

FREE!

# PCGzine

Issue 44 | August 2010

Free Magazine For PC Gamers. Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...

**EXCLUSIVE!**  
**TWO WORLDS II**  
 Exclusive interview

**EXCLUSIVE!**  
**STRONGHOLD 3**  
 Return of the castle-building strategy game!

**PLUS**

- ARMA II: Operation Arrowhead
- Patrician IV
- Star Wars: The Force Unleashed 2
- Portal 2

**KANE AND LYNCH 2**

**CAPTAIN BLOOD**

**SHIP SIMULATOR EXTREMES**

**MAGICKA**

**MONKEY ISLAND 2: SPECIAL EDITION**

**REVIEWED!**  
**COMMANDER: CONQUEST OF THE AMERICAS**  
 An in-depth review of this epic trading sim

**REVIEWED!**  
**APB**  
 Our verdict on Realtime World's long-awaited crime actioner

**PREVIEWED!**  
**FIFA 11**  
 Will the PC finally get the football game it deserves?



# Welcome to PCGZine



If proof were ever needed that there's real diversity in the PC gaming market, then we've got it for you right here. From sports (FIFA 11) to out-and-out shooters (Singularity and Kane & Lynch 2) to strategy games with a novel twist (Commander: Conquest of the Americas and Ship Simulator Extremes), PC gaming has it all, and we have it all for you in this issue.

We've also got the definitive verdict on this year's hot new MMO, APB, and hot off the press info and screenshots on Portal 2 and The Force Unleashed 2, as well as much more besides.

**READER FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to tell us what you think of the magazine!

Enjoy the issue.

**Dan Hutchinson, Editor**  
pcgzine@gamerzines.com

## MEET THE TEAM

Probably the best games writers on the planet



**Andy Griffiths**  
Andy is in charge of the content in PCGZine, so he's the man to thank for that.



**David Scammell**  
Don't let those youthful looks fool you, as David's been writing about games for years.



**Jon Denton**  
Before joining us, Jon was one of the gaming wizards behind 360 magazine.

## Don't miss! This month's highlights...

**Stronghold 3**  
*If an Englishman's home is his castle, then prepare to get gazumped!*

**Monkey Island 2**

**Force Unleashed 2**

**Singularity**

**Two Worlds II**  
*Find out how the developers will improve this sequel*

**FIFA 11**

**Kane & Lynch 2**

## QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

Portal 2	Captain Blood
Patrician IV	Magicka
The Force Unleashed 2	Commander: CotA
Stronghold 3	APB
Two Worlds II	Singularity
FIFA 11	ARMA II
Kane & Lynch 2	Monkey Island 2

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# STAR CRAFT II

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PLAYBACK OPTIONS:

## NUCLEAR LAUNCH DETECTED...

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[www.pegi.info](http://www.pegi.info)



CONTROL →





## PORTAL 2

**Publisher:** Valve  
**Developer:** In-house  
**Heritage:** Half Life,  
Team Fortress 2  
**Link:** www.think  
withportals.com  
**ETA:** 2010

**PREVIEW  
FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to  
tell us what  
you think of  
Portal 2



Wheatley can get you into areas  
GLaDOS doesn't want anyone to see.

# Portal 2

**FIRST  
LOOK**

*GLaDOS ramps up the crazy!*

### What's the story?

Just because Valve didn't make the announcement that every Half-Life fan in the known world was hoping for at this year's E3 games show (Episode 3 anyone?), that doesn't mean that Portal 2 was anything less spectacular. Winner of multiple post-event awards, this sequel is going to be superior in every way to the amazing original. The boundaries of the Internet can barely contain our excitement.

### What do we know?

Not only does GLaDOS return but players will also meet new AI constructs like Wheatley, who makes the companion cube seem like an antique. These helpful entities allow passage to areas of the Aperture Science testing facility, which few eyes have seen before, and new puzzle dynamics such as the anti-gravity excursion funnels which can ferry items from one side of a level to the other, spring-like jumping platforms and two different sets of gels which can either propel or repel objects.

### Anything else to declare?

Judging from all the footage which has been released thus far, the developer is dialling up the design of the puzzles to be much more elaborate. Manoeuvring lasers to destroy turrets or expelling them via conveniently placed vents will be common place in this sequel. Valve are still being very quiet about the plot – as they generally like to be – but there's still plenty of time left before the game is released next year.



Valve require players to  
be much more aggressive  
this time around.



The propulsion gel seems the craziest  
new addition, and is able to coat  
entire levels with fast-travel lubricant.





# APB

## ALL POINTS BULLETIN

"A CITY IS MADE OF ITS PEOPLE;  
YOU ARE THOSE PEOPLE"



▶ **PLAYBACK OPTIONS:**

[www.APB.com](http://www.APB.com)

**OUT JULY 2ND**

**18**  
www.pegi.info



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## PATRICIAN IV

**Publisher:** Kalypso Media  
**Developer:** Gaming Minds Studios  
**Heritage:** N/A  
**Link:** www.patrician4.com  
**ETA:** Autumn

**PREVIEW FEEDBACK!**  
 Click here to tell us what you think of Patrician IV



**EXCLUSIVE SCREENS!**



# Patrician IV

**FIRST LOOK**

*And you think piracy is bad now...*

### What's the story?

10 years is a long time for any franchise but thankfully one of the original trading simulations is staging a comeback. Welcome back Patrician, gamers have missed you. Faithfully emulating the age-old problems of supply and demand, players will have to master procuring various goods during the Middle Ages, form reliable trade routes and battle the ever-present problem of piracy on the high seas.

### What do we know?

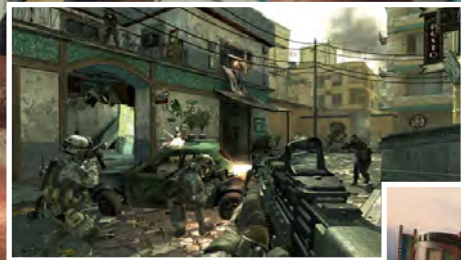
Every town in the world of Patrician IV specialises in a certain commodity, whether that's wood, cheese or wool, and it's up to you to spread the wealth around, effectively buying low and selling high in order to build wealth, gather valuable resources and build your own cities in order to gain further standing in Europe. It isn't as easy as all that though, as there are plenty of bandits, diseases, civil unrest, pirates and competing cities – such as accurately recreated versions of Cologne and London – to challenge your economic prowess.

### Anything else to declare?

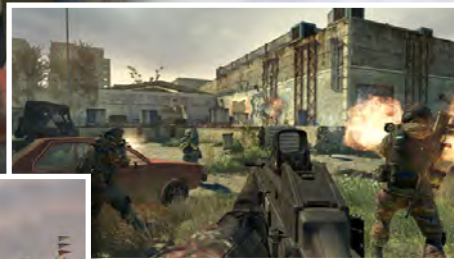
Patrician IV's as deep as you might expect from the genre, but the learning curve seems fair with more abilities and missions becoming available over time. Every effort has been made to make the series more accessible, with a smoother interface and a tutorial to explain every gameplay facet. This series will be unknown to many gamers, but with a new developer and a great-looking engine, this is an IP that's set to become popular again very quickly.



# CALL OF DUTY MODERN WARFARE 2 RESURGENCE PACK



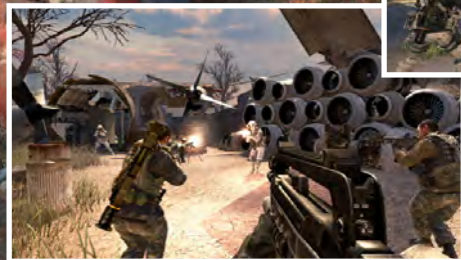
STRIKE



VACANT



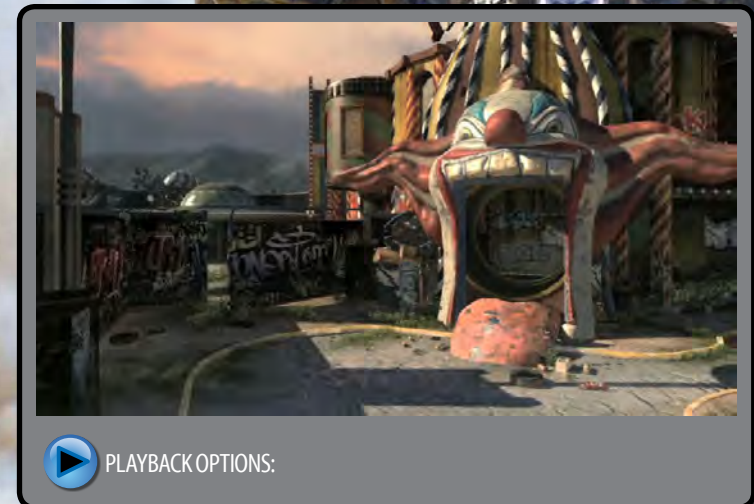
CARNIVAL



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XBOX LIVE

XBOX 360







**Publisher:** LucasArts  
**Developer:** In-house  
**Heritage:** Republic Commando, X-Wing, Tie Fighter  
**Link:** www.lucasarts.com  
**ETA:** 26th October

**PREVIEW FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to tell us what you think of *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed 2*



On Kamino it never rains, it pours.

