The crisis with Crysis

Contributed by Lutzifer
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I really liked Crysis. It excelled in nearly every aspect of the game in comparison to its predecessor Farcry. The lush graphics and the nice gameplay variations made it a thoroughly enjoyable experience for me and i even defended it against critics, who thought it to be just a mediocre offering. The only thing that felt short of an AAA title on my first play-thru was the ending. And that is a gross understatement. Crysis features one of the most anti-climactic endings in A-list gaming history and is even worse than the already mediocre ending that Farcry used. The last two boss fights were just plain boring and tedious and the developers tried to mask it as difficult by throwing a bunch of smaller enemies at you to make it feel more difficult. But they only managed to ruin it even further imho. You ask yourself, why is he telling us this now?

Well, because the developers decided to stop patching the game just half a year after its release, which is not only a shame for the players, but also shows how little Crytek and EA care for their product support. I wouldnt even have commented on this, if EA didnt have a track-record for not supporting their games beyond the five seconds they make big bucks with it, but because i actually used to think highly of Crytek. Their decision made me especially angry because they also had the audacity to blame piracy for their failure in making enough money with the game:

Cevat Yerli in an interview with PC Play (hr):

(...) We are suffering currently from the huge piracy that is encompassing Crysis. We seem to lead the charts in piracy by a large margin, a chart leading that is not desirable. I believe that’s the core problem of PC Gaming, piracy. To the degree PC Gamers that pirate games inherently destroy the platform. Similar games on consoles sell factors of 4-5 more. It was a big lesson for us and I believe we won’t have PC exclusives as we did with Crysis in future. We are going to support PC, but not exclusive anymore.

While i agree that it is lucrative to develop for multiple plattforms it is still ludicrous to argue like above. Sure, other companies have also sold less of their games on the PC compaired to consoles, but those where often released first on the consoles and arrived only as ports on the pc carrying their own set of critical development and marketing mistakes (dumbed down gameplay & interfaces, technical issues, etc.). In my opinion his argument reeks of aggrieved re-attribution of Crytek's mistakes with Crysis, so they can use the old scapegoat pirate joe and join in the choir about the death of pc-gaming, that other incompetent developers like to sing also. I could go on about the fallacy of the pc-is-dead line of arguing but since Doug Lombardi already said it better, just follow this link.
On a side-note: Multiplattform-development is something i have waited for for ages, as sure have many other gamers world-wide. And just when others are making this a feasible thing by giving developers the tools to do so (like the Unreal engine for example), he uses it as a argument to counter piracy, while in reality they have gone with PC-exclusivity because they where paid of by microsoft to do so... ...or in Eric Cartman's words: WEAK!

Other reasons, why Crysis didnt make it:
The easy ones are the high competition with other titles in the tough christmas-market and the three consoles that were also pretty new to the market (the wee one was even sold out because of the high demand), so the customers money maybe just wasnt there in the same amount that they had hoped for. Another point that you can find in the Lombardi interview is the gross neglect of the hardware base of pc gamers. There is only a handful of gamers that have the rigs to play Crysis in all its glory and still many many more gamers went out and bought it, despite the fact that Crytek developed for the wrong target audience. Others may have invested the money in hardware and went with the piracy route, but that's tough luck imho, if you neglect the hardware base of your customers (still 70% on directx 9 cards).

Now for the product itself:
As i said above, i enjoyed my first run through the game. But when i played it again with my girlfriend, i actually noticed alot of the mediocrity that others had seen already. The enemy placement often felt out of place / unrealistic and the high amount of enemies seemed to be there, at more than one point in the game, to make up for the unballanced gameplay, i.e. the super-human capabilities of your suit. The story in its essence breaks down to a shorter version of halo in the farcry setting, and once you make that comparison alot of the things feel tainted. I still liked it though, but knowing that the ending would suck the big one, didnt help much in motivating me and my girlfriend to actually finish that playing session. The last save when we stopped playing is somewhere after the pretty boring inside-the-alien-structure part and my girlfriend has no intention on finishing.

I can only imagine what the drop of support means for the online multiplayer community, but it doesnt look too well either...

So, in conclusion, why do developers not spare us the PR bullshit and their self-righteous explanaitions and admit, that their game didnt go well, because - oh well - it might have not been that great. There i said it. It's that simple...