

persian games

Number 1 - August 2013



Asemandez
Best Indie
MMO At
2013

asmandez II
| Carpet | Rot Gut
Shaban | Mitra
Garshasp

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Hello to all of you game lovers
The age of neglecting video games has gone. In fact, one of the biggest and most influential media in the world is this art/industry. Since, besides delivering the message, it gets you involved and influences you much more. Scattering of Iranian video games urged us to found the Persian Games magazine which is the result of our two years efforts. We will be publishing this magazine both in Persian and English, so that everyone in the world would have the opportunity to get familiar with Iranian video games. Our main goal is to focus on Iranian video games and analyze them professionally. In the next issues, you would get to know more about the

**Managing-Editor
Hamzeh Azad**

Hello and greetings to all your loved readers. I wish you enjoy your summer holidays.
The first issue of the Persian Games magazine aiming to analyze and support Iranian games is released this summer and we hope it to always continue. You may be surprised while reading our first issue. Your right! 29 Iranian games which have been released during the few past years up to December 2011 are analyzed in this issue. So, our first issue seems to be a reliable reference for those who are keen to get familiar with

**Editor-in-Chief
Aidin Noori**

When cinema was still a newfound phenomenon, many didn't name it even an art. They assumed that theater to be a more complete art than cinema and called cinema an industry. This seems to last an issue for ever and is being discussed in other fields. Now it's time to compare cinema and the newfound phenomenon, video games. Knowing that video games have a more tendency to industry or art not only isn't a controversial discussion, but also is so helpful for those foreigners who have passed the classical period of such phenomenon. It is helpful to approach the innovations and reaching thing hasn't been discovered so far.

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Special Thanks: Seyed Taha Rasuli

extent of Iranian video games. Besides, one of our main concerns is to make officials concern about the video games industry/art within the country. These games have such importance that the Secretary of the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution claims: "If video games are not more important than the nuclear power, they are not less important." It's also worth saying that in this issue, the game ratings are according to their style and genre. Besides, we've also tried to order the articles chronologically considering the games' release date. Wishing Iran a more successful country in the field of video games.

some Iranian games. Reading this magazine, you can find out the development rate of Iranian game makers who are working despite of all hardships. In our second issue, you would find other quite a different magazine with new sections. So, wait for the second release!
It is always hard to start something. Once you've started it, the difficulty decreases. So, help us by providing feedbacks, we would appreciate them.

But it seems to be a little early for us to raise the discussion on this issue within our country, Iran, in which game design is still young. These days we are at the point that other countries used to be 20-25 years ago. Making significant improvements and taking the floor in this art/industry requires solidarity. In order to progress and get to the top we should not just rely on game designers; the audience, the government, authors and criticizers also have equal shares. For this clear reason, we are about to take some steps for the game design development in our country by the Persian Games magazine.

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Review

Lotfali Khan Zand



Review

Nader's Blade



Quest of Persia

"Lotfali Khan Zand" was published in 1387 by "HonarhayePooya" studios, another title like the rest of Iranian titles which couldn't compete with foreign titles in its genre but could be mentioned as one of the good and standard Iranian games. The game's story tracks back to the 12th century (Iranian calendar), the time when Lotfali Khan Zand after conquering-Zarghan Castle, is suddenly attacked by Agha Mohammad Khan Ghajar and is forced to flee to Kerman. You have to fight Agha Mohammad Khan's legions and their allies which mostly take place in Kerman as Lotfali Khan Zand. The story isn't supposed to carry any new message; it only narrates a historical event. But this special type of narration could have had a more interesting aspect. The accent and speech of the narrator isn't very good and if it weren't for the text in the loading screen, the gamer would have surely lost track of the story considering the awful narration. The developer

group has used 'C4' engine as the base for graphics. The designers tried to use the whole or most potentials of this engine and in the process they have used the 7th generation effects too. The use of these effects has made the weak and slow animation of the characters not so noticeable. Except for couple of characters like Lotfali Khan Zand and the Level Bosses, for the rest of the characters a simple and basic animation has been chosen which doesn't give you a good feeling in battles. The artificial intelligence of the enemies is basic and on the scenes where you face 3 of them you wouldn't have much problem and with a couple of blows you can kill them easily. The sound system and the effects used aren't very good and better translation could have been used which are not few in Iran. But the music is completely consistent with the environment and is acceptable. Lotfali Khan Zand compared to the games released in 2008 is not in a

good position but we shouldn't forget that with all the restrictions Iranian games have, we can still name this next to titles who have a more professional view. **Amin Shirvani**



A year after releasing "Lotfali Khan'e Zand" Honarhaye Pooya Studios has released the third title of these series under the name of "Nader's Blade". The story continues from where the last title left off. At the beginning, the incidents of Nader Shah's time is shown including: Emersion of the Young Nader in Khorasan, Defeating the Abdali Afghans, The help of MohammadHasan Ghajar and Karim Khan in Esfahan to defeat the Afghans.



Next you see the old Nader attacking the Russian Fleet so he can force them out of north of Iran. Like the earlier version of Nader's Blade, the narration again faces problems. Although the pre-rendered movie scenes of the game are at an acceptable level, but they don't help the game very much. In the middle of a big combat, all of sudden a movie scene is played and stops the flow of the gameplay and obviously annoys the audience. Also we cannot overlook the jumping from one branch to another in the story either. The cycle between the four characters of the game hasn't come out very well and doesn't help in anyway other than making the story incommensurable. The graphics of the game is built on the basic C4 engine, the same engine you became familiar with in the previous version. There are a lot of negative and positive points in Nader's Blade; from the good texture design of the buildings which is a positive point, to the decrease

of frames whilst in a combat and executing blows. Unfortunately, combination blows are not as effective as before and only tire you in combat. After the Sound problems noted in the previous version, the developers decided to use a professional team like Glory Group in this part. Yet again we see problems in the sound aspect. The choice of voice for the characters is not very good and you definitely can't decide the voice you're hearing belongs to which character. The gameplay is nearly the same as you experienced in the previous version. The fighting and the riddle-solving have been parts which the developers tried improve but we should admit not much success has been found. After the release of every national game we are used to saying that comparing it with the foreign titles is not the right thing, but Nader's Blade was a game which took Iran's game design industry to whole new level in developing standard titles. **Amin Shirvani**

Developer: HonarhayePooya
Publisher: Pardis Game
Genre: Action, Third Person
Platform: PC

6

Developer: HonarhayePooya
Publisher: Pardis Game
Genre: Action, Third Person
Platform: PC

6.5

Review

Royintan

Royintan

AsrePahlevanan; second analysis
AsrePahlevanan series is one of the first games built in our country that reached a popularity never seen before. When the first edition was released, very few game designer and publisher in the country thought of an Iranian role play game. Because of the restrictions and the view over this genre of game and the smaller aim of this game than action and adventure games, "AsrePahlavanan" managed to get a lot of attention and shortly after the first edition, continue with the release of "Royintan". Keeping this in mind, analysis of "Royintan" with the current standards of game industries isn't the perfect act for firstly, the designers are using the technology of years ago to design and create the game. And secondly on the box art, "AsrePahlevanan v.15" is written so the developments aren't compared to the first edition. The environmental variety of the game compared to the original version had a lot of progress and covers a lot of tastes. Besides the environmental variety, the story has a lot of flexibility which makes this variety reasonable for the gamers. Also the magic and types of attack has developed comparing to the first edition and gives this option to the gamer to freely choose this fighting style.

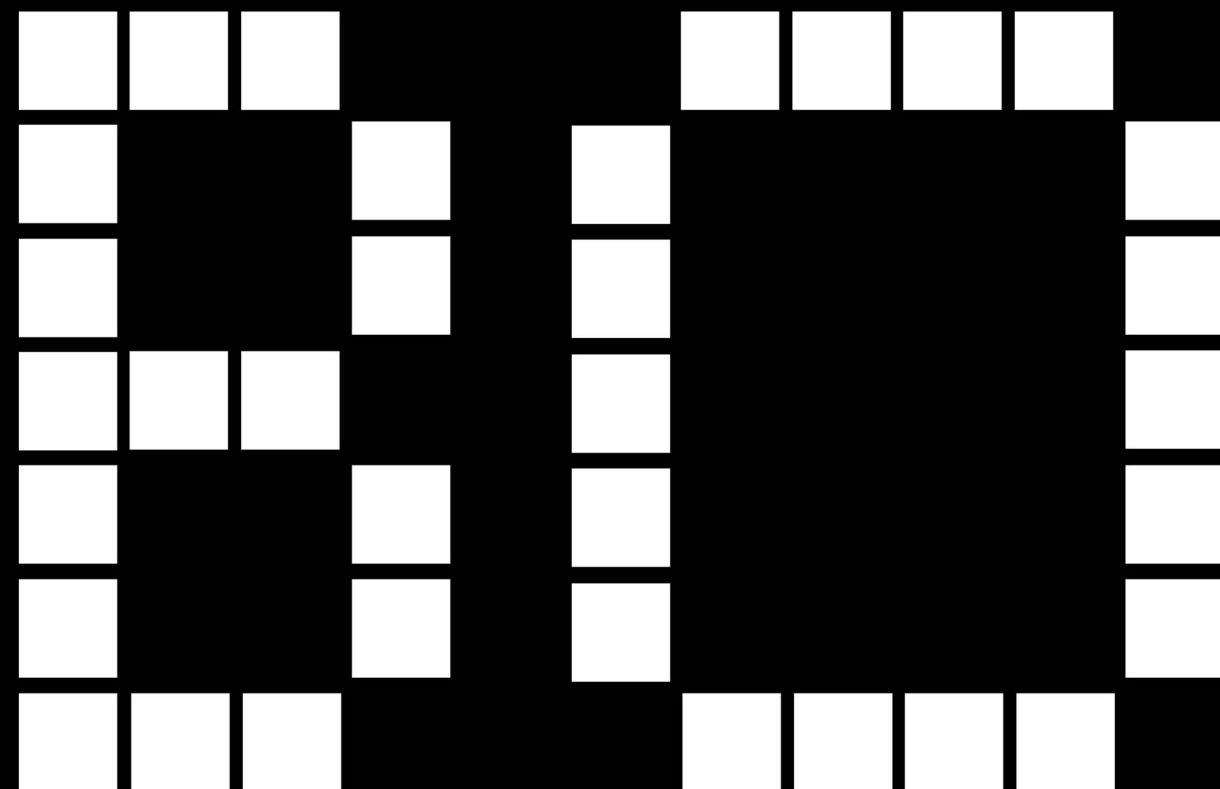


The packaging considering the wanes is better than the other games currently in the market and includes a manual booklet. Summing up, we can say, AsrePahlevanan: Royintan, reached an acceptable success comparing to other games produced here. But we should remember that comparing to the current standards, this game is far from successful.

