Panzer Elite Public Beta

Thank you for downloading the public beta. The purpose of this beta is to check if it works on your machine. If you have any problems with this demo in any way please check the support section below how to give us feedback about it!

ONLY USE THE FEEDBACK SECTION BELOW TO REPORT PROBLEMS. Other means will be ignored.

One advice however: This is a BETA software. In other words the final quality and playability of the game cannot be judged solely by this demo. You get an impression of the potential, but surely cant rate it. The complete version of Panzer Elite offers much more through its campaign system. For further info about the features please check www.wingssimulations.com.

This demo must NOT be distributed in any way without prior written approval of Wings Simulations or Psygnosis. This includes but is not limited to: Internet sites, Covermount CD's, FTP servers and CD copies.

Installation

The game comes as a zip or self extracting archive file. Unzip it into any folder you wish. It occupies roughly 70 MB unzipped.

After installing the game you MUST START the 3D Control Center in order to make the game work!

System Requirements:
Minimum: P166MMX, 32MB. With 3D card you need 64MB.
Recomended: P2-266, 64MB, RivaTNT or Voodoo 2 Banshee 16MB card.
DirectX 6.1a (See below for URL's!). Active Movie 2.0.

Win95a does NOT have Active Movie 2.0, please install or use machines with later releases. We use Qsound for 3D sound, this should work on most Windows compatible sound devices.

3D Hardware Setup

Software Renderer: If you run this game on P166MMX up to P233MMX you might need to reduce viewrange for performance. See below (keytable) for info. Note: On many slow (non Pentium2) systems with 1st generation 3D Hardware our Software Renderer might perform better. The reason is the amount of graphics (textures) we need. On 1st Gen 3D cards we need to swap so many textures into the card that our Software Renderer might be faster.

Direct3D: Default should work on most computers.
The game automatically sets up your graphics card. If you got a secondary card like a Voodoo2 the program will use it by default. This means when you have a RivaTNT with a Voodoo2, but like to use the Riva, you need to choose another primary display via our select.exe program (advanced button).
<u>Reminder</u>: Choosing a higher resoltion occupies more space inside your 3D Card and might limit texture memory!

<u>**Advanced Options:**</u>

We do not recomend changing these settings, but play around with them if you want to change display results:

<u>Detail Level</u>: This setting decides which textures are being reduced in size and quality to fit inside your 3D card. You can use the highest detail level (thats 5) on small cards, but game speed is reduced. Using the user button you can turn texture reduction on/off for individual texture types.

<u>Window Mode</u>: If your card is a 2d/3d combo card like the TNT or Banshee you can run the main game in a window. This is for debugging only.

<u>Enable Software Cursor</u>: Earlier Voodoo cards which had to be installed separately besides your main video card had no hardware cursor support. Enable this option to show the software cursor.

<u>Filter Textures</u>: If you dont like the blurry look of 3D cards you can disable filtering with this option.

<u>DirectDraw Device</u>: If you have more than one 3D card installed you can select the correct driver to be used here

<u>Direct3D Device</u>: Ignore this for the moment, but you can activate the DirectX software emulation here (slow)

<u>Fog</u>: usually our game recognizes what fog type your card supports. If it doesnt you can choose between Vertex Fog and Fog Tabel mode

<u>Depth buffer</u>: Again, the game chooses automatically whats best for your card: w-buffer or z-buffer is w-buffer isnt supported.

<u>Halfscanmode</u>: This is an optimization for the software renderer which is not implemented yet.

Main Menu

Instant Action
There are three tabs you can choose the following settings: Nationality, number of tanks to control and which tanks you ad your wingman drives. Press "ok" to enter the scenario. Your simple goal is to destroy all opposing forces.
The game toggles between TWO different instant action scenarios, so try both.

Single Scenario (not available in beta)
You can choose among the 40 scenarios for each side. You will enter the campaign menu after you have chosen to start the game (see bwlo how that works). After playing the mission you will return to the main screen.

Campaign Game (not available in beta)
This represents the main game mode of the game. Three length of campaigns can be chosen:
• Short: covers one theater of war, either Desert, Italy or Normandy
• Medium: covers two theaters of war, either Desert and Italy or Italy and Normandy
• Long: covers all three theaters of war.

