Clans: United we stand

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Introduction: 'Sweet Anton'

The seven-year old Swede Anton is a Corporal, but not in the regular Swedish Army. He is a member of *Commandos Elite*, a *Medal of Honor: Allied Assault* (*Mohaa*) clan. Being a Corporal in the clan *Terran Confederation*[1] Dennis, one of our researchers, often plays matches against his Swedish equal. Is the match in fact equal with him being seven years old while he's twenty-five years old? One would say no immediately if it wasn't for the fact they don't meet face to face. These matches are all played *online*, where age doesn't matter, but skill does.

When a group of people decide to bundle up their skills and work as a team under one name a *'clan'* is formed. To be more exact and to quote Lucien King:

> *"Clan: a term for a group of players who practise and compete together on a regular basis within the culture of Quake and other first-person shooter games. Every clan gives itself a name, and members of that clan will add a two- or three-letter abbreviation as a tag to their own name to show membership in the clan. Like track and field, clans compete together in both solo and group events. Top clans are ranked and recognized like top players."* (King, 2002)

Clans, like every multiplayer online game, are community-oriented. Just recently are active player communities of successful games seen as having high commercial value and are attracting increasing attention from researchers, developers and gamers and their communities. This recent interest in clans caught our attention and we will analyse clans from different perspectives with this main question:

'*What's the significance of clans for the gamer, its community and the developer?'*

This paper is also important for future research as it can be used as a reference or guide on clans. The five following papers each address the clans of Mohaa from different perspectives.

The papers are written by students of Utrecht University and present the outcome of an explorative study that had its primary goal to study the phenomenon clans from a variety of perspectives.

We decided on studying clans as a whole, and not pick players or a clan as a case study. As I said before, being in a clan myself granted me access to other clan's forums, members' only areas and for the sake of my 'clan title' other clan members are more willingly to answer our questions. This research also will be a good reference for future (case) studies. Anton's father, for example, was a member of *Commandos Elite* too, but decided to join another clan. What made Anton decide to stay at *Commandos Elite*? And why does Anton's father let him play a game that's for ages 15+? As a researcher this is a very interesting field to study, as =TC= Cpl. Mauz I don't care what clan he is in or how old he is, as long as he takes my bullets first before I take his…

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[1] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk

Medal of Honor: Allied Assault: 'for the n00bs & 1337s'

Medal of Honor: Allied Assault is the third in a series of WWII games published by EA Games. The first two (*Medal of Honor* and *MoH: Underground*) were developed by Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks Interactive for the Sony PlayStation, continuing the director's fascination with all things WWII. For the series' first foray onto the PC, EA handed over development to 2015. After its release in 2002 it has won numerous awards and by now two more pc expansions have been released as well as an Xbox, Gamecube and Playstation 2 version.

We will, however, concentrate on the PC version, as this is being played online. Although the new console games will have the opportunity to be played online it is still in development, not to mention its community. The PC version has already a highly developed online community and this is what we're interested in and one of the main reasons we chose this game. Another reason is that First Person Shooters, like MOHAA, are perfect to build clans around. Because the game has multiplayer maps that make you work as a team you quickly rely on each other to win the round, you HAVE to work together.

Medal of Honor: Allied Assault recreates the sights and sounds of World War II Europe, following the career of Second Lieutenant Mike Powell as he engages in combat across the continent. Despite the realistic environments and weaponry, Mohaa is a cleverly developed run-and-gun shooter. The story line is delivered through cut scenes, mission briefings, and even in-game scripted sequences, offering the gamer an entertaining mix of mission objectives. Ranging from simple search-and-destroy missions, to the massive Omaha Beach landing, 2015 has gone to great lengths to keep the player engaged in the game. Mission objectives vary from level to level, and stray from the standard shooter formula. One of the missions has the player manning a machine gun on the back of a jeep, while the driver tears through a German airbase. Another mission has Powell searching for a downed pilot deep in enemy territory, and escorting him to a safe house. The most spectacular level is the Omaha beach landing, recreated here in such grand style that the first attempt will likely have you sitting back in your chair awestruck. Fans of the movie "*Saving Private Ryan*" will instantly recognize this level, with all of the action, dialogue, and mayhem seen on the big screen. Throughout the game, the story is advanced with a combination of cut scenes between levels and scripted sequences during the missions. The game is broken into 6 missions, with a total of 33 levels, running from 1942 North Africa to 1945 Germany.

Mohaa features two modes of multiplayer gameplay: standard Deathmatch and Team-Based Objectives. The multiplayer maps are quite large, and offer a good variety of different settings, including the famous Normandy Beach landing sequence.

This multiplayer option is what expands Mohaa's playtime, and what makes people build clans, ladders and tournaments about, and this is the field we're interested in and which is studied.

Methods

Now we have introduced our main question, we will follow with the methods we used in our research. In order to research this question we used different methods, which we will now exemplify below;

- Literature research: this means we all searched and studied articles, papers and other texts which were relevant to our research;
- Ethnographic research: this consists of playing the game ourselves and watching others play and participate in clan communities. It also meant looking at websites, forums and other similar media;
- Quality research: With quality research we mean the interviews we've conducted. We've made a questionnaire which we've send out to various clan members. The questionnaire consists of 17 questions divided over 5 topics. The questionnaire can be found in the appendix.

The reason we've used three different methods, is because we wanted our research to be as broad as possible.

Scientific relevance

By researching our main question, which is divided into five different angles, we hoped to achieve a better understanding about clan communities and their surroundings. One of the things we hoped to learn more about, are the social aspects of such a community and by doing so we provide scientific knowledge for a better understanding of social contact that takes place in a new social environment. We also believe that this research can be valuable to the game industry, because with more knowledge about clans, they can build better "clan-based" games. Both the gamer and the developer will benefit from this. The gamer will have a better gaming experience and the developer will sell more games, with a longer sustainability.

Five themes

In order to give a good solid answer to our main research question, we've divided our research into five different themes, which all have a different angle on the main question. These five themes are the following;

1. General information about clans. What is a clan community?
2. Mods, cheats and patches. What is the relation between clans and these three aspects?
3. The off-game clan community. Is there clan life outside the game world?
4. Game aspects. Why are first person shooters, and in our case MOHAA, suitable games for forming clans?
5. Game developers and clans. What is the relationship between them?

The themes will be presented in our research in the above order. We did this, because we wanted to start out with the clan phenomenon in general. What a clan precisely is and what its place is among other communities. Then, in the next theme about mods, cheats and patches, we looked at the technical aspects of the clan communities; what do they create to influence the game and what kind of influence does participatory culture have on the game itself? These themes are related to each other because they give a good first impression of what a clan is about. This is followed by the next theme in which we've researched the manifestations of the clan members outside

the game they're playing. This theme relates to the first two themes, because it goes further into the social aspects of a clan community, involving participatory culture and fandom.

The next theme will give a better understanding why first person shooters are so often used for forming clans. This partially relates to the first themes, because now we learn which aspects a game needs to be a good clan game. Our last theme will research the relation between the clan communities and the developer. This research relates to all the themes and our second theme in particular, because of its connection with modifications.

Schematic
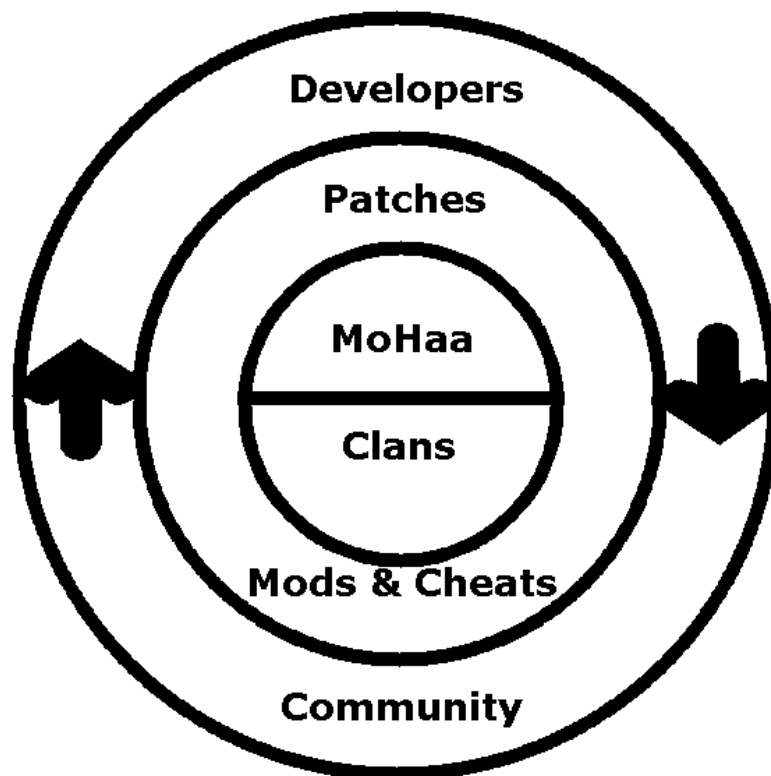
During this research we worked from a perspective as is been drawn out in figure number 1. It's necessary to understand this model fully or else it might be difficult to understand our research as a whole.

The upper part of the circle is the developer side. As said before, we used *Medal of Honor: Allied Assault* (MOHAA), which has been developed by *Electronic Arts* (EA), as our case study. EA is responsible for game-updates by placing *patches* online. These patches change something in the game and need to be downloaded by people who play it. So the developer created MOHAA and creates patches. These patches change some features inside MOHAA.

The lower part of the circle is the side of the community. The community exists out of people who buy and play *Medal of Honor*. The community does more then just buying; they participate in the creation of a culture around MOHAA by making, on the one hand, their own skins, maps, cheats and other types of modifications, and on the other hand by forming social alliances to compete with each other. These alliances are known as clans.

Now it is necessary to name the relations between the upper part and the lower part of the circle. The developer creates MOHAA and sells it to the consumer, who becomes part of the MOHAA community by doing so. The community creates a culture around MOHAA by creating clans, which are in direct connection with the game. Not only does the community create a social culture, they also participate in the creation of the game by creating skins, maps and other kind of modifications. These modifications, just like patches, have influences as well as on the game itself as on the clans. Not only do cheats and mods influence the game and the clans, but they also influence the developer. EA uses cheats and mods as an inspiration for sequence games or patches.

We will now go on with our research and start off with the first chapter which deals with clans in general. Have fun!

Clan communities: 'to boldly go where no researcher has gone before'

By Dennis Spaans

Introduction

Before we go into detail about aspects surrounding clans one should first know what exactly a clan is. The study of clans requires an understanding of the, on first sight, complexity and variety of clan structures. To be able to make sense of all the aspects of playing in a clan, it is necessary to master the multiplayer gameplay experience, the language between players and the foundations of a clan. Luckily I am, as I stated in the general introduction, part of the Mohaa clan *Terran Confederation* myself long before this research started. I also play in the Dutch national team of Mohaa. Being in both teams gives me the opportunity to 'boldly go where no researcher has gone before'. This is both exciting for me as interesting, knowing I'm the first researcher to analyse a clan from this perspective. To truly understand a clan structure I also believe this is the best way to do it. This part of the essay can be used as a reference or guide for other researches about clans; therefore I see it as my duty to be as detailed as possible when schematising them.

