

Why does it take so long? or...  
The delay of Mac ports and what  
to do about them.

Welcome to the December edition of Point & Click. This column is about my opinions on games as a long-time gamer, the gaming industry and the people involved, and much more.

This month I'll be talking about the reactions of most gamers to the length of time it takes for games to be ported to the MacOS and what you can do to benefit the Mac gaming community.

Also keep in mind that while I use Diablo and Blizzard as a specific example, the following opinions are relevant to any game and any company.

## n Example Of A Long Wait

For those of you who don't know about Diablo, it is a role-playing game by Blizzard set in medieval times. It was released for the PC in January 1997 and was promised for the MacOS in the summer of 1997. It hasn't been released yet.

And while you're at it screw Blizzard. Christ. They are exploiting Mac users. Wherever the money is at. They focus their energy on PC games because that is where the buck is at. Shall I be the first Mac user to say I refuse to buy Diablo?

This is an actual message posted on the Diablo message board at the Macintosh Gamers Forum on AOL. This post reflects the opinions of many Macintosh gamers about delayed or canceled ports. I'm sure most of us can understand where he's coming from. We've had the frustration of waiting and waiting for that game that either never came or was months behind the PC version. We felt angry and wanted to punish the company for treating us so rudely. We wanted to show that although our numbers might be small, we can still have a big impact that will make them think twice before ever doing anything like that again. We want respect for what we feel is the best

gaming computer on the market, the Macintosh.

However, what we really want is the game. We've been waiting months for it, and not buying it would be depriving ourselves of hours of fun gaming experience. This conflict is shown in another post, also about Diablo.

## Biting The Hand That Feeds You

Ahh!! It's a vicious circle! Don't buy the game, and screw Blizzard, but we must buy the game to sate our inhuman desires!!!!

Let's look more closely at what the guy above said about hurting Blizzard if we don't buy Diablo. I think that the only people we will be hurting is ourselves if we refuse to buy Diablo, or any game, merely because it is a few months late. What the game companies care most about is revenue. If the Macintosh community can show, through their dollars, that there is money to be made from selling a Mac version, then more Mac versions will be made. What company in its right mind would continue porting games to the Mac if they lost money the last time they did it? It wouldn't make financial sense.

## Release Dates

The real root of the Diablo debate is about release dates, the bane of any game publisher or developer. Many people are mad because Blizzard promised us a summer 1997 release and they couldn't make it. They complain that Diablo is now an old game and newer games are on the market. Why do so many people equate keeping release dates with how much the companies care about the Macintosh? I don't know what goes into the making of a port but I do know that delays beyond the control of the programmers happen. I also know that calling a company uncaring because of this is wrong. Someone else said this far better than I can in a post to the same AOL message board.

Why boycott Blizzard??

If you like the game buy it.

If you don't like the game,

Don't buy it!

It's that simple.

Personally I will download the demo and play with it for a few days. If it's cool I'll buy it. If the multiplayer features look cool I'll buy it. If it's a fun game I'll buy it. I really don't care when it's released. If nobody had given you any release dates and it suddenly appeared in stores sometime in November would you have even thought of boycotting Blizzard? Why should any software company bother giving out release dates if their just going to get a bunch of negative bull.

Hear! Hear! Isn't the most important thing getting the game released? Isn't the most important thing being able to play the game? I would have loved

for it to have been released in the summer as Blizzard promised, but it just wasn't possible. It wasn't as if Blizzard purposely held off funding or delayed the project to do others for Windows. The delay was the fault of events outside the control of the programmers and we should be patient. Diablo will come and it will be great.

## What To Do?

What can you do about a game that's been delayed or isn't even going to be ported? Unfortunately, there isn't anything you can do directly, but indirectly you can be a powerful force in keeping more games coming to the MacOS.

If a game has been delayed then keep an open mind about buying it. Check out the demo, reviews and other people's opinions. Don't boycott any company or encourage others to do so because it will hurt and not help. If you think you will enjoy a game then buy it on its merits alone.

If a game might not be ported then go to Mac Requests - War Room at <http://macrequests.pair.com/warroom.html>. Sign petitions that will be sent to the companies to let them know that you want their games ported. Write the company a letter telling them how much you and your friends want the game ported. Encourage others to write letters too. A bit of advice; writing a paper letter is more effective than writing an email because it seems more serious.

In the end, all you can do is wait and hope that the game will still be released. It isn't as exciting or invigorating as boycotting a company but it will yield more beneficial results. In the end, what we all want is for the game to be available for the MacOS.

Erica J. Marceau

[erica@applewizards.net](mailto:erica@applewizards.net)

<http://members.aol.com/MacSierra/>

<http://www.applewizards.net/>