After choosing campaign length and startig theater of war the game enters the platoon screen. Here you can see, modify and equip your platoon. When moving the mouse over hotspots you ca click a description will appear. That works for all aras of this campaign menus. The following actions are possible:

Multiplayer
Setup is staight forward. One player setups the game while the others join. Use IPX or TCP/IP for LAN or TCP/IP for internet game. Notice: You MUST have DirectPlay6.1a installed. Follow this URL to patch your DirectX6.1 to DirectX6.1a: http://www.microsoft.com/directx/developer/downloads/dplay.asp

The beta only has ONE multiplayer map available.

Creating a Game
After selecting the protocoll you will be offered with a menu with the following settings:

<u>Map Name</u>: you can only pick one map here. The release version lets you pick all 40 maps available in the game.
<u>Number of Players</u>: set this to the maximum number of players you want to allow. Note: mor than 4 via internet might cause lag and lost connections. If all players have fast connections the number of players can be higher.
<u>Player Settings</u>: Here you can enter a historical date to limit the type of tanks the players can choose from. You can filer tanks for both sides to completly block certain tanks from usage, and you can set the buy limit, which sets the number of points each player can spend on his platoon. Thje respawn time is the time the player spends in "limbo" when he died, before he respawns.

<u>Victory Conditions</u>: You can set a time limit for the scenario. The victory conditions are either a kill score each player wants to reach or an area which needs to be conquered.

<u>Edit Area</u>: Here you can drag the spawn areas of the players to the locations you want them to start the game. Players who died will restart at this area. You can also create supply areas where players can refuel and reammo their tanks. If you set those zones to "Peacezones" no one can fire upon you while in such a zone nor can you fire out of such an area. In order to check which area you need to conquer or defend call up your Radio Operator map in game (key F12) to check.

Joining a game

Select join game and the protocoll the server uses. When playing on LAN (local area network) its either IPX or TCP/IP Automatic. Whe you play via the internet use TCP/IP Manual which requires that you enter the IP number of the host. If oyu are the host and want to give your friends your IP number to join the game use the start menu->launch and type "winipcfg". A window will popup and tell you your IP number. Use ICQ or IRC to give that number to your friends you play.

A selection screen appears which should have the game listed as soon as the host is ready. If it doesnt show it after a few minutes it would be good to check via ICQ or IRC if your friend is still there :o)

After selecting the game you can edit your platoon. A default platoon is choosen. If you want to overwrite those tanks just press the reset button and choose other tanks. There is a "buy" limit you can spend which you may not exceed. Press "ok" and enter your name when done and you will enter the chat.

Launching the game

Once all players are in chat (the color represents their nationality: green for allied, blue for german) the host may start the game and all clients will automatically go into the game.

Notes about Multiplayer

The above way to get a game going is pretty manual and might be much easier when we support a major gaming service like Heat or Microsoft Gamingzone. We are currently talking to them but at the release of this demo nothing has been decided yet.

Multiplayer is tested but has some crashbugs we still try to identify. Please tell us your experience via the feedback section!

<u>Options</u>

You can switch resolution of the main campaign menu here or reassign keyboard commands.

<u>Main Game</u>

Mouse Control

The mouse is your virtual view, ie. by moving the mouse you can look around**. To toggle between virtual view and mouse pointer just right click**. Your mouse pointer unlocks and is now usable to use the mousetank, which is our vector like display in the top left corner. Right click at any time to activate the virtual view again.

Drag the cannon to turn turret, drag the hull to turn the tank. Click on "+" to speed up, on "-" to slow down. Click on the numbers 1-4 to select your wingman, then click either on the landscape to move them there or on a target to let them engage it. Clicking on any of the small triangles changes your camera view to that position. The triangles below the wingman numbers are the 3rd person camera behind your wingman.

You can drag the mousetank with the top left drag handle or zoom the mousetank with the bottom right handle (good for larger resolutions where the mousetank is small).

The large button below the mousetank accesses the pop-up menu with the most common commands. Those are identical to the commands listed below but gives easier access.

Using the Mousetank

The wireframe tank abbreviation in the top left corner is a mouse control device we camm Mousetank, or MT for short. The following fuctions can be accessed with the mouse pointer:

Drag and hold cannon:	Rotate Turret
Drag and hold hull:	Steer hull while driving
Clicking on +:	Accelerate
Clicking on -:	Brake

Clicking on small squares:	Change camera position to crew member indicated
Clicking on small triangles:	Change camera position to external view as indicated
Clicking on numbers:	Select Wingman #
Clicking on large "M" bar:	Access pop-up menu for Wingman and misc. commands (third mouse button pops this up as well)
Red Arrows:	Compass, the large triangle points to north
Third Mousebutton:	Pop up menu

Using Mouse Interface for Wingmans
You can select a wingman either with the MT as explained above or simply by clicking on him in the 3D main window. This selects the wingman. In order to tell him to go somewhere simply click into the landscape. If you click on a target he will atack it as best as he can.
Pressing the Alt.key and into the landscape will let him fire smoke if available on that spot. If you Alt-click an object he will try to destroy that object with HE ammunition.
Note: Wingman use all their weaponry to their disposal automatically.