The main question I ask this paper is: *What exactly IS a Clan?* Along with the following questions: *How is a clan formed and organized? How much does it differ from other virtual communities?*

In other words I'll be showing the ins and outs of a clan, but before doing so, I'd first like to show the clan community's place in the total of virtual communities. This essay doesn't cover the ongoing debate whether (certain) virtual communities are good or evil and what it all comes to, this paper is mainly intended to schematise the current situation.

The parts about virtual communities and game communities are also the only piece of real theory that can be found. As this is a new field of study there is very little research on clans that I thought that could be used in this part of the essay. So the first part of this paper will consist of a quality literature research on virtual communities and game communities, the second part of this paper will consist of a mainly ethnographical research along with quality research in the form of interviews.

Virtual Communities

The field of virtual communities is studied in different perspectives. Searching the net for theory about virtual communities it's inevitable not to come across Howard Rheingold's theory[2] and his experiences with the online community the '*Well'* (Whole Earth 'Electronic Link), 'a computer conferencing system that enables people around the world to carry on public conversations and exchange private electronic mail (e-mail)' (Rheingold, 1993). His essay offers little more than an ode to the Well and this kind of communities, but points out the fact that these kinds of text based communities are well organized and large in numbers. 'Virtual Communities', Rheingold states, 'are social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace' (Rheingold, 1993). His idea of virtual communities lies in the people's love for debate and discussion and has no consideration of fan communities and game communities. He mentions the use of Multi User Dungeons in a negative way: '(…) the most addicted players of (…) Multi-User Dungeons (MUDs) on the international networks, spend eighty hours a week or more pretending they are someone else, living a life that does not exist outside a computer. Because MUDs not only are susceptible to pathologically obsessive use by some people but also create a strain on computer and communication resources, MUDding has been banned at universities such as Amherst and on the entire continent of Australia' (Rheingold, 1993). This way Rheingold shows no consideration of the MUD player and leaves out this well-studied field. He states that people of the Well talk about a shared interest, but isn't a game community (like in a MUD) a similar thing? Gamers come together to play a game against or with each other, to share gameplay experiences, also online. His idea of virtual communities is too limited, and should take into consideration all the other online communities that are out there, who do not come together for the sake of the debate, but come together to share the same interest, like the Well people. He is willing to go as far as the MUD, but MUDs are mostly text based, so this offers a thin line with the Well people, and he describes MUDs in a negative way.

What Rheingold leaves out is that virtual communities aren't only places like the Well or MUDs, but these are also fan communities (of all kinds: celebrities, music genres, sport, games, etc.), peer-to-peer communities (like Napster or Kazaa) and all other possible online communities.

The term '*virtual community'* acts like an umbrella and covers *all* online communities. An *online community* is a virtual place (like a website, forum, (game) server or chat box) where people come together to share an interest, whether it is a political debate, fandom, the gameplay experience of a first person shooter or all that lies in between.

> *In a global point of view, the Internet is the living organism that hosts many online systems. Boundaries of geography, economy, culture, degrees of education and family traditions have disappeared. Gamers are co-authors that take part in the experience. Communities are playing fields for social interaction. When gamers send messages to other gamers, they are free to exchange email addresses and meet beyond the game community. Communities have become an extension, a new medium of human touch.*
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> (Cindy Ahuna, 2001)

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[2] http://www.well.com/user/hlr/vcbook/

Game Communities

The fastest growing online community at this moment is the game community. Game communities are founded by the enthusiasm of games by gamers. As stated in the main introduction player communities of successful games are seen as having high commercial value, because these people have a more than normal interest in a product. Game companies are interested in these communities and, not surprisingly, want to be involved in these communities. But (game) fans don't like to be reminded of the fact they are fans of a commercial product and see the games as theirs:

> '*The big companies, like EA, should mind their own business, as they never listen to the gamers anyway (e.g. produce anti-cheat software along with the release of a new game, which we request over and over again). They're just in it for the money and nothing else, a good example is the recent release of 'Breakthrough', the 2*nd *expansion for Mohaa, which showed all the crap the 1*st *expansion (Spearhead) was released with. If they had listened to the gamers they know they shouldn't have released a 2*nd *Spearhead. Mohaa rules, and don't touch it with crap expansions. Because they (EA) don't care about a gamer's opinion the game is ours at the first day of its release*' (A =TC= Clan member, 2003)

The source of the first game communities can be found at the first text adventures, based on Dungeons & Dragons. Roy Turbshaw en Richard Bartle developed the MUD (Multi User Dungeon) in 1979. This term was then used to describe every environment people can log into and play a game with each other. In 1989 it had 2000 players, which were a lot in that era. It also was the highlight of the text adventures as the graphical part took over and gathered numerous of players. Doom was the first game that offered a graphical environment, which allowed multiple players to access at the same time. Ever since Doom the online game community has been a part of a gamer's life and it would even grow out to be Massive Multiplayer games.

> '*With the widespread availability of broadband internet connectivity, and 3D acceleration hardware, graphically intensive multiplayer online games are now developing into a sizable part of the exploding digital entertainment industry.* (Fleming Seay, 2003)

So, where do clans stand in all of this? I would argue that a clan is the expansion of a game community, a kind of 'game community-plus'. Because clans are created to play a game in its most pure form (e.g. no mods or cheats) clan members are people who are the most devoted to a certain game. It's not just playing a game with or against other people, or talk about games on forums or chat boxes, no, it takes devotion to a game and to the other clan members to sign up for matches and trainings, be present, take orders and to work together as a team, a unity. It's not just liking a game and downloading walkthroughs for it, it's *loving* the game and try to master (own or pwn) it.

This presents a scheme that divides the online communities:

Virtual Community ⟶ Game Community ⟶ Clans

This scheme shows where clans are situated in the world of online communities. Clans are at the end of a community network, but represent a very large group of gamers, which is still growing.

Clans: an insider's analysis

In this part I will discuss my own experience of joining =TC= and the ethnographical research, along with quality research I've done in order to schematise clan structures. Besides =TC= I researched numerous other clans, to get a more general picture of clans. What follows is an overview of all the steps one takes in joining a clan and being (active) in a clan.

There are all kinds of different clans out there; most of them are founded based on friendship and mutual goals, especially in the early days of a new game. However, throughout the months, or years even, with the growth of online players most clans begin to recruit new members based on skills, but also people's attitude are evaluated. Some servers are swarmed with spammers and people who verbally abuse other people. These players don't do the game any good, and respectable clans like =TC= don't recruit them and even ban them form their server. In =TC='s case no one under the age of 16 is recruited, because a lot of players around the age of 12-15 are amongst the above described category of spammers. =TC= does stand alone in this age case, as of today I have found no other clan that has the same requirement. CE Cpl. Anton, for example, is 7 years old, but is still recruited, based on his skill and his online attitude.

> *'He can't read and write in English yet anyway, so what's there to comment about, he kills, that's enough, innit?'*
>
> (A CE officer, 2003)

Joining a clan comes forth out of the interest in the game and its particular options. Mohaa offers different kind of online maps and types of games. Deathmatch is the most general first person shooter type, where every one is your enemy. A Team Death match is a type of game where you join one side (in Mohaa's case Allied or Axis) and shoot as many of the other side. These types of games don't appeal to me at all, objective games however do. The point in objective based maps is to blow up or defend a certain objective like a bridge or a control room. This requires tactics and teamwork to successfully end the round, when u die u die, you don't 'respawn' until the next round. This was (and still is) my interest and so I began to look for game servers, which offered these types of games. I also like a big crowded server (for lots of kills), but they have to have a low 'ping' to avoid lag. A bad Internet connection can be a killer and an annoyance. Also one important option a server should have is a good admin, who kicks and bans cheaters, spammers and other annoying players. Having set these requirements a server has to come up to, I came across =TC='s server.

After playing a lot on the =TC= server I began to know and respect the =TC= players. I respect their skill and attitude and wondered how it would be like to be in a clan like that. I checked their website that looked very professional and decided to sign up for recruitment as soon as there was a spot. Some clans hire every player that comes up to their requirements and are very big, others like =TC= have a set amount of clan members (30 in =TC='s case) and hire no more until a clan member retires or is dismissed. The minimum amount of people a clan consist of is 2. There are plenty of 2 versus 2 matches and ladders to sign up for. With the application I agreed to the clan rules (as described by B. Schutte later) and to the use of Teamspeak[3]. This is a small software program that allows one to communicate with others using a microphone.

What follows is a trial period in which I was evaluated on different aspects: skill, attitude, the use of the =TC= forums and the use of Teamspeak. Because =TC= is a rank based clan I had to put the =TC= tags in front of my name (yeey!) along with the Rct. (recruit) Rank. There are other clans (e.g. Grunts with Attitude[4]) who don't use a rank

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[3] http://www.teamspeak.org
[4] http://www.grunts-with-attitude.co.uk

system; new players just have the clan tags and 'trial' in front of their names. As Mohaa is a WWII game I like a rank system, it is also used as a reference who leads a match. Outside the game, everyone is equal, inside the game everyone acts as normal, but listens to the Commanding Officer (CO). He provides the basic communication, tactics and leads the team. Being in a clan with a rank system makes you want to climb the rank ladder; therefore you are more devoted to be better, play matches and to get the job (as a team) done. It doesn't matter how old you are or what social background you have or how you look at the game ('it's just a game'), when you are in a clan and 'earn' a higher rank, you cannot help but feel proud of it.

The recruitment period is, in =TC='s case, a two-phase evaluation: the new recruit phase where your basic skill and attitude is evaluated, basically when a new applicant is assessed, and the cadet phase, where the same is evaluated, plus the use of Teamspeak and forums, basically the 'real' trial period. In my case I just did my job and got the private rank after a while. Throughout the months you earn a higher rank basically by being active and develop in matches, on the forums, in trainings.

I mentioned matches and trainings a couple of times, and I will go into them now. A clan differs not much from a real life soccer club, as there are scheduled matches and trainings. Some clans even have a clanpay system that allows members to pay an amount for maintaining the clan's server. This basically is the same as a subscription at a soccer club. Most clans are registered at online ladders like Clanbase[5] or Jolt[6]. A ladder is a list of clans on which a clan can arrange (challenge) other clans to fight for its position, with the 1st place as a clan's ultimate goal. There is a limit on how far up the list you can challenge (e.g. No 156th ranked clan can challenge for the 1st place). Matches like these are arranged through the ladder's website, and the final details (e.g. what server, what password and what anti-cheat software is used) are arranged by the clan match arrangers, who contact each other either through MSN or e-mail. Another form of matches is the CMOHL[7] system, which comes closest to the system of a real life soccer club. In this system a clan is in a certain competition-based division, like the premier division. All clans in that division should play one time against each other, which is scheduled on a weekly basis by CMOHL, once all matches are played there is one champion of the premier league and all other clans that are 1st in their division are promoted one division. All clans that finished last in their division are demoted one division. A clan can have different teams in a ladder, but no clan member may play along side both of them. All clan members are assigned and registered to one team.