Amir Golkhani

Review

BO



"Bo" is one the successful Iranian independent titles which has made a lot of success in the world too. This game has been designed by an able and young game-designer called Mahdi Bahrami. Like all other independent games, Bo isn't a story-based game. Bo doesn't have any background and has been left alone in a 2D world by the designer to find its own way in a weird world. Bo's job is to build stairs while destroying other stairs in order to find the "Rescue door". After you help Bo reach the door, you can continue to the next level. Game levels are few but in Mahdi Ebrahimi's personal website,

in the "Level Design" section (which Mahdi Daneshvar another one of the able designers is running) update section has been added. Bo's world is colorful and bright, and surely if you spend couple of minutes in it, you would be attached to it for hours. Reaching some of the doors requires solving difficult puzzles, and not everyone would be able to simply go through with building and destroying other stairs. For this reason, the designer has inserted a help bar which would show up if you're not able to complete the level after couple of minutes which would guide you with some pictures. It should be noted that the

design of the pictures shown is very nice. If after putting your thoughts into a level, you're unable to complete it, by pressing the "R" key the level would restart. Obviously, unlike the simple and childish design of Bo, it challenges only those who really use their brain potentials. **Amin Shirvani**

Developer: Mahdi Bahrami
Genre: Platformer, Adventure
Platform: PC



Developer: RAS Games

Publisher: Pardis Game

Genre: RPG

Platform: PC

7.5

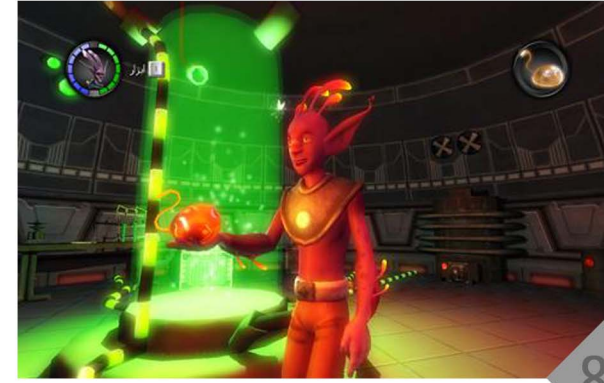
میترا

Review

Tag and Vee in Mithra Planet

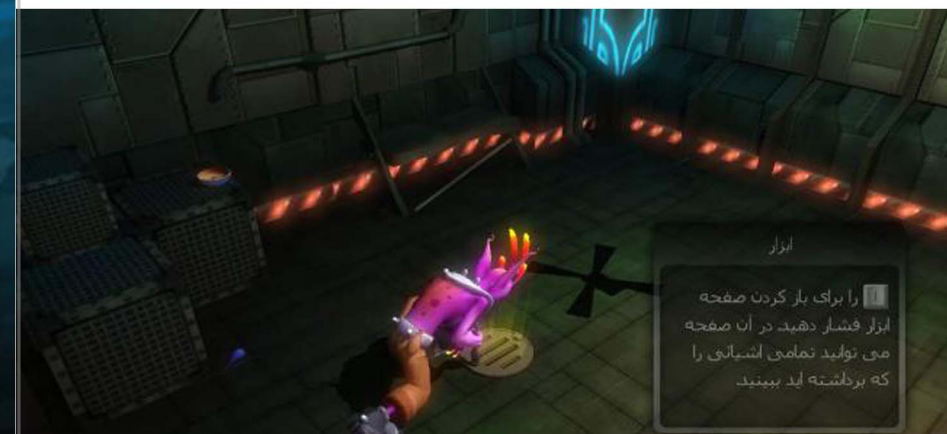
Tag and Vee in Mithra Planet is one of those names that whenever we are talking about good games, we'll consider it as one of our first choices. But it hasn't been very popular amongst people and unfortunately is one the low sales in the market. The game having good graphics qualities and great gameplay, and also its success with foreign press praise and good critics, it's not been getting much success here in Iran. One reason for that is that this game hasn't been marketed and advertised well, and also because it's one of the pioneers, it hasn't had press talk and hype. The thing that is promising about Tag and Vee is that this game, in action, is a great video game and that, proved its rightness. While Tag and Vee doesn't impress us by doing unexpectedly superb, but it is really enough when it must be and that is satisfying. This game uses a great fantasy story and in this aspect, did very well. In this fantasy little world, we have two lovely characters and then we have epic clichés.

That's enough for making progress throughout the game levels and solves its puzzles. But this storyline has not many details and if it were a little longer, it could get boring. Tag and Vee do a lot of adventures in Mithra and at very first minutes of game, the gamer will secure a relationship with these characters and rises up for their target. But then, the gameplay loses its tempo and gets monotonous. Nevertheless, good puzzles will not let the player gets bored and with variety it puts in the game, let the game live up to the end. Gameplay is straightforward, smooth and enjoyable and alongside the good looking graphics, gorgeous scenes and various colors make you feel more comfortable and let you play the game with joy. While great 3D graphics is not a real matter for these kinds of games, there are lots of great scenes with great graphics that it is impossible to imagine this game without it for me. They have used lots of colors for environmental design and the game has an okay lighting and that causes not to tire player eyes.



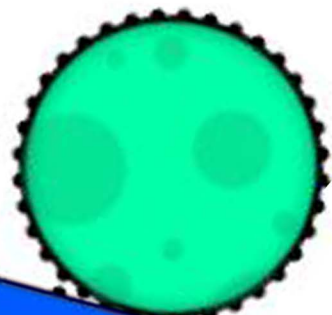
But there are also a few problems with it, such as expired textures and not enough details in character and environment design. There are also problems with shadows and lighting but this is not what you may stop playing because of. Like other Persian games, we see lots of bugs and glitches but that also doesn't foreclose you of playing it. Unfortunately, we cannot hear lots of sounds in the game and that is way below the standards. While game advertisers insist that by removing long dialogues make this game more comfortable for Persian gamers, but it is impossible to deny that this game is a little prosaic and silent. Luckily, sound actor for Vee is great enough to let all the problems fade. But in the other hand, we cannot expect much from game music too. We neither hear good music nor hear them at the right time. It looks like that the game directors had no plans for making the music have availed so we cannot hear the music whenever it has to be one.

In general, Tag and Vee is a really good, enjoyable game which is worth playing for its good gameplay, eyes appealing graphics and nice storyline. The players will not get dizzy and will not say bad things to game developers. This game is a good one among Persians and is mediocre among International but don't forget that is has not used all the potentials. There is time for getting better for this game. Tag and Vee is a short game that has to be played, otherwise you will continue your verisimilar misjudgment of Persian games.



Review

Everything Can Draw



Developer: Mahdi Bahrami

Genre: Adventure

Platform: PC

7.2

The numbers of Iranian freelance games which are built by a single person are not few. Fortunately the good games found amongst these are not few either, and although no budget is being given to these types of freelance games, we are still seeing that in comparison they are a few steps higher than other 3D Iranian games, a lot of which are given budget. Amongst Iranian game designers, MahdiBahrami is one of the young designers with a good taste. One of his titles "Everything Can Draw" which around 3 years ago went online for free. At first this title was supposed to advertise part of the gameplay built by MahdiBahrami. But shortly after its release on the net, it received positive feedback from gamers and this urged Mahdi to further develop his gameplay by adding more levels and

also by adding a "Level Editor" he tried to make his title a freelance game and compete in Tokyo's freelance game competition. Luckily this game got through to the final rounds but with all its capabilities it couldn't make a name amongst the top games. "Everything Can Draw" favors a simple but interesting gameplay and physic is the key to finish the levels and really, the only way to win is by moving the spheres towards the color walls which are in your way. If you're tired of the few levels of the game there's no place to worry. You can use the "level editor" and make your own levels and enjoy. **Amin Shirvani**



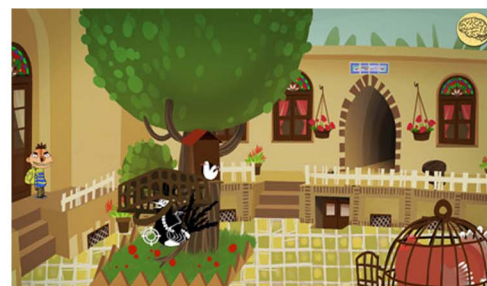
Review

SheytanatAlimardan Khan



Probably the youth of Iranian game design industry has forced many to see the game built as imitation of the western counterparts. Even the developers and the publishers their game is like the foreign example for the sake of sales, unaware of the fact that by this they lower the value of their own work and attract most of their audience in the hope of unique experience of foreign standards, the result of which is the innovations not being seen of even put to question. 'SheytanatAlimardan Khan' is one of those games that because of being similar to a popular game called Neighbours from Hell are put to such judgment. The well-known poet, IrajMirza, has written poems about people abuse the modern version of which is the mischievous character of Alimardan Khan. Alimardan is the naughty mischievous character whose mischief and harassments is the main mechanism of the gameplay. Considering this, the genre and type of the game, it is off justice to expect a deep story. The developers created the second half of the game differently from the first to give it variety, unaware that it disrupted the balance of the gameplay. This cause has put Alimardan's characterization under scrutiny because the story isn't long enough to understand both

sides of his character. To avoid this problem we can look at the characterization of other characters and also the mini-stories which expand the gameplay and the story. To add to this, the lack of narration with the help of animations and movie-scenes has further damaged the story part of the game. The game is a 'Point-and-Click' adventure where you have to put objects together to reach Alimardan's goal. In general, the game's puzzles are very good but often you see very easy puzzles which disrupt the balance of the game. Don't expect variety in the puzzles either because of the short gameplay you cannot expect special variety. And now the graphics of the game. For the type and art design of the game, 2D Hand Drawn has been used. As you know, the children are the majority of the audience and considering this; the choice of art design cannot be known as a problem but actually is appraisable. The design of objects and characters and the colorful design of the environment of gameplay in the section of point-and-click have made it different from the titles in this genre. Furthermore, the details of the surrounding and items which are used in the game have an equal level of graphics which creates a balance in the difficulty of finding items.



The title (SheytanatAlimardan Khan) might not be such a strong one but considering its age rating and the simple puzzles meant for low-aged audience is suitable. Also, if you forget the experience from Neighbours from Hell while you play this game, you could enjoy this Iranian version even more and might even find new innovations.

Behzad Sha'bani

Review

Gando



Gando

The fifth generations of gamers, those who have seen and played the fifth generation consoles definitely remember "Crash Bandicoot" with great memories on PlayStation, a 3D platform game which is one of the best titles. "Gando" is very like this legendary game so the Iranian designer calls it "Iranian Crash". The similarities of this game with its foreign counterpart isn't only its genre and uses animals as the characters and a short jawed gator named Gando instead of the fox called Crash. Gando lives in a zoo in the suburbs of Tehran with his friend Koala. But one day the zoo officials decide to move Koala to another place so Gando tries to reach his old friend. Meanwhile, a leatherwing steps forward to help him in reaching his friend. Other animals of the zoo with the leadership of Gorilla try to stop Gando. The mischief monkey, Mr. Wolf and the

sable also help Gorilla. The game environment is very fun and simple and considering the suitable age, it is acceptable. Also the characterization is helping the story. Platform games due to their variety in gameplay and their mechanism aren't usually boring for gamers. Gando likewise, uses the same flow and has created a fun game. Like already said, the game's audiences are kids, and the ESRA has rated 3+ for this game. But are 3 or 4 year-olds able to finish the levels? Unfortunately the hardness of the game is not stable and it hasn't been worked; right at the beginning you have to face the cruel and soulless environment, you have to fight 60 animals and to add more to this, with only four hits, you're sent right back to the start. After that you have to scare 5 of the zoo guards. This level is based on

stealth and the artificial intelligence of your enemies is very low and it makes the level even harder. Even if you scare 4 guards and you fail to scare the fifth then you have to start the level all over again. It would have been better if the hardness of the levels had some balance so it wouldn't put gamers off right at the start. But in the upcoming levels less action is used so such problems are reduced. The points you collect as you go along refill your health and some other mechanisms also exist which give a variety to the game. The colorful screen of the game makes a good first impression and alongside it, the design of the characters, the zoo animals and other visual aspects are done very well. Unfortunately the technical graphic aspect of the game is weak. Also many graphical bugs are seen in the game.

Developer: 3D Pasargad
Publisher: Loh-e ZarrinNikan
Genre: Platform/ Multi-genre
Platform: PC

6.5

Another notable point is the lack of a standard loading screen; after the demo the screen freezes as if the system is not responding but all of sudden, after 20 seconds the level starts! Another point is the problem of output on low systems. One of the strong points of the game is the sound mix of the game with thanks to the professional mix group. The translation group of the game has done their work brilliantly.

Although on the sound FX part, the audio group could have used the environment better to further show off their sound FX abilities.

Gando is a good game and no more. If the level difficulty and the physics of the game were better we could have proudly said: Gando is the Iranian rival of Crash, but it isn't so. **Behzad Sha'bani**



Review

Garshasp: Serif's Mace

Garshasp

Garshasp: Serif's Mace is one of those games that you cannot recognize as a freelance product. So I cannot say this game has a particular thing and it's worth playing just because of that. I think, Garshasp is an adaptation of both God of War series and Hakim Ferdowsi's epic "Shahnameh" at both technical and artistic aspects and you have to decide whether it is a dense one or not. Perhaps the only seat that could be criticized independently is graphics. It must be! Well, at the time game was released into domestic and international market a few years earlier, it wasn't so much of a graphic-kind-of-a game. Now, that we passed years from those days, it's even worse. But, somehow we need to reconsider our behavior toward this matter. Why? First of all, because the developers had built the engine themselves, it worked at the time. Secondly, it is pretty good artistic self. Somehow all the artworks and concept arts talk to you.



For that we can only praise the lead artist Soheil Danesh-Eshraghi who is a real artist with no doubt. More positively, developers evolved these artworks and concepts into the action and there is not a single moment you would think that this artwork is something irrelevant. Thirdly is the game cinematic and cut-scenes. While they are few in numbers and don't appear frequently, they carry the right amount of information and has good low-key direction. At more technical traits, it has two basic graphical problems. I say, there are a lot of problems but, if it wasn't for these two, this game could be more successful.



First, there are no graphical filters or post processing techniques available so the game's graphics are simple and non-detailed, which is way behind the generation. Second, the game was not polished and has so many bugs and glitches.