# Star Wars: The Force Unleashed 2

**FIRST LOOK**

*Send in the clones*

### What's the story?

Starkiller is back! And if you thought the all-powerful Jedi would remain deceased thanks to his grizzly demise during the first game, then you've underestimated the creativity of the LucasArt's money-spinning department. The trusting protagonist is reborn, thanks to cloners on Kamino, and is searching the galaxy for his former love interest Juno Eclipse and seeking his revenge on Vader who left him for dead. Expect the same third-person slicing and dicing, now enhanced with two lightsabers, as well as the ability to torture enemies with a variety of Force powers.

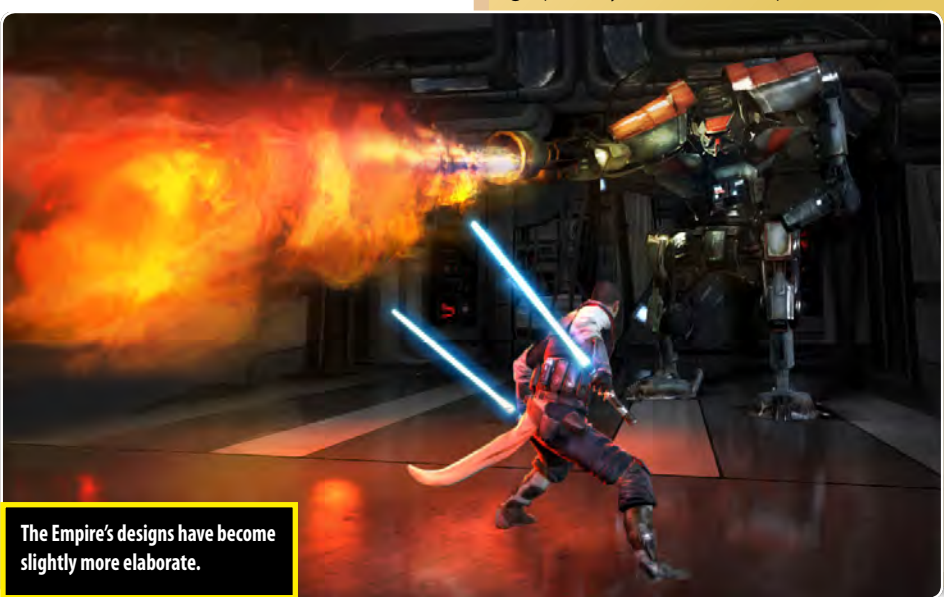
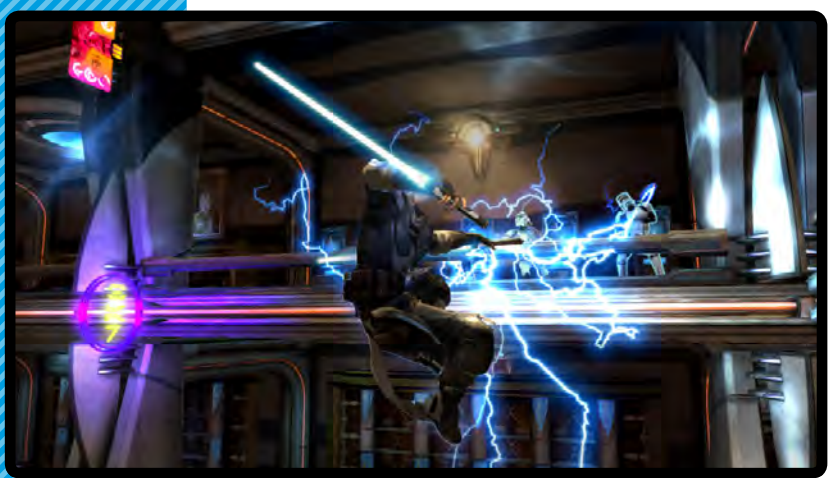
### What do we know?

Even though the combat seems relatively unchanged from the original, graphically it seems far superior, with environments that look to be much

shinier than before, and a smoother implementation of the ever-impressive Euphoria tech which empowers enemies with real-time self preservation, so they'll cling onto beams, crates and each other in order to stay alive.

### Anything else to declare?

The PC version is being helmed by Aspyr Media who dropped the ball with the original, but as this arrives alongside the console versions, we remain hopeful. As long as we can daisy-chain Stormtroopers we'll be happy.



The Empire's designs have become slightly more elaborate.



# AION



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**Publisher:**  
Southpeak Games  
**Developer:** Firefly Studios  
**Heritage:** Stronghold  
series, Space Colony  
**Link:** [www.stronghold3.com](http://www.stronghold3.com)  
**ETA:** 2011



Players can see the innards of buildings by merely swiping their cursor across them, creating a neat cutaway effect.

**PREVIEW FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to tell us what you think of Stronghold 3



Light, as ever, is key, with dark areas potentially hiding enemy troops or raiding parties.



housing, etc in any direction, forming any pattern possible. 30 missions will feature in total, across two different military and economically centred campaigns set on many different maps, which will be threaded together by what's sure to be a typically dark yet funny storyline involving the original Stronghold's signature enemy, Wolf. The original antagonist is back, despite many believing he was dead, and he's begun besieging and infiltrating castles at night, a big no-no during the middle ages. >

**FIRST LOOK**

# Stronghold 3

## Shoring up the foundations

### What's the story?

Building a castle is an art form, which more than five million gamers have enjoyed over the past 10 years thanks to the British developers Firefly Studios and their iconic Stronghold franchise, and which still a large contingent of modern gamers are unaware of. That's about to all change, as the third chapter in the long-running series is set to be bolder, more beautiful and more accessible than any of the games before it, and the developers have promised to return the series to its original charming roots, with the thrill of torturing villagers and catapulting livestock to their doom.

### What do we know?

Gameplay will still be the mix of castle building and economy management as fans have seen before, but rather than utilising the tile build structure, now everything is fully realised in 3D, allowing complete engineering control, and with the ability to build walls, keeps, peasant





There will be many different types of ranks of buildings on offer, with Firefly promising at least 10 different types of housing.

## > Stronghold 3 continued

Different times of day will feature during scenarios, but the team has just stopped short of implementing a full day/night cycle, so they can implement the strategic implications of fading light much more accurately. Time of day indicates the ratio of fog of war – or darkness of doom as we much prefer to call it – which can only be penetrated by fire via a scout's torch or a lit hay bale. Battles in the game will hinge on these stealth dynamics, and army numbers will be in the hundreds rather than the thousands featured in the last sequel.

Firefly have once again tried to recreate medieval life as closely as possible, and an extension of this is the ability to look inside buildings. Whenever you spot a structure, a random room will cutaway to show peasants, lords or workers going about their business. Expect to see cows being milked, banquets being hosted and royalty evacuating their bowels – if you're lucky. Or not, as the case may be.

### Anything else to declare?

Socio-economic management has been streamlined, so players can spend more time doing things they like, such as adding new defensive measures to their castle and scoping out local areas for potential raiders. Multiplayer will also feature like the previous games, but interestingly, a powerful editor

will be included, allowing fans to build their own maps, scenarios or castles – recreating Helm's Deep from Lord of the Rings, for example.

Supporting player content was definitely something Firefly wished to emphasize, and whether that's via a mod support option or some kind of in-game portal remains to be seen. Despite only seeing a pre-alpha build, this is the type of Stronghold we all want to see – less complication, more charm and great-looking visuals. This is a game which will create plenty of interest, and we can't wait to learn more.



Goodbye fog of war... hello darkness of doom!



Castle design has been given a massive overhaul, offering unparalleled choice and design potential.







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CONTROL →





# 7UP

More golden nuggets of gaming glory to come



## FIFA Manager 2011

**Publisher:** EA | **ETA:** Autumn  
Football Manager is currently reigning supreme, but EA are going all out for their crown! This year fans can enjoy an expanded online mode, new tactics creator and even take part in the World Cup. Competition is good, we feel.

## Deus Ex: Human Revolution

**Publisher:** Square-Enix | **ETA:** 2011  
If trailers could blow socks off, then this sequel's would make our toes officially bare. Unfortunately Warren Spector isn't at the helm, but that doesn't mean we don't want this game any less. Think Blade Runner but better. No, really.



## Arcania: Gothic 4

**Publisher:** JoWood | **ETA:** February 2011  
The Gothic series has always been a staple of hardcore open-world RPGs but it appears Spellbound is softening to modern day concessions with a mini-map, quest markers and even (shock horror) a tutorial mode. About time in our opinion, and the game should be better for it.



## Guild Wars 2

**Publisher:** NCSoft | **ETA:** Summer  
More new info has sneaked out about this sub-free MMO, and its ambition is growing. No longer will players choose from typical roles like tanks and healers, instead those abilities will be possible for all characters. Last man standing modes will also feature, allowing one last chance for victory, too.