As soon as a match (date) is arranged, clan members can sign up for it, either through members only forums or, in =TC='s case, a members only volunteer system on its website. Most matches are played with six to eight people. 20 minutes prior to a match, everyone that signed up for should log into mirc[8], *a virtual meeting place where people from all over the world can meet and talk'.* Most clans have their own 'room' and this is where the CO sets up the final team after everybody logged in. The CO is mostly in contact with the other clan too, to arrange the final IP and password details. A server will be 'locked' and passworded, so only the people that play the match can log into the server. A match mostly consists out of two objective maps, and every clan should take one side until 5 or 7 rounds are played. After 5 or 7 rounds everybody should switch sides (e.g. from allied to axis) to play the second half of that map. The points are based on winning the round, so if =TC= wins 4 out of 7 rounds in a half the score is 4-3 to =TC= by halftime. The point is to win as many rounds as possible to win the match, and move up your place in the ladder or competition. These matches require communication (through Teamspeak and in game team talk (by typing)) and above all teamwork. When

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[5] http://www.clanbase.com/
[6] http://www.ladders.jolt.co.uk/
[7] http://cmohl.burstfire.net/news.php
[8] http://www.mirc.com/

the match is over both clan's COs report the match on the website and the score and ranking is arranged.

Besides league- or ladder-based matches a clan match arranger can arrange a friendly game with every clan he wants to, he only need to contact them and hope they will accept. Most matches, league and friendly matches, use the above described match system and require the use of anti-cheat software, as both clans want to be absolute certain the game is won/lost on a fair way. Certain clans have a bad reputation (e.g. some clan members have been caught cheating) and the anti-cheat software is a solution for playing these clans in leagues. Most respectable clans however don't cheat and these are the matches that are the tensest and the most fun to play.

To me, being in the clan Terran Confederation means being online with my friends. Some of the clan members are really close to each other; some are even real life brothers. Some describe =TC= as being an online family. We share the same interest: games, especially Medal of Honor: Allied Assault, but it's not the only reason we log on for every day. It's to have a laugh, talk about things, and have fun. That's the reason I open Teamspeak first thing in the morning, check the =TC= forums and close it when I go to bed.

Conclusion

In this paper I showed what it means to be a clan member. I showed by using a match system like CMOHL, and a clanpay system, that a clan doesn't differ much from a real life soccer club. In matches when it gets very tense I lose as much sweat as I would in a soccer match.

I don't argue that all is said and done now about clans. There is still a whole field of study. Online communities like clans have its own language (e.g. noob, n00b, b00n, newbie to flag new players, Elite, leet, 1337, to flag good players that kill, own, pwn other players), which is interesting to study. There is a lot of room for case studies in this field too, like the CE Cpl. Anton example earlier.

The main reason I made this paper is to show the ins and outs of a clan, for future reference. To study an aspect surrounding clans one should know all about clans first before jumping into it, and I have covered all aspects of a clan. Using this research as a basis one can continue doing other research in this field. The object of study was complex, and it offered itself to a mixture of methods, based in textual analysis, participating observation and interviews, but in the end it was fun to do, as I have made new friends and I got to speak with interesting people on different Teamspeak clan servers. I also believe it was a privilege for me doing this research and being in a clan myself, as I am the first researcher schematising a clan structure like this. I do believe this clan structure can be taken into account when studying clans from other games (e.g. Quake, Unreal Tournament) as all those different game clans have the same fundamental foundations: being together, work as a team and have fun.

This is =TC= Cpl. Mauz, signing off…

Now it's my game!

By Robert Hoogendoorn

An introduction in cyberspace and participatory culture

In this chapter we'll discuss the following question; *"What's the influence of mods, cracks and patches on the social relations in a 'Medal of Honor: Allied Assault' clan community?"* Within this question it is necessary to define the culture around cracks, mods and patches at first. Secondly we need to define what cracks, mods and patches are. When these definitions are made, we are finally able to put two and two together for answering the main question of this chapter.

Why is this question important for our research? One of the most fascinating areas of gaming culture and internet is the participatory culture in which people participate in the creation of meaning and fandom. This chapter will question this participatory culture by researching the creations in the gaming community in relation to the connection between developer and community and vice versa.

Cyberspace[9] must be defined as the enumeration of every possibility in the digital environment; file transfer protocol (ftp), multi-user dungeons (muds), the World Wide Web (www) and every (chat) program that networks computer to each other. The key element of cyberspace is not the consumption of information. For that kind of service we already have our well known television. The key element in cyberspace is the participation of the user in a social process of collective intelligence. By assimilating cyberspace to a digital network infrastructure a social movement is created inside an industrial program, as been explained by Lévy.[10]

As Hoogendoorn puts it in his final bachelor paper; cyberspace is an environment in which people must be able to speak freely. There has to be freedom of speech and freedom in exchanging information.[11] Of course there is lots of information about an innumerable number of subjects findable on the World Wide Web. There are homepages, spoof movies, persiflage, stories, chat rooms and lots more ways to provide people with texts about a certain subject. This new tendency, I which people produce while they are consumer of a subject, is called *fan culture* by Henry Jenkins.[12] In his online article he points out that fans are more and more becoming cultural producers instead of meaning producers. They transform the act of consumption into various forms of creative expression. These creative expressions turn out to be a big part of the game community. I'll sketch a small piece of gaming history in relation to creative expressions in this community.

"In December 1993, *Wolfenstein 3*-D's developers, now known as id Software, released [or maybe we should say 'unleashed'] *Doom*, also initially as a shareware download (15 million copies of *Doom* are estimated to have been circulated worldwide since). *Doom* was revolutionary and culturally significant in that it was multiplayer (up to four players could play via LAN [=Local Area Network], serial connection or telephone lines) and the id developers made the unprecedented move of releasing the game's source code to the public. This allowed gamers to make modified versions of the game, customising landscapes and game models, and creating new levels and even 'total conversions' – entirely new game

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[9] *Cyberspace* is a term by William Gibson. First introduced in his book *Neuromancer* (1984)

[10] Lévy, Pierre / Cyberculture / 1997 / translated in 2001 by Robert Bononno / p. 75, p. 104-105

[11] Hoogendoorn, Robert / Verzet in de wereld van bits, bytes en binaire code (*Resistance in the world of bits, bytes and binairy code*) / 2003 / Final paper for his degree in the Bachelor of Arts. http://www.nederob.tk

[12] Jenkins, Henry / Media Consumption / http://web.mit.edu/21fms/www/faculty/henry3/publications.html / last time viewed at the 15th June 2002

scenarios, such as *Barney Doom* or *Star Trek Doo*m. […]Both multiplayer gaming and an active mod development scene continued and grew through id's subsequent titles: *Doom II* (1994), *Quake* (1996), *Quake II* (1997) and *Quake III Arena* (1999), and the development of competing FPS titles, such as *Unreal* (1998) and *Half-Life* (1999). The popularity of multiplayer FPS gaming saw the development of clans (groups of gamers who play together as a team – both in online games and at real-life LAN meetings) and a shift towards team-based games, which are now by far the most popular (e.g. *Half-Life Counter-Strike* (1999), *Medal of Honor Allied Assault* (2001), *Battlefield 1942* (2002)." (Morris, 2003) [13]

Ever since the development of Doom, the First Person Shooter (FPS) genre has been highly involved in the constitution of participatory culture in gaming culture. No FPS game can be released or fans will develop new levels, skins, "unlimited ammo cheats", wallpapers, websites and many more. This in contrast with television and film, where the community most of the time is discouraged creative efforts of the community. This phenomenon is being called 'Culture Jamming'. Hoogendoorn and De Heer argued in one of their texts;

"Culture Jamming sticks where rational discourse slides off. It is simply the viral introduction of 'radical' ideas. It is viral in that it uses the enemy's (commercial companies) own resources to replicate itself - corporate logos, marketing psychology, clean typography, ad speak. It is radical because -ideally- the message, once deciphered, causes damage to blind belief of the consumer. Fake ads, fake newspaper articles, parodies, pastiche. As Greil Marcus states in an article in Lipstick Traces: "The theft of aesthetic artefacts from their contexts and their division into contexts of one's own devise." In this way Culture Jamming is some kind of fandom (as been talked about by Jenkins), where consumers take the right to produce products about their favourite show, person, movie or product. The best Culture Jammer is totally unexpected, surprising, shocking in its implication. Like Jello Biafra once observed when he was talking about creative crime (culture jamming red.);'What better way to survive our anthill society than by abusing the very mass media that sedates the public?'" (Hoogendoorn & De Heer) [14]

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[13] Morris, Sue / WADs, Bots and Mods: Multiplayer FPS Games as Co-creative Media / LevelUp Gamesconference Cd-rom / Digra / November 2003

[14] Hoogendoorn & De Heer., From parasitic inventions towards mutual dependency: participatory hackculture in cyberspace, 2002 (essay) http://www.students.let.uu.nl/0013846/project/hackculture.doc (14/06/03)

What are we focussing on?

In this chapter we'd like to focus on some of the modifications (mods), patches and cheats used in the online community of *Medal of Honor: Allied Assault (Mohaa)*.[15] What do gamers think about mods, cracks and patches; when are mods allowed in a clan community; why are they created and who creates them for what kind of purpose? We'll only look at those mods which alter the gameplay. So we will not check out "*No CD cracks*", but only cracks and mods which have influence on the gameplay itself.

// Figure 1 //	**// Figure 2 //**	**// Figure 3 //**
Screenshots are often used by Mohaa fans to show their best kills during multiplayer matches.	Above you can see a screenshot of a wallhack. This kind of crack makes walls inside the levels of Medal of Honor disappear.	Wallpapers are one of many ways in which communities use creative expressions as forms of consumption and production.

As been observed in the previous chapter, there's a wide variety of communities. This wide variety is reflected in the almost infinite number of gaming communities and the great number of people who've joined the *Medal of Honor: Allied Assault* community. This variety can also be seen in the many creations made by fans, from wallpapers to wallhack and from modification art to new maps. As we've said; we'll only focus on modifications, patches and cracks which will alter the gameplay and the gaming experience. But first it is necessary to define the difference between these mods, cracks and patches. In order to do so we've interviewed Mohaa-gamers[16] and a person who's a gamer and an employee at the Dutch department of *Electronic Arts*, the developers of for example *Fifa Soccer* and the *Medal of Honor* series.

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[15] Medal of Honor: Allied Assault – Electronic Arts – 2001 (PC version) http://www.ea.com

[16] These gamers are members of a Mohaa clan called "Terran Confederation" (TC). The interviewees will only be named by there clan name. – http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk (last visited: 8th of November 2003) Review our online discussion: http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk/forum2/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=1636

Patches

In this paragraph we'll make clear what patches are, how the community uses them and how patches should be used. We'll do that by using the opinions of our online interviewees. We did two ways of interviewing; one by an online discussion and the second by an online questionnaire. But how do gamers define a patch?

> "A patch is something created by the game makers to fix errors in teh game after its release. Either a glitch in a map or the ease of using cheats. As i said EA have not supported these areas. We had a total of two patches with MOHAA and tht was it. The rest have been created by various community members like maps fixes." (Hudson66)[817]

> "Patches are made by the developer to fix post release issues (bugs) with the game, and/or add new content. This is the reason you use them - if you don't you miss out on the bug fixes, the new content, or the ability to play on updated servers. The main reasons patches are created are due to the game being rushed out for release, or not enough beta testing being done. Sometimes new hardware is released too which requires a game patch." (deejaya)[18]

Patches are files created by the developer. By running these files or overwriting older files the game is being updated. Sometimes a game is being released with several little bugs and/or errors in it. In Medal of Honor there's a well known bug in which it is possible for the gamer to submerge beneath the surface of the playing field and shoots its opponents, a so called glitch. These are errors which should not happen to exist in the first place, but now with the internet it is possible to distribute game-updates and fixes more easily. With a little bit more beta-testing these patches shouldn't be necessary.