Now that we have reviewed the only distinct feature of this game, it's time to go to adapted parts. Level design is not good enough to make it memorable and is basically made of stereotypes of the genre. Luckily, there are boss fights among these clichés. Garshasp must be the first Persian game that has good-looking, tight-challenging boss fights. The game is leaning on GoW series where it is about game design and action or puzzles. You realize this soon after starting the game and you hope that it gets better as you seek more time, but the game sticks to its roots and always tries to be good and fun, just like GoW. Now I can tell you that it has been GoWish enough to entertain you about 5 - 6 hours but not enough to make you praise its own sake and its developers. Garshasp has been made by a small developing team. They made a good game based on an epic by replaying levels from other successful games. With that in mind, you will see lots of similarities between this game and other hack and slash games of the time.

As long as the action is concerned, the game will satisfy you in its own way. By turning on and off the action engine, the developers have initiated some velocity for the game that helps you stay on it and play for a longer time. The gamer, however, will enjoy this tempo and will keep playing. Unfortunately, on resting times the game is still silent and doesn't fill you with story, so that you can be bored. You expect it to be storytelling at those times, and even with narrator feature, it's not a storyteller kind of game. So, we can say that story sucks.

By the way, you may stay on it to the end. At the end, we have boss fight as common but lack of personality for the villain and even for the hero, also lack of details about the story and unexpected times in the game you cannot follow the terms of fighting with the enemy. We do have conclusion for the untold story but we couldn't enjoy the fight at all. For that, even hopeful gamers may say that the game wasn't quite that thing that they had expected and while we know this is a good game, we find it less than what it is at the end. **Saeed Zaferani**

Developer: Dead Mage

Publisher: Lobe Zarrin Nikan

Genre: Action, Third Person

Platform: PC

6

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Review

MirMahna

There was this time that Iranian game producers thought they could compete with foreign AAA games without experience, knowledge and budget, the weak games which one after another were produced and resulted in failure, where the result of those thoughts. The problem was that the designers, under the influence of the sales of games like Call of Duty (both in Iran and foreign countries), chose the first-person shooter genre as a start. Actually one of the most difficult genres in game design which requires a lot of knowledge is the FPS (first-person shooter). But anyhow, there were games which were a little bit higher than other games and reached more success. One of these games is "MirMahna", which compared to many Iranian games before and after itself is more standard.



MirMahna has an interesting story. Under the ruling of Karim Khan, foreigners take over parts of the Khark islands and with illegal trade and looting, give the people of the area a hard time. In these times, a person named MirMahna, the son of Mir-Naser Vali (who was a pirate for reasons not mentioned in the game) decides to gather a group of young southerners and stand against the foreigners. On the other hand, you take the role of a young person in the south whose sister is kidnapped by the foreigners and has to join MirMahna's crusade. I should mention that all of the storyline isn't bound to this paragraph but because of the restrictions of words for the writer it has to suffice. Compared to other Iranian games, characterization is good and for each of them quite a good background is provided. And with the help of motion catcher system we experience good animations for each of them. Although MirMahna's gameplay has a lot of problems, but compared to its Iranian counterparts has a huge leap.

The use of better artificial intelligence, intelligent enemy tracking, search for fastest combat route, are new systems that Iranian gamers were eager for. Also there is a so-so taking cover system in the gameplay designed by Mr. Aghajani, which gives a more professional gaming experience.

Throughout the game you see 7 linear levels each of which take place in different areas; areas like mountains, the Indian Company Headquarters, Moslestine Castle, and four other attractive areas. The use of these areas not only gives more variety to the game but also shows the historical places to the audience. Besides the main combats (which are done with pistols, knives and these sorts of weapons) there are some arcade mini-games which was interesting (at least for me). These mini-games are no more than 2 and are summed up to boat riding and shooting foreigners' boats with balls. It should be noted that none of these parts are built well but for the first time they are acceptable.



Gameplay and sound FX are the two weak points of MirMahna which could have improved if spent more time on in order to bring the game nearer to the standards. But on the art design and levels we should admit that MirMahna has done a good job and in many occasions we see beautiful designs of the historical buildings but the problem is the not so good textures accompanied by the AA problems damage the technical graphics of the game. Facial design and the variety of characters' animations in game are other nerve wrecking problems which you have to bare in the short few-hour gameplay of MirMahna.

The Sound FX from a lot of perspectives is better than the graphics but if we are to be honest both of them are to no good. The Sound FX is mostly done with music and instruments of the southerners which is good point but the lack of coordination between the music and the beat of the gameplay damages both parts.

Last words:

In the end we should say, as the first decent Iranian game in the genre of FPS and more importantly the first national game (a title I never understood) MirMahna is a beautiful and attractive game but also with a lot of problems none which should stop you from trying this game at least once.

Shayan Ziaie

Developer:
Espris Pooyanama

Publisher: Espris Pooyanama

Genre: Action, FPS

Platform: PC

7.5

Review

Mountaineer

Developer: Niv Entertainment

Publisher: HI-VU
Genre: Platformer, 2D

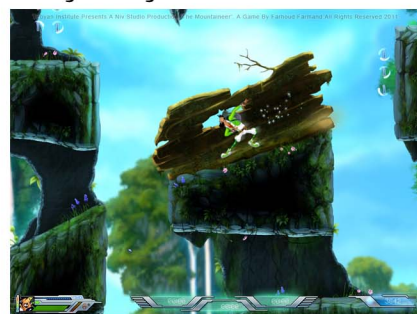
Platform: PC

6.5



Mountaineer (Kooonavard) is one of the finest Persian games which by the time of its release into domestic market, changed the critics' minds and raised their hope upon this probability that from now on we can see more from Iranian games. So we have higher expectations from it. There is no doubt in the matter that Mountaineer was the very first game that followed all the standards in various aspects. This, as a pleasant fact, hashacked this game in audiences' minds. Not because the game might be one of the best games of all time or even its own period, but because when you hear its name

among the others, you feel good about it. Now we have to see what features this game has. Mountaineer, as I said before, is the first Persian game following the standards. This game has worked professionally and not only on paper but also in action. The game has right level design and gameplay as a pioneer. One of few Persian games that when shows an item or option, follows a purpose. And most likely the first Persian game that teaches ways of winning before taking the player into action with challenge. We can name it as the first Persian game which has a good and useful inventory too. The first Persian game whose storyline is more than two lines tops and its chapters are not boring and uncomfortable. So, when we reach Mountaineer, we do feel -for once- that this a real entertaining video game.



When I said this game knows its genre and follows standards, I wasn't joking. In mountaineer, we do not only perform 2D platform for fun but also making it work as a simple simulator. We see a lot of professional details about the sport and a few simulation acts too. Game levels, stick to each other and player can play the game non-stop. Everything is neat so far but, there are problems in ways leading to that goal. The game is very pixelated and hard as hell. That's why you have to become a great mountaineer, for a jump with a small mistake could finish you off. And for doing that you have to face many other problems. So, I can easily say that you have to have faith in God; otherwise, these errors and problems will punish you in a way you could imagine only in Medieval. Unfortunately, all the brightness of this game can be ruined by darkness, problems which can forbid you

of playing Mountaineer. These are mostly technical difficulties we are talking about but there are a lot of them in the game.

I can say and you will confess that bugs, glitches and other frustrating stuff, assassinated the Mountaineer from top and all the game makers efforts. First of all, you can't save the game in the middle of a level. You have to wait till the end of the chapter you are trying to pass so you can save the game. By keeping that in mind, you might be interested to hear more about other problems.

Many times, you will find the game freezing when it is trying to run a simple dynamic animation. It may stop working when trying to play a cinematic cutscene and shove you to your desktop area. You will be forced to play third stage over and over again just to hope if it works out. Bugs are so common in this game; much simpler things can make you cry though. For example; it is possible that one of the goats stick in the air with its horns, and when that happens, nothing would happen afterwards. Now, that you are not able to save the game, you have to face a bigger problem and that would be: Time! When that happens, you have to restart the game from the last save, which is most likely before starting this level, and then you have to play all the way you had come again and just hope that it doesn't happen this time! What if it happens? I just uninstalled the game (I was thinking about killing myself at one point!).



Now you may agree that, even right-standard-solid gameplay, exciting scenario, cute-appealing graphics and great sound and music aren't worth a penny when you have to experience all that problems. **Saeed Zaferani**

Review

Entegham 2



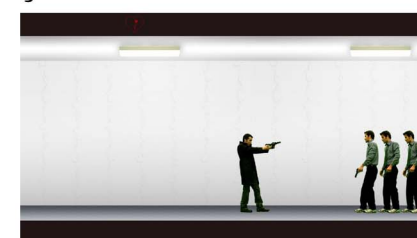
It happened a lot to myself, sitting around with friends, talking about things like cinema, music or even computer games and our affection towards it would urge us to make those ideas in our own mind come true. When I played "Entegham 2" I felt such a feeling flow inside me, and the designers built their game with such purpose! So if we are to look at Entegham 2 from this angle, when we should say the designers have done a magnificent job and we'll understand their goal. But because we shouldn't look at everything from an emotional aspect, I'll stop myself and not name it magnificent. On the other hand, logic is very cruel with powerful jaws which tear apart. So if you see my logic out of control, don't blame it on me.



"Entegham" built by "Padideh Studios" is an action in the dead genre of "Interactive Movie". The story was about Yashar and Maziyar and their troubles with the mob. One of the stories positive aspects is the existence of grey characters like Maziyar and Yashar, which created



togetherness. In Entegham 2 the story continues. Yashar is wounded and Maziyar needs his help to free his son from the mob. The story is straight forward and doesn't have too many ups and downs. If we are to be logical and compare it with its foreign counterparts like "Mad Dog Mockery", Entegham doesn't have anything to say, but it's best to keep logic tied. Neither Entegham 2's script is written by professional writers, nor are its actors professional. They are game lovers like us!



Entegham 2 has been casted with HD cameras and the video quality is much higher than the first title. Besides, a really good animation of hands and gun has been added to the border of the screen which gives a good first person feeling to the game. One of this game's problems is the level of difficulty. It is so hard that it becomes annoying. Because it has been shot with camera on hand, inconvenient vibrations are seen. Being on purpose or not, these vibrations make aiming even harder. You have a small aim and at the right time you have to place it on the enemy so its red color becomes white and then shoot under the second. You have to coordinate the vibes with time and your sight, and shoot at the enemy at the right moment, a small mistake ruins everything!



The auto-save system also adds to the problem. You have barely managed to kill 7 to 8 enemies and the ninth sends you 9 enemies earlier. This sometimes happens so often that you feel pity for yourself. There are three types of guns, revolver, shotgun, Uzi. Because most of the enemies are killed with a single shot, there is no difference between the guns and their powers. At the ending levels, the game type changes to 2D action platform. The background is pre-rendered but the people are the same from the game. This part could have added a good variety to the game if the mechanisms and the standards were paid attention to. Mechanisms like jumping or crouching haven't been added and you only move forward, shoot and get shot. At the end of the level you see a level boss requires aiming which is invisible and certainly hasn't been one of the game's mechanisms, and the invisibility of the pillar which you have to hide behind it is due to its lack of facilities. The ending is in a way that we can expect another episode from Padideh Studios. We hope that the problems of their game would be resolved and see their third game with better options so the power of jaws of logic wouldn't match them anymore. **Reza Gharaloo**

Developer: Padideh

Publisher: Loh Zarrin Nikan

Genre: FPS, Interactive Movie

Platform: PC

6

Review

Thermobox



Subtitle: Thermobox was one of the first Iranian games for iOS platform which shined brightly. In the past, as a critic, I always suggested game designers of this land to focus partly on small and mobile games. Basically a game industry or more generally the software industry wouldn't get very far without running small ideas first. When we cannot use the restrictions of mobile platform, we obviously cannot use the vast potentials of a bigger platform. But back then, everyone was thinking of big and exclusive games, then for the first time we were observing a good, well-built Iranian mobile game called 'Thermobox'. The game was free on App Store and only supported iPhone. I got the game for my iPad and started playing with lower quality. I have to admit, Thermobox was the first Iranian mobile game that I enjoyed playing. The developers of the being Zana Games Studios choose the right path. The developer team understood that a mobile platform required what kind of knowledge to build a game. Thermobox like most other common mobile games, have a special idea that forms your goal in the game.



In this game which is built in the Puzzle genre, you must guide a hot ball into a frozen box by changing the path.



