SHANDA Interactive Entertainment, a NASDAQ-listed Chinese software company, has had teamed up with the government to develop patriotic online games.

"Shanda believes it has a responsibility towards society and towards the future," Shanda president Tang Jun said.

The games, called "Register of Chinese Heroes," digitally pull the country's major historical out of retirement to serve in patriotic campaigns.

Prominent among them is Zheng He, a Chinese admiral, and a Muslim eunuch who led a series of epic voyages of exploration as far away as the east coast of Africa 600 years ago.

The authenticity of at least one of the online heroes has been questioned. Lei Feng, a selfless Communist soldier who died in an accident, is believed by many to be a fictional character made up by Beijing propagandists to boost morale.

The games have been developed in cooperation with the Press and Publication Administration, Shanda said.

China's government has expressed some concern about the impact that online games - a huge business in the world's most populous nation - are having on young people.

Agence France-Presse

This report appears on australianIT.com.au.