Using a Joystick
Most joystick functions have default settings. We use a Microsoft Sidewinder as an example, other joysticks work similar or have less functions if they got less axis or buttons.

Joystick left/right:	Steer left/right
Joystick up/down:	Raise/Lower cannon
Twist Joystick:	Rotate Turret
Firebutton:	Fire Main gun
Coolie Hat:	Change View
Buttons ABCD:	Change view to crew members
Throttle:	Change speed

NOTE: It might be necessary to unplug your joystick if you dont use it due to its interference with the game when not calibrated correctly. You can increase the dead center in the main menu options screen!

Keyboard Interface

Controlling the Tank
1-0 (main keyboard)	10%-100% speed
Backspace:	stop, apply brakes
Cursor up/down:	Accelerate, Brake
Cursors keys left/right:	Steer left right
4/6 on numpad:	Turret traverse left/right
8/2 on numpad:	Cannon up/down

(note: most steering functions can be set to faster intervalls pressing the Control-key simultaneously)

Fire Equipment
Space:	Fire Main Gun
	(select target first to fire at target or deselect with right mouse button to fire in gun direction)
Left mouseclick:	Select target
R:	Select closest enemy in Range
T:	Select closest Threat (to your tank)
N:	Next in selection
Ammunition selection:	A=Armor Piercing, H=High Explosives, S=Smoke, Shift A/H: Special AP1 and AP2
L:	Loader info (ammo in stock)
/ (divide on numpad):	Fire Bow MG
* (multiply on numpad):	Fire Coax MG
Cursor Keys&Shift:	Move Bow MG

Cockpit

Ctrl-B:	Close Hatch (button up, is a toggle)
5 (numpad)	Commander View (outside hatch or inside depending on hatch status)
1 (numpad)	Gunner View
7 (numpad)	Driver View
9 (numpad)	Radio Operator View
3 (numpad)	Loader View

F1:	Forward View
F1 (again)	Second Forward View (Scope at gunner, visionslit at driver etc.)
F2:	Left View
F3:	Right View
F4:	Back Views
F1-F4 with Ctrl:	External Views

Shortcuts:

F5:	Binocular
F6:	Drivers Vision Slit
F7:	Bow MG Scope
F8:	Gunners Scope

Shift F12:	Save Screenshot (into root directory of Panzer Elite)
F12:	Map View and Platoon status, Artillery strikes

Controlling Camera

Alt-Left/Right	Turn Camera around tank
Alt-PageUp/PageDown:	Elevation of Camera
Alt-cusor down/up (numpad):	camera zoom

Wingmen Commands

Ctrl-V: Start Formation Change, then press Ctrl- (l)ine, (c)ollumn, [Echolong Left,] Echolong right

Select Wingman (Toggles, multiple Selections possible):

Ctrl-1:	Select Wingmen 1
Ctrl-2:	Select Wingmen 2
Ctrl-3:	Select Wingmen 3
Ctrl-4:	Select Wingmen 4
Ctrl-5:	Select ALL Wingmen
Ctrl-6:	Select Convoy (if exists in scenario)
Ctrl-A:	Attack marked target
Ctrl-F:	Fire at Will
Ctrl-X:	Cease Fire
Ctrl-W:	Wait
Ctrl-C:	Continue
Ctrl-G:	Goto Location

View Ranges & Performance

On some computers (non Pentium2) it might be necessary to reduce viewrange to get a better performance. Try those in game: (final version will profile computer and make those choices, but lets the user change the setting)

Alt-F1:	Short Viewrange
Alt-F2:	Medium Viewrange (default)
Alt-F3:	Long Viewrange

Feedback, or how to report bugs, suggestions and problems

First, try to recreate the bug. If you can it helps us finding it when you describe how you recreated it. then check the KNOWN ISSUES section on our webpage, which should soon open. If your bug is listed there please do not send it again.

Look at the list below and find out in which category your bug belongs and use the email adress listed for that categroy. The category will also list what FILES you should send to us so we can verify your system configuration.
Describe the problem you encounter in detail and send the email to the adress listed. It helps us if you list your system configuration as well like:
CPU type, Memory, 3D Card type, directX Version, Soundcard.