Different obstacles and platforms make your job harder. The game has 150 levels which for a mobile game is extraordinary. The levels gradually get harder and with introducing new mechanism as you go along, they keep the variety of the game till the end. The basic of the game is that you can delete parts of the platforms and use them to change the status of the poles and other platforms. For example, with giving angle to a platform, the hot ball slips down. Reaching higher levels, the puzzles get more complicated and require more work to finish them. The designers used different tools to give variety to the game. Tools like dynamite, mine, oxygen capsule, bendable iron, bouncing hot ball and other things each giving a special variety to the gameplay. To finish the game, each of these tools should be used correctly, although, the developers have designed some of the levels in a way that you have different options for the completing it.

In the technical field, Thermobox is close to reality when it comes to physics. It means that working with platforms is a real and logical experience. But on the field of visual design this game isn't at the level it should be, although we shouldn't expect much higher from the developers as this is their first experience in mobile games and they surely focused on other things. The sound effects are normal and it seems like archived sounds have been used. In the end, considering this the first professional experience of Iranian game designers in the field of mobile games markets such as App Store, we should say that Thermobox is an interesting game with the enough requirements of a mobile game.



150 levels, variety in gameplay and a quite new idea makes Thermobox an acceptable and standard game compared to the games in its genre. If you have an iPhone or iPad, I suggest you try this game and also take a look at Zana Games Studio's website. This studio is currently releasing some new games which real improvements can be seen in them.

Ali Fakher

Review

In Between



The newly up and running game industry of Iran has a lot of path to cover to reach the top. A lot of people believe it should start with simple and independent titles and designing big and costly games in these conditions is not to its benefit. There's no place to debate on this within this article but the designer of "In between" (Team Snore) has designed a game 2D platform game with lots of developments compared to its Iranian and foreign counterpart and could be a reason to why we should start with small projects when move to bigger ones.

Certainly we shouldn't expect a long story like Alan Wake's from this type of game. Usually games like this have a linear storyline and not much characterization is done. "In Between" is about a nightmare like night which traps a boy named Jack. While he's asleep the nightmare steals his pillow and turns Jack's life around for a night. Jack's only goal is to return his pillow to his bed. Jack is an untidy but loveable kid. His way of dressing and his untidiness gives a good humor to the game. The game has other visual aspects too which help clearly show Jack's few personalities.



The nightmare, as we expect, has a scary face and body. And also in the higher levels you get to know Mr. Nightmare's friends and Jack's new enemies which also have a brilliant design. the game is a basic 2D platform game and doesn't have action mechanisms and you only have to move the obstacles to get from point A to point B. you should keep in mind point C and point D too,

because In Between presents something different. Although you only control one person, that is Jack, but at the same time he moves in two dimensions. You should consider the obstacles in both maps and move according to them. This type of obstacles and the fact that two screens exist makes the job harder. Holding the L-Shift key in one screen, Jack is able to move through the obstacles which are another one of the game's innovations in the gameplay which makes thinking in routing increase.



One of the positive features of successful titles in this genre is the increase of items along the path of completion. In Between also benefits from this. For example friends of Mr. Nightmare who are moving obstacles or foggy areas which make your movement difficult. The game includes five chapters each having around 15 levels and the time needed to finish each chapter makes sure the game isn't monotony. The level of difficult is also suitable for this genre and its standards.

The graphic and game-physic is another one of the perfect aspects of the game. You can easily setup this game on your PC and enjoy. The design of the surrounding is also done perfectly. The game uses 5 themes for the five chapters of the game all of which have a heavy atmosphere but it creates an interesting paradox with the humorous characters. Unfortunately the design of the backgrounds isn't done very well and isn't suitable for the game environment. The physic of the game is in balance with the flow of the game and doesn't stop your progress.

We should also criticize the background. Although it makes a buffer between the two screens but because of its not so good design, it doesn't encourage too much. The music is composed of 5 tracks each for one chapter of the game. Unfortunately the music is composed of short notes and doesn't have too much variety and if you play the game without these notes you wouldn't feel much difference. Jack's dying sound when he drops from platforms, the scary sound of Mr. Nightmare, the sound of the narrator, plus the heavy and scary theme (considering the age rating) is also of the positive features of the sound FX.

All in all, In Between is a very good game which uses new innovations and its blend with the 2D platform genre shows that the steps of game development should be taken one by one.

Behzad Sha'bani



Developer: Team Snore

Genre: Platformer, 2D

Platform: PC

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Developer: Zana Games
Genre: Puzzle
Platform: iOS

7

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Review

Wartime 2



The analysis of a "Mod" takes a lot of precision. The game's innovations and new details should be analyzed, on the other hand, the basis should not change and the game should always be related to its original one. Iranian mod "the wartime" which is known as one of the best Crysis-mods, is designed by the "Epidemic" studio. This studio was found by the Moavi brothers (Mobin and Masoud-Moavi) and is gathering more employees and is about to progress. But, on the time of the Wartime's release, it was just these two brothers that were working on this project. The story of Wartime takes place before the Warhead's incidents, when the sergeant Psycho returns to the island to fight with the Korean's left and clear the island of them. Of course, the Korean's are not your only enemy, the Robots and aliens are also in the game. The storyline of the game, despite of being simple has a fast rhythm. However, this fast rhythm doesn't make us neglect the different significant or small weaknesses in the storyline. Totally, the storyline is a tool for joining the different parts of the game together and much attention is not paid on it during the game. The Wartime's gameplay is going to be discussed after its storyline.

Developer: Epidemic
 Publisher: Epidemic
 Genre: Action, FPS
 Platform: PC

7.9



The gameplay is a mixture of mechanics, the main secret atmosphere and the ability to slow down the time. By the addition of new features to the Psycho's armor by the Epidemic team, besides the previous abilities, he can also slow down the time and attack the enemies during this time. The slowing down feature, considering the addition of more detonating objects, not only doesn't damage the gameplay, but also makes the explosion scenes more attractive and beautiful. The interesting thing about this feature is its integration with the two other abilities of the Nano armor. For instance, you can jump down a building and then slow down the time when you're still on the air and shoot the enemy meanwhile.



Fortunately, the game's physics has also helped the gameplay and makes the Psycho's and his enemy's movements seem more natural, like the original versions. It should also be mentioned that the game has some bugs in its gameplay, as in delays while loading the objects, but these bugs are not that serious that damage the gameplay. The other thing to mention is the imbalance of the artificial intelligence. The game's artificial intelligence in the easy game levels works extremely weak and ridiculous. But in the harder game levels (Delta) it works surprisingly powerful and intelligent.



Besides, its Xbox controller support is one of the remarkable features that make this game distinctive among the other Iranian ones. Besides the gameplay, the game's graphic, despite of being loaned from its original version, has an excellent design.



It seems that the Moavi brothers are familiar with the Cry engine features well enough, and have become experienced designing the landscapes and different places. There are many points worth saying about the game's music and sound. The music of the game is loaned from the Killzone 2, and concerning the Killzone, we can't make any critics about the music. Unfortunately, the dynamic system of the music doesn't seem to be efficient enough; in some scene that you are playing secretly, it is still having high rhythm. This is sometimes that annoying that makes the player mute the music. The sounds are also borrowed from the original version of Warhead and sometimes have some inconsistencies. Totally, we can claim that much attention has not been paid on the sounds and music and they've been added just in order not to have free spaces. In conclusion, I believe that the Moavi brothers, have done a significant thing by designing Wartime and using Cry engine and were able to change the standards of game designing in Iran. It should also be mentioned that Wartime 2 is being developed along with the development of the Epidemic team and adding new members to this team. **Amir Golkhani**

Review

Earth Salvation - Secret of the dragon



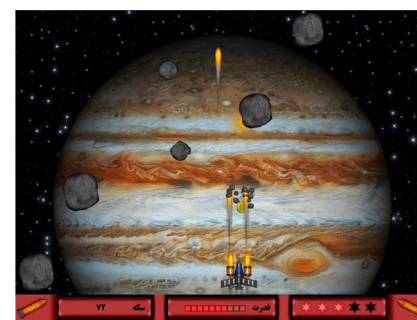
This game is a 2D shooter game in the genre of 'Space Invaders' including four levels with different gameplay. The game's story, which is only understandable from pre-level texts, starts when a satellite is stolen by aliens. These creatures scatter all over the earth in search of resources, establish bases and destroy anyone who stands in their way. Our mission is to cleanse earth from these creatures and free the conquered areas. In the first level, you are in an important part of the city and with the use of three machines you have to destroy every alien. In the next level you go to the solar system and your mission is to kill the aliens and keep going until you have secured earth from those filthy creatures. In every level (except level one) collecting stars would boost your shot and upgrade its power and damage. Killing enemies would drop coins, and collecting every 50 point coin gives 1 unit and every 100 point coin 2 units to your coins. Before starting the game, it's best to read the short manual, because you don't have any in-game help and you would get confused. One of the game problems (which would probably put you off for a couple of days) is the missing of checkpoints! If you reach the end of a level and confront an enemy of hit a rock, you have to start the level from the start point which is really annoying. In my opinion the simplest enemies are the level bosses! Because with a couple of rockets and shots you can easily destroy them and they aren't dangerous like tilted ships and fire cannons against which you need fast reaction to save yourself. You hear a different music in every level but it doesn't give you any special excitement and not much work has been done on this field. The sound effects are better than the game music; every enemy and bullet has its own sound, and as the enemies swap, so does the sounds and it doesn't repeat. The programming is done by Visual Studio 2008. The language of the programming is C#. XNA library is used and the support programs are 3DSMax, Paint.net... **Aidin Noori**

The first series of Garshasp was released in 1389, and impressed a lot of people. Although it had a lot of problems but it was acceptable at the time. Garshasp: Secret of the Dragon is an expansion pack which has been released for some time now. So we shouldn't expect too much change in the game.

(Spoiler Alert)
 Garshasp: Secret of the dragon is an introduction to the main title and as you can see, the story tells of incidents before Serit's Mace. If you remember in Serit's Mace you had to retrieve your treasure (Serit's Mace) from the demons and free Sistan from the evil forces. In Garshasp: Secret of the dragon we see how Serit's Mace is acquired by Torag's Family. Garshasp and his brother (Orokhash) set off to a jungle to find their inheritance but notice that something is stopping the demons from claiming it. Also if you remember the ending of Serit's Mace, after Garshasp's battle with Hitasp, Garshasp rides a dragon which you meet for the first time and sets off to destiny. It might have been a mystery for you as well as to how Garshasp is so good with the dragon. You find the answer in Secret of the Dragon. Dragon is the thing stopping the demons from claiming the Mace. This is the biggest strong point of the game. The next problem in the story part of the game is the unfinished characterization. The game revolves around a single character, the only introduced characters are Garshasp, his brother, Aghore (a demon Hitasp set to find the mace) which in its best situation we would be unhappy about the number of characters. Also, notes are found along the way, which are written by a third person who also was after the mace and gives you valuable information.

Actions of Garshasp: Secret of the Dragon are much simple than other games in this genre like God of War or Castlevania because you don't need much thinking to solve the riddles. Furthermore, the simple surrounding with few details makes finding the path easier. Although difficulty in finding the path

Developer: Seyed Saeed Hosseini
 Genre: Defender
 Platform: PC



7



isn't one of the standards of this genre but you cannot find any of it in Secret of the Dragon. But in the field of action it has a joyful gameplay. You can probably name this well-built action the main motive for finishing the game, although it has some problems. Your only weapon is a sword! The interesting fact is Garshasp fights the dragon with this very sword and with the same sword kills hundreds of demons. So you can say the action doesn't have much variety, and the fact that you don't fight with the level boss also adds to this lack of variety in its action. Although the different levels of power of the demons are clearly visible but the easiness and the short length of the game disrupts the balance of the power with the enemies. Maybe the fact that it's an expansion could be good excuse for the short length of the gameplay but we cannot overlook the other problems in this aspect. The game is built with In-House Graphics engine with the help of PhysX, OGRE 3D and Open AL.



With the current situation of the graphics designing in the country we shouldn't expect perfect graphics. The lights in the game are at a reasonable level and the development in this section is clearly visible. In the sound FX part the game isn't very powerful whereas using the environment sound system we could have seen better FX. The music section is good and the classic Iranian legendary music gives you motive to continue. In the end, Garshasp being a well-known game, it has high potentials in its genre so we hope that the developers see to the problems of the last series and make Garshasp a great game.