> "In February 1996, months before the commercial release of Quake, id released three levels over the net to allow gamers to bug-test network play. Two days later, game hackers had not only discovered bugs, but provided patches to fix them; hundreds of patches and hacks were sent to id in the following months. Users had even figured out how to activate features in Quake the developers had not yet thought were functional. One id developer was quoted as saying: 'The joke around here now is [that] we can let the rest of the world finish Quake for us'" (Morris, 2003) [19]

In the Mohaa community patches are widely accepted and appreciated. Gamers can only play each other when they have the same patch installed, therefore patches don't give one an advantage over one an other. The developer should interact more with the gaming community, as pointed out in Sue Morris' quote above, so that the number of patches is being reduced. Patches should not be created to recover little design-bugs, because those kinds of problems should have been eliminated with beta-testing by the community. Patches should only be used to anticipate on developments in the game community, for example to battle bravely against cheating.

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[17] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk (last visited: 8th of November 2003)

[18] id.

[19] Morris, Sue / WADs, Bots and Mods: Multiplayer FPS Games as Co-creative Media / LevelUp Gamesconference Cdrom / Digra / November 2003

Cheats & Mods

During this research we found out it is hard to define the difference between cheats and mods. Therefore we'll discuss them together in order to make compare them better. Once again we'll use literature, the online discussion and interviews that have been done.

The first question the probably rises to mind right now is: Why is it difficult to define the difference between cheats and modifications? After the complications are pointed out, we'll try to make a clear definition on the difference between mods and cheats using gamers' opinions as our main argument.

Just to make things clear, this research is not about in-game cheats and we'll not discuss the use of in-game voice communication[20]. In-game cheats are cheats which are build in the game. There's no external program or file necessary to use the commands to cheat. In most FPS games these kinds of cheats exist, even people who don't play computer games that often know of the existence of god-mode, infinite ammo or map selecting commands. To unlock the possibility to use this kind of commands Mohaa needs to be started by executing Mohaa using the following parameters;

// Figure #4 // [21]

```
C:\Mohaa\mohaa.exe  +set ui_console 1 +set cheats 1 +set thereisnomonkey 1
```

The codes can be triggered only inside a single player campaign game. The gamer needs to press the ~button to open the gaming console. Typing '*dog*' in this console will unlock the God-mode and typing '*wuss*' will give the gamer all the weapons and ammo.

But these are the kind of cheats we are not going to talk about. In this research will only be focussed on creations by the community which function as a mod or cheat in the multiplayer mode of *Medal of Honor: Allied Assault*. So, how to define a cheat and a modification?

Speaking in technical terms, the differences between cheats and modifications are quite easy to define. Spoken in technical terms a cheat is a small piece of software which changes a part from the source code of a game. Therefore a cheat has the ability to alter the rules and boundaries of games. A cheat might change the gravity inside a game or it can make the explosion of a grenade more damaging for its surroundings. These are rules which are written within the source code of a computer game.

"I believe cheats are a bad thing as it ruins the whole point of playing (fun and competitive) [...] i dont see the point in cheating to get an advantage. [Because practise makes perfect and cheats don't]" (Hudson66)[22]

"Cheats are bad for the same reason drug taking in sports is bad - you cannot have a fair game (or race) if someone is using a cheat (or drug). Cheats are never

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[20] Voice Communication – an external program is often used by online gamers to speak with each other during the game. There are known servers which insist that the gamer has that piece of software running. But 'voice communication' is not an official option in Mohaa and should therefore be seen as a cheat, because it gives gamers an advantage over other gamers who don't have the possibility to use voice communication during Mohaa.

[21] http://www.cheats-hacks.com/index.php/cheats/PC/Medal%20of%20Honor:%20Allied%20Assault (25/10/2003)

[22] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk (last visited: 8th of November 2003)

really good, unless you are all using them on a LAN with consent or something. Which answers your next point too, if everyone is using the same cheats, and has access to them, it's not really cheating. You aren't cheating anyone out of anything if everyone is on the same playing field. I have played on a few servers with built-in cheats turned on (godmode, noclip) and it was fun for a minute or two." (deejaya) [23]

A modification, on the other hand, is file which adds or edits something in the game. It has nothing to do with the rules and boundaries in the game, like a cheat does. A mod recreates the game's interface and its game-environment. So mods can erase trees from a map or make grenades like gigantic, just to notice them better. The most famous kind of mod is the mod that *"... will add squib's, blood marks, and all the gore you ever wanted in mohaa ENJOY!".* [24] *Electronic Arts* skipped that kind of stuff out of the game to focus more on tactics and technique instead of just plain old murdering, slashing, killing and shooting around. But *"...there is a fine line between a mod and a cheat. And some mods are cheats, when they aren't even meant to be.*" (deejaya)[25]

// figure #5 //
In the unmodificated version of Medal of Honor Allied Assault blood is no where to be seen.

// figure #6 //
With the "*Guts mod 1.0*" installed there's finally blood to be seen in Mohaa. [10]

What we've done now is defining the difference between mods and cheats in technical terms. But there's a big grey area between these two definitions.

"A mod to me can be various things. It is usually something created within the community [...] to add something to the original game. These can be a good thing or a bad thing [...]. E.g. you can have a mod that adds something different to the game like skins (different uniforms on the players) there are also weapon-mods that change the look of the weapon and sound-mods that change the original sounds within Mohaa. People have also made "custom maps" could also be seen as a mod to the original game. These can all be seen as adding something extra to the game for a bit of fun." (Hudson66)[26]

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[23] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk (last visited: 8th of November 2003)

[24] Guts mod 1.0 – by Ceskins / ceskins101@hotmail.com

[25] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk (last visited: 8th of November 2003)

[26] These gamers are members of a Mohaa clan called "Terran Confederation" (TC). The interviewees will only be named by there clan name. – http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk (last visited: 8th of November 2003) Review our online discussion: http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk/forum2/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=1636

"They [mods] can be very small (custom crosshairs) or very large (total conversions, like Counter Strike [a modification on the game called Half Life]). [...] Why not use them? After a while games can get boring. While you may think a game is the best game around, there's always something you don't quite like about it. [So you can modify the parts you don't like]" (deejaya) [27]

As is pointed out in the two quotes above there's a very difference range of modifications available in the community. But what about the grey area we mentioned earlier?

"I would probably class anything that adds ease, or assists in the game should be looked on as a cheat. I would define a mod as anything that "added to, but did not offer any assistance to the game", i.e. clan skins, new maps [...]." ([EVO]-Phoebian-) [28]

"A cheat helps one to have an advantage over others. Mods give everybody the same advantage or disadvantage, so everybody has equal opportunities." [Translated from Dutch] (=TC= LCPL. Chameleon) [29]

"A cheat is anything that gives players an advantage over everyone else that is NOT in the game when you buy it, e.g. wallhacks, aimbots." (=TC= Lt. Dr Soccer) [30]

These quotes help us to differentiate cheats from mods. It's quite clear now that we shouldn't just look at the technical differences between mods and cheats, but we should also look at social implications. Modifications which can be seen as mods, based on the technical definition, may be seen as cheats using a social perspective. We'll look at some examples to prove my point.

// figure #7 //

"A cheat can also be classed as a mod [red. or vice verse], [the] differences being that it gives a distinct advantage to the person using it. Example of a cheat is that it usually takes something away from the original game like the walls for example. So that person can see you through the walls. For this reason cheats are more commonly known as hacks e.g. Wallhack."(Hudson66) [31]

← The wallhack is a clear example of a mod which can be used as a cheat and giving an advantage over other gamers.

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[27] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk (last visited: 8th of November 2003)
[28] Id.
[29] Id.
[30] Id.
[31] Id.

// figure #8 //
Another example of a modification, which can be used as a cheat, is the invisible-skin. This is a skin, created like any other skin, which makes the gamers avatar appear (or actually disappear☺) invisible. This mod clearly gives a gamer an (major) advantage over other gamers and therefore this mod should be seen as a cheat.

There's still one little difference that we need to mention; the difference between server side modifications and user side modifications. Sometimes a server[32] allows certain mods or cheats;

"I always use the realism mod; this mod is hosted on the server and makes Mohaa looking more realistic. I used to play, in times when I was 'serverless', with a laserdot. A laserdot is a little dot as your crosshair which makes it easier to aim. There are gamers who still use it and who don't see it as a cheat. But I do see this as a cheat and therefore I don't use it anymore." (=TC= Lcpl. Chameleon) [33]

This interviewee clearly makes a distinction between mods that are on the server and mods that are installed on the personal computer of someone. The realism mod runs on the server and is therefore to be used by everybody who logs on the server. A mod installed on a personal computer will only give an advantage or disadvantage to the person playing on that specific computer. Some of our interviewees even argued that 'Mods are server side, installed on the server, cheats are client side, installed by the gamer/cheater.' (Regus) [34] There are some good arguments to hold on to this definition. But this definition would make every form of modification impossible.

"On our server, we allow no mods at all. Not all mods are cheats, but the only way to ensure a cheat free environment is to have no mods. There is no way to tell the difference between a mod and a cheat without actually using it yourself. Some people think a custom crosshair is not a cheat, and perfectly acceptable. But using that custom crosshair puts you head and shoulders above the others who use the default one. Some custom skins may not look like "cheats", but if you are using them with forced models, you may have slightly better visibility on the enemy than other players playing default have, which is another advantage they don't get." (deejaya) [35]

This blocks the creative expressions of gamers on the one hand, but on the other hand it will give all gamers the some gaming experience during their multiplayer matches. Participatory culture is to be seen as a good thing, therefore the definition of 'Regus' and the opinion of 'deejaya' are just too strict.

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[32] Server - a computer which hosts the game that will be played by several users. The rules of the game (map choice et cetera) are being decided by the server.

[33] These gamers are members of a Mohaa clan called "Terran Confederation" (TC). The interviewees will only be named by there clan name. – http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk (last visited: 8th of November 2003) Review our online discussion: http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk/forum2/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=1636

[34] Id.

[35] Id.

Conclusion

There can be concluded that cheats are changes on the game source and, besides that, modifications which give a gamer an advantage over other gamers can be seen as cheats as well. FPS-Gamers really dislike cheats because of the advantages it brings to the cheaters, besides that they dislike the cheating-mentality. So there's a technical side and a social side on the definition and dislike of cheats.