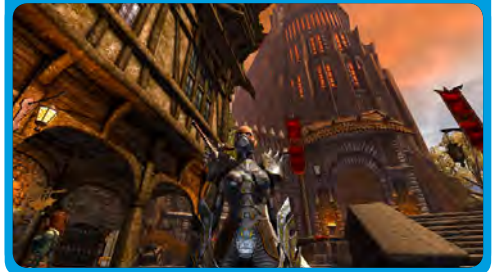
## Divinity II: Flames of Vengeance

**Publisher:** Larian Studios | **ETA:** Summer  
For those hankering for more Divinity action, Belgium's biggest independent developer is offering an expansion featuring a revised engine and 20 new hours of gameplay with 35 new quests. Time to take your warrior out for another spin.



## Dragon Age II

**Publisher:** EA | **ETA:** March 2011  
Hands up if you're still busy with Dragon Age: Origins. Well, you'd better mop up those quests as BioWare is currently developing another one, with enhanced combat, new locations and new characters. It's definitely sequel season.



## Swords of the Stars II

**Publisher:** Paradox Interactive | **ETA:** Q2 2011  
Space strategy games always attract attention in the PCGZine office, so it was great to hear Kerberos studios are working on a sequel to Swords of the Stars. Expect a new engine, better visuals, new leviathan-class ships and a new alien menace – dubbed the Lords of Winter.



**AUTUMN**

- True Crime

**SEPTEMBER**

- Crysis 2
- Medal of Honor

**AUGUST**

- Kane & Lynch 2: Dog Days
- F1 2010
- Mafia II
- Dead Rising 2

**ON THE RADAR**



# SINGULARITY™

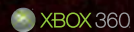
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CONTROL →





# Second Time Lucky

*We sit down with Jake DiGennaro from Topware Interactive to discuss why Two Worlds II is worth a shot*

**R**eality Pump are a stubborn bunch. Not content with the average open-world RPG that was Two Worlds, they're willing to give their original IP a second chance. Some gamers may already be rolling their eyes, but we appreciate their courage to right a gaming wrong, and so we then caught up with the game's publisher, Topware Interactive, to learn more.

**The original Two Worlds was disappointing, so do you feel you have to win back some gamers?**

We're well aware that there were concerns surrounding the first game, and we have made no effort to make excuses for its shortcomings. What we did was to take all the criticisms and feedback from the original, and use it as a launching point when we set out to make the sequel.

We took special care in identifying the things we did well and that players enjoyed, as well as the areas we

needed to improve that caused the game to suffer, and are excited to bring players back into the totally revamped world of Antaloor.

**The dialogue was one of the biggest complaints of the original, so how has this been improved?**

Dialogue definitely took a unique approach and provided for a few laughs, but for the second game we brought in a team of North American writers who have been involved with the game's scripting from the very beginning, and are working hand-in-hand with our voiceacting studios to ensure the game makes the jump across the Atlantic ocean seamlessly.

**What lessons has Reality Pump learnt after the original game?**

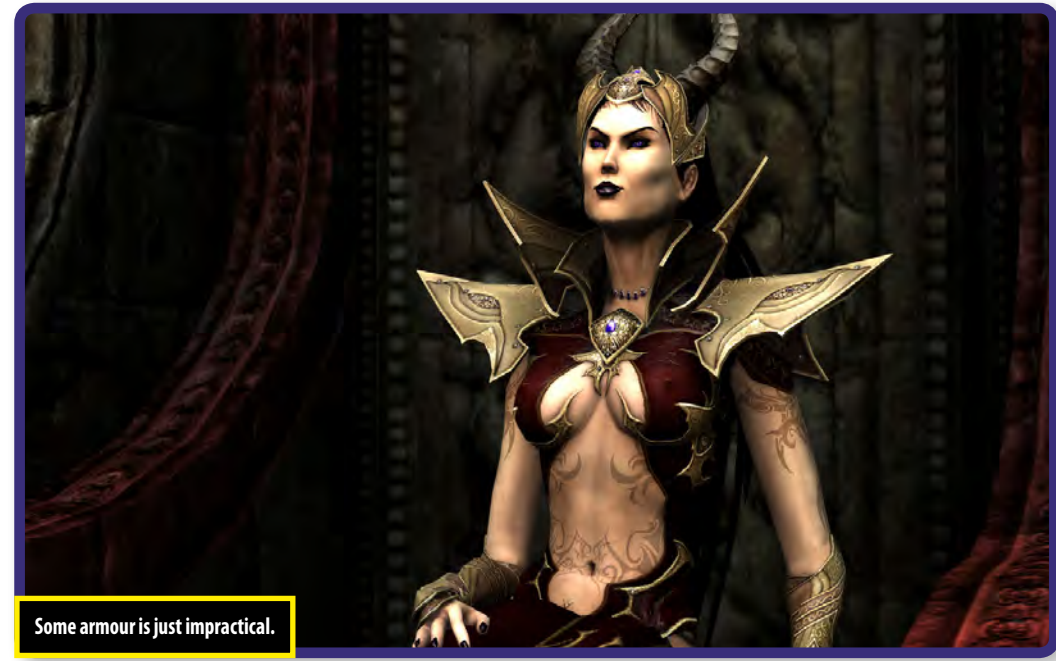
We could literally do an entire interview about all the things we've learned between the development of the original Two Worlds and now, but I



Jake DiGennaro is the PR and Community Director at Topware Interactive, and when not dealing with player feedback, he's always on the look out for sneaky Orcs.



Stay away from the glowing goblin.



Some armour is just impractical.





Never insult a warrior's mother without accepting the consequences.



Interiors consistently look gorgeous.



Expect plenty of dramatic locales.

> Interview continued

think more than anything, it was very clearly identifying the goals for the game early on and sticking to them.

From constructing a new game engine to bringing in focus groups to provide feedback on what we were doing well and where we could improve, *Two Worlds II* is really the franchise's opportunity for redemption, and one we have not taken lightly.

**Multiplayer was bolted onto *Two Worlds* post release but what are the advantages of including it right away?**

Multiplayer has been a central point in the development of the game as a

whole, and keeping it in mind throughout the development process has allowed us to create an experience that feels like a natural element of the game, as opposed to simply an additional feature.

**What can you do with the new GRACE engine that you couldn't do before?**

Simply put, everything! The GRACE engine is considerably more powerful than its predecessor, allowing us to really bulk up on environmental textures with actual depth, breathtaking lighting effects and dazzling particle effects that bring the world to life without sacrificing stability or performance. It's very powerful indeed.

**How many hours worth of gameplay are we talking about?**

The main storyline will take players roughly 25 hours to complete, with an additional 15-20 hours of side-questing and exploring. There's an entirely separate online co-op campaign, as well as PvP and the highly anticipated Village mode.

**The original *Two Worlds* ended on quite a cliffhanger. How will you fill in gamers who haven't played it?**

We made note of the fact that many players would be visiting the world of Antaloor for the first time in *Two Worlds II*, so we made sure to incorporate dialogue early on that will bring newcomers up to speed quickly.

**One of the biggest problem with open-world fantasy role-playing games is populating the game world. What makes *Two Worlds II* worth exploring?**

Well, for starters there's over 200 NPCs to interact with, a plethora of side quests, hidden areas, thousands of enemies and mini-bosses, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. ●

***"Two Worlds II is really the franchise's opportunity for redemption"***



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◆ DEMOED

Ship Simulator  
 EXTREMES

Publisher: Paradox Interactive  
 Developer: USTEP  
 Heritage: N/A  
 Link: www.shipsim.com  
 ETA: 28th August

**PREVIEW FEEDBACK!**  
 Click here to tell us what you think of Ship Simulator Extremes

# SHIP SIMULATOR EXTREMES

*Drama on the high seas*

Whenever a real-world tool gets game-ified, every player should stand up and pay attention. The creators of this title put their teeth in the development field creating simulators for naval academies worldwide, so would-be seafarers need to look no further if authenticity is what they are after.

This instalment, the third in the series, is easily the best looking, too. The way the water moves and the interaction within the environment

creates some absolutely awe-inspiring scenes. There's a full day/night cycle and weather realistically transitions from calm to stormy, and even snowy. The simulation even goes so deep that weather patterns are attuned to the calendar, all controlled by the player.

Blueprints have been used to recreate each vessel in the game, the models of which ooze an unprecedented amount of detail. In total there are 32 on offer, which range

from massive kilometre-sized oil tankers, commercial ferries and even the humble speedboat.

So far, so sea orientated right? Well that's a fair point, and it's clear that this kind of experience won't cater to everyone, but those that find this remotely interesting will be catered for, and much like when Flight Simulator

first introduced weather, the challenge helping these huge vessels – and even the smaller powerboats – is something most gamers will enjoy at least for a while. Just don't expect any guns.

There are three different campaigns, each made up of many different missions. The first details the exploits of Greenpeace in Antarctica, the second >



Anyone want to stop some whale hunting?



Many real-world locations have been recreated.





Ship Simulator  
EXTREMES



Harbour management also plays a key role.



Conditions can change at a moment's notice.

