Earthsiege 3 Technology Demo Release Notes.

Section I: Overview

Thank you for downloading the Earthsiege 3 technology Demonstration!

This demo is the shake down cruise of our next generation game engine, Internet Server architecture, as well as a very early test of play balance for Earthsiege 3. Our master plan of conquest is to release a series of demos over time, each one incorporating new features and game elements and allowing for ample opportunity for input from gamers like you during the game's development.

This first installment is a pre-alpha technology release, not a Beta version. We know there are a lot of things in there like explosions, debris, etc., which are pretty rough. Oh yeah, and a complete lack of any single player capability. Little stuff like that.

Bearing all this in mind, please let us know what you think. We crave your input. If you like something, please let us know. If it bites, please tell us so we can fix it. We are doing this to bring you, a valued potential future customer, the best possible gaming experience in Earthsiege 3.

Absolutely nothing is set in stone at this point. Okay, a couple items are wet concrete, but even there you can still scribble your initials if you take our meaning. We want your input on every aspect of the demo: the vehicle designs, buildings, artwork, weapons, terrain, interface, speed, network performance, server architecture and whatever else you can think of. Tell us, we are listening!

Please post your comments to:
http://www.dynamix.com/es3/forums.html

Please include details of your system configuration and network connection including

Processor type
Processor Speed
Video Card
3D Accelerator Card
RAM
Operating System
Sound Card
Modem/Network Connection Speed

Section II: Supported Platforms

Windows '95,   Windows NT, Pentium processor, at least 32 MB RAM. The demo will probably run on 16 meg machines, but this has not been thoroughly tested.

Windows '95 users must install DirectX5 to run the Earthsiege Demo. A version of the demo with DirectX5

is available on the sierra website or from Microsoft. Windows NT users must install Service Pack 3. We recommend you also install the newest video drivers from your card manufacturer. This is especially important if you have a 3D accelerator installed. Only 3DFX-based 3D accelerator cards are supported in this version of the Technology Demo. The Technology demo supports VooDoo, VooDoo2, and VooDoo Rush chipsets.

The Technology Demo has been tested with the following 3D Accelerator Cards:

Righteous 3D (Orchid)
Intense 3D Voodoo Rush (Intergraph Computer Systems)
Stingray 128 3D (Hercules)
Pure 3D (Canopus)
Monster 3D (Diamond)

For an updated list of supported 3D accelerator cards by manufacturer, you can check our website at:
http://www.dynamix.com/es3

Section III: Installation

The Demo requires at least 35 megs of uncompressed hard disk space and about 50 megs of free Hard disk space after the game is installed. We recommend that you allow Windows to manage your virtual memory settings but if you choose set the swap file manually, make sure it is at least 50 megabytes in size.

To install the game, download the file (if you haven't already) from our website at:
http://www.dynamix.com/es3/download.html

Click on the file icon and the self-extracting will do the rest. Follow the onscreen commands in the setup menu. There is even a handy icon to uninstall the demo should you wish to do so.

Section IV: Quickstart

Here is a quick and dirty crib sheet to get you in the cockpit fast. It is by no means complete, however. Please refer to the GAME MENUS and GAME CONTROLS documents for an in-depth description of all functions.

Connecting to the game.
1) Dial up and connect to your internet service provider.
2) Launch the Earthsiege Technology Demo
3) From the **Main Menu**, select "Join Game."
4) This will take you to the **Join Game Menu**, If it is not highlighted, left-click the item on the menu with your mouse.
labeled **Master Server:Dynamix.**
5) Press the **Query Selected** button. You should see a list of available game servers.
6) Find one that does NOT have a little padlock symbol next to it and has a low number in the "Ping" field. **Left Click** with the mouse to select it.
7) Press the "**Join Server**" button. This will take you to the Player Setup Menu.
8) Left click on the "**Player Name**" field. Type in your pilot's name.
9) Press "Okay." You should connect to a game at this point. If you have problems, it may be because the server you have selected has been shut down, or the maximum number of players is already in the game. You could also experience problems if your Internet Service Provider is experiencing very heavy loads. You may have to try later in this case.

Battle Controls
Here is a quick list of controls to get you going.

Alt+Enter will switch you to full screen mode. You probably want to run the game this way for best performance.
F5 allows you to chat with players in the game.

