

Product Information

Published by MacSoft

Web: <<http://www.macsoft.com>>

List Price: \$49.99

Age: Mature 17+ Animated violence, blood and gore

System Requirements

PowerPC 603e at 180MHz or faster or 604e at 132MHz or faster

32 MB RAM (64 recommended)

Mac OS 7.6 or higher (Mac OS 8.0 or higher recommended)

120MB hard disk space and a CD-ROM drive

Name any computer game genre that ends with “ups” and most probably it is the kind that I hate most. Shoot'em'ups, bash'em'ups, mash'em'ups, etc. Normally these mindless shooting games have one main objective: shoot everything that moves on the screen and do your best not to suffer a nervous breakdown.

Nowadays, it seems that the only thing that differentiates one shoot'em'up from another (say Quake and Doom) is the amount of various weapons and gore in the game. Even the story lines seem to be suspiciously the same (90% of the time you have to save the world from aliens.) Nonetheless, it seems these kind of games have proved to be very popular among computer gamers, so much so that the market is now over-saturated with such games.

However, to every scenario there is an exception to the rule, and Unreal is the exception in this case.

Featuring 24-bit color, super-hi-resolution graphics, spectacular dynamic lighting, and bilinear texture smoothing (makes walls, objects and creatures look better up close), it is optimized for 3D graphics cards and multi-player setup procedures.

Internet play, with true client-server environments, is but a small demonstration of how well-

thought-out the game is. Rumors say it took 3 years to develop. It's involving plot, addictive qualities, balanced puzzles and relatively "easy" side-controls made it an instant hit in the Wintel market. At the time, porting Unreal to the Mac seemed a big challenge. Macsoft, a veteran in Mac games having previous experience in porting Quake and Duke Nukem 3D, stood up to that challenge, and excelled at it, too. The game is not only better looking than ever, but feels much more responsive than its Wintel counterpart.

No time to admire the mouth-watering graphics, counter-attack. Fast!

Unreal is one of those games that gets you addicted to its genre without you even noticing it. Call me a nerd [Ok, you're a nerd! —Ed.], but I always look for mind-involving challenges, even in games. Unreal requires a certain amount of strategy to complete; it got me so hooked that I lost all sort of social etiquette for a month. The nice aspect of the game is that you actually start living the character while playing.

When you fire, it is for survival, not just for mindless killing (although it tends to get very messy at times). You start off by choosing your character, then the story begins. You are a prisoner aboard a spaceship that crashes upon an unknown planet for an unknown reason (err...I never said no aliens, I meant the game is an exception in another sense <g>) The goal seems simple—just escape. The plot is actually much more complex, but you only know it a step at a time, which makes the game more exciting to complete.

The graphics are simply stunning, the options are tremendous, and the game is very stable. The manual is small, but very effective and clear (made like your prisoner log book that you found when the ship crashed). The package is an absolute killer. To be completely honest, I think I was so impressed by the game's package (die cutting, embossing and various special colors), because it is what you would expect from more expensive software, not a game.

Definitely, not for the weak-hearted.

I have only two complaints about the game (which are rather serious); there is no auto-mapping, and it is extremely heavy on resources. If you can survive both problems, and can afford the game then I would strongly recommend it. If you would like to know more about Unreal for the Mac you can try the following:

Macsoft: <<http://www.wizworks.com/macsoft>>

Scandalon (Matthew Parsons): <<http://www.planetunreal.com/mac>>

Now if only I knew how to work out the ASMD combo attack...

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