Behzad Sha'bani

Developer: Dead Mage
 Publisher: Lohe Zarrin Nikan
 Genre: Action, Third Person
 Platform: PC

6/5

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WAR TIME



Review

Ghatl Dar Koochehaye Tehran

Detectives, men with chapeau hats and overcoats look for clues of murder in the alleys. Yes, 'Ghatl Dar Koochehaye Tehran' pictures such detectives and adventures. This time, small kids are involved in a cruel serial killer's killings. The serial murder of these kids in a cruel way has startled the people. The lower city areas are frightened by this killer and the Old Tehran newspapers each try to blame the government or the rival party, are in despair. The head of gendarme, colonel Nasiri appoints one of his best detectives to the case, detective Afshar. Here's where a clueless case finds footprints of politics and horror...



Most of adventures games which have a detective theme have a similar storyline to this game. A murder happens and a professional detective is appointed. Yet still this idea hasn't lost its attractiveness and attracts the audience into a point-and-click adventure. Surprisingly, the story is straightforward. Shows the violence it should and goes further than the usual schemas. In simple words, the story isn't touchy and pictures the kind of person you're trying to track down. From this aspect, the game is successful because other adventure games don't use such precision and make do with short plots. But we still can't overlook the weakness in characterization and the creation of simple one-dimensional characters. The main character, Detective Afshar, is a faithful detective who seeks the truth, and it doesn't go any further than this which is bad. If we move from the story to gameplay, we can see better points about this title. Like the main schema of this theme, in each level you have to search the environment and find clues which might help your case and talk to other characters. Although, the dialogues with other characters are at a lower level than other adventure games and serve no purpose but the continuum of the game.

The puzzles take a sizeable proportion of the gameplay, and the developer is half way to making a good job out of it. 'Ghatl Dar Koochehaye Tehran' has average puzzles and no special point could be taken out of them, most of which are seen in other adventures. But for an Iranian developer, these puzzles are good enough and from the audience point of view it might not be a weakness. The design of these puzzles is kind of odd and they don't get the audience involved as expected. For example, playing tic-tac-toe with a janitor isn't normal for a detective, is it? The WinterMute graphics engine seems suitable for adventure games. 'Ghatl Dar Koochehaye Tehran' uses this engine to create an environment for the audience as expected. As far as the story goes, a variety of environments have been designed for it.



A range of environments from offices to historical sites have been used, and if you were concerned with this aspect, you shouldn't. But the characters' designs have been done as good as the environment. Starting from detective Afshar, there is no special feature or attractiveness about him. An interesting point is that in the cut scenes seen (which are a great part of 'Ghatl Dar Koochehaye Tehran') we see an old man with white beard which shows a better person, and in the game we see a different Detective Afshar. Basically, the Detective Afshar we see in the cut scenes is way different than the Detective Afshar we control in the game. It was best if more work was done on the design of characters and the movement animations so we could have witnessed a better graphical product, but having these problems, the graphics is still acceptable and could be considered one of the positive points of the game. The last part and the winning ticket of 'Ghatl Dar Koochehaye Tehran' is the sound FX and the music. The music is mostly from Iranian tunes and gives a good rhythm to the game. But we could problem the number of music tracks. The number is very few and the tracks quickly repeat.



When the name of a known dubber such as Mr. Bahram Zand is written on the cover, we could guess that the sound effects of 'Ghatl Dar Koochehaye Tehran' would be fit for any taste. The dubbing of the main character, Detective Afshar that is, was done by Mr. Bahram Zand who truly fits this character. The dubbing of other characters have also been dubbed very well so you will surely be satisfied with this aspect. 'Ghatl Dar Koochehaye Tehran' aside from its problems, is a title with new experience in this this genre in Iran, and with its acceptable graphics, professional sound effects, we can see a game far clichés delivered to the fans of adventure games. **Ghasem Najjari**

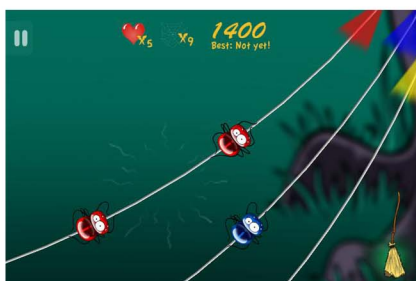
Developer: ResanaShokoohKavir
Publisher: Asre Bazi
Genre: Adventure, Point-and-click
Platform: PC

6.5

Review

Spider Way

With the hot market of smartphones, a lot of games and apps are being released for them. In these markets too have we seen the release of Iranian games too most of which are developed by independent designers. But it has been sometimes now that Tango Games studios have started to publish high quality games and apps for smartphones. Luckily this team hasn't bounded itself to games for android and its titles can be easily run on iPhone and iPods.



The newest title of this team that has been released for android and iOS is called Spider Way.

The game starts where some spiders are invited to a party but a couple of evil spiders appear and stop them from going to the party. Now you have to help the spiders reach the party with regard to the webs in the path. In each level there are 3 webs, each of them are marked by red, yellow and blue color. The spiders that appear on the screen are marked by those colors and you have to move them according to the color of the webs. The moving of spiders are quite simple at the start of the levels and only using the touch features of the phone, the place of the spider is shown.



As you pass the first levels you reach harder challenges. The speed of spiders you have to guide increases and harder enemies appear in your path and to kill them you have to hit them more. The enemies are not too hard but in higher levels when their number increases, getting rid of them becomes time consuming. Throughout the game you can acquire items which you can use to kill enemies or to speed up the operation of guiding spiders. One these items are the bomb, which you can use when the number of enemies has increased, and with it you can destroy all of them. The other useful item is the color brush. When you use this item the destination of all 3 woven webs become the same and after that you can calmly guide the spiders to any of the webs you like. The flow of the gameplay as already said is designed suitable for the smartphones, and the gamer doesn't get tired throughout the 50 designed levels. The music and sound FX has a good harmony with those colors and you can clearly feel conveys the humor and extravagant feel. The environment design is also suitable for a puzzle type of game, and between the Iranian games published for smartphones till now, is of

a higher class. The title of Spider Way is free of any problem on any aspect, but unfortunately only one language has been designed for the dialogue texts and the user menu. English is your only choice, and for a game that is developed by an Iranian team is not very acceptable and it could have been more attractive for the gamers if the Persian language was added as well.



The release on international stores like Play Store and App Store is the excuse to be content with English. Spider Way was not only successful between Iranian games, but was also successful in competition with foreign titles. We hope that Tango Games Studio would be more successful in the future and with taking into consideration the few minor points, find a better place in the market of smartphone games and apps.

Amin Shirvani



Review

Gorbeye Ghajari

"Gorbeye Ghajari" is one of those minor well-built Iranian games which once you get busy with it, you forget the time and you sink into its great environment; a simple game unlike games nowadays which their only focus is on graphics and sound. Gorbeye Ghajari could be named as one of the best "Point-and-Click" games both in the world and in the dull Iranian games market. It's useful to know that the idea of the game is derived from an interesting animation developed by Hoorkhash Studio, a studio who has had a lot of cooperation with Rasana Shokoh Kavir (the designer of Gorbeye Ghajari) and also is responsible for their new game (Sedaye Faramoosh Shode).



The story of Gorbeye Ghajari is as follows: based on historical events, NaserAldin Shah is sick in bed and there is no cure for his disease. One day, a cat belonging to one of NaserAldin Shah's wife enters his majesty's chamber and the door shuts behind him! The poor thing doesn't have any way out, so he takes refuge next to NaserAldin Shah's bed and after some time gives birth to couple of kittens! Apparently at the time they believed in a superstition which said if a kitten gives birth next to an ill person's bed, he will surely get well and NaserAldin Shah actually did get cured!

The poor (or lucky) cat becomes the favorite pet of the court and NaserAldin Shah! The game begins where the poor cat is stuck in the rain with his beautiful kitten and the kitten is very hungry. Your mission starts here. You have to help the cat enter the royal court and find food for the kitten at the same time. The game's main dialogues and monologues are put on the professional narrator's shoulder. The narrative genre of the game might be odd and also funny for many of you, because the narrator uses the accent and sometimes the Azari language which gives a mixed feeling of surprise and grace to the game. Gorbeye Ghajari's gameplay is like all other games in this genre and works simply by the click of mouse on intrac-table items in the surrounding. Initially you can only move around and do simple stuff but as you go along you see the other aspects of the game and the interesting riddles kick in. Just so that you can get familiar with the game riddles I'll give you an example from one of the interesting levels, in which the royal cat wants to speak with NaserAldin Shah but she can't so she tries to speak through king's parrot (who knows a of human's language) and in a mini-game you have to coordinate the sounds of the cat with the parrot.

The positive point of Gorbeye Ghajari compared with other games from Rasana Shokoh Kavir like "Sheytanathaye Alimardan Khan" is the deep comedy used and doesn't rely on 'Slap-Stick' scenes (scenes which use violence). Although in the last level of the game we see some 'Slap-Stick' comedy but it is controlled. The graphics and sound FX are the great aspects of Gorbeye Ghajari which has a lot to say. The first point which gets the audiences' attention from the start is the great use of typography (the use of letters and words for creating art) by the art group of Rasana Shokoh Kavir in the environment. Besides this is the null comedy used by the designers in the surroundings (like Net-Cafes, PSP, Cooling system and etc.). Another feature of Gorbeye Ghajari is the use of dynamic items in the environment like rain, water and fish in the pool which gives a more dynamic feeling and soul to the game.



Last words:

It might have been some time after the release of Gorbeye Ghajari and it might have gotten old but it's still one of the fun and interesting 'Point-and-Click' games. If we compare this game with its foreign counterparts, it might not have much to say but certainly Gorbeye Ghajari is big step for Iranian game design in the international fields. **Shayan Ziaie**

Developer:
Resana Shokoh
Kavir

Publisher: Asre
Bazi

Genre: Advent-
ure, Point-and-
Click

Platform: PC

8.7

7.5





Another disease! Nothing can be done. This is one of those types of disease that no cure has been found for it. I'm talking about MMO disease. Only those who have been infected by it understand me. Nowadays, game makers first infect the gamers free of charge, and then ask them for money. This type of business has been around for a long time.



If you are one of those who while working, watching a movie, listening to music, surfing the web, reading news, chatting, and even playing have a tab open which reads Asmandez II, then surely you know this disease and its consequences. Although, we can be proud that this time we are infected by a hundred percent homespun disease!

Like always, everything begins with clicking on the 'Join Now' button. After entering Asmandez and viewing a short prologue accompanied by digital music, you enter the universe. The fight between humans and robots never ends. From the start, Asmandez shows off its technical power to the audience. With the power of HTML5, the game executes in your browser without any problem.

The fact that you can play Asmandez with an internet speed which doesn't load Gmail or loads the National gaming institute with a five minute delay means that the technical team has done its job brilliantly. Although 'Disconnected' is displayed from time to time, but if you're a veteran MMO player, then with a comparison with other games you would see the supremacy of Asmandez.

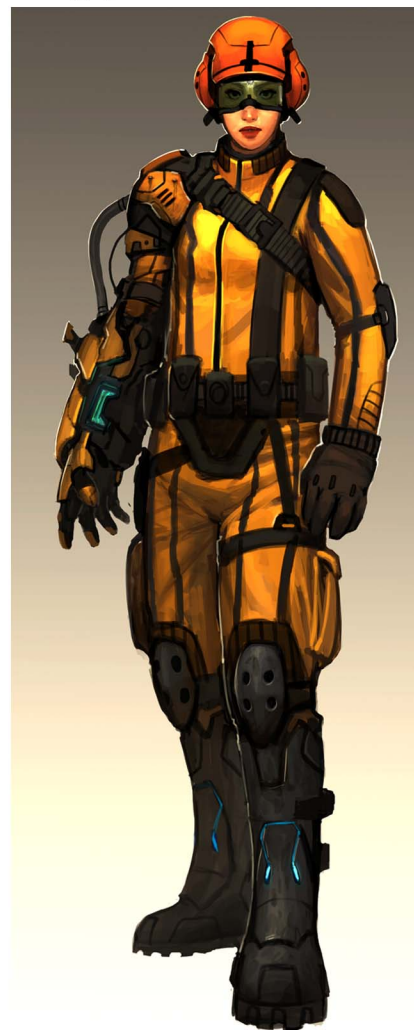


Asmandez learning curve is low. This means that if you're not familiar with MMO, it would take time to get used to the world and the endless variables. It would probably be easy for MMO players or those who have played Asmandez 1, but Asmandez II is harsh with newcomers. Your steps of getting familiar with the building and resources menus ends quickly and if you listen to the game and create your profile quickly, very soon you will see the attacks and defeats in the 'Reports' menu. But because defeat in the early stages of MMO games doesn't cost too much and from an aspect, it urges the player to quickly learn the game rules, we can overlook this problem.