> **Ship Simulator** continued

involves a cruise liner which is set ablaze at sea with a full allotment of passengers, and finally there's the challenge of managing a busy harbour. Each scenario will test

different elements of seafaring, so it isn't only about manning the rudder – sometimes it's about testing your managerial mettle. Every mission is constructed around real-life testimonies from commanders, who make an appearance post-mission in video form,

Imagine being at the helm of this big boy.



*“Each scenario will test different elements of seafaring, so it isn't only about manning the rudder”*

to recount their experiences in detail. It's a nifty reward which further sells this franchise's commitment to absolute realism.

Multiplayer has also been given a lot of thought, and as well as offering a free-roam mode, as many as 25 players can explore ships in unprecedented detail, and there's also an editor for creators to design their own scenarios. So expect plenty of new content to arrive post release.

It would be fair to say that the Ship Simulator series has always catered to a

**EXTREME CONDITIONS**

*What challenges await in the open water*



**Busy ports**

**Turbulent waves**

**Passengers**

**Busy ports**

Locations from around the world have been faithfully recreated, and even though it's tempting to admire the sights, maintaining awareness of other traffic is paramount. Listen to the Harbour Master and you can't go wrong.

very specific gaming audience, but with a fantastic new look and a shed-load of fresh new content, this could be the entry that thrusts the series into the mainstream concious. We're looking forward to seeing if we measure up to the challenges it sets, and so should you. ●

PCGZine

Ship Simulator EXTREMES

**HOW COMPLETE?** 90%

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS?** 80%

*This franchise isn't only for navy enthusiasts any more*





Publisher: EA  
Developer: In-house  
Heritage: FIFA series, Madden series  
Link: <http://fifa.easports.com>  
ETA: October

**PREVIEW FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to tell us what you think of FIFA 11

**HANDS ON**

# FIFA 11

*EA promise that this year will be different*

While FIFA has been confidently taking back digital football's Premiership crown on consoles for the past few years, its PC brother has been left out in the cold, stuttering away on an old, abandoned engine, waiting for its chance to play in the first team. As you may have guessed from the slightly laboured analogy, then, FIFA 11 PC has finally caught up with its flashier

console superstar, and can show its face on the training ground once again. Well, sort of. FIFA 11 is being upgraded to the full 'next-gen' engine, with its 360-degree movement, player physicality and all-around soccer-shaped loveliness, but football isn't quite coming home just yet. Sadly, we're only getting FIFA 10, albeit FIFA 10 dressed up as FIFA 11. Still, beggars can't be choosers.

**"FIFA 11 is being upgraded to the full 'next gen' engine, with its 360-degree movement"**

So let's focus on the good stuff. FIFA 10 did indeed revolutionise videogame football, and FIFA 11 PC enjoys all of its advances. Players are no longer chained to the traditional eight directions that have ruled videogame football since the ISS heyday, so they're now free to move anywhere within the 360-degree radius around them, making for a far more organic footballing experience. With this freedom comes considerable options in open play. You can build up complex passing moves



that look and feel different every time, thanks to this freedom of movement. If you're dribbling, you can slightly cut inside a defender as opposed to at 45-degrees, again reshaping the entire dynamic of an attack.



Dribbling is superb, as long as you're playing with a controller.



**Iniesta. World Cup winner. Diver. Owner of a child's face.**





You can't beat those dramatic EA skies.



Jostling for the ball makes a welcome return.

> **FIFA 11** continued

And joining this freedom of movement comes a robust and – once again – organic physics system that not only governs the speed and trajectory

of the ball, but also the players. EA has been calling it 'freedom in physical play' since its inception last year, and it's a fairly accurate moniker. When you go to challenge another player, your momentum, angle of approach and

player's strength statistic all combine, and result in a battle with the other player, who's undergoing exactly the same calculation.

In reality, that translates to a serious tussle for the ball; one that can go back and forth and actually feels tangibly physical. Players like Rooney and Tevez can visibly hold off their opponents, while a lighter player like Messi would need to rely on his skill and guile to avoid being barged off the ball by a lumbering defender.

Obviously, the game has been designed with the 360 controller in mind, and this is even reflected in the

on-screen icons, but fear not, it's not just a console port. The customisation that's been available in the PC version for years returns in beefier form, so you can spend hours creating your own chants and importing them into your game should you wish. And you *should* wish, as it's damn funny.

So, EA has finally done PC gamers justice and given them the FIFA game they deserve? kind of. It's actually the FIFA game they deserved last year, but now the next-gen engine has made it to PC, hopefully FIFA 12 will be more in line with its console partner. Until then, it's still warming the bench. ●



Graphically, it's still shockingly good.

	<b>HOW COMPLETE?</b> 	<b>FIRST IMPRESSIONS?</b> 
	<p>A FIFA worthy of our platform, but a year too late</p>	



**KANE & LYNCH 2**  
DOG DAYS  
Publisher: Square-Enix  
Developer: IO Interactive  
Heritage: Hitman series  
Link: www.kaneandlynch.com  
ETA: 20th August

**PREVIEW FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to tell us what you think of Kane & Lynch 2: Dog Days

**HANDS ON**

# KANE & LYNCH 2: DOG DAYS

## Big trouble in little Shanghai

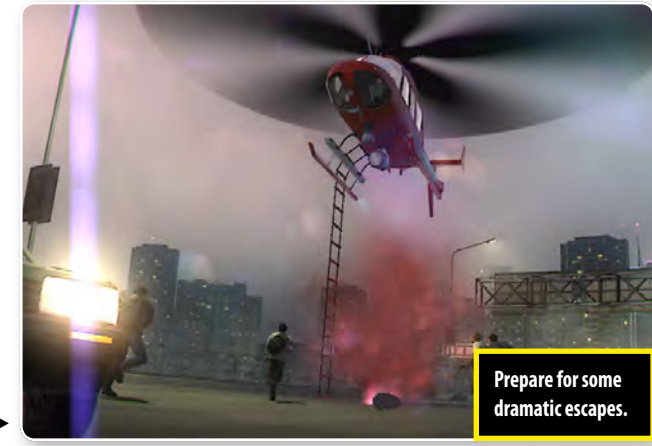
IO Interactive has a talent for creating iconic psychopathic monsters who are completely at odds with the type of protagonists gamers are used to. If playing as Hitman's Agent 47 didn't float your boat with his array of homicidal

gadgetry, then the Danish developer has a new death mongerer for you to confusingly empathise with: Lynch. The longest-haired member of the duo seen in the screenshot below was absolutely barking in the third-person action-orientated original, but for the

sequel players get to see his softer – yet still rock solid – side on the mean streets of Shanghai. The tone is even darker than the original, with a seedy YouTube-esque filter purveying all of the game's visuals. Co-op once again is supported from the outset with the second player controlling the steady but no-less combat efficient, Kane. ➤



Lynch's kung fu moves needed some work.



Prepare for some dramatic escapes.



Well-placed shots will often propel foes onto the ground.



The not-so dynamic duo.





Be careful when choosing cover!



Trust is a dirty word in the world of Kane & Lynch 2.

### > Kane & Lynch 2 continued

The dreaded duo find themselves in heaps of trouble once again when an arms deal goes wrong, resulting in the entire Shanghai underworld aiming to get a piece of their craniums. Cue plenty of shoot-outs involving police, civilians and plenty of wanton destruction in crowded public areas. Interestingly, the entire proceedings are

set over 40 eight hours which allows the fiction to get into the real nitty-gritty of the relationship between the gun-happy couple.

Gameplay wise, the action is still very much set around the third-person, with cover utilisation as important as ever. The pace seems much improved this time though, with AI guards more likely to flank instead of just taking pot shots behind bins or concrete pillars.

Now there's a destructible element allowing more brittle materials, such as wood, to disintegrate under fire, further increasing the speed of skirmishes. Also the way damage registers has also been improved, with characters being propelled backward onto the floor when shot with sufficient force. This mechanic is more engrossing than the traditional bleed-out dynamic, and communicates when players are taking too many risks. Every element of the way combat unfolds seems better, and to the developer's credit, they seem to have listened to many of the complaints regarding the original.

Much like the main protagonists themselves, Kane & Lynch 2 is really all about redemption. The first game, after a huge amount of hype and fanfare, was guilty of some very odd design



## STEAL FROM YOUR FRIENDS

How K&L 2's multiplayer shakes down



Fragile alliance

Undercover cop

Cops and robbers

### Fragile alliance

The job is to steal four million dollars in four minutes. Each round is all about stealing cash from a vault while stopping any cops in your way. Players can kill other to earn their cut, but then they become a target to all other surviving members in the group.

choices, but it seems as though the sequel should fulfil its initial promise, including some excellent multiplayer carnage, too. It may not be the franchise most PC owners want IO Interactive to be working on, but that doesn't mean the action won't be any less impressive or fun. ●

PCGZine



HOW COMPLETE?



FIRST IMPRESSIONS?