Mods are changes on the game-interface which do not provide a gamer an advantage over other gamers. Not giving a gamer any advantage over other gamers is a big argument for mods to be accepted by the community (of course there are exceptions), even though some servers do not allow modifications at all – just to avoid cheating, while good anti-cheat software is not available.
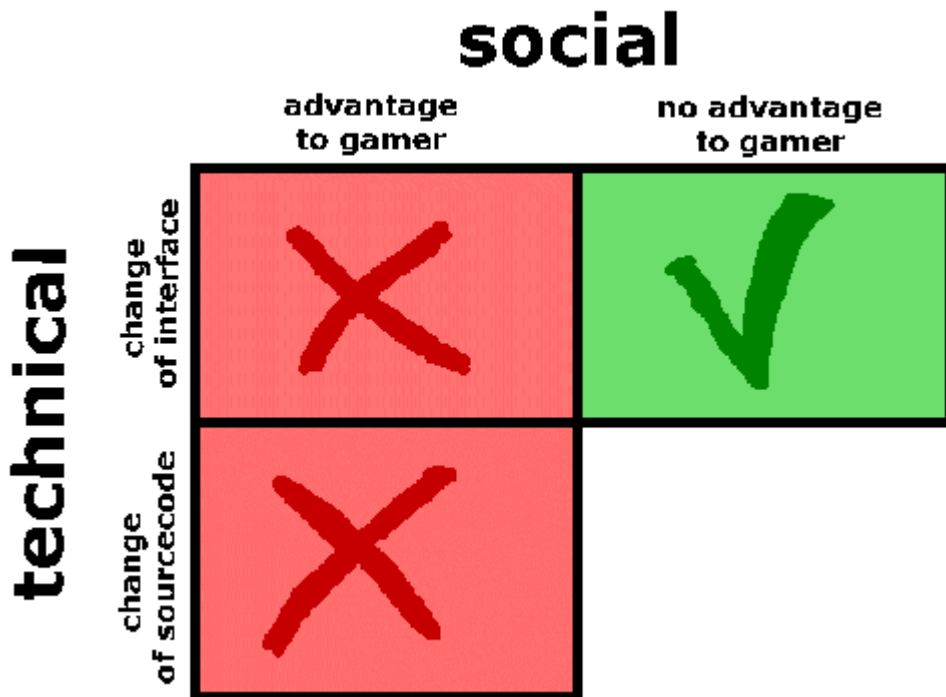
// figure #9 // this table shows the non-acceptance of cheats (change of source code & change of interface which gives an advantage to the game) and the acceptance of mods (change to interface & no advantage to the gamer)

"why hasn't EA support the game from cheats it really pi..es me off when u get cheaters on here, and i hope they sort this out in the future!" (the daddeh)36

In relation to the social attitude towards mods, cheats and patches we can say the following. Patches are okay to use, because these files don't give a gamer an advantage over other gamers. Therefore gamers are most of the time willing to get the newest patch-updates. Everybody in a clan needs to have to same patches installed in order to be able to play with the other team members. Some clans might decide not to download a certain patch, but this might exclude the clan from certain matches and competition where all the gamers do play with that patch.

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[36] These gamers are members of a Mohaa clan called "Terran Confederation" (TC). The interviewees will only be named by there clan name. – http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk (last visited: 8th of November 2003) Review our online discussion: http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk/forum2/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=1636

Modifications are okay to use in every situation, but still some servers do not allow modifications just to prevent cheating. Therefore mods are not allowed either during some matches or events. But still, gamers believe that mods are okay to use as long they don't give a gamer an advantage over other gamers. While this is hard to detect by software, sometimes mods aren't allowed either.

The final kind of file we need to point out to is the usage of cheats. Cheats are hell for every game. Some gamers might get such an advantage they'll win every time. Therefore cheaters are almost always banned from the match or competition. Even though the gaming community dislikes cheats in general, because they give advantages to other gamers, cheats are still created in every game. It's a continuous struggle between the community and the developer. Gamers create cheats, because there's a possibility to cheat and the developer reacts by bringing in a new patch which fixes this cheat. Still, some cheats, which technically seen are mods, can't be fixed by EA. That's the reason some servers won't allow modifications at all.

Still there is room for lots of discussion concerning ethnical problems like the collapse between the freedom of creative expression and the unwritten rule not to cheat. This is actually the main problem concerning the usage of mods, cheat and patches and therefore software developers should pay special attention to this point of discussion.

Yes Sir! Consider it done!
Insight into the Off-Game Clan Community
By Bas Schutte

"The Office of Recruitment is currently closed until further notice. Please call back again at a later date to see if the Office is taking applications. Thank you."   =TC= Lt. Dr Soccer[37]

Introduction

It's a full-time job to engage in a clan community. When the application is filled in and a name tag is in front of your name, you can call yourself one of the members of the big social network. Stationed behind your personal computer, a new social environment invites you to come in and join the world of the clan community. Where the contact with your colleagues mainly derives from the game you are playing, a central new part is opening your eyes and pulls you in.

The new world opening, is the 'off-game clan community', which is an important part of 'being in a clan'. In this research the main question will therefore be:
"In which way is a clan constituted outside the game and how does a clan member participates in this?"

The main aspects in this research will mainly be written from an ethnographical perspective, with qualitative research and opinions and remarks of clan members. These opinions and remarks are from interviews and chat with the clan members of a couple of clans. There is a main clan though, which used in this research: the international clan, Terran Confederation. A big clan with a social structure and a tight organisation.

Scientific knowledge about the participation of clan members alongside their game is useful for the game industry, to provide gamers with the best possible software to build clans and provide the best game experience. It also provides better understanding of the social contact which takes place inside a new social environment, called the clan community.

To ensure the position of the clan community within the broad range of communities, fandom and communities will be discussed. Then the main forms of communication which are used in an off-game clan community will be mentioned. After this the main aspects of the research in off-game clan communities will be shown. These aspects are: the social aspects of a clan, discussing the (social) rules and behaviour of clan members participating in an of-game clan environment, and the army aspect, which will relate to the army ranks and hierarchy. The research ends with a short summary of the main questions and findings, and a word of discussion.

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[37] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk/recruitment.asp Recruitment page Terran Confederation, =TC= Dr. Soccer

Fandom

> *"On-line fan communities might well be some of the most fully realized versions of Levy's cosmopedia, expansive self-organizing groups focused around the collective production, debate, and circulation of meanings, interpretations, and fantasies in response to various artefacts of contemporary culture."* Jenkins[38]

The cosmopedia, spoken of above, is seen 'as a galaxy of virtual worlds giving expression to the diversity of human knowledge, a galaxy that would not be organized a priori but would, on the contrary, reflect the trajectories and the uses made of it by its explorers.'[39] (Levy) Communities are structured around and built upon the knowledge of their participants and the knowledge given by the cyberspace they are participating in. Fans who are searching the internet for material to improve or broaden their knowledge mostly find communities based upon beliefs, which are pursued by their own beliefs. The easy thing to do then is to join the community and form a part of the great virtual world based upon their fandom.

The on-line fan communities which are important in this paper are the ones of computer games, and specific for this paper: the clans. Communities build around computer games are growing faster and bigger these days, and therefore it's important to know more about. To make clear where the communities stand upon another, a short classification by Spaans (2003): Game communities are part of the virtual community. The virtual community is the umbrella which covers all the online communities. The game community is a smaller umbrella and holds all the game related online communities. Clans are at the end of this classification. This presents a scheme which divides the online communities, as presented in the first chapter.

Virtual Community ⟶ Game Community ⟶ Clans

This scheme shows where clans are situated in the world of communities. Clans are at the end of a community network, but represent a very large group of gamers, which is still growing. Therefore it is important to study all the aspects of clans.

Below, the main aspects of an off-game clan community will be showed, together with the forms of communication.

> *In a global point of view, the Internet is the living organism that hosts many online systems. Boundaries of geography, economy, culture, degrees of education and family traditions have disappeared. Gamers are co-authors that take part in the experience. Communities are playing fields for social interaction. When gamers send messages to other gamers, they are free to exchange email addresses and meet beyond the game community. Communities have become an extension, a new medium of human touch.[40]* (Cindy Ahuna)

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[38] http://web.mit.edu/21fms/www/faculty/henry3/collective%20intelligence.html Henry Jenkins
[39] http://www.humanities.uci.edu/mposter/syllabi/readings/levy.html Levy
[40] http://switch.sjsu.edu/v7n1/articles/cindy02.html Cindy Ahuna

Clans & the off-game clan community

The off-game clan community is getting bigger and bigger and more time is spend on community activities. Websites, forums and chats sessions are available and clans are using them to present the clan, making contacts, discussing tactics and show the world what they are made of.

Before getting into the two main aspects of the off-game clan community a short summary of the forms of communication used in an off-game clan community.

Ways to communicate

1. Websites
The website of a clan is the home base and the online face of the clan. The logo and the tag[41] of the clan is clearly visible and often spelled out. There is a members section in which the members of the clan are being introduced and there is a section where the clan is introduced, usually through a 'history' section, a 'rules' section and a 'about' section. There are links to 'wars', matches played against other clans, to competitions where the clan is playing in, which servers are available and which events are coming up, like training days and matches. Services like a download section, for maps and skins used by the clan, links to other clans and forums. Some clans do have a section where there is personal news and information about things which are related to members of the clan, like birthday greetings and promotions.

2. Forums
The forums, usually found via the homepage of the clan, are sites where discussion can take place. The discussions are very various and range from technical support and other game related items to jokes.
The classification in discussion groups are often: news, general discussion, and technical support. In the group news there are important things which are clan related. This part of the forum is sometimes closed for public eyes. You have to have a password to see and participate in the discussion. The general discussion is free for all and lists things as: funny things, movie reviews, and other often not game related items. Technical support is, like it says, technical support with the game, server or other computer related items.

3. *Chat*
The chat sessions are the ones outside the game. Clan members who chat with each other about different things via msn messenger, teamspeak, or IRC. Most of the time the rules of the clan prescribe that everybody needs to join a chat communication program. This enables a quicker and easy way to communicate with the clan and their members.

The forms of communication stated above will be researched and used in this paper to show the participation of a clan outside the game. The following aspects will be researched:

First are the social aspects of the off-game clan community, discussing the (social) rules and the behaviour of clan members in the off-game clan community. This aspect is important to study because through all the forms of communication, which are found above, a social network inside the clan is build. By studying the rules, written and unwritten, the regulations of the clan community, and the balance between real life friendships and clan friendships, an indication can be made which strings are holding a clan together.

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[41] A clan tag is a name/tag in front of your name, consisted of a two- or three-letter abbreviation, which is used while playing the game, often between '=' or '[ ]' to show in which clan you participate.

The second aspect is the influence of the army on the off-game clan community, discussing the hierarchy and the ranks inside the off-game clan community.
The clan community, which is studied here, is playing the World War Two game: Medal of Honor. This resolves in a ranking system which is dedicated to the ranks of the army. An army hierarchy is build upon respect and power. This gives an interesting angle on a clan community in which 'even-skilled' gamers have to work with different ranks and power structures. Are these 'army rules' of a clan as strict as in the army? How do members of a clan get on with this?

The two aspects, as spoken of above, will now be worked out;

Social aspects of an off-game clan community

> "*Because game communities are social in nature, knowledge and understanding are more apparent in virtual worlds.*"[42] Cindy Ahuna

Important part of the clan community outside the game is formed through rules and the use of these rules. The rules and the use of them are building the social face of the clan and the way the clan is based on certain beliefs and standards.

