

Friday, June 15, 2007

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InfoTech // Thursday, June 14, 2007



'England' up for auction in Weblo virtual world

Time is GMT + 8 hours Posted: 14-Jun-2007 18:12 hrs

The royal crown is carried out of the House of Lords after the State Opening of Parliament in 2005. An online virtual world playfully branded "Monopoly on steroids" is offering England to the highest bidder, with the winner to be crowned king or queen.

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The website Weblo.com, a reality-based virtual world launched in December of 2006 by a Montreal-based firm of the same name, announced it was putting "England on auction."

Bidding begins Thursday and is expected to top 70,000 dollars by the time the auction gavel drops July 12.

California is the most costly Weblo "property" to date, bought at auction for 53,000 dollars, according to company spokesman Sean Morrow.

"We thought we could break out of the

mold by not just letting someone be the president of a country, but the virtual king or queen," Morrow told AFP.

"We already have teams of Weblonians, citizens of Weblo, expressing interest."

The monarch of Weblo's England not only has the opportunity for prestige and profits at his or her own Weblo profile page, they get a percentage of all financial transactions in a virtual equivalent of taxes.

Unlike Internet virtual worlds of Second Life and Entropia Universe, members of Weblo are represented by MySpace-like profile pages rather than animated characters called "avatars."

Instead of fantasy planets or islands such as those in Second Life or

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