Grim and grey, yet somehow enjoyable



Captain Blood

**Publisher:** 1C Company  
**Developer:** Seawolf Studio  
**Heritage:** N/A  
**Link:** [www.1cpublishing.eu/game/captain-blood-pc/overview](http://www.1cpublishing.eu/game/captain-blood-pc/overview)  
**ETA:** Q3 2010

**PREVIEW FEEDBACK!**  
 Click here to tell us what you think of Captain Blood

**HANDS ON**

# CAPTAIN BLOOD

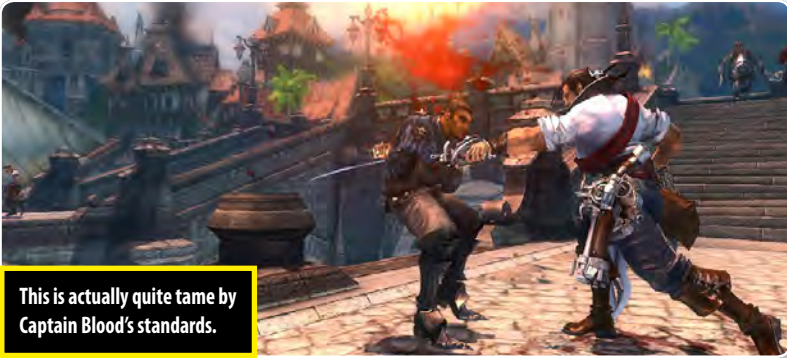
*A swashbuckling murder simulator*

**W**ith a name like Captain Blood, you would think there be some kind of Vampiric activity afoot, but rest assured, this title from Russia is completely devoid of any kind of Twilight-inspired fantasy. Instead the name hints at this third-person hack-and-slasher's true calling – malicious violence in ridiculous red-soaked detail. Picture God of War with a distinct swashbuckling flavour borrowed

from Pirates of the Caribbean and you'll be a long way to understanding the appeal of dealing death in any number of enjoyable ways, including the ability to cut off arms and heads with your trusty cutlass, or blow enemies away with the devastating scatter-shot fired from the hip. There are plenty of different projectile-based weapons available but all are steeped in the 16th-century setting. Enemies

even explode with red HP and golden coins so new moves and weaponry can be unlocked.

Players control a big, burly pirate captain named Blood who's framed for treason, before being interned as a slave, subsequently escaping and branding himself with the intimidating title in order to pursue vengeance against the Spanish forces that wronged him. It's a decent premise which completely sells the loveable rogue aspect, but there doesn't seem

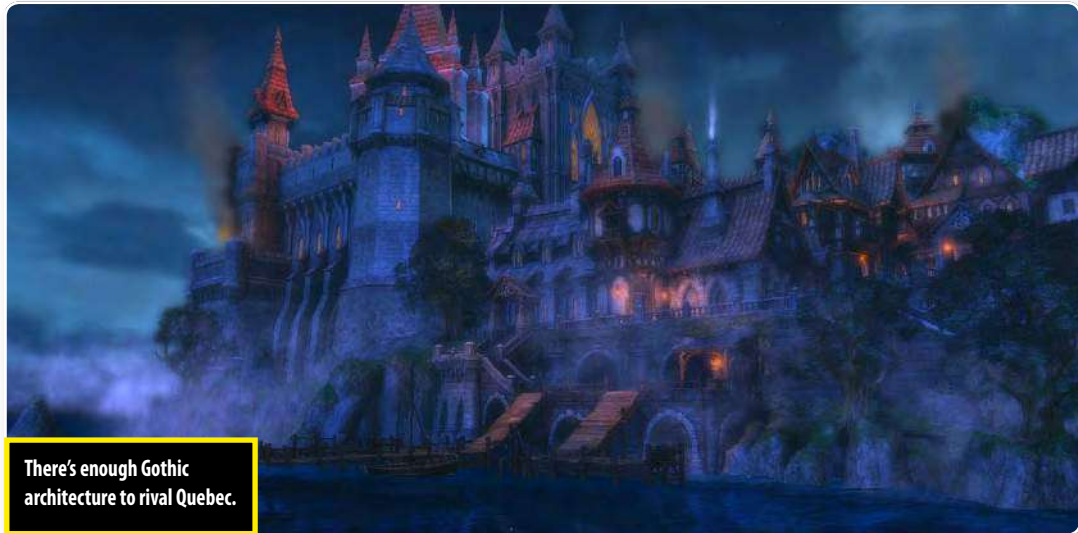


This is actually quite tame by Captain Blood's standards.

Puzzles do their part to keep the body count down – for a few minutes.



Guess what happens next.

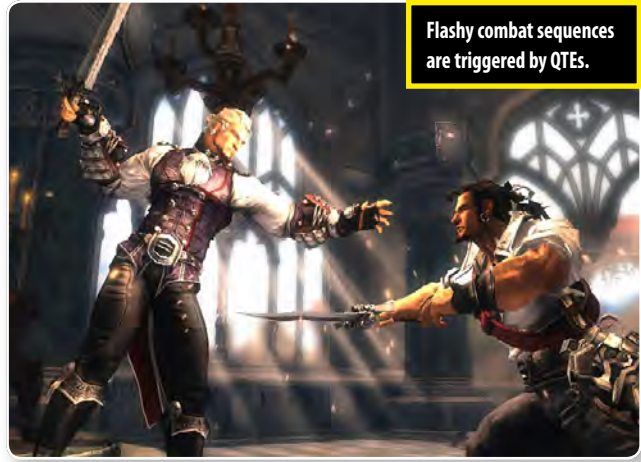


There's enough Gothic architecture to rival Quebec.





Blood's pal Pitt also is playable through certain parts of the campaign.



Flashy combat sequences are triggered by QTEs.

## LIFE ON THE HIGH SEAS

How Captain Blood's ship combat works



Fire cannons

Fight off boarders

Kill bosses

### Fire cannons

Sending desecrutive cannonballs to enemy vessels is as easy as approaching the gun, pressing the interact button, aiming carefully from a first-person perspective and firing. Each ship has a health meter, so aim for the hull for maximum damage.

Captain Blood

### > Captain Blood continued

to be the depth which many would expect from an IP based on the series of novels by Rafael Sabatini of the same name. During our experience with a preview build, the story was only briefly addressed, before the beefed-up Captain was slaughtering group after group of invaders in a dark coastal

village, which did beg the question why base a game on a book if your game doesn't share the same fictional depth as the source material?

By the same token, combat is just as approachable, with the ability to pick up weapons dropped by enemies for a short while and infrequent boss battles which serve to break up the relentless swatting via quick-time events. The

class-based enemies ranged from small scout-like foes with bows and arrows or small swords, to gigantic yeti-like hooligans which took more than a few attempts to take out.

Progression seems very linear, yet still enjoyable, with the siege aspects making way for ship-versus-ship combat and the ability to steal other vessels. These aspects are all heavily dependent on where players are in the campaign but again, they provide an interesting break from the constant killing, or at least a different means of dispatching foes.

Graphically the game looks sharp, and atmospheric. The sound design is passable and the score does its part to channel the good lord Zimmer as much as possible – which can only really be a good thing.



For all its violence, the engine can provide some very serene scenes.

Captain Blood looks unlikely to seriously challenge the genre's current heavyweights (God of War, for example), but seeing as most of them aren't available on our platform, some PC owners may do well to give it a try and tickle a fancy they might not realise they had. ●

	<b>HOW COMPLETE?</b> 	<b>FIRST IMPRESSIONS?</b> 
		<i>A no-frills pirate adventure</i>





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MAGICKA

**Publisher:** Paradox Interactive  
**Developer:** Arrowhead Games Studio  
**Heritage:** N/A  
**Link:** <http://arrowheadgamestudios.com>  
**ETA:** September

**PREVIEW FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to tell us what you think of Magicka

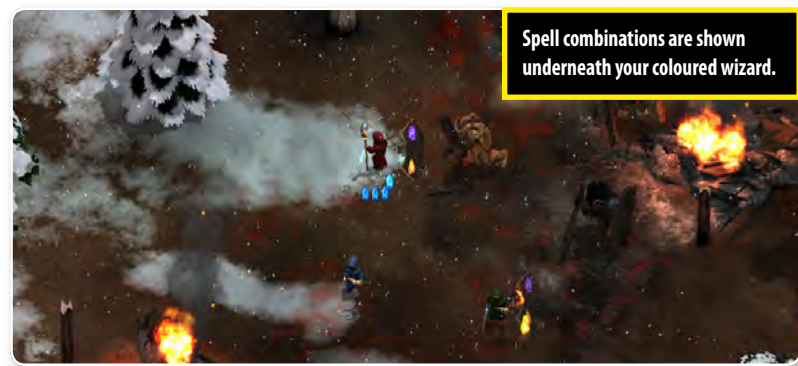
**EXCLUSIVE SCREENS!**

**HANDS ON**

# MAGICKA

*A faux-pas fantasy which is sure to steal your heart!*

*“Right from the off, it’s clear to see that Magicka is built to be enjoyed with friends”*



Spell combinations are shown underneath your coloured wizard.

The fantasy genre isn't the most innovative in gaming. Ever since the beginning, players have been adventuring against Orcs, dragons and wizards, all hell-bent on world destruction and sassy female Elves. Frankly, it's about time somebody put the genre in its place, and we know just the studio to do it.