Movement
The keypad on the far right of your keyboard controls your movement.
Number Pad 8 (up) will accelerate forward
Number Pad 2 (down) will accelerate backward
Number Pad 4 (left) will turn you to the left
Number Pad 6 (right) will turn you to the left

Firing Controls
The Target cross-hair aiming is controlled with the mouse.
Left Mouse Button fires the current weapon
Right Mouse Button targets an object or enemy in your crosshair
"T" Targets the closest non-teammate
Number Keys 1-4 selects current weapon (most Hercs have only 2)
"L" Links weapons of the same type together (dual fire)

A few words about targeting.
It is important to target something before you fire your weapons at it: they will not triangulate on an object or enemy if it is not targeted, making it very difficult to hit.

When you have successfully targeted an enemy, a box will appear around him and you will see a **circle connected by a line** to your target for all weapons except missiles. This is the **Target Lead Indicator** and it is your best friend in battle. Aim at the center of the circle to hit the target.

Missiles are self-guided and therefore do not require a lead indicator, but they must lock-on to a target before they will hit it. A green box appears when you have achieved a missile lock on a targeted enemy. You must achieve a lock each time you shoot a missile salvo. Wait for the lock before you fire!

Miscellaneous Controls.
Number Pad 9 Engages your chameleon cloak
Number Pad 3 Will cause you to crouch. Press it again to get up.
Spacebar Reincarnates you when you die. And you will die: that's why its called a Deathmatch!
Shift-S Shuts down/Powers up your reactor. You have to be shut down to receive the benefits from a repair or reloading pad.

Using Repair and Reload pads.
There are special pads in the game that will repair damage and reload your weapons. The "repair" pad has a red cross in the center. The "reload" pad has a bullseye. You must stand on the pad and power down to utilize it. It may take several seconds to complete its function if you are badly hurt or very low on ammo.

There's a lot more, but this should get you started.

Section V: General Performance Notes.

Earthsiege 3 is a CPU intensive 3D simulation. The faster machine you have, the better off you will be. If you are running a server (i.e. hosting a session), the system demands are quite a bit higher than if you are merely joining one. The person with the fastest machine should always host your network games for best performance. It is also very important for the Host to have a good internet connection. If you can set up a powerful machine as a dedicated server, your network experience will be a premium one.

Graphics detail and screen resolution settings can be changed to improve performance in the program

shell "**Options Menu**" or they can be changed on the fly while you are in the game. Press **F3** to bring up the preferences while in the simulation, or go to the Main Menu Options screen. The biggest boosts to performance will come from lowering the screen resolution, turning down the detail on shadows, decreasing the visibility distance, and lowering the terrain detail.

The initial graphics settings for your machine are automatically determined the first time you run the game. If you wish to return to default settings after you have changed the preferences, you must delete the file defaultPrefsCfg.cs. The next time the game is run, the auto-configuration program will run again.

Section VI: Recommended machines

Well, this is part of the reason we are releasing the demo: To find out. You probably will do fine as a client machine with 32 megs and a 166 in software at 640X480 or 512X384 with the detail cranked down a notch. For a 133, you will probably have to run at 320X200 resolution and turn a lot of the bells and whistles off.

Here are some configurations we think will perform well:

Client Machine
P166 with 32 meg, 8 meg SVGA video card, 3DFX accelerator, 28.8 or greater internet connection.

Server machine.
P200 or better, 64 meg, >28.8 internet connection.

Unabashed 3D Accelerator Card Plug:
You don't have a 3D Accelerator yet? Well, we think you should get one. Not only does it make Earthsiege look awesome, but it also runs a lot faster. And hey, it's a lot cheaper than upgrading your whole machine. We like the 3DFX and Verite chipsets best (but only the 3DFX chipset works with this demo!). Make sure to read the label before you buy: there is a lot of junk out there masquerading as 3D accelerators.

Section VII: Known Issues

"Stacking" Hercs.
If many people join a game simultaneously and do not move from the starting point, it is possible that one player may land on top of another when entering the game. This will not damage either player, but the player on the top of the stack cannot move until the player beneath him moves from the starting point.

General Joystick Support Issues

If you experience extremely poor performance (jerkiness and very slow mouse response even in the shell) it may be due to a joystick calibration problem. To remedy this you must do a complete (POWER OFF) shutdown, restart your machine and then recalibrate your joystick. Restarting windows or even pressing the reset button on your machine will not be enough. You should do this each time you plug or unplug a joystick or other game control device into the game port on your computer.

Joystick Support with NT
The only Joystick supported under NT is the Microsoft Sidewinder 3D PRO. If you have a fast machine and are experiencing problems using your Sidewinder with the demo, you may be able to solve this problem by re-installing the joystick drivers from NT Service Pack 2. You will need the Service Pack 2 CDROM to do this.

