

MIR

Date: 21.10.2004

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GAME SEARCH REPORT

This week we searched 3D adventure/action games. This report includes the important points we get in our search.

Tomb Raider

The latest of Tomb Raider was better than the previous versions in that the graphics was much more better. The atmospheric effects made the scenery better. The levels were more interesting and the bad guys were more intelligent with AI techniques. However this new version (Tomb Raider 4) had some very dark areas, which was a failure. Also the story was not so interesting or so much different than the older versions. The lack of a secret level was another negative aspect of the game.

Half Life

It is one of the most popular games all over the world. Especially its ability to import different mods like CounterStrike make the game very popular. Also the graphics, the lightning effects are very good and realistic. Physical properties like gravity, slippery are properly integrated. More NON earthly/Prototype weaponry and human enemies like the Assian enemies are liked by the game players.

DIABLO – II

Diablo II is the sequel of Diablo. However it's many times larger than the original Diablo. For example, Diablo II has four acts each of which is much more than a longer version of Diablo. Although Diablo was a very successful RPG game Diablo – II not only supersedes it with new features but also reach the top among other RPG games.

The gameplay makes Diablo II one of the most impressive games. Gameplay is fun, fast and action oriented. Story is simple enough so even a new player can easily involve in to the game. Diablo II has an addictive gameplay. Of course, this could be a drawback to some people. But surely Diablo II has the ability to make you want to play for "just a few more minutes" in hopes of finding some new weapon or armor.

Diablo II has a really good inventory control system. If you have multiples of the same type of item, such as keys, these items can be stacked together in one inventory slot. This will enable you to keep other slots free for all other items you will find. Also you have a private treasury which gives you more space to store items.

One of the really great things about Diablo II is the skill tree. This is one of the things in the game that keep you going. Another feature that makes you an addict. You think, "if I can just get to that next level, I can grab that

next great skill." And there are lots of unique skills for each character that are all upgradeable so you can get really powerful in one. All of the skills and inherent abilities of the characters makes the game really well balanced. Each of the characters has it's own advantages and disadvantages that make you want to replay the game with each class.

The sound of the game is very good. All of the different monsters have their sounds which are all good. The music in the game is also very good adding to the ambiance of the game nicely. Diablo II also have great cinematic breaks between the acts. The animation, voice acting, and lighting effects are perfect.

Graphics of Diablo II, on the other hand, isn't so impressive. It uses Diablo's engine and its graphics is much like of the Diablo. Although some details are good the monsters aren't drawn so good. There are some graphical features that make graphics of the game a bit much prettier. Game's lighting is really good, especial lighting effects of the spells are impressive. In Diablo II parallax scrolling had been used, which gives a 3D gloss to otherwise flat – 2D - objects. However, I think, Blizzard gives more importance to gameplay rather than graphics. Graphics is in secondary importance in the whole game.

One of the main disadvantage of the game is its save system. It is really bad. Your only choice for saving a game is "Save Game and Exit." You always restart your restored game back in town, with all the levels you have cleared re-filled with monsters. It also, I think, discourages exploration and experimentation, by not allowing you to save while doing either.

Hitchcock: The Final Cut

You control psychic detective Joe Shamley, hired by the mute niece of millionaire (and Hitchcock fan) Robert Marvin-Jordan to find out what happened to the cast and crew of the movie he was making. The entire story takes place on Marvin-Jordan's seaside estate, including the manor house and an onsite film set. The story sounds interesting, but it is not improved in the game. On the contrary, our detective gets confused by lots of characters with relationships to various other characters. After a while, the player will not care to follow who is who.

The background graphics are successful. The atmosphere is established through the use of detailed 2D backdrops and you are able to snoop around in them with a 3D character. Shamley can walk and run, but he tends to slide while doing either.

The game tries to recapture the spirit of Hitchcock by adding fifteen minutes of actual footage from Psycho, Frenzy, Torn Curtain, Saboteur, Topaz and Shadow of a Doubt. While these cutscenes are interesting, they only rarely have anything to do with the current point in the story where they occur. They're more seemed to be advertising tools.

Sound effects are appropriately haunting. But the dialogue occasionally tends to cut out during long sequences. You can then read subtitles to follow the dialog.

They have problems in camera shifts too. Shamley will be strolling down the sidewalk, when all of a sudden the camera will jump behind a random building a block down the street. Even more! At times, the camera even gets stuck as Shamley skips along the sidewalk and far out of view, making the player wonder what our hero might be doing on his own.

The game uses a mouse-keyboard interface. The player uses the keyboard to control Shamley, completes actions with the spacebar, examines close-ups with the mouse and brings up a PDA system by right-clicking. This set of actions make the game-playing boring. The working thing among these features is the PDA. It contains the game menu, objects you've acquired, your notes, and a quick map. The quick map can only be used outside, but it allows you to immediately jump to any place you've already been.

Myst – Riven – MystIII:Exile – Genevieve Lord (MystIV Revelation)

Below, there are some features and characteristics that make Myst Series one of the biggest-selling adventure computer games of all time.

First of them, Myst is published in 1993 and took the advantage of CD's storage capacities to create a gaming experience quite unlike any other. It is refreshingly different because, you can not die in the game and there is no combat of any kind. It has a nearly transparent point-and-click interface and you navigate fantasy island created from beautiful static scenes rendered in high resolution. Being an older game, Myst's graphics are slide show that changes as you change direction. Movement in the game is limited and 360-degree panning isn't possible. 2D pre-rendered technique is used in game. It uses frames but the graphics are composed of 3D models that have been rendered into flat backgrounds. Its visual beauty, interface, simplicity, pacing, visually memorable fantasy worlds and inoffensive puzzle-solving style of play take it a step further from others. Main points of Myst is its ability to convince players that they are actually exploring a different world and use of 'find information in one place and use it to solve something in another place' ideology which is a new challenge to most gamers.

The motion in Riven (published in 1997) is done through transitions which give you the impression of actually walking through the game environment. Every building has its own texture, there are set of unique sounds on top of soundtrack and lightning is employed to bring out details in each scene. Unlike some games that demand you to solve the puzzles in a certain order. Riven lets the player solve puzzles in any order, therefore story line is not linear. There is no wrong way to play Riven.

Exile (published in 2001) is composed of static scenes like in previous games and there's slight hesitation as you move between areas. It has a playing simplicity. The developers let you freely and smoothly pan your view in any given scene in all directions with the mouse. You just move your mouse to look in any direction and click on an area to move to it or an object to manipulate it. Attention to sounds is required in this game. In some environments success is based on your sense of hearing.

Scripter and music sequencer are same in Genevieve Lord and Exile. Therefore, it has more experience. A new technology developed for this game. ALIVE (Advanced Living Interactive Video Environment) that provides dynamic and different environments. By combining node-based engine with multilayered real-time effects simplicity of navigation is kept, graphic quality is improved, real feeling of life is added and very high quality on very low configurations is attained. Cutting-edge technology is used for graphics. To provide the player to feel the surrounding by touching instead of clicking player's hand became an important part of the interface in this game.