Magicka is the debut title from Swedish studio Arrowhead Games,

and recently we got to enjoy some co-op with the game's Director, Johan Pilestedt, to learn what this fantasy mash-up is all about.

Right from the off, it's clear to see that Magicka is built to be enjoyed with friends, supporting four-player multiplayer both locally and online. The bland visuals might be jarring to some, but it allows the small team to funnel more resources towards

creating fantastic spells combining different elements – fire, cold, life, arcane, water, shield, lightning – with the game's innovative combination system. Within minutes – after some expert tutelage from Pilestedt – we were firing off ice lightning or drenching foes with water before electrocuting them to death for maximum damage. Almost reminiscent of Street Fighter, the more advanced spell creations work much like finishers. Dramatic spells like Phoenix causing massive damage to



The bosses may look plain, but they immediately inspire panic within any group.



Deploying a shield is always useful but what sort is key? Our favourite is the mana variety which heals as it protects.



Burn baby burn!





MAGICKA



Visuals are plain when there aren't any spell effects dominating the scene.



Bonds will be broken in deathmatch.

> **Magicka** continued

any nearby enemies, while also reviving any team-mates at the same time.

All of these combinations are stored in the game's menu under the *Magicka* books, and extra spell concoctions can only be unlocked when players discover them via runes in the main campaign. The system is very intuitive but requires a level of

dexterity which may alienate some, whereas others will immediately admire its complexity, whether playing with a keyboard or controller.

There are also several different multiplayer modes available, including competitive and co-operative options with campaign support. The story is your typical fantasy affair, where a wizard wants to take over the world and has unleashed ghouls, goblins and

monsters unto the general populace. The plot is carried out in a satirical manner and filled with corny jokes which mock the genre in some really inventive and silly ways. The voices of the villagers immediately made us chuckle, with their tones which was a healthy mix of Simlish and Animal Crossing's chattering.

The pace of the game is relentless and often chaotic throughout, with panic regularly breaking out. This feeling is further exacerbated by friendly fire – which is constantly something to avoid – to provide balance. Spells are powerful, but don't fire them off willy-nilly, unless you want some very angry team-mates.

Overall, it's perfectly clear that *Magicka* is being aimed at the more casual gaming market, with a price



The ice not only causes damage but also slows enemies down.

## MULTIPLAYER MADNESS

Four-player goodness across the board

Campaign

Survival

Deathmatch

### Campaign

The plot is the typical fantasy fluff, punctuated with clever jokes which will occasionally make you chuckle. This game is definitely best played with a headset – if you can't find some buddies to shout at each other.

which reflects its download-only status. However, the gameplay packs more ingenuity and more enjoyable chaos than most full-priced games. As long as there's some substance to more lengthy play sessions then this has the potential to be a massive sleeper hit. ●

**HOW COMPLETE?**

80%

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS?**

80%

Fast-paced fantasy co-op with some chaos thrown in





# Commander: Conquest of the Americas

*Make the New World pay. Literally*

**Publisher:** Paradox Interactive  
**Developer:** Nitro Games  
**Heritage:** East India Company  
**Link:** [www.cota-game.com](http://www.cota-game.com)  
**OUT NOW**

**System Requirements:**  
2 GHz CPU, 2 Gb RAM,  
Shader 3.0 3D card

**N**ot content with simulating the exploitation of the Eastern world in East India Company, Nitro Games has turned their focus to the West, in order to offer gamers the chance to colonise the Americas. Set between 1500-1650, Commander: Conquest of the Americas can be best summed up as a historical strategy game but with a fascination for trade dynamics funnelled through its core.

The location may have changed but the general gameplay structure is still the same. As an agent of one of seven different empirical entities – Britain, Netherlands, France, Denmark, Spain,

Portugal or the Holy Roman Empire – it's your solemn duty to found colonies, export valuable commodities back home, fight for supremacy and generally be top dog on the other side of the Atlantic. The challenge is considerable though, with unruly natives and pirates to contend with, as well as the other six factions all vying for a significant piece of the New World.

Each nationality has various bonuses or pitfalls, with the British struck with low morale when founding colonies, or the Spanish unable to form good relationships with natives. Clearly inspired by history, and even though



## FREEZE FRAME

*Taking you through the game, one step at a time...*



**15 MINUTES**  
A bit overwhelmed, so thank the maker for the tooltips helper.



**1 HOUR**  
You can't spend too much time naming a colony. Old Newfoundland it is!



**4 HOURS**  
Ships are good, but building up township facilities is the real winning secret.



**6 HOURS**  
At war with five different nations, and all our colonists want is a theatre.



**8 HOURS**  
After over a decade of blood, trade and tears, you'll want to start again.







Placing colonies in more inhospitable environments won't cripple your revenue too much.



The sphere of influence grows with your population, unlocking new mineral deposits.



Advisors won't stay happy for long.

> **Commander** continued

each game does start with a reasonably clean slate to work from, it's easy to fall back into old rivalries.

Each campaign begins with one single vessel packed with 50 colonists, enabling one township to be created in pre-determined areas on the map. Whichever landing spot is chosen is crucial, as all of the valuable resources – from which money is made – will often determine how easy the first years of your new empire will be. The likes of gold, silver, cotton, iron ore, dyes, cocoa and tobacco are scattered all over the playing areas, and some spots may have limited potential. This one decision can shape your campaign, which is both enjoyable and absolutely terrifying.

Not to worry though, as once the population count grows in the first settlement, another area can be created, but Commander never lets players get ahead of themselves as colonies can

only be established once pre-determined population counts are hit.

Unless players tax their settlements into submission, most revenue is earned by shipping commodities home which would be massive grind, if it wasn't for the handy-dandy automatic trade router. The easy to use interface makes setting up elaborate shipping trade routes easy, and allows players to concentrate on diplomacy, building up colonies and warmongering. Four advisors from the empire are also present, and set missions in accordance with your faction's higher wishes, whether they involve military pressures, trade or religion. Keeping them happy is

paramount, as they can reward new technology and gold from the fatherland. Aside from a thirst for cold hard bullion, this historical strategy also

has a competitive element too, with player performance constantly matched up against other AI contenders. Like similar titles in the genre, the relations window doubles up as a high score mantel, and the feeling of topping others never fades.



The inhabitants of Little Big Shoe came for snow, but stayed for the view.





The damage model may be crude but the landscapes regularly looks spectacular.

> **Commander** continued

Even when played at the lightning pace of the highest game speed, a

complete session will still take around six hours to complete, and the game is very much set up for multiple playthroughs. There's the ability to create

and take part in standalone naval battles as well, but they only serve as a footnote to the main campaign.

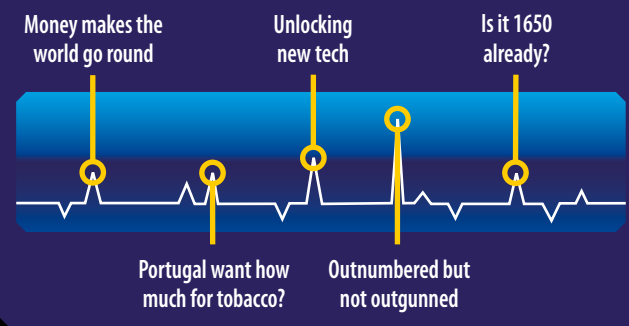
Naval combat has been given a lot of attention, with a level of detail most won't appreciate, and the ability to order ships around RTS style or get deckside and control a ship one-to-one. However, land battles haven't been offered the same detail and are only represented by auto-resolve match-ups. It's clear that the developer isn't aiming for the complete battle experience, but not allocating sufficient resources to infantry on infantry skirmishes may disappoint some players. The lack of any multiplayer is also a big omission but Nitro has assured us they're adding support post-release via a patch.

Key to any free-form strategy game is that element of the unknown; that random event which can turn the entire world onto its head, and this title has that in spades, with wars often proving

devastating and pirates forming a constant annoyance. That sort of gameplay doesn't really kick in until the last hundred years, but until then seeing your gold multiply provides more than enough enjoyment to sustain those long periods of play.

Commander is best summed up as a Sunday morning experience; not taxing, but challenging and enjoyable enough so that time just drips away while you play. This is, we think you'll agree, the sign of a great strategy experience. ●

**PULSOMETER** *Signs of life*



*“Naval combat has been given a lot of attention, with a level of detail most won't appreciate”*



Roll over screen for annotations

**PCGZine  
Verdict**

*A trading sim suitable for all. Engrossing, challenging and immensely satisfying*

- Gameplay makes trading fun
- Approachable, yet challenging
- Missing multiplayer functionality

**87%**





**Publisher:** EA  
**Developer:** Realtime Worlds  
**Heritage:** Crackdown  
**Link:** www.apb.com  
**OUT NOW**

**System Requirements:**  
 QuadCore CPU, 4Gb RAM,  
 512Mb 3D card

# APB

## Living the life of grime

**F**ive years is a long time in game development, and when it's for a game spearheaded by the original creator of the GTA series, it's to be expected that many gamers may predict the dawn of a new age when your anticipated product is finally released. Unsurprisingly, APB isn't the diamond descended from heaven which so many people were hoping for, but that doesn't make it any less of an enjoyable online open-world actioner.