Insert the service Pack 2 CD in your CDROM drive
Select "Settings" from your Start Menu
Select "Control Panel"
Double Click on "Multimedia"

Click the "Devices" tab
Click "Add"
Select "Unlisted or Updated Driver."
Enter the Path to the directory on the CDROM containing the joystick driver (e.g., e:\i386\ )
Click "OK"
When the dialog box with the default address for your joystick port appears; make sure it is correct.
Then click "OK" again.
Then click "Yes" to restart your computer. (It is a good idea to do a power-off restart).
Make sure to calibrate your joystick before running the demo.

Section VIII: Earthsiege URLS

Sierra's Earthsiege 3 Site
The "Official" marketing site for ES3. Has some nice stuff.
http://www.sierra.com/ES3

Earthsiege Webring HQ
Excellent starting point with links to fan sites, story, and special events.
http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Castle/8911/index.html

Earthsiege Underground.
This is the hardcore Earthsiege site. Check it out for the latest dirt, Earthsiege universe writers guide, additional background, and stuff they won't let us put up on the official site. This will be the location of the message boards during the tech release
http://www.dynamix.com/es3

Section IX: Technical Demo Documents List

If you really want to get down to the nitty gritty, here are a few things you can check out
Game Menus.Doc   Word Document outlining complete shell functionality
Herc Systems.Doc   Complete Description of Herc systems and Hud
Vehicles&Weapons.Doc   Stats on the vehicles and weapons in the demo
Input Mapping Help Text   How to customize all game controls: for serious gamers.

These documents are all available on the Earthsiege Technology Demo Website.

Section X: Game Controls.

Note for the serious gamers: all key assignments, joystick, mouse and other input device functions are completely customizable and can be changed by editing the input configuration files. Please see refer to "Input Mapping Help Text" for instructions on creating a custom keymap to suit your personal tastes. If it was not included with your download it is available at our website.

Function Keys

F1 - Configure HUD mode
(Click and drag with the mouse to reposition the HUD instruments)

F2 - Sim preferences setting
F3 – Toggle Player Scoreboard
F4 - draw in wireframe
F5 - send message to EVERYONE (shout)

F6 - send message to your TEAM
F7 - send message to your current TARGET
F8 - send message to a specific PLAYER

F11 - set full screen to Software
F12 - set full screen to Glide (if available)

Keyboard Vehicle Controls

A, NumPad 8	Turn Left
D, NumPad 2	Turn Right
W, NumPad 3	Increase Forward Velocity
X, NumPad 4	Increase Backward Velocity (slows you down if moving forward)
S, Backspace	Stop

Shift-S	Power down/restart
L	Link/Unlink same weapon types

1	Select Weapon 1
2	Select Weapon 2
3	Select Weapon 3
4	Select Weapon 4

E, NumPad 9	Cloak/Decloack
C, NumPad 3	Crouch/Stand

O	Projectile Camera

Enter,
NumPad *   Activate/Deactivate Shield

Shift+Enter,
NumPad/   Activate/Deactivate Shield Tracking (must have enemy targeted)

Q, NumPad 7	Focus shields forward
Z, NumPad 1	Focus shields rear

[	Rotate shield focus left
]	Rotate shield focus right

T,
NumPad Enter Target nearest enemy (non-teammate)

G,
NumPad -   Next enemy target (non-teammate)

Shift-G,
NumPad +   Previous enemy target (non-teammate)

R	Step through scanner ranges
Shift-R	Toggle active/passive sensor mode

, (comma)	Next Navpoint
.(period)	Previous navpoint
M	Set Navpoint

Space   Fire current weapon

Mouse Controls

Movement: Aiming of targeting crosshair

Button 0 (left)   Fire
Button 1 (right) Select Target
Button 2 (mid) Target nearest enemy (non-teammate)

Default Joystick Control (for an 8 button 3-axis joystick such as SideWinder)

X-axis (right or left)   Turn
Y-axis (forward/back)   Accelerate forward or backward
Rz-axis (twist-rudder)   Adjust shield focus front/rear
Z-axis (throttle)   Fine adjust acceleration forward or backward

Button 0   Fire
Button 1   Target Object Under Crosshair
Button 2   Link Weapons
Button 3   Cloak/Decloak
Button 4   Previous Weapon
Button 5   Next Weapon
Button 6   Couch/Stand
Button 7   Toggle shield tracking

Hat: Move targeting crosshair (aiming)