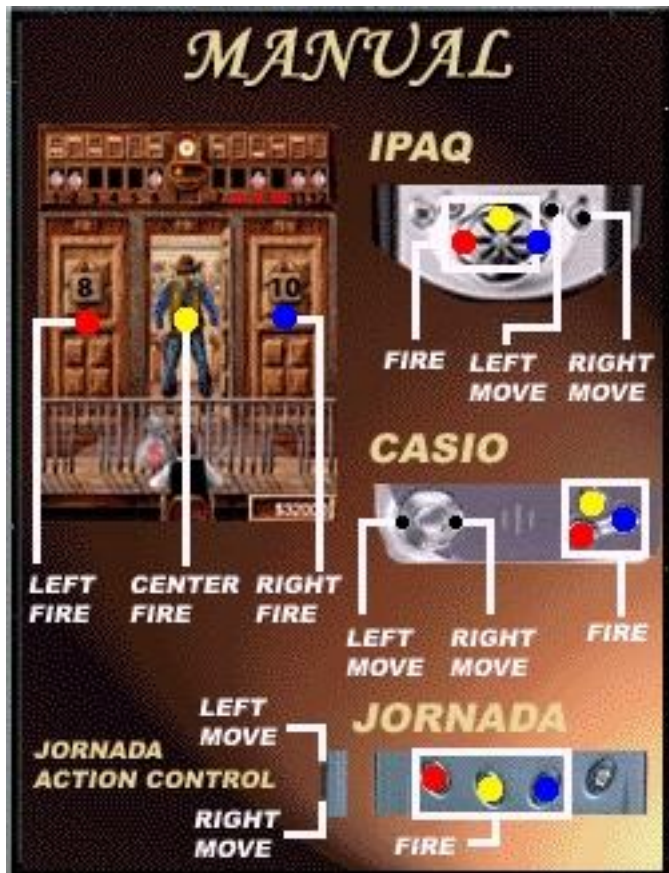
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The game really hots up with several cars coming in all at the same time. In the lower levels, the bandits are not very fast on the draw. Using one hand on the stylus and another on the directional buttons works best for me. However, the [iPAQ's](#) directional buttons are designed for quick left-centre-right firing. My observation is that the bank robbers resemble the customers too much (except for the handkerchief on their mouths) and are dressed in different colours (see picture below), it is too easy on the trigger to use the directional keys. At least with the stylus, you can move in for a closer look before the actual kill.

The sound is very good and every shot produces a satisfying bullet hole on the victim or background. It's a great shooter game like [ZIO Interactive's Pow Wow](#) and I really can't offer any improvements except to use the [iPAQ's](#) directional button for horizontal scrolling (thus using the stylus to shoot away). A configurable key-set would be useful here.



In closing I want to say a good word for these responsive-to-suggestion game developers at [Vertex Digital](#). If you are like me, we offer suggestions and feedback to game developers like we do to the government, never ever expecting anything to be done.

Well, surprise of surprises, not long after I bemoan the lack of power on the swing in [Miniature Golf](#), I got a nice email from the game developer with a patch. Yes, the swing is a tad more powerful; but the game is now more challenging. If you are very very careful (and lucky), with the patch you can score BIG. On the downside, you can lose big especially after a few stupid swings. Great going, guys - another well crafted game that plays every bit as good as it looks.

Big Bangs:

- Good game concept of enduring interest - stolen from Bank Panic
- Good attention-to-detail graphics and Western theme
- Adequate sound and good use of both stylus and hard buttons

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Misfires:

- There should be a configurable keypad especial for South Paws



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