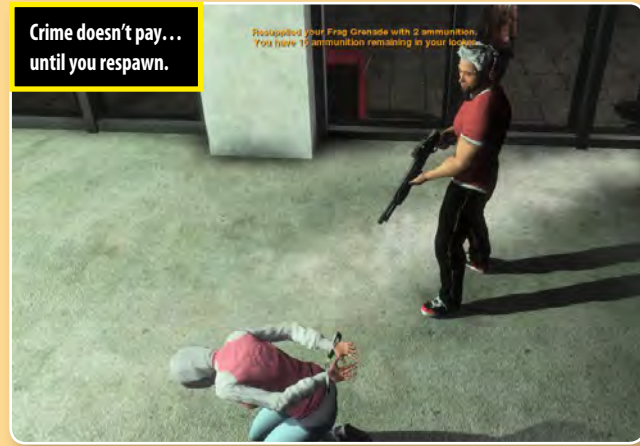
APB is a PvP-orientated online experience where gamers can align themselves with one of two factions – Criminals or Enforcers. These two forces

must then go at it, for the good of a rather boring setting of San Paro. Split into three different areas, there's the two action zones, Waterfront and Financial, where missions are carried out and battles are fought, and the peaceful social area where players can design new outfits, car liveries, tattoos, music, and give their avatar some expensive plastic surgery. It reminded us of an edgier version of The Sims – if EA LA

**“As objectives are met, opposing squads made up of real players will be dispatched against you”**

let off the shackles and let players design anything they wanted to.

The heart of the game is in the action zones, where players for either team carry out missions for a handful of contacts scattered around the city. As objectives are met, opposing squads made up of real players will be dispatched against you, transforming the tepid ‘travel here, interact with



## A DAY IN THE LIFE

What you'll get up to during a typical session

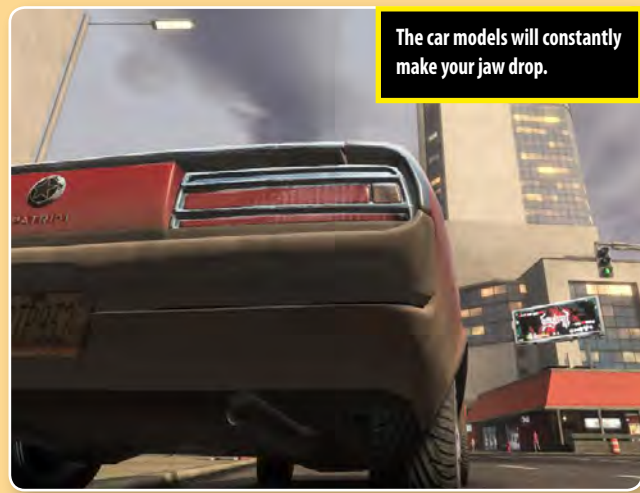


**Carry out dirty deeds**

**Customise threads**

**Hunt down bounties**

**Carry out dirty deeds**  
 You'd think only the Criminals would carry out the illegal activities – such as running over civilians, torching places and the like – but the Enforcers aren't much better, resorting to any means necessary to get the job done. Collateral damage really is a prerequisite in San Paro.







*"Realtime Worlds has created a game unlike any other, and it's worth experiencing"*

Riding shotgun is not only fun but also highly effective in combat.

### > APB continued

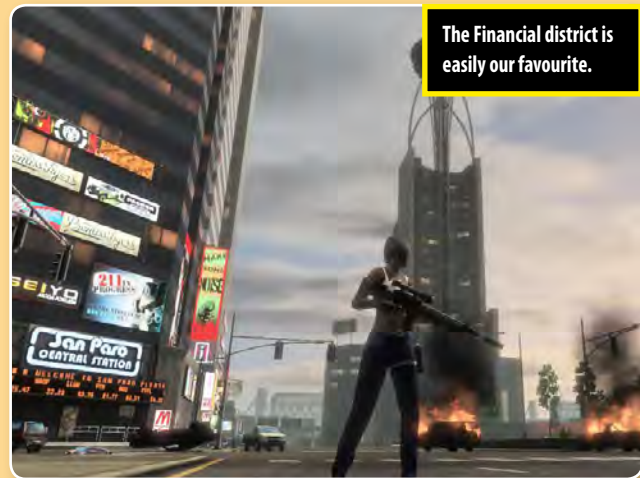
this dynamic there', to tyre-squealing, gun-blazing, all-out action. Teams can accommodate six players to take out opposing members and civilians but not other random players, which means that griefing potential is definitely dialled down considerably on the 80-player servers.

Most of the game time revolves around driving or shooting, the former of which is great fun, but the latter just feels too loose. Damage caused to other players isn't communicated properly, so usually you'll just pepper away until somebody rag dolls.

### Puzzling element

Perhaps the most puzzling element of APB is the payment structure, which offers players 50 hours of action zone play out of the box and more time can be purchased via a top-up fee. It's bizarre because other than the PvP aspect, it's really hard to excuse the additional cost of playing.

Realtime Worlds has created a game unlike any other, and it's worth experiencing initially. There are some unforgettable moments to be had when teams work together – such as jumping off ramps to escape pursuers, or rolling into an ambush all-guns blazing. Viewed as a standard 50-hour experience, most players will get enjoy their time with APB until their time expires. As a standard third-person game, this online experience represents great throwaway fun, but when compared to the pay-to-play heavyweights all vying for your cash, it lacks real depth. ●



The Financial district is easily our favourite.



Avatar creations range from the stunning to the bizarre.



Roll over screen for annotations

## PCGZine Verdict

Disappointing, but still worth a punt if you love multiplayer carnage

- Great matchmaking system
- Powerful customisation editors
- Lack of variation

# 78%



SINGULARITY

# Singularity

## Wading through the waters of time

**Publisher:** Activision  
**Developer:** Raven Software  
**Heritage:** Wolfenstein, Marvel: Ultimate Alliance  
**Link:** www.singularity-game.com  
**OUT NOW**

**System Requirements:**  
Dual Core CPU, 2Gb RAM, 256Mb 3D card

**T**ime travel is one of those universal concepts which everyone relishes, yet it's an area where gaming has only occasionally dipped its collective toe. Thankfully, Raven Software have rectified that foible by setting their entire game around messing with history.

Singularity is one of those rare first-person shooters which challenges the concept of linear gameplay, and is steeped in Cold War mythology. The plot is centred around an abandoned Russian island called Katorga-12m where the USSR were experimenting with a rare super-element named E99. Gamers control a modern-day silent

soldier, and their job is to investigate the facility which has recently shown signs of activity.

To many, the action will feel like a traditional run-and gun-shooter, but there's enough story for gamers, with an attention to detail that is accommodated with scattered notes, projected movies and audio diaries to pad out the world. All this helps to give story twists more weight, as it's

made clear from very early on that your failure will lead to disaster.

Pace is a concept which few developers understand, but this FPS is easily one of the most well-crafted we've played all year. Supernatural portals which allow swift travel between 1955 and the modern day are sprinkled liberally throughout the 10-hour running time, and as a result both the derelict 2010 and shiny 1955

*"Pace is a concept which few developers understand, but this FPS is easily one of the most well-crafted we've played all year"*

Every weapon, including the TMD, can be upgraded to perform better.



## TIME MANIPULATION DEVICE

Never leave home without one



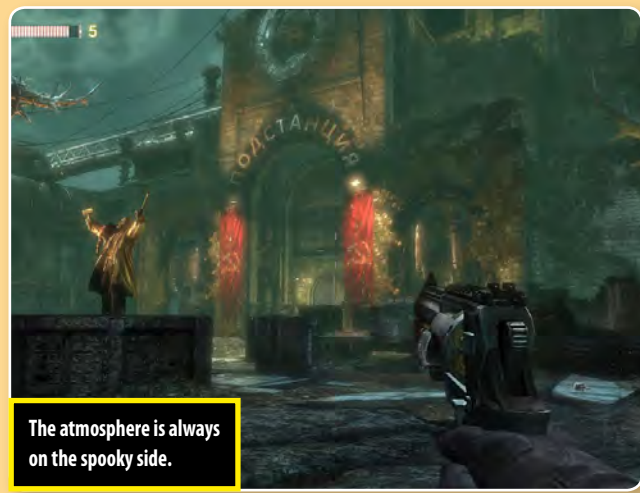
Age enemies

Reconstruct objects

Freeze time

## Age enemies

Bullets are so passé. Who needs them when you can age an enemy in seconds with the handy TMD? They'll immediately keel over and shrivel up – not unlike the effect seen in the first Indiana Jones film. Unfortunately, soldiers cannot revert to their baby years. Gaming isn't ready for infanticide yet.



The atmosphere is always on the spooky side.







Ghostly flashbacks are common and can be really disturbing.

