
Do we really get sick of it?

(Monday, 20 March 2006) - Contributed by Adam (Vergil) - Last Updated ()

[This week, my frothing hunger for multiplayer RTS action makes me think critically about the "games are getting stale" arguement.]{mos_sb_discuss:4}

One criticism that has been leveled at the game developers lately, one that I myself have called point to from time to time, is this: games, especially in the PC market as of late, have been following the same genre success formats with little to no originality being breathed into the market. What's worse is that the number of available genres (In the PC case, RTS, MMO, and FPS) can be counted on one hand. The comment is that this has occurred because of the rising cost of game development, meaning that companies would rather place a solid investment risk on a format that they know will sell than take risks and give us something innovative to play (Like the neat stuff the DS's touch screen has brought us and the rumblings of the new Nintendo Revolution Controller).

While this is for the most part true, I can't help but notice that I have been having a craving as of late. I want a new Sci-Fi RTS. I don't want to recreate battles on Middle Earth. I don't really feel like raising an empire from Stone age to modern age either. If I wanted to do that I'd play Civilization. I also really don't want to mess with all this greater strategy stuff that the Total War series and Star Wars: Empire at War has us. And I definitely don't want Warcraft 3's Hero system involved.

Basically, I feel like there hasn't been a good entry in the RTS field since THQ/Relic's Warhammer 40,000: Dawn of War in 2004. It doesn't help that Dawn of War's expansion, Winter Assault, fails to make the game interesting for too long after it came out. I wish I could get my hands on a sequel to Starcraft or Command and Conquer or the up coming Supreme Commander which won't be out for at least another year.

That's when it hit me. I know I've played through these tried-and-true Real Time Strategy formulas before, and yet I still want to do so. This particular type of game, for me at least, regardless of how often repeated its formula elements might be, is still entertaining to me. So long as they don't keep doing the same story, make prettier graphics, play with a new unit idea here and there, and allow for fun online multiplayer options, I'm interested.

So I suppose that there is some truth in the statement that a lot of games are the same, but maybe they are because that's what we want. While I wait patiently and hope that Dawn of War's next expansion will be better I can't help but think: Innovation is nice, but if it isn't

broken, why fix it?”