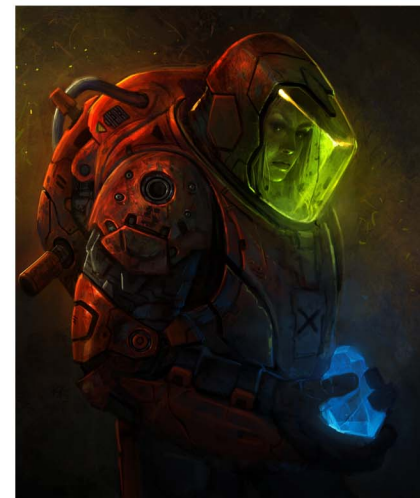
Around 5 to 10 hours is needed to get familiar with the icons you see. Then you get to know the basic mechanisms of the game like managing the human industrial resources and at the same time you get engaged in different combats.

The universe is cruel and even crueler from that is your neighbor in this universe. These neighbors could be friends, family or other players, who wouldn't let you be at ease even for a second. To be able to cope in the universe you need a lot of resources and for resources you should expand your colony. This rule makes fighting inevitable. To come out of combats alive, you either need time and patience or a lot of points. This means you either have to spend your time or your money! The game designers to set you back, sell you points in an unusual way, for example when you need 20 points to quickly build your buildings, they either sell you 19 points or 50 points! But the game currency is a lot more balanced than the earlier version so you can use your experience with other strategy games to come out victorious.



ZONA HAWK
ASMANDEZ II

Those who are not into paying for premium games can play Asmandez without paying anything. But the amount of time and energy they have to spend is a lot more than other MMO games. From visual aspects, Asmandez 2 is really beautiful. From the main menu which is your first sight of the Asmandez 2, till 200 hours after entering the universe, you can still enjoy the visual beauty of it. The interfaces have been designed with beauty. Lovers of Si-Fi movies and games would really enjoy the interface of Asmandez2. Sidebars, menus, icons, and other parts of the interface are favorable for Si-Fi lovers. The most beautiful part of the interface is the universe map.



Universe map being one of the most important features of Asmandez 2, allows you to see the whole universe, rest of the planets; and know your neighbor's and your own status. This menu works exactly like Google Maps. You can see the whole universe or you can zoom in and see your neighbor's status. With a click on any planet you can view the political status (to with confederation it belongs), the economic status (resources) and the military status. You have the option to create your very own unique look and with a click on any planet you can see other peoples' avatars. The avatar design is another one of the positive graphical aspects of the game. The universe map with all of the grids and guidelines for the planets gives you the feeling of commanding a fleet in a Si-Fi world! Another one of the important technical-graphical features of the game is that everything happens in one tab.



Unlike other MMO games, after clicking, you're not taken to another page and everything happens on the same page. This feature both helps the speed of the game and the fluency of the gameplay. Aside from the design of the interface, design of the units and the backgrounds are also notable. The first thing you see when you enter your planet is weird looking trees and the fantasy looking nature of the game. Characters, robots, war arts and other tools are all put next to each other in a nice Si-Fi theme and give a good integration to the design. The dynamic feature of the units and tools gives a more intimate sense. MMO players know that dynamic tools in a browser-based game are not a common thing, and again the technical team has helped the design of the game to create a unique product.



If you haven't tried Asmandez, you should take a look. Signing up and starting the game wouldn't cost you anything, but at the same time, makes you familiar with a whole different world. Asmandez 2 is the best and most professional games ever built in Iran and its success in the world shows that when a professional team of script-writers and enough study join their forces to create a game, the result would be nothing but "perfect".

SeyedTaha Rasuli

Developer:
Tose'e gar shabi-hsaz

Genre: Strategy
Online

Platform: WEB

Review

Mobareze Dar Khalije Adan

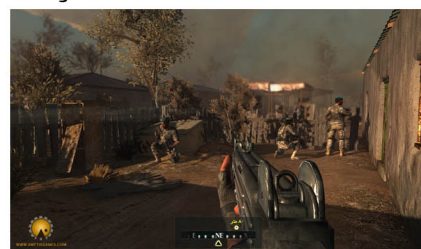


Although I believe "Mobareze Dar Khalije adan" hasn't stepped ahead of the standards in its genre with the least necessary, but compared to the titles published in this country it is very good! When we look at this game and see the developments to the prior games, the hard works of the development team comes to our mind more than anything. "Mobareze" is a first-person action game which unlike its prior games is playable. Before the tutorial of gameplay's mechanism, the game starts with a couple-of-minutes long demo which shows the reason for the Mission. The layout of the atmosphere is very well done, and you don't know what language your enemies are talking in. But the goal is clear. Having weakness in designing the levels, you have to be in enemies' sight once or twice and you have to start the level again but it is enough. And right after you finish this short level, you see a full headline of the game with a short video and the documentary continues becoming the whole of game's story which ripens as you go along and a story like the Sacred Defense is built.



Games in this genre in the world class, observe some points which "Mobareze" had to observe if it wanted to be great, but it didn't! At the first sight, the game is very short and the reason is the short single-dimensional narrative. We only see one mission which might have taken a long time but could be turned to no more than 3 hours of game.

The shortness of the game gives a high tempo to it and makes the shooting more enjoyable and ties you to the game. Although these kinds of levels don't follow basic set of rules but the beat is right and nearly after every high pitch combat we have a low beat which allows the gamer to calm down and get ready for the next battle.

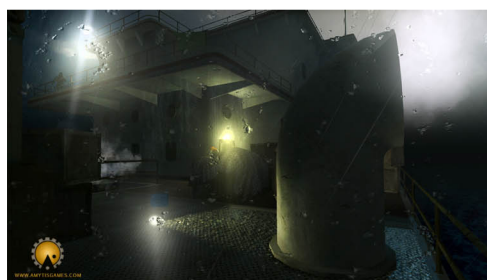


From this aspect we should give a medal to this Iranian Call of Duty. Although the first levels aren't very good, but like always, as the game nears its end, it gets better and better. We can surely say that the level of speed boats is the worst level of the game from any aspect and forces all sorts of torments on the gamer; but the game gets more exciting as you go along and doesn't stay like this. The weakness in the design of the levels gradually decreases to an extent, where the "Awaiting Helli-Burn" becomes one of the best levels of the game. At the end we are surprised by an Ending. Surely the last levels of the game aren't as good as the interesting and exciting ending of the game. We should praise the developers for the ending which sums up hours of gameplay and sends the gamer home happy. Unlike the gameplay where it can proudly present itself, on the graphics part it certainly cannot hold its head up high. The reason for it could be found in the restrictions of Iranian designers' choice of engine. We can say none of the effective filters or effects is used in this game.

The 2D and 3D design of the objects in the environment is not good at all. One of the noticeable features is the design of tools and specially weapons which is said to be based on real models. The texture quality of the weapons is better than the rest of the objects in the game. The last point we can note about the graphics of the game is the noticeable developments in solving the problems and bugs. I have finished "Mobareze" twice and I haven't seen any notable bug and this feature we can hope on.

All the positive points gather in one place until we reach a big negative point. The game lacks in creating amusement for the audience, both on the aspects which are under the developers and control, and those aspects which they can't control. Anyhow, it affects the satisfaction of the gamers.

For example the artificial intelligence is so weak that it could stop the gamer from continuing the level. Sometimes you have to repeat an act because of this very linear artificial intelligence. Another aspect under the developers' control is that if you shoot a historical object you will be punished and you have to repeat part of the level. This stops the gamer from enjoying the game and this isn't good. The designers maybe forgot that the Eiffel Tower collapsed in the Modern Warfare 3! The gamer has to be entertained; the game likes explosion, destruction and such incidents, not moral points in a battle field! **Saeed Zaferani**



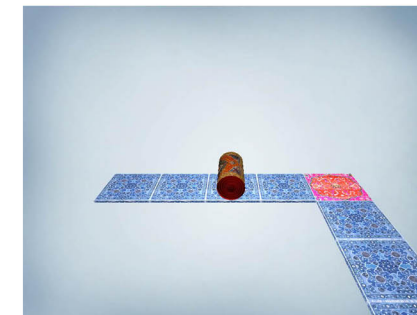
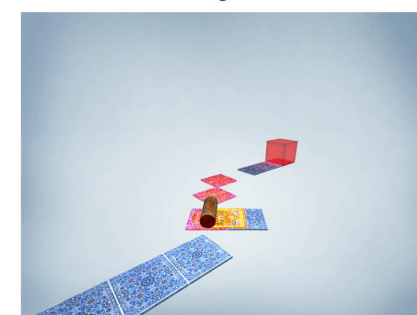
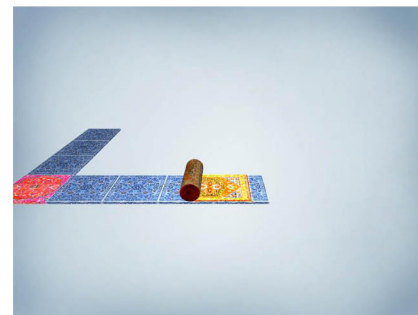
Review

Carpet - Siavosh



It has become typical of every review, preview and generally every article regarding games developed in Iran to avoid comparing them with foreign titles, and make do with comparing them only with a few Iranian titles of the same genre. As for independent titles though, this is different as we can compare them with foreign titles since creativity is a critical element in these games and resources are relatively similar for indie developers all over the world. Let me make myself clear. The article you are about to read is about MahdiBahrami's newest creation Carpet, and is a result of a comparison made between this title and similar foreign titles and there was no subtlety used in writing it.

The game starts with a great piece of music. Music is in general one of the factors that is paid little attention to in indie games and is sacrificed for gameplay or the general idea of the creators in most games. Carpet not only has paid attention to music and the beauty of its sound, but it also has had a glance at its harmony with the atmosphere of the game and the general idea behind it.



The repetitiveness of the music should be taken into account, but for an indie title at this stage, the music does not lose its beauty and can cover the game pretty well to the very end. Certainly, the most important factor for success of an independent title (and every title in general) is its gameplay. Carpet's core mechanics are quite simple, and even fail to attract the player's interest at first glance. The player simply has to lay a carpet on blue tiles and then roll it out. This is where MahdiBahrami shows off his art in level design. By combining this simple mechanic with some typical elements of this genre, he has managed to create one of the most beautiful yet most difficult puzzle games in the world of independent games. These typical elements include obstacles (red tiles) and rotating platforms (blue tiles) which, along with blue tiles, has moved the gameplay into a different mind-boggling phase. Generally, its gameplay, and its level design in particular, dominates many national and international titles in the genre and gives the sense of a puzzle game to the audience to the best degree.

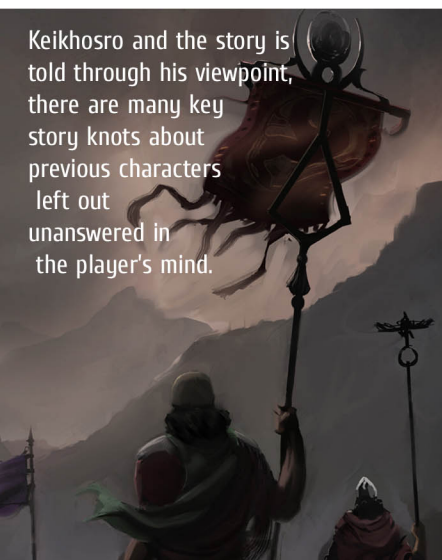
The only major drawback of the gameplay is the imbalance in the arrangement of the levels. Unfortunately, the arrangement of the levels is not in concordance with the difficulty curve of the game and this hurts the overall rhythm of the game to some extent. The graphics is good, given the fact that the game was created using the Unity Engine and the limitations of this engine. However, its excessive simpleness and its dull coloring shall not be overlooked easily, but the graphics design in general fits the game well and does not let the player to feel a lack in this area. Game menus, which were added in the final version of the game, enjoy a completely Iranian design despite its simplicity, and the game beats even most of the huge and costly Iranian games in this aspect.