A clan community often work with a set of written rules, which can be found on the website of the clan community. These rules are guidelines to a nice, fair and respectful online game, contact online and to ensure a combined team with the right attitude. The amount of rules varies with the clan. The Terran Confederation has a large page on their website which is filled with all sorts of rules.
There are general rules and regulation ranging from: when wearing the =TC= tag you play with respect and honour, do not use hacks, modifications or cheats, and when there is a fight among players, settle it out on the private forums or finish it with a duel. Then you have the server rules, which will not tolerate: spamming, swearing and insulting other players. There are rules for the protection of data of the members: never give personal details of other members. A large part of the rules are about communication. There is a recommendation for the members to view the forums at least twice a week, to be noticed about events of the community and details about upcoming matches. Voice communications are used in the clan and a set of guidelines are written for them to make sure that the new way of communication does not become a disability of the clan. There are rules for the ranks and decoration in the clan and rules for the recruitment of new members.[43]
These rules are above everybody in the clan. Everybody can address someone about their behaviour or their actions. And everyone inside the clans' server has to obey the rules given.

An interesting part of the set of rules is: Are they being followed? Terran Confederation clan member: Lt. Dr. Soccer, about the solving of a fight inside the clan community;

> "*Problems or fights would, I think, be dealt with by the clan leader (in our case wk) possibly with the other officers talking to the parties involved and then taking the appropriate action. As for dismissed members, any questions should be directed to the officers and its not like because the person was dismissed u cant talk to them so...*"

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[42] http://switch.sjsu.edu/v7n1/articles/cindy02.html Cindy Ahuna
[43] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk/rules.asp Terran Confederation

This shows that any quarrels are being solved between the officers and the parties involved, but that there isn't any social code to avoid the person. Of course it depends on the kind of misunderstanding or fight. Another member of the Terran Confederation is =TC= PVT. Spiffing Shot. He simply puts it this way when asked about the following of written and unwritten rules: "*Don't Spam, cheat or insult players even if they are noobs. + Don't piss ppl off.*" According to Spiffing Shot: just behave normal like you would do in real life, not insulting people or 'piss them off'. Like =TC= LCPL. Chameleon says: "*Rules that count in the 'normal world', count here.*"[44]

> "*Multiplayer games can be very social. In the shooter genre, players sometimes band together into "clans", groups who fight against other groups. Sometimes the social bonds developed in these clans extend beyond the game into friendship and players offer each other moral support through personal hardship and help each other find jobs,*" Schleiner[45]

Social bonds formed in the off-game clan community are very tight and sometimes even compared with family bonds. =TC= Lt. Dr. Soccer :

> "*TC was founded on friendship and mutual goals. As time has gone by we've recruited based on skill, but also peoples attitude, generally once people have joined they've become firm friends with the other members, some members even describe tc as an online family.*"

=TC= Chameleon about the clan being build upon friendship or skills:

> "*Friendship. At least in =TC= it is. If someone good but isn't nice he wont join =TC=. If someone is nice but not good he will <u>probably</u> join =TC=. I say probably cause you need to have some skill but its not that important.*"

These answers are showing the social face of the clan. Friendship and fun are most important, next to the skills of the players.

A lot of members of the clan keep their TeamSpeak, voice communication system, on, while not participating in any of the game related things. The same thing with chat programs like IRC or msn messenger, where every clan member has other clan members listed. This way a connection between the members of the clan is almost constantly in the air.

=TC= is an international clan where once a year a large number of the group comes together at a geographic placed centre and socialize with each other, speaking about all kinds of subjects next to the game. Sometimes even with allied clan communities. This creates a firmer bond and makes faceless friendships get a face. =TC= Spiffing Shot:

> "*Meeting in real life allows the friendship that you've made over the internet to a faceless player, become a 'real' friend [if you like them in the flesh] + it give you a chance to see if 'MaNdy th3 d3aTh K1LLeR 2000' is really a top-heavy lass from stoke-on-Trent or just a middle aged man named Robert playing in his underpants.*"

But the contact is still more online than offline in real life. This is understandable with clans which have an international team of members, like =TC=.

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[44] translated from dutch : "Regels die een beetje in de "normale wereld" bekend zijn gelden hier ook."
[45] http://switch.sjsu.edu/v7n1/articles/cindy02.html Cindy Ahuna

> "*One of the best things about being in a clan is making friends, and whilst they can never be as important as your friends in real life, its nice to be able to go online and have a laugh. Its also a nice chance to meet people from other countries.*" =TC= Lt. Dr. Soccer

The army aspects of an off-game clan community

> *Clans are virtual platoons of players that can as communities be compared to street gangs or small military units.[46]* Antti Autio

It is important to look at the relationship between the clan community and the army aspect of the game. The clans participating in the game Medal of Honor are closely connected to the game and copy a lot of the game. In Medal of Honor the basic setting is World War Two, which can be found again in the style of the website, ranking and rules and regulations of a clan. The army hierarchy which clans, like =TC=, copy and use to structure their clan, gives certain players more power over other players. An interesting aspect to study is how strict the clans follow these rules and ranks of the army.

Ranks in a Medal of Honor clan

Most Medal of Honor clans use the ranking system provided by the army. This begins with recruit (Rct.) and eventually ends with General (Gen.), General of the Army (Goa.) or Field Marshall (Mar.). Clans can determine which rank is the highest and the lowest. They can also determine the speed and the reason of a promotion or degradation in rank. The promotion of a player lies often in the fact that a clan member has done a good job in a 'war'[47], or has been a long time in the clan, or did something good for the clan.

> "*Ranks and medals are not the most important thing in the view of the Terran Confederation, but are there to distinguish between people that are more senior within the group. The individual for outstanding performance earns such things, contributions to the Confederation and by standing among peers. Therefore you cannot just ask for a promotion or a medal as this will work against you more so that for you.*"[48] Terran Confederation rules

The clan founder(s) and leaders are mostly the same persons, and they are often the highest in rank. When a clan is started the players with the most power are the ones who decide the rules and ranking system. Webmaster of the clan website, recruiting officer, and other more powerful 'jobs' are often the ones with a higher rank. But you can still work your way to the top of a clan by your playing skills, besides your off-game community work.

> "*Well whilst Moh is a military game and TC does have ranks and rules they arent very strict e.g. you dont address higher ranking people as "sir"*
> *Ranks are in tc to show organisation and structure, with our most experienced players who have done alot for this clan being put in positions of responsibility allowing them to get more involved with the actual running of the clan. As for rules they must always be followed to the letter.*" =TC= Lt. Dr. Soccer

The hierarchy ranking system copied from the army has his influence on the structure and the face of the off-game clan community.

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[46] http://www.student.oulu.fi/~anautio/quake/quake.html#SECTION00041000000000000000 Antti Autio
[47] A war is a match between two clans.
[48] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk/rules.asp Terran Confederation rules

"*Most of the clans i have been in don't believe in rank, they believe everyone is equal hence they have no tags. In my first couple of clans i did have a rank though, but my first clan did not live long enough to actually apply them(i was the 3rd in rank, but that didn't say anything, i had nothing to say etc etc, not in a negative way btw), the 2nd did not keep them as 'strict' ranks, just as sort of a guideline, and for the army aspect i reckon, play an army game you have ranks. Higher ranked people would command in the clanwars, but outside the game there was no difference between those people. For other clans this is different, like EUMC, as rank appears to be a top priority here, even tho i don't know how far they take that.*" Regus, experienced player, clan member.

Army like rules

As written earlier in this paper, clan communities have a lot of rules. Some of them are in relation to the army aspect of the game. The commanding officer has a large role in the set of rules. Problems will be solved by the commanding officers and information given by them is important. These rules are made by the players who have a lot of power in the clan community, often the commanding officers and/or leaders of the clan community.

The rules and ranks are different for each clan, not so much in textual way, but more in a contact way, where everybody looks different towards ranks and promotions of other clan communities and clan communities have other ways to look upon their structure of the clan community.

So far the important aspects of an off-game clan community. The conclusion will follow and a short discussion.

Conclusion

Through a web of communication systems like websites, forums and chat programs, a social network is being created. All forms of communication where there is no face to accompany the texts, but plain texts with a social attitude. This is because of the fact that the social network consists of a team of players pursuing the same goals and combining their forces to reach these.

The bonds which are created outside the game are often compared to family bonds. Friendship and fun is the most important thing in the clan community. Most players who join the clan have nice playing skills, but mainly it's all about attitude towards the other clan members, making fun, and fit into the community created by the clan. This social behaviour often leads to off-game off-line meetings, where the group socializes and talks about all kinds of subjects next to the game. The friendships are not being seen as tight as real life friendships, but important and nice to have. The international aspect is also important for some clan members.

An important aspect of creating an off-game clan community is based on a set of rules, which are written and unwritten. The written rules followed in a clan are often made by the clan leaders or other high ranked players. These are visible at the website, mostly next to the goals of the clan. These rules have to be followed by the clan members to avoid fights, indifferences and other behaviour that leads to the affection of the clan community to act as a tight group with the right attitude. The rules which are not written mainly cover the behavioural rules. Be nice towards new gamers, other clans and their members, in the game but also outside of the game. Basically the rules which count in real life have to be followed online.

Another important aspect is the influence of the army, which is promoted by the game's gameplay and World War Two story. The army provides another set of rules, ranks and decorations which show another power structure within the off-game clan community. The ranks, promotions, decorations and medals only affect the attitude and will to climb up the ladder. There is not a different type of respect when speaking with a higher ranked clan member. Of course every clan member looks slightly different upon their clan's power structure or higher ranked players but this differs mostly between clans. Most of the time there is a mutual respect and the clan members see each other as equals. The only thing the medals, promotions and ranks bring in the clan community is structure and organisation, coordinated by responsible and active clan members.
The way a clan participates outside the game environment is created by social behaviour, rules and a social structure where mutual understanding and equality are important for the team spirit.

In this paper the clan =TC= has a big responsibility in the research data. Other clans are researched, but these are all based upon a contact with =TC=. Generalization can be present, though =TC= is a big international clan with a good reputation and a high ranking in leagues.

Medal of Honor; what's all the fuss about?

By Brendan Dekker

Introduction

We now have a pretty good understanding of what a clan is about. In the first chapter we've discussed what a clan in general is. Then, in the second chapter we've discussed some of the technical aspects which are common to the clan community. And in the previous chapter we've discussed the social aspects of this community, outside the game.

In this chapter we will discuss some other aspects which are relevant to our research and to one particular question in general:

What makes Medal of Honor, a first person shooter (fps), a suitable game for building clans?

In order to answer this question, we have to go step by step.
We will start by examining the online gaming situation in general. This means we'll be looking at what it is and who is involved. Then we'll explain what first person shooters really are. That means we'll be looking at the genre's history and its features, and particularly the multiplayer option. We'll also be examining what the attraction of first person shooters, and Mohaa especially, is. And this will all lead to the final examination of why an fps, like Mohaa, is suitable for building clans.

The reason we're doing this step by step, is to give a good overview of the genre. We could off course leave all the history and genre features out of it, and just focus on the game Mohaa itself, but that would narrow our research to much. We're not only interested in why Mohaa is a good game for building clans (or a bad game, for that matter), but also why the entire fps genre is suitable (or not) for building clans. We want to know what features such a game should have to be an appropriate game for clan building. And we hope this research will be valuable for other genres too. If our final conclusions good be used in other genres as well, that would be great. But at the moment we're directing our attention to the fps genre and Mohaa in particular. We'll start by examining the online gaming situation in general first.