Suggestions
For any suggestions you might have please use this email adress: suggestions@wingssimulations.com

3D Hardware/Software Renderer
Any problem ecountered with 3D hardware accelerators or the software renderer should be reported to this email adress.
You will help us if you include the following files as ATTACHMENTS immediately AFTER the prolbem occured:

Data\cpu.ini	This file contains your PC's CPU type
Data\hwconfig.ini	This file contains your 3D hardware card type
Data\EnumDirectXlog.txt	This file contains DirectX setup informaton
Data\Desertfoxlog.txt	This file is the debug error log file
Data\Setting.hal	This file are your current settings of your 3D control center

Email to: 3d@wingssimulations.com

Controls
Any problem associated with keyboard, mouse or joystick should be emailed to: controls@wingssimulations.com

Gameplay
Any issues with gameplay like crashes, physics, simulation oddities, shooting, terrain or vehicles should be emailed to the below adress. Include the following file:

Data\Campaign.ini	This file contains the current startup conditions of your scenario
Data\Desertfoxlog.txt	This file is the debug error log file
Data\Setting.hal	This file are your current settings of your 3D control center

Email to: gameplay@wingssimulations.com

Sound
Any issues you have with sound should be emailed along with your soundcard type to: sound@wingssimulations.com

Artificial Intelligence
Any issues you have with pathfinding or behaviour of your wingman or AI controlled units should be emailed to:
AI@wingssimulations.com

Multiplayer
ANY multiplayer issues should be emailed to: Multiplayer@wingssimulations.com

Misc
Anything which does not fit into the above categories like issues with the menu, keyboard reconfiguration etc. please email to: Misc@wingssimulations.com

Again, to summarize:

Suggestions:	suggestions@wingssimulations.com
3D Hardware:	3d@wingssimulations.com
Controls:	controls@wingssimulations.com
Gameplay:	gameplay@wingssimulations.com
Sound Issues:	sound@wingssimulations.com
AI Issues:	AI@wingssimulations.com
Multiplayer:	Multiplayer@wingssimulations.com
Misc:	Misc@wingssimulations.com

Read the message board what our alpha testers have to say about Panzer Elite:

As a reviewer, editor, and sim enthusiast, I don't usually care for breathless endorsements of sims. That being said, I now want to go against everything I believe in and make a blanket statement right up front:
Panzer Elite could become the best tank simulation ever. Really.
(John "Spoons" Sponauer in the SimHQ.com preview)

Now, that I've written the piece, I must say I haven't not been so impressed with a game in years. PE is fantastic!! I'd be playing it all the time if I didn't have to review Talonsoft's "West Front", a nice game but tame compared to PE.
(Jim Cobb/writer of preview in Computer Gaming World)

Wooow those forrests look really amazing...it feels good...hell one time. I even stopped to enjoy the scenery around, the trees the grass...I could almost smell the air as well :)
(Peter Fisla)

It's funny, because both Rod White (from PCME.COM) and I met at another event and are
still talking about the game (Panzer Elite)...
(Marc Dulz, Writer for Computer Gaming World, Gamecenter.com and many others)

Looking forward to Panzer Elite very much.
I downloaded the screenshot named 'Screen1.jpg' from Gamezone.com, converted it to a .bmp and now use it as my opening Windows screen. It's that good!
Really, the tank models (and infantry as well)do look excellent. Whoever built them is very talented.
Have high hopes for this game/sim. Go, go, go!
(Rick McCammon)

I seem to recall seeing turret machine guns on some WWII tanks. Will that be part of the game i.e., can commander or loader take on infantry with turret machine gun while unbuttoned? BTW, been following board since it started - what a wonderful concept!! Speaks volumes of your concepts regarding honesty and customer relations.
(Gandalf)

Keep up the good work and extremely good custumer-company relationship!
(Blackhound)

The game gives you a previous unexperienced feeling of "being-there". The superb graphics are closer to reality then anything I´ve ever seen on a PC. An incoming artillery strike let´s me always automatically look for cover under my desk. And NOT losing a wingman in a mission is an extremely satisfying experience, cause coming back with your platoon intact is no easy task. (The AI gives you a real challange, espacially when not riding a Tiger, but rather a platton of 4 PzIVH)
(Holger Netthoevel)

Ok.. I'm calming down now ;-).. time to come up with some better ideas I guess. But hell running through the houses is a LOT of fun hehehe.. Especially the ones marked "Vive le France".
(Fionn Kelly)