In the end, my suggestion to you is to get Carpet on your PC or smart phone as soon as possible and enjoy its every moment, for you may not be able to experience such a well-made game set in a completely Iranian atmosphere with an outstanding level design for years to come. **Amir Golkhani**

In every art-related industry, there are some that push the boundaries and define new genres. From The Godfather in the film industry to unparalleled works of Da Vinci, each and every one of these has revolutionized their respective industries. If we were to name groundbreaking and genre-defining games, Diablo would definitely be among them. By mixing a unique combination of role-playing elements with an epic story, they have been able to create an experience that has influenced every single game in the genre, one way or another. Last year, game developing studio Sourena Game, which is one of the most renowned game developing studios in Iran, launched a title which owed its gameplay mechanics and general structure to the great Diablo. Siavosh should not be viewed as another

Diablo as it has its own identity. Maybe its camera placement or gameplay elements are similar to Diablo's, but these similarities are only superficial and the game has a lot of potential to stand out as a different game. Its first distinctive feature is its completely Iranian story. The general story begins revolving around finding the heir to Siavosh. The opening chapter of the game is good and properly introduces the complicated mechanics of this genre to the player. Unfortunately, the biggest drawback of Siavosh in story is the constant change of the main character and switching between different characters. Each character in the game has its own historical and mythological background, which makes the player sympathize with them easily. However, when the game switches to

Keikhosro and the story is told through his viewpoint, there are many key story knots about previous characters left out unanswered in the player's mind.



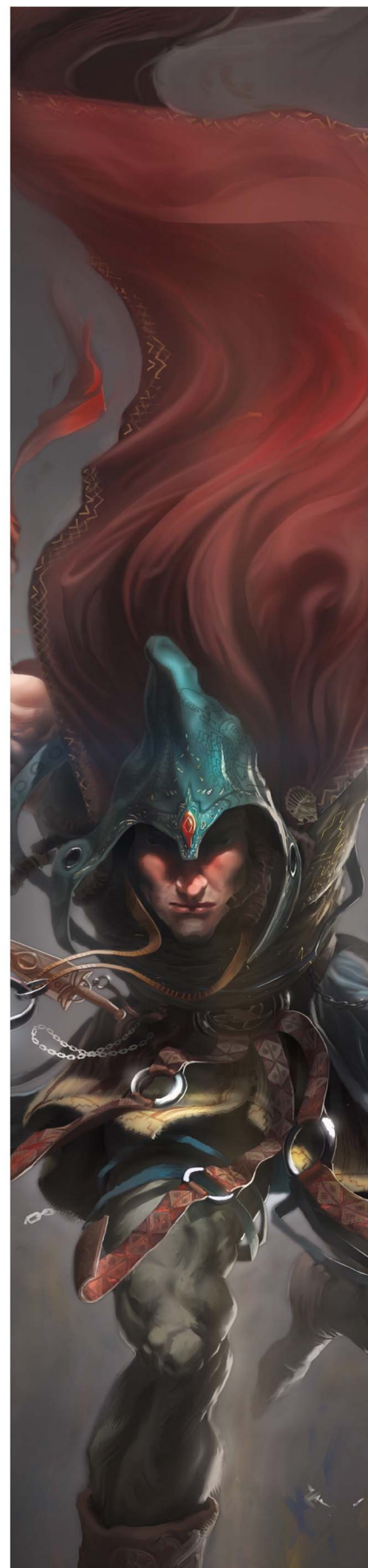
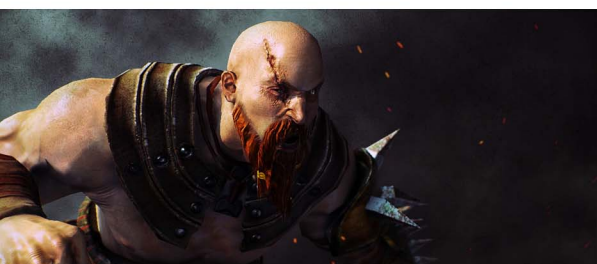
Review

Siavosh

This upsets the process of getting to know the characters and as a result causes the player to fail to sympathize with them. Another factor that adds up to this weakness in terms of character development is that the game is relatively short. Siavosh is too short for an RPG game compared with western RPG standards, and this has hurt the game to some extent. The game hasn't been very successful in designing NPCs either and has some weaknesses in this area too.



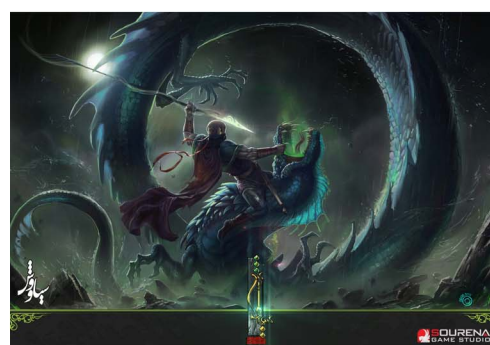
For example, when the negative characters are speaking the dialogues, you can hardly feel anger, joy or any other emotions. Apart from those, the game has been able to offer a completely Iranian story with a compelling atmosphere and given the partial diversity in environments in the game, the story keeps you interested until the very end. Besides the story, the gameplay can be reviewed. The gameplay is inspired by Diablo and is successful in conveying a sense of this groundbreaking title. However, there are a few factors that have shadowed the experience of this game. First, this game is simpler than similar games in this genre. The magic bar (mana), for example, is re-filled automatically after a spell is executed. This is very trivial for hardcore-role-playing gamers and discourages them from experiencing this game. In addition, the number of enemies and the strategies they choose are very limited and this part is also influenced by the simplification of the game.



However, it should be noted that the change of the main character, which has hurt the story, has managed to enhance the variety in gameplay and increased the replay value of the game several times. Unfortunately, the game is still simple and doesn't pose a challenge for the fans of the genre. Taking into account that this game is a completely local product and the long period of time spent to design the graphics engine, it seems that the audience will be pleased in terms of graphics. The only problem in this part is the soulless coloring of some of the environments and the fact that some environments are empty of various objects. At last, we get to the sound and the music part of the game - two parts which are quite opposite in terms of quality in this game. In terms of music, and particularly of epic theme, this game is one of the bests in Iran.



The music fits the game very well and makes the experience enjoyable. But unfortunately, the sound, and voice acting in particular, is performed very poorly and by no means can compete with other games in this genre. Finally, I recommend every Iranian gamer or game developer to experience Siavosh. I guarantee this game is worth putting Diablo III and its unparalleled multiplayer aside for a few hours, and immersing in the world of Siavosh for a while. **Amir Golkhani**



Review

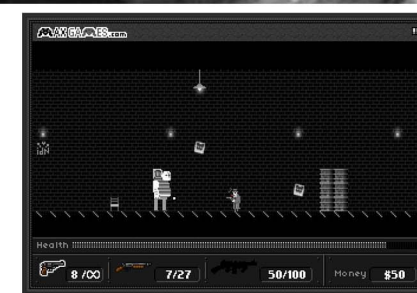
Rot Gut

There're always independent games which with a little idea and motivation, bring big glories for themselves and their country, and in a lot of aspects are more attractive and successful than game which a lot of money has been spent on. Not long ago, 3 Iranian game designers without any financial intentions released a game on the web which received a lot of positive feedback and created hope for the future of Iran's independent games.

Rot Gut or "Black Potion" is a 2D action platform art-pixel game.



The story of the game goes back to the time of the ban of alcohol and rot gut sales in America and is very simple and fluently narrated. A group of mafia creates potions in distillation factories which kills people and then use the body of those people who died to make more potions and expand their work. The first role of the game is a detective with a cigar on the corner of his lips who has to get adventurous and unveil the mystery of the creepy factory and destroy it. The game includes 6 levels with 2 level bosses. The game weapons are restricted to a pistol, a shotgun and a Tommygun. The details of the two latter are interesting; they have different range and a big kick and throw the character back.

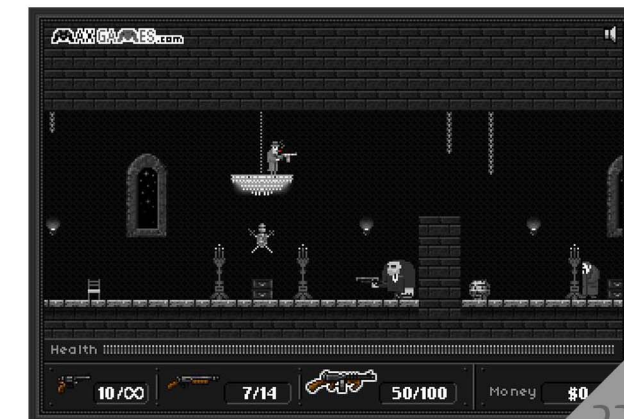


With the coins you collect from shooting at boxes, chests, and barrels you can increase your health and buy extra magazine for your guns or try your luck with \$5 to get a magazine and health or a simple coin.

The defense from shots is done by jumping. At first you have to identify the enemy's features and then fight him. With the decrease of health, the border of the screen becomes red with the effects of blood, and to make taking-shot more realistic the blood bounds the borders.

At the start of first level, the use of keys is taught in an interesting way using signs. We experience very few bugs in the game. I personally experienced a bug which wasn't too much of a problem and didn't stop me from continuing the game. If an enemy is quickly nearing an edge and you shoot that edge, he will fall on the ground and get stuck. Or if you quickly to down the stair, the dog who's following you would fall down with a tremor! The variety of enemies is good for this type of game. The enemies have different features; some of them have high speed in movement or shooting or both, others have higher health than other enemies and require more bullets to die, or others which give to coin, magazine or health when they die. The graphic of the game is pixels with a black and white theme and only the coins, tip of detectives cigar and the effect of particles of blood and bits of meat from enemies' bodies might have color pixels but when you kill an enemy with a shotgun it seems like a grenade is blown up inside it and its body is torn to pieces quickly drops from the stairs and hits the sides or the wall and returns which hasn't been designed very well.

You see cut-scenes at the start of some levels which narrates the story in pictures (there is no narration or dialogue which urges you to try and find out what's happening). Sometimes these cut-scenes take a humorous theme which gives variety and a brake to the game.



The mix and the music are done very well. Every level includes a special music which plays to the end of the level and have a 20s and 30s American theme. The music of the game is like Cheap-tune Jazz. For an independent game with a small volume, the use of such music with different themes and beats isn't out of the picture. Not much attention has been put on the details of sound FX of this small game. Every enemy has its own sound effect. Also, the sound of placing a cup on the table, shotgun's bullet touching the ground... has given value to the sound of the game.

The game has been built with flash engine and using Flixel library and the levels have been designed with Dame Editor. Aidin Zolfaghar, Mohammad NejadAzar and BehzadRahimi with the help of a sound mixer (Matthew Hagberg) are the developers who have published this game on the net. The game's volume is roughly 6 megabytes, but this small volume can keep you busy for 15 to 20 minutes. You can use it as a break from work or study and enjoy it.

Aidin Noori

Developers: Aidin Zolghadr, Mohammad NejadAzar, BehzadRahimi

Publisher: Max Games

Genre: Platformer, 2D

Platform: PC

9

Review

Shaban

Old Iranian games have always been a good base for books, films and certainly video games. Fortunately there are a lot of Iranian games which value these stories and legends and at the same time show off the rich history and culture of Iran to the world. Many games like Garshasp, Sedaye Faramoosh Shode... are a testimony to this fact. Now is Shaban's turn to continue this path with picturing the story of 'The forty thief of Baghdad' (which we have witnessed a lot of different views on it, sometimes with lots of changes and sometimes with little change). The interesting point is that the game has initially been released abroad and the troubles with the National Gaming Institute haven't allowed the game to be released in the country!



The word 'Shaban' means shepherd and the story is about a small shepherd who on a windy night is attacked by thieves and all of his sheep are stolen (except for one which you find in the game). This is the main storyline. Your adventure starts from where you have to find the thieves with the help of your little sheep and return what is rightfully yours. What attract you from the start point are the way the story is narrated and its interesting cut-scenes. There is no dialogue or monologue or any narration. All the gamer needs to know are conveyed by visual and audio effects. It's good to know that the cut-scenes are like the successful game 'Koohnvard' which is in the form of comic strips with warm colors.

The storyline is followed in several different locations, Shaban's House, abandoned Cable Car, Village, which give a special attraction to the game. Like all point-and-click games, to reach a certain goal you might have to go through a path several times, but the positive point of Shaban is the balance it has created between the areas and the fact that you don't have to move in these areas and get bored.



Shaban's gameplay is simple and at the same time attractive. All you have to do at the start is move about in the area and get familiar with atmosphere, and then the riddles come one after the other. There are different types of riddles in the game which appear at the right time and in the right order and challenge you; good riddles which never lose their attractiveness. In my opinion the best riddles of the game are the 'Hidden Object' riddles which have been created in the best possible way. For those who are unfamiliar with hidden-object riddles in which you have to find special objects in a messy area which makes finding the item more difficult. Besides the main riddles, there are small puzzles in which you have to put together puzzles and pieces of papers which speed up the game and stops it from being boring.

