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Game Development Essentials: An Introduction



Synopsis

GAME DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIALS: AN INTRODUCTION, 3E is an authoritative, industry-driven introduction to the world of game development, with updates that keep readers current and well-prepared for a successful career in the field. This book not only examines content creation and the concepts behind development, but it also give readers a background on the evolution of game development and how it has become what it is today. GAME DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIALS also includes chapters on project management, development team roles and responsibilities, development cycle, marketing, maintenance, and the future of game development. With the same engaging writing style and examples that made the first two editions so popular, this new edition features all the latest games and game technology. Coverage of new game-related technology, development techniques, and the latest research in the field make this an invaluable resource for anyone entering the exciting, competitive, ever-changing world of game development.

Book Information

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About This Edition From the Publisher New Features Revised profiles, tips, and quotes from industry professionals and educators. New and updated game screenshots, photos, illustrations, and diagrams. Expanded sections on the newest trends in game development, including mobile, social, and serious games. Coverage of new console and mobile platforms. Discussions of new trends and technologies, such as 3D, motion control, cloud-hosted, augmented reality, convergent

platforms, and transmedia. Additional Features Comprehensive coverage of all essential gaming topics ranges from planning, prototyping, and testing, to production and marketing. Case studies and industry profiles of prominent game developers offer a revealing behind-the-scenes look at the workings of the industry. Thought-provoking questions help readers develop and fine-tune the skills specific to game development. Game demos, accessibility games, and articles offer new material for the companion DVD for a complete hands-on experience.

Jeannie Novak is the lead author and series editor of the widely acclaimed GAME DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIALS series (with over 15 published titles), co-author of PLAY THE GAME: THE PARENT'S GUIDE TO VIDEO GAMES, and co-author of three pioneering books on the interactive entertainment industry--including CREATING INTERNET ENTERTAINMENT. She is also co-founder of Novy Unlimited and CEO of Kaleidospace, LLC (dbalndiespace), providing curriculum development and consulting services for corporations, educators, and creative professionals in games, music, film, education, and technology. Novak served as director of the Game Art & Design and Media Arts & Animation programs at the Art Institute Online and has taught game courses at UCLA, Art Center College of Design, DeVry University, Westwood College, ITT Technical Institute, and the Academy of Entertainment & Technology at Santa Monica College. She holds a B.A. in mass communication/business administration from UCLA and an M.A. in communication management from the Annenberg School at USC. She also serves on the Online Gameplay Committee for the Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences and has served on the executive boards of the International Game Developers Association (Los Angeles) and Women in Games International. An accomplished composer and performer, Novak was chosen as one of the 100 most influential people in technology by MicroTimesmagazine and has been profiled by CNN, Billboard Magazine, the Sundance Channel, Daily Variety, and the Los Angeles Times.

First of all, who is this book for? When I first bought this book I thought I was in for a mind breaking tutorial or insight into game development, and considering all the great reviews, I think these expectations were completely normal. Reality is: the book will only teach you very, very essential stuff. So, if you already have any sort of experience in game development, or you have been a hardcore gamer looking to become a game developer, you probably know this stuff already. This book is great for teenagers who would love to become game developers or professionals in other areas looking to cross over. Still, if you are knowledgeable in gaming or game development, you may want to buy this book for formalize your knowledge into comprehensible data sets in your mind