### Roll over screen for annotations



## > Singularity continued

environments all feel refreshing. Seeing them age and crumble around you is always hugely entertaining.

Most of the gameplay is centred around the experimental Time Manipulation Device which is the definition of player empowerment. It's an ingenious piece of kit. A typical arsenal is also included but there's also more experimental weaponry, like for example a rifle which allows bullets to be steered in real-time. Nothing beats steering a shell into a foe's cranium who's covering behind cover.

The feel of combat itself is exhilarating, with enemy soldiers constantly suffering torn limbs, and firepower which feels sufficiently destructive. The presence of Element 99 has forced mutation on this spooky isle as well, so there are teleporting zombies, insectoid monsters and bulky club-wielding drones. The variation is constant, and most new enemies will surprise and excite.

Team-based multiplayer also makes a very welcome appearance, and while it isn't groundbreaking, it still proves functional and is hugely fun, too.

Singularity is game of many successes and few blemishes. The only issues we had were occasional texture problems and a lack of a quick save, but other than that this first-person shooter really is an achievement. Raven Software rarely get to create their own IP, and if this is a sign of what they can accomplish, the reigns should really be let off much more often. ●



Should we go for the skill or the grieving shot?



Gore and PC shooting go together like strawberries and cream.

## PCGZine Verdict

*A triumphant step in the right direction, but not without its faults*

- 👍 New engine provides nice visuals
- 👍 Great multiplayer implementation
- 👎 Campaign is over too quickly

# 90%



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# ARMA II: Operation Arrowhead

**Publisher:** IDEA Games  
**Developer:** Bohemia Interactive  
**Heritage:** ARMA II, Operation Flashpoint  
**Link:** www.arma2.com  
**OUT NOW**

**System Requirements:**  
Dual Core CPU, 2Gb RAM,  
512Mb 3D card

*Preaching to the converted*

**W**e think that if any of the PCGZine crew found themselves in a desert with a rifle and in the unfortunate position of having enemy soldiers closing in, we can put our hands on our hearts and say with absolutely certainty that we would perish almost immediately. That sobering fact is what ARMA II showed us all too well last year, and wouldn't you know it, Bohemia Interactive have released a standalone expansion to crush our fighting dreams all over again.

This is the hardest military sim on the planet, and ARMA II wears its medal for authenticity proudly on its chest. Set in the fictional country of Takistan, the conflict shares the same themes one might expect from the conflict in modern Afghanistan. The campaign

involves three different combatants – a Delta Force operative, a tank commander and the ever-ready Apache pilot. Unfortunately the tour is relatively brief, with only around five hours worth of play time and, needless to say, there isn't the same sort of



The amount of firepower on offer is both staggering and terrifying.

## VEHICLES OF WAR

*Three of our favourite mobile creations*



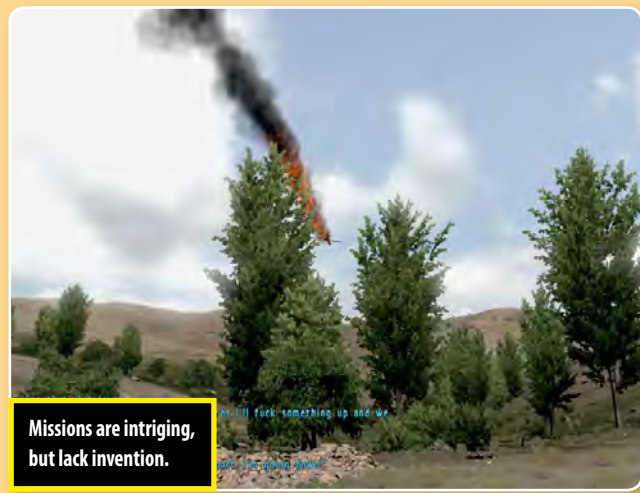
**M1-A2 Abrams**

**AH-6J Little Bird**

**MQ-9 Reaper**

### M1A2 Abrams

ARMA II isn't short on armoured beasts, but they are more complicated than many games give credit for. For the Abrams, players will need to communicate directions to their driver and call targets in order for the two separate gunners to take them out.



Missions are intriguing, but lack invention.







As long as the necessary hardware is present, ARMA II can look stunning.

> ARMA II continued

drama, voice acting, or cut-scenes to be found in even the most boilerplate adventure, but it does serve to introduce all of the new toys.

Speaking of which, Operation Arrowhead adds a plethora of them, including unmanned aerial drones (for the commander that doesn't want to break a sweat in battle), backpacks for travelling, new weapons, vehicles, the Takistani forces and their 230 kilometre homeland to deploy in. For ARMA veterans, this new dynamic theatre of war will feel a lot like heaven, with the ability to create any modern conflict possible, thanks to the fantastic in-built mission editor.

As it tends to be with Bohemia Interactive's titles, there are still a heap or problems with the AI, and occasional collision detection issues which occasionally jar. During one paratrooper exercise we discovered our parachute wouldn't open after jumping from a considerable altitude. However, rather than liquifying on ground contact, our impervious trooper simply began to grind chest-first throughout the desert, while still alive! The engine itself is still ridiculously demanding too, with even modern PC rigs struggling.

There isn't any doubt that these issues will be sorted out by the community but the fact is that, out of the box, they shouldn't have to. Operation Arrowhead is best thought of as a new box of toys and nothing more. For fans it will be a godsend but for everyone else this update definitely won't change their minds. ●



"Do we have to fight again?"



To bail or not to bail, that is the question.



Roll over screen for annotations

PCGZine  
Verdict

As buggy as hell, but still the most realistic military sim out there

- Plenty of new content
- Charitably priced
- AI is still as dull as dishwater

74%





**Publisher:** LucasArts  
**Developer:** In-house  
**Heritage:** The Secret of Monkey Island: Special Edition  
**Link:** [www.lucasarts.com/games/monkeyisland2](http://www.lucasarts.com/games/monkeyisland2)  
**OUT NOW**

**System Requirements:**  
1.5 GHz CPU, 1Gb RAM,  
128Mb 3D card

# Monkey Island 2: Special Edition



Wrap yourself in lovely, warm nostalgia

Graphically intensive remakes tend to rub some gaming purists the wrong way, especially when dealing with a game which is as old as LeChuck's Revenge, but Monkey Island 2 manages not only to faithfully refresh the original game but also be approachable for anyone new to experience one of the greatest point-and-click adventures of all time.

For posterity's sake, the story features Guybrush Threepwood marooned on Scabb Island in his pursuit for the mighty Big Whoop

treasure, which takes the lucky pirate all over the Caribbean, where he'll solve puzzles, combine items and meet an array of crazy and memorable characters. It's these characters which absolutely steal the show, and the writing by Ron Gilbert and co still feels top drawer, even after 19 years.

The remake features beautiful new visuals, which transform the old pixels into a mix between an oil-painting and cartoon. It's a dramatic shift but one which doesn't rob the original of its flavour, and if you really don't like it, you

can always revert to the original look at a push of a button. The addition of concept art and Steam achievements means that even die-hard fans who own the 11-disc original, will enjoy this purchase – which is a steal at £6.99.

This remake is a must buy for anyone who enjoys Monkey Island, even a little bit. It isn't just the game itself but what has been added that makes this special edition something every fan will relish. It's also still one of the funniest videogames that's ever been written. A must buy. ●

It's still possible to play this adventure in its original glory.

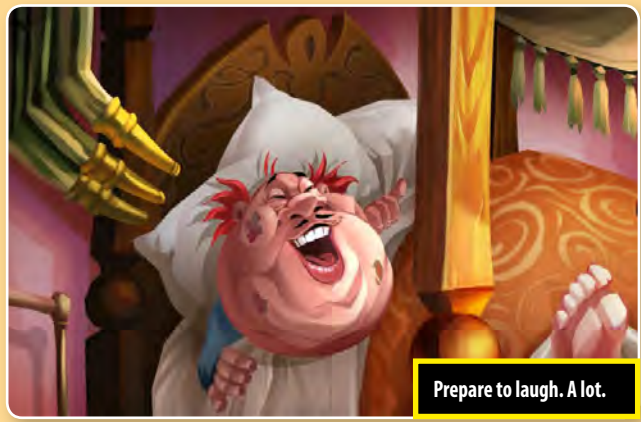


## DEVELOPER'S COMMENTARY

*Into the minds of the makers*

Commentaries can be a mixed bag, but Monkey Island 2's succeed in the most part. Activated whenever approaching a particular location, the soundbites (usually between one-two minutes each) are funny, insightful and occasionally off the wall. Ron Gilbert, Tim Schafer and Dave Grossman's insights are worth the entry fee alone.

Tim: Oh that voodoo guy, I forgot about him. Oh geez. Oh, LeChuck's asymmetrical walking was the hardest thing to get right of any walk cycle, I think still to this...



Prepare to laugh. A lot.



Largo is as much of a tool as you'll remember.

## PCGZine Verdict

Still the funniest adventure ever created, and worth any gamers' time

- 👍 Interesting commentary
- 👍 Great voice acting
- 👍 Gameplay still holds up

# 90%



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