

## MiniClip

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Sunday, 11 November 2007

Last Updated Sunday, 11 November 2007

Does anyone remember Dancing Bush? Back in 2001, a quirky little Flash game featured George Bush in Saturday Night Fever mode. Dressed in 70's disco dancer regalia, the president jived, boogied and strutted on the computer screen with gamers choosing his next step. The game ended up becoming very popular, getting over 2 million people to view it in less than 9 weeks. And with that small hit, Miniclip.com was well underway. The game, originally distributed as a link via email to 4000 people, was created by 24-year old, fresh college graduate Robert Small. He filmed his then-partner Tihan Presbie dancing in the kitchen, imported the video in Macromedia Flash, coded a few selection algorithms, and slapped on George Bush's head. Robert followed up the effort with a series of new games, including Bush Shoot-Out and Bush Aerobics, and commissioned other games from numerous bedroom Flash programmers to build the site's content. From that humble beginning, Miniclip has grown to become the largest online gaming community, boasting a user base of over 35 million people. With no business experience and no external funding, Robert has encouraged user growth with his genuine love for games. He maintains a good pulse of what games his audience - which consist mostly of the young and the very young - are looking for. His website releases a couple of new games every month to keep users coming back. They are also one of the first websites to encourage content sharing. You can copy their games, send it to friends and put it in your own websites. They brand their games religiously so that free distribution of the games actually becomes free advertising for the company. The technique has paid off with new users who come to the site after discovering one of their games from somewhere else. Today, Miniclip's games are built by numerous coders who either sell or license their creations to the website. Robert himself has since retired from writing games and now focuses solely on running Miniclip's growing business. Still, judging from his interviews and his steadfast dedication to keeping his vision, his passion for the medium only continues to grow.