

CIS 487

Game Design I

Assignment 2: Game Evaluation

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World of Warcraft

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Introduction

The game I chose to evaluate is World of Warcraft, created by Blizzard Entertainment. World of Warcraft is a MMORPG, or Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game. It is based upon the Warcraft series, which all begin on a world called Azeroth, where eight different races live and protect their land from enemies - and from each other.

Game Overview

“Four years have passed since the aftermath of Warcraft III: Reign of Chaos, and a great tension now smolders throughout the ravaged world of Azeroth. As the battle-worn races begin to rebuild their shattered kingdoms, new threats, both ancient and ominous, arise to plague the world once again.” (www.worldofwarcraft.com)

The eight races that thrive in Azeroth are divided into two factions: Horde and Alliance. The Horde comprises of orcs, tauren, trolls, and the undead, while the Alliance consists of dwarves, gnomes, humans, and night elves. These two groups fight against each other in order to preserve their way of life after the devastating Chaos War.

Each race is then divided into classes, though not every class is available to each race. The following seven classes are available to both Horde and Alliance: Druid, Hunter, Mage, Priest, Rogue, Warlock, and Warrior. There are also two faction restricted classes: Paladins are Alliance only, and Shamans are Horde only. Each class has its own strengths and weaknesses, and when coupled with the various attributes of the different races, a diverse array of characters can be created.

When you first enter the world, you begin in your race’s starting area. From there you can travel to other areas around the world to complete quests and gain levels, meet new people, join guilds, battle tons of creatures and even other players, explore instance dungeons, and just have a

good time. Eventually you will choose two professions, such as mining and blacksmithing, where your character can mine for tin and gold, and with these minerals, refine them to make sets of armor or special weapons. When you turn in quests or defeat enemies, you earn experience points, and in some cases, money. Once you gain enough experience points (which is denoted on your experience bar in the user interface), you automatically gain a level. With each level you gain new skills, your character statistics (such as strength and agility) get better, and certain level-restricted items (such as armor) become available. There are currently 60 levels in the game, but an expansion pack is in the works to add another 30 or so levels, plus more exciting content. With the money you earn you can buy new armor and weapons to improve your skill and stats, food and potions to raise your health or mana (your magic points), fun things such as a pet owl, and lots more.

World of Warcraft was created for any type of player – from the one who plays for hours each day to the casual player, who plays only once or twice a week. Even though it is a MMORPG, where you can meet thousands of real-life people, you can easily stick to yourself and solo your way through the levels.

The user interface is adaptable to each player, and you can even download mods (which are not supported by Blizzard, but some are allowed) to further enhance the UI. At the bottom of your screen lies one long action bar to hold buttons for quick access to spells, abilities, character info, map, bags, and more. On top of this bar is your experience bar, which shows how much experience you've gained at that level, and how much you have yet to earn in order to reach the next level. In the control menu you can add up to four more action bars, which can line up on top of these bars and/or along the right hand side of the screen. In the upper right corner is a mini-map of the area you are in. In the upper left corner is a picture of your character. When you are in