(this is how this book has served me the most), for the writing is clear, easily digestible, and the presentation of the whole deal is beautifully done.What does this book talk about?A lot of things! And this is one of the very best features of the book: it will guide you to every detail of game development, even if offers very little information on some topics, so you won't stay completely ignorant with this book. It talks about: the target market, history of games, gameplay, storytelling, characters, marketing, development process, the development team, etc... By the end of this book you will feel good about your understanding of games, even if it is at a small extend, because now you fell that you have your feet on the ground. This is another great feature: it never talks about game development as something easy. Actually, on the ending chapters, where the author talks about the development process, she makes a clear point on how crazy the whole deal can be, doing justice to those people who thought they were in for an easy way to make money.The book has lots of "developer side notes". Some are really bad, coming from developers completely oblivious for me: they teach only what is obvious, and sometimes repeat what the author has already taught. But then again, some are brilliant, coming from either random guys or very famous developing houses like: Infinity Ward, Ensemble Studios, Obsidian Entertainment, etc. This little side notes offer guidelines on what to avoid, pursue or do while creating or thinking a game.What I disliked.Game Development Essentials Second Edition teaches its topics viewing gaming mostly as business and not as art. This was very disappointing for me. It constantly talks about knowing your market, and creating a good game for them. They always try to teach you to see games as a product and not as a creation to deliver a message. For a person who loves all games (me) that try hard to be art, or at least, to get a message across, it was hard to come to terms with all this (gaming as art is what inspired me in the first place).Moreover, when the author talks about the importance of storyline in some games, she really bashes linear storytelling, saying games are supposed to be non linear. It weird but she stresses that the best games have non linear storylines and she creates this feel on her text that linear stories are a crime. But I asked myself, what about: Halo? Half Life? Gears of War? Max Payne? Metal Gear? Grim Fandango? The Longest Journey? Resident Evil? Killzone? Resistance? Silent Hill? Most of my favorite games tell linear stories! I believe that creating a linear story is a better way to developing characters; very few games have offered non linear storylines without making characters of such game look generic. But what bugs me is this: she openly talks about how great the story for some these games is, but nearly in the same paragraph she bashes linear storytelling. I think the author should rewrite that whole chapter, explaining which storytelling methods work better with the different genres in games.All in all this is a great book, and definitely the best intro to game development. While it has a share of short comings, most of the time you'll be

entertained and impressed by the learning scenario that author has created. She is not exhausting, she never punishes the learner with tons of questions, and the technical stuff is kept to a minimum. If you are looking to get into the business, look no further, this book will do you great justice indeed.

Game Development Essentials (3rd Ed.) - Lays out the groundwork to help readers develop the foundational knowledge and common language required to get into the game industry, or brush up on their existing knowledge. Straight to the point, factual and comprehensive, the third edition of the book brings readers up to speed on everything they would need to know about game development. From its humble beginnings, all the way up to the most current trends, this book covers it all. Since it is impossible to go too in-depth on any one topic, this book is an excellent stepping stone to the author's other game development books, of which are numerous. My favorite sections are the interviews with industry professionals, which offer a glimpse of what is going on in the real world, as opposed to topics you may find only in purely academic textbooks. The author is knowledgeable and accomplished in her field, and I would highly recommend this book as a must read to anyone interested in game development.

I picked up this book as a possible replacement for the book that is currently used in my 'Game Design' course. This book is very attractive and professionally put together. It covers the material that would be essential (hence the title) when discussing the elements of game design:1. The history of the medium I found some annoying factual errors in this part of the book. Which initially turned me off but I continued to read since errors seemed to be in the sidebars which may not get the same editorial review.2. Who plays and why? This contained very interesting material for students to discuss with respect to player motivation, personality and gender. The eye-opening part for me was the view of game playing from the perspective of generations. Baby boomers, Generation X and the Millennial Generation look for different things from the games they play. (This part made me examine my own choices for games and the characters I am most attracted to in them!)3. The elements in a game - genres, platforms, player modePart II is where the real gems are for people who really want to design games:4. The elements of storytelling5. Creating the characters/roles6. Creating the game experience, e.g. challenges7. Creating the World and Atmosphere (anyone else listen to the audio CD to remember the delight in playing the game?)The last part covers:8. The key roles/titles in the game development process9. The process of producing games10. The future of gamingThe book ends with the following bonuses:11. A list of resources for those who are serious about actually getting into the game business12. List of books to read and

learn more13. A CD with toolsThe key thing I value when spending time on a book is one - am I learning something new? This book offers many ideas central to designing video games. It is an excellent book for a course on the topic or for any budding game designer to pick up start the journey.

I liked it, but was somehow disappointed of the lack of technical tips. I thought the book was about giving insight on how to write, plan and design games (not on the technical side by per se, but on how to develop a game in terms of overall required tasks) instead you get a light overview on where the game industry is right now. Don't get me wrong, the book is ok, but I think it lacks depth. Probably is ok as an introductory text as a Game Development 101 assignment on a school.

As a student the book is easy to read and the concepts are well explained. This book covers all the basics, everything you need to know from building your game to licensing and publishing and the numerous accounts from real developers help paint a better picture of the industry you're about to dive into.

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