The graphic and sound effects are the good aspects of the game. The graphics if not better than its foreign counterparts, it's certainly not worse than them. It's good to know that the majority of the graphics' design is done by hand, and for the sake of knowing better the abilities of the designers and their value for the graphics of the game, you should know that 30 backgrounds have been designed for the game! Now add the interesting animations and the movement of the characters, you would see the amazing game and at the same time independent you're faced. The sound effects are brilliant. Although the sound effects don't go any further than the sound of lightning and the sound of sheep, but the correct usage of them gives a brilliant effect. The music tracks (which are completely original) are also in coordination with the atmosphere of the game. Although sometimes the complete opposite happens, it can be overlooked.



Last words:
Shaban is one of the few Iranian games which has been published by a foreign publisher (BigFishGames) and is certainly one of the best designed games in the last few years in the point-and-click genre. Considering the foreigners' feedbacks, it seems like they have understood the magnificence of our work more than us! If you're skeptical, you can take a look at the site of the foreign version's publisher and if your budget allows, you could buy it for 10 dollars!
Shayan Ziaei

Review

Shetab Dar Shahr



Before the release of 'Shetab Dar Shahr' with regard to the talk I had with the developers of the game, I expected a revolutionary title. After the game was released and I was sent a copy by Arvin Tech, my idea about the output completely changed. A title that made so much noise was released in a simple package. Although the design of the box-art was at a high level, but the way it was presented and the fact that only one disc was in the package made the buyer unhappy about the 5000 tomans price.



After discussing the box-art and the way it was presented we come to the game itself. After the installation, when you enter the game, the first thing that catches the sight is the vast area of the game. They are designed for the game is about 100 kilometers and on this aspect, this game is more prominent than other domestic titles. But unfortunately this vast area is put under scrutiny by the few number of cars. The number of cars is bound to 15 and it makes the experience of this variety in routes less enjoyable. Unfortunately the level of difficulty and the artificial intelligence of your competitors is somehow designed that

doesn't have balance and sometimes they become too powerful and other times they become too weak. Now consider this, throughout the whole of the game you only face too rivals, and this means that being left behind means a restart.



And restart, with only 15 cars, is boring and this means the years of designers work goes to waste. Now add the user interface to this to make the gameplay the worst aspect of the game. Although, the gameplay is still a head and shoulder higher than its counterparts in the domestic market but our expectations from 'Shetab Dar Shahr' was more than this. Besides the gameplay, the visual and audio features of the game also add to the problem. The design of the environment is quite good and covers the different tastes very well. But the not so good color mixture of some scenery makes the gamers tired of moving about in the area. But the unique and attractive design of the cars, the graphics aspect is somehow acceptable. The sound effects are not like the graphics aspect and are bound to repetition. In general, the music designed for the game is consistent with the theme and perfectly mount the

game, but unfortunately their variety is low and after couple of hours of playing it becomes boring. The sound effects of the cars are somewhat different to their actual sounds. But considering the limited access of the developers to the cars we can overlook this weakness.



With the points mentioned in this text, we can say that 'Shetab Dar Shahr' as a domestic title, has been more successful than its counterparts and can easily take control of the market with release of DLCs or expansion packs. But this title hasn't met the expectations created by the developers last year and a lot of features mentioned in the interview were not seen in the game. I hope these unnecessary hypes are less seen with domestic games and the developers fulfill their promises. **Amir Golkhani**

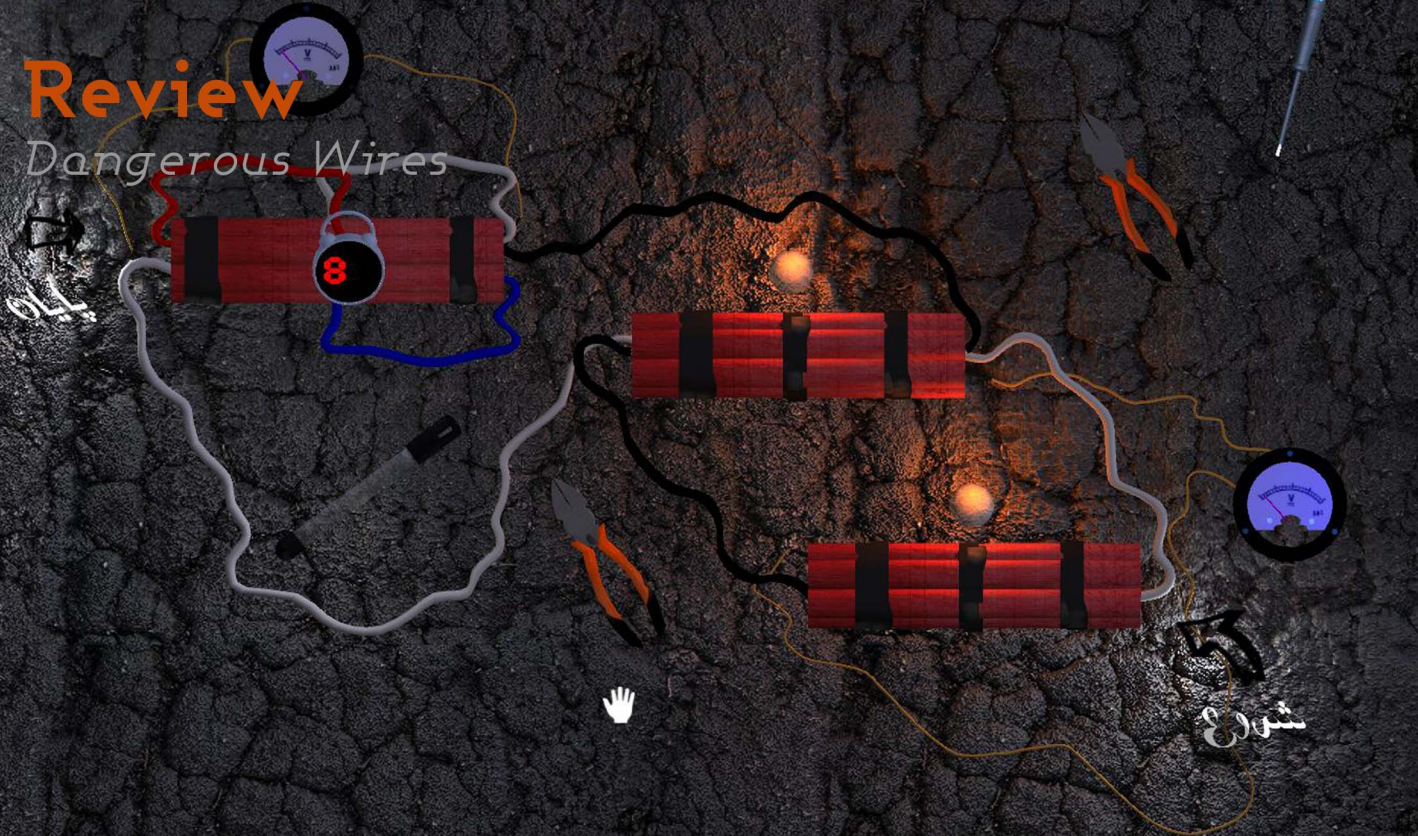


Developer: Peta Games
Publisher: Big-FishGames
Genre: Adventure, Point-and-Click
Platform: PC

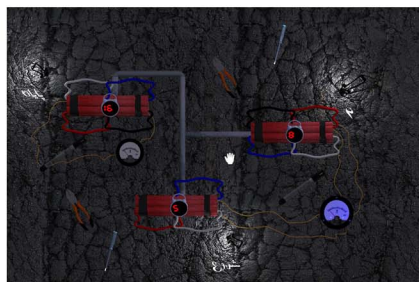
Developer: Arvin Tech
Publisher: SarzaminRayaneh
Genre: Racing
Platform: PC

Review

Dangerous Wires



Dangerous Wires is a desktop game developed by Neday-e Ziba Afarinan. The game uses a simple mechanic as its core- dragging tools onto other objects - and it requires the player to progress in the game by using tools such as wire stripper, test light, etc. on wires. The player must defuse time bombs by clipping specific and special wires.



First, the player should drag test light on each of the wires and clip those on which the test light doesn't turn on. Clipping wires on which the test light turned on would end in a game over. Timers play an important role in gameplay and add to the excitement of the game. Each timer, according to how much access you have to it, has a certain limited time. That is, the player should consider the timer with the least amount of time their top priority, thus defusing time bombs with less time first. Fortunately, the timing of the timers are tested and do not cause difficulty. With a little concentration, one can easily overcome these challenges.

There are several levels in this game in which the player has to defuse multiple bombs. In each level, there are multiple bombs that are attached to a wire and connected in series and the player has to defuse them in order of their position and priority. The priority is determined by the timers that are placed on the bombs. If the planning is right and correct, the player can defuse the bombs and win.

As we progress in the game, it gets more difficult and full of various ideas - ideas such as bombs in series and multiple timers in a single level and other interesting and challenging factors. The game enjoys good graphics and doesn't leave space for criticism artistically, specially the main menu which is pretty appealing. These graphical and artistic effects are one of the reasons that keep you playing to the very end.

The game doesn't feature good music. The music doesn't fit the mood of the game and shows that the developers haven't spent enough time to select the tracks. However, a new edition of this game named Skyfall has been released



recently, the mood of which is based on the blockbuster movie 007: Skyfall. This edition features better music than the original version. The sound effects used in this game are good and right effects are used at the right time. The game doesn't perform bad, technically speaking, but it could have done better.



Some obvious bugs occur in the game, which is a negative point. The game has been developed in six months by Neday-e Ziba Afarinan and has been under the good management of Mr. Ali Najafi. Marketing has been good and the sales figures are promising, which shows the fact that Iranian gamers care about independent and local games. This can compensate at least a small proportion of the efforts young indie developers put into the business.

We are looking forward to seeing better games from all the indie developer teams from Iran and from all over the world.

Mohammad Reza Mostafavi

Review

Outland



I didn't like to start this article with this name, but wherever there's talk about Outland, the name comes in. I don't have a choice: Machinarium



Machinarium was an independent game, publish from 2009 to 2011 on any platform you could think of and received very good feedback from critics and gamers, to an extent that it received awards like the best PC game of the year. It wasn't odd that the brilliant ideas of that small game became the example of new game designers and open a new path for creating new games and it did happen. Now some Iranian game designers tried to take example from Machinarium and create titles such as Outland that has a lot of similarities with its source of innovation.

The story of Outland begins where the main character of the game is living his normal life. At this time, the aliens endanger his city and are about to steal the houses of his land. They want to build a new city on a different planet with these very houses. This is where you come in; you have to stop them from reaching their goal.

Considering the suitable age group, the story has a straight forward storyline

and can even tell its story to 3 year olds. Aliens taking something from the main character and we as the main character try to take it back isn't a new idea, but is suitable for a small game. So if you're trying to make a fuss about the story of the game, you better take a look at the age rating. The main character is a person without a name; we don't even know its gender. It's thought and dialogues form as ancient lines on his head and the only thing we can understand from that is his goal. He wants to rescue his city with his small size and make his people happy. With a look at Joseph, the main character of Machinarium, we can see veins of his features and characteristics in Outland's main character. These similarities are more visible in the color mix than the design. Aside from its similarities, the main character of the game has an adorable innocence thanks to its good design. A kind of inability is seen in him who turns feelings. The contrast of his small build and innocence with the big goal he has in mind gives a good feeling to the game.



The design of the environment is one of the powerful aspects. An environment that has been created with good taste, with good is shown to the audience.

These environments have been built with Multi Media Builder which has been initially used for creating autorun but building this game with this very software has given acceptable result. The design of the environment thanks to this software has been very effective. Paying attention to background colors and the use of colors with the theme of Armageddon has managed to keep the audience content and ready them for the gameplay, the riddles and challenges.

The 'Point-and-click' riddles are at an average level. The difficulty of puzzles is at a level which is easy for game nerds and a little hard for new gamers. The developers have used the objects to interact with the environment to make the riddles more interactive. Also there is a helper in right corner which you could use if you get stuck on a puzzle. You can use this guide to find the path to solving the puzzles. Another positive point of this guide is that it doesn't tell you the whole path, so the gamer has to then find the way himself.

Outland is a small step for its ambitious developers, because the idea is derived from another game and with a little creativity it has been mounted on the main design. If the developers of this game could take bigger steps in the adventure/'Point-and-click' genre of games by gaining more experience, they can surely be more successful. If their ideas are original that is.

Ghasem Najjari

Developer: Fotros

Publisher: Lohe-Sina Game

Genre: Adventure, Point-and-Click

Platform: PC

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