The online gaming history

"For most members of the general public, the online world didn't exist until the internet started to explode in 1993 and online games didn't exist until publishers started adding internet connectivity to computer games in 1994-95" (Mulligan)[49]

So most people believe that the online gaming situation started sometime in 1995 or 1995 with Doom and Warcraft, but that isn't the case. The world of online gaming started in 1969 when *"Rick Blomme writes a two-player version of MIT's famous Spacewar for the PLATO service"*[50] This service was one of the first time-sharing systems which was used primarily for experimenting with new ways to use computers for education. This system grew larger and could host about 1000 simultaneous users by 1972. During the period 1970-1977 more games appeared on the PLATO service. Some of these multiplayer games are: Star trek, Avatar[51] and Airfight[52] then in 1979 Roy Trubshaw and Richard Bartle develop the first working Multi-User Dungeon (MUD) at the Essex University. During the next years various versions, some legal, some illegal, of this MUD appear. And out of that the 'classical' MUD as we know it arose. In 1982 Kesmai Corporation[53] developed a text based game called the Islands of Kesmai for CompuServe. They later on also developed MegaWars I, which was the longest-running for-pay online game in history when it was closed down in 1998. 1n 1984 the first commercial version

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[49] Mulligan, Jessica, The history of online gaming 1998
[50] Mulligan, Jessica, The history of online gaming 1998
[51] a Dungeons and Dragons-style game
[52] a flight simulator
[53] formed by John Taylor and Dr. Kelton Flinn

of MUD is released on Compunet in England. And in that year AUSI is set up by Mark Jacobs, which will eventually become Mythic Entertainment. He ran a text-based role-playing game named Aradath from his own house, using a server system and installing eight phone lines. This may be the first instance of a professionally run, flat-rate online gaming service. Then in 1985 Bill Louden leads a project which is similar to CompuServe, called GEnie[54]. This is the first serious competition for CompuServe. In November of that year, QuantumLink is launched by Quantum Computer Services (later America Online). They aren't paid much attention to, but that will change. *"The Golden Age of online services begins."*[55]

In 1986 Kesmai rewrites MegaWars I and launches it on Genie as Stellar Warrior, becoming the first multiplayer online game for Genie. In the same year Jessica Mulligan writes a combined Chat-based/Email-based space strategy game named The Rim Worlds War, being the first Play-By-Email game on a commercial system. Also in 1986 Kesmai begins testing Air Warrior[56], being the first true graphics based Massively Multiplayer Game on GEnie. QuantumLink stars testing of Rabbit Jack's Casino, the second graphics-based online game in the industry. In 1987 Air Warrior is released on GEnie and Rabbit Jack's Casino on QuantumLink. In 1988 Gemstone II is launched on GEnie. This text-based game will become the most popular game on GEnie. In 1989 Jessica Mulligan becomes GEnie first dedicated games product manager. They release Galaxy II becoming the third most popular game on GEnie. They also launch A-Maz-ing, a 3D combat game, being the first online 'shooter'. In 1990 GEnie launches The Hundred Years' War. This will be the definitive turn-based online strategy game, allowing 300 players. In 1991 Dragon's Gate is launched on GEnie, becoming a top three popular game. Also in this year, founder Bill Louden leaves GEnie, what will eventually be GEnie's downfall.

This is a brief history of the online gaming situation, before the invention of the first person shooter. We will now go on with the history of the fps and its features in the next chapter.

First Person Shooters; an overview

In this chapter we will first give a brief history of the genre. We will also discuss the specific features of the first person shooter, focusing on the multiplayer option. We've chosen to look especially at id software, because they lead the way for first person shooter development and its features like the multiplayer/online option.

The first person shooter has been around for a decade now. During that time it grew immensely popular, especially the Multiplayer option. It all started in 1992 with the release of Wolfenstein 3D by Apogee. This game differed from other games because of the vanishing-point perspective of the playing environment. With their avatars, the player could move around in a world with similar rules to those of 'real-life'. In Wolfenstein you could move sideways or up or down and the game gave you an idea of depth by changing object sizes. This game was the first in a new genre and since then numerous first person shooters have been developed.

> '*Each new game contributing to a transformation of this genre by offering increasingly complex narrative levels, supporting a variety of different gameplay features and contributing to the development of many online communities.*'[57]

In 1993 id software released Doom, known to every self-respecting gamer. The greatest innovations since Wolfenstein were the enhanced sounds, graphics and physics.

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[54] GE Network for Information Exchange
[55] Mulligan, Jessica, The history of online gaming 1998
[56] A WWII combat flight simulator.
[57] Bryce, et al, spectacle of the Deathmatch; Character and narrative in First-Person Shooters 2002

It was the first fps with a multiplayer option. You could play it via a Local Area Network (LAN) or modem. Gamers could now fight human opponents in deathmatches[58], instead of computer opponents. The game was released as a shareware product. This meant you could download it from the internet for free, which is probably one of the reasons why it became so popular. After the initial release the id also released the source code, giving the gamer the opportunity to modify the game. Id took it to another level with Quake in 1996. This game had a new graphics engine which supported a fully 3D rendered game environment, resulting in astonishing graphics.

> '*The overall look and playability of this game, together with its support for up to 16 players competing against each other,*
> *quickly established Quake as the benchmark FPS. It also facilitated web-based gaming for up to eight players, and allowed access to the Quakeworld network. This, together with the customizability of the game controls and the ability to send messages to other players during the game, contributed to the overwhelming popularity of the game, as highlighted by the growth of online communities of fans and modifiers of the Quake series. This community grew even richer when id released the Quake C language which allowed players to even more power to change the game by altering existing levels and creating new ones.*'[59]

So Quake meant a technological breakthrough, but Quake II really was something else. It changed the gameplay from a linear perspective to a more open level structure. Also you could choose lots of different 'skins' now. You could choose male or female for example, making way for 'modders'[60] to make new skins and implement them in the game. But maybe the most important innovation was the enhanced online option with the ability to use *Gamespy,* a piece of software used to locate servers supporting Quake gaming, showing you the players' names and your ping rate. Then Quake III is released, which is not really new, but has better graphics and better online and multiplayer facilities. The big difference in this game is the development of facilities for online gaming that aim to be compatible with the PC instead of just the consoles.

During this decade this genre has grown to unprecedented heights, being one of the most popular genres around, especially when it comes to online gaming. If you look back to the release of Wolfenstein and now, you can see the huge difference in graphics, narrative, game-play and the multiplayer/online option. All this gives the gamer a sense of immersion, of really being 'in' the game. This is of course what we are looking at in our research, the online option as this is what creates communities and thus clans.

In the next chapter we will focus more on Mohaa. We will look at why people play this game so enthusiastically.

What's so special about Mohaa?

In this chapter we will be looking at the various aspects of Mohaa. What is so special about his game that makes it suitable for online gaming? What is so special about first person shooters in general that makes them suitable for online gaming? We'll be examining this mainly by looking at the answers we've got from our questionnaire. This will give us answers from dedicated online players, who play Mohaa above all else.

One of the first things you can say about most first person shooters but Mohaa for sure is the first person perspective you have. During Mohaa there are no panning or aerial shots, no cuts to close ups or reverse shots from the perspective of the enemy.

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[58] Violent and frantic games in which the aim is to score the greatest number of kills or 'frags' to win.
[59] Bryce, et al, spectacle of the Deathmatch; Character and narrative in First-Person Shooters 2002

[60] people how create new modifications just for fun

Instead, the view remains solidly first-person. This never-changing perspective heightens the sense of 'being there' and immersion in the gaming narrative. Another thing about Mohaa is that it sets you in the battlefield. And not just any battlefield, but a realistic WW II environment. You have to 'kill' your opponents in order to win. *'I think only first person shooters are the best because it puts you in the battlefield rather than "just a game".*[61] *([EVO]-Phoebian-).* This was just one of the answers that stated this. People like to 'shoot each other up and they like doing this in a realistic setting.

Another good aspect about Mohaa is that you can talk to your team members. You can give each other instruction on what to do or not to do. You can tell each other were a sniper is hiding for example. This not only provides a more realistic combat experience and helps you in defeating your opponents, but it also creates sort of a bond among the players.

> *'.]   Moh allows you [as with most games but better] to type messages witch can be displayed to all players or just your team. This means everyone u see is 'real' and you can interact with them [by killing them], causing a closer bond with your fellow player.' (=TC= PVT. SPIFFING SHOT)*[62]

Mohaa is really a very complete game. It gives everyone something to their liking. Some of the levels seem to have come right out of the movie *Saving Private Ryan*. Also the graphic layers are exemplary, every explosion 'feels' like an explosion and every combat is engaging. And then the sounds effects, they also play an important role in giving the player a sense of 'being in the battlefield'. The average gaming situation in Mohaa, with bullets passing your head, people shouting instructions at you and warfare going on all around you, is the closest as you can get to an actual battlefield.

> *'The game itself is very very ...polished, is the word that springs to mind. Its by far the best looking, balanced [with realism mod], + its ww2 which ive got a thing for.' (=TC= PVT. SPIFFING SHOT)*[63]

But why is this game then so suitable for online gaming? Why not just play it alone against Artificial Intelligent adversaries? And that already answers the question. Gamers first of all don't want to play alone. They usually want to share their experience with other gamers. They want to show their skills and have others be amazed of them. And second, gamers don't want to fight AI adversaries, because they become predictable after a while. After playing a game several times you can predict when, in the case of Mohaa, a German comes walking around the corner what makes it pretty boring after a while. That's why the online option is such a treat. You get to play against other, human, adversaries, making it a whole new experience every time you play. "

> *'Playing Medal of Honor online is totally different to single player, because you don't get dumb bots following you about and getting in your way. Instead you get (sometimes) intelligent people who you can actually work as a team with.' ([EVO]-Phoebian-)*[64].

> *'To me Medal of Honor is just a perfect game, playing it online against other people just gives me a different experience every time i play it, even though after such a long time its getting rather dull, which is why im looking forward to CoD and HL2, i think those games will greatly reduce the strain on my MOHAA application icon. Anyway, i just love playing against other people and having fun with them, thats what games are about, to have fun to the max, and fighting people is generally less dull than fighting robots. Also there aren't any advantages, you play against someone that has the same possibilities as you,*

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[61] Questionnaire answer.
[62] Questionnaire answer.
[63] Questionnaire answer
[64] Questionnaire answer.

unlike AI, so its all up to you, your skill and cunning. There is ofcourse the mouse and the computer status that make a difference(thunder's crappy fps hurts his gameplay.' (Clanhopper[65] Regus)[66]

These answers show what we stated previously, that people prefer playing against human opponents, because they want to test their abilities to the 'max'.

But maybe the best thing about Mohaa is the objective mode. That's the number 1 reason why people tend to play this online so much. In the objective mode you are in a team, either the Germans or the Allied, and you have to complete a mission as a team. You have to cooperate in order to win the mission. This cooperation ads another dimension to the game, which you don't have when you play it alone against your PC or play a game online alone (like a deathmatch).

'FPS games are just suitable because its usually team vs team, which gives you alot of opportunities with team work, instead of everyone just working on their own.' (Clanhopper Regus)[67].

So now we know what aspects are so special about first person shooters, we can go on with answering our main question in the next chapter.

Why is Mohaa a good game for building clans?

In the previous chapter we discussed the various aspects of first person shooters. We discovered why they are so popular and why people like playing them online. The main conclusion we could draw from that was that the objective mode is probably the most important reason to play this game online. And from that conclusion we can now try and answer our main question, namely:

What makes Medal of Honor, a first person shooter (fps), a suitable game for building clans?

So why is this game suitable? That answer lies within our previous statements about the objective mode: cooperation. This game is suitable for building clans because you have to team up. You have to cooperate in order to win. We came to that conclusion primarily after examining the answers to our questionnaire. Some of the responses we had are the following:

'Moh is a good game for building clans imo primarily because of the Objective mp mode. This forces people to work together to succeed and subsequently clans are formed. (=TC= Lt. Dr Soccer)[68]
'FPS zijn denk ik zo populair bij clans omdat je samen moet werken. Je kan het zien als een potje voetbal. Daarbij heb je teams/clubs, bij FPS heb je clans. Vooral de objective-mode bij MOHAA maakt het samenwerken leuk.' (=TC= LCPL. CHAMELEON)[69]

'The game modes in moh are mainly team based and this of course becomes a disorginised team. Clans are a logical step up in organising a team into a better one.' (=TC= PVT. SPIFFING SHOT)[70]

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[65] Someone who goes from clan to clan, never staying in one and the same for a long time
[66] Questionnaire answer.
[67] Questionnaire answer.
[68] Questionnaire answer.
[69] Questionnaire answer.
[70] Questionnaire answer.

'I think Medal of Honour is good for having clans because you always play this game in a team, a clan is a group of people so thats also a team of people.' (Clanhopper Regus)[71]
'any team game is suitable but the more cooperation it requires the better it is as its the cooperation that promotes the interaction and therefore the sence of being part of something bigger than yourself when your 'in game'.' (EA-employee who is in a clan himself)[72]

These answers show us that Mohaa is indeed suitable for building clans, because of the cooperation. When you are in a clan you are sort of in a 'team', trying to defeat the opposing team. Being in a clan makes you a better organized team then when you play it online and have a different team each time. In a clan you practice a lot with each other and therefore become better and better as a team. Everyone has a specific role and you know what to do. It's just like being in a soccer team for example. When you play a lot together, you become more and more acquainted with each other and get to know the strong and weak points of everyone. And you can use that information to form the best team as possible. So, for example, someone who is good at shooting becomes a sniper.

So being in a clan gives you the advantage over players/teams that are not. And the answer to our question is that Mohaa is suitable for building clans, because of the team aspect. But not only Mohaa is suitable, most games with objective mode are probably suitable. They don't specifically have to be first person shooters. It's the cooperation factor that decides if the game is suitable for building clans or not. The more cooperation a game requires, the more suitable it is for building clans.

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[71] Questionnaire answer
[72] Questionnaire answer

Conclusion

In this chapter we have discussed various things. We started out with giving a brief history of the online gaming situation in order to understand were this phenomenon comes from. Then we proceeded with the history of the fps itself, so we knew how that was created and that gave us the foundation for our further research.

We continued by looking at what features first person shooters and Mohaa in particular had that made this game such a success and discovered that there were a few things. We found out that being in the battlefield was one of them as well as the option to talk to each other during combat. Our research shows that Mohaa is just a very complete game in different ways. It has good graphics and sounds for example.

Another thing we discovered is that gamers play this game online, because they want to 'test' themselves. They want to compete with human opponents instead of AI opponents. When you play it online it's all up to you, you don't have any advantage over your adversary. It's up to you, your skills and cunning to win the game.

Then we stated that the best thing about Mohaa was the objective mode, in which you have to play as a team in order to win. This means you have to cooperate and that is what brought us to our main conclusion in this chapter. This game is suitable for building clans because you have to cooperate. You have to work as a team and a clan is a team, but a well organized one. Being in a clan gives you a better chance of winning because you train together and know the people in your team. This means you all have your specific role and everyone does what he does best. Being in a clan also provides a better gaming experience, because you get more involved in the game and its surroundings.

In the next chapter we will discuss the various aspects of the relation between the gaming industry and clans.

Clans and the Gaming Industry:

From Doom to Medal of Honor, Describing the History and Looking to the Future of Multi-player Gaming in relation to Clans.

Introduction

In my research I will focus on the relationships between Multi-player Games, Clans and the Gaming Industry.
The question I want to try to answer with my research is the following:

What is the importance of the existence and input of Clans as gamers for and to the gaming industry? What kind of relation currently exists between the gaming industry and these Clans?
More importantly, what can be done to strengthen these relations?

The method which will be used to answer this question is by analyzing the answers to a questionnaire which was completed by several clan members. This way I hope to show a glimpse of the relationships which currently exist between the Gaming Industry and Clans. In addition to this, I will first look at the history of Online Multi-player Gaming, and some subjects which are related to it. I will look at the current situation, and I will also try to look ahead to see what might be done to improve upon that situation.

To accurately describe these relationships I will first try to trace and describe a bit of the History of Online Multi-player Gaming. This will specifically be about First Person Shooter Games (FPS), so I will start with one of the first FPS games which was very popular, and could be considered one of the milestones in the development of online multi-player First Person Shooter games: Doom.
Ever since the release of FPS games like Doom, the gaming industry has made it possible for the gamers to make their own levels, using level- and game editors supplied by the developers themselves.
This freedom to influence and create new gameplay has also led to other forms of the games, via modification of the game. The ability to change the source code of the game engines led to a new phenomenon: Modifications (Mods).
The game Half-life has had an important role in the developing importance of Mods for the Gaming Industry: It spawned the Game Counter-Strike.
Within the game communities Modifications play an important role. Modifications are most usually made for multi-player first person shooter (MPFPS) games, and around these games and their Mods, Clans are formed.
After I have described the above subject matters, I will look at how they relate to other forms of Multi-Playing, over the internet or on LAN parties, via pay to play systems or on tournaments, between casual gamers and professional gamers. I hope to describe how the Clans, the Developers and other representatives of the Gaming Industry and the Game Community all figure into this.
Finally, I will try to summarize my findings, and try to draw a conclusion about what direction these relationships are going, and what can be done to improve them.

Doom

Doom was released in 1993, by id Software, and would come to represent a new generation for computer games. id Software had released Wolfenstein 3D/Spear of Destiny, but its creators, John Carmack and John Romero, had bolder plans for a new game with more realism added to the game play and graphics design. While developing Wolfenstein, John Carmack started work on a new game engine, which would later become the DOOM engine. This engine would be used and modified by many other companies, to create new and similar games. The ability for the regular user to be able to modify the engine would become an important step in the history of Doom and perhaps even in the history of Multi-Player (MP) gaming.

The Doom engine set new standards for real-time computer graphics, the gaming experience, and for MP-gaming. Doom was one of the first FPS games which was playable with multiple players, via a network. Usually this network would be made connecting several computers via their printer ports or if possible via a Local Area Network (LAN).

> John Romero:
> *"Well, during development on a game at id we always knew that our latest   game was going to be better than our last game, so it was obvious to us all that DOOM was going to be better than Wolfenstein 3D/Spear of Destiny. Carmack's idea of adding netplay to DOOM was when I told the other id guys, 'This is going to be the most badass game in the history of the planet Earth.'"*
> *"Our previous games had all used some form of compression in their data files that was very hard to crack (because some essential information was linked into the EXE file, which was compressed too). The fact that we removed all compression from DOOM data files was a large step toward making it easier to modify. Releasing the data specs was the other important aspect to helping others modify our game."*[73]

Doom is now actually in its 10th anniversary, but has been played continually by fans of the game, ever since it first came out. Today Doom is more than just a game. Following the success of the game, id Software released the source code, and in doing so, perhaps unwittingly, made sure that Doom would be around for a long time. Gamers all over the world have modified and improved the game engine with extra features like OpenGL, mouse aiming and lots of new multiplayer options.

As a game, Doom was very suitable for the emergence of clans. Of course, there weren't that many players who had access to the internet or a Local Area Network back then, but those who did, were instantly hooked. Right about that time LAN parties started to emerge. In addition to swapping code and other information over the networks, Doom started to become one of the reasons to organize these parties. Still, it would be a while before true MP-gaming over the internet would arrive. Internet was not yet widely available to everyone. Doom's successors, also developed by id Software, like the Quake series, would make increased usage of the internet for game play. At a certain point, these games would no longer be bought for playing the single player part of the game, but for its Multi-Player capabilities. Clans started to appear, and its numbers are still increasing, with the rise of internet still going strong.

Especially the Quake series of games were pivotal in the growth of these Clans. Many of the Clans which formed around these games still exist. Even today it's possible to join online games of Doom and Quake 1, 2 or 3. For those interested in trying a game of Quake be warned for some of these gamers have been playing ever since the games were released, and fighting them will prove extremely difficult.

The trend of buying games solely for Multi-Player use is evident in the rise and increase of Multi-player games developed by the industry, and the Modifications (Mods) which the gamers and the game community made for these games.

Mods and Counter-Strike

The first modifications for Doom were made possible because id Software had released their source code to the public, and later released programs to make modifications to the levels and the game itself. After a while the gamers started to make their own modifications, which they would send to their friends via the internet. Some

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[73] http://doomworld.com/pageofdoom/doomhist.html

Mods, named Total Conversions (TC), would change the whole outlook of the game. For instance, for the game Doom, there are TC's which change it into a game set in the Star Wars universe, complete with Storm Troopers and Darth Vader, or a TC which places you in the eerie corridors of a space station inhabited by Aliens, after the Alien series of films, complete with sound bites from some of the characters (and monsters) of these films. The term Total Conversion is now becoming less common on the internet it seems and the term Mod is more often used.

One of these Mods, designed for the game Half-Life, has achieved great popularity among clans and online gamers. Designed by an allegedly bored college student who enjoyed playing against others, the game development was partly taken over by Valve when it was still in its infancy, and helped the designer improve the gameplay and add extra features. The game was solely designed for Multi-play, which could be done via LAN or the internet. Bots, which are players controlled by the computer using relatively simple Artificial Intelligence code could also be installed if you could not or did not want to use the internet, but still wanted to play in a team against multiple opponents. As said, the game achieved great success and popularity ever since its first release in 1999. On June 18th, a small crowd of fans could play one of these first Mods for Half-Life. Today, Counter-strike has spawned a number of commercial successes. Counter-strike has been made available for the Xbox, and a new version of Counter-strike for the PC, called Condition Zero, is in development.[74]

Other modifications followed. Day of Defeat is another example of a Mod born in the gaming community which is now slated for commercial release by Valve. Obviously, Clans do have an important role in the community which started to form around these games. Most Clans collectively try out new games, and usually decide, as a clan, if they like the game or not. Also, Mods are perhaps just as important for the success of a new game. This is one of the reasons Valve has released a level editor for their upcoming sequel Half-Life 2. Giving the gamers a chance to design new maps and levels for the game, will surely enhance the gamer's involvement in the game. It will also allow the creators of various Mods to try out and see what they can do with the new game engine. It is not at all unimaginable for instance that the original Counter-Strike will simply be remapped in the new Half-Life 2 game, since the fans of the game can fiddle around with the editor before the game has arrived. In fact, there are currently some groups of Modders who have been busy creating new Mods for the game already. One example is shown on The Last Great War website, a game set in WWII, just like Mohaa and Day of Defeat.[75] Another is the Mod G.H.O.S.T. Ops, a Mod which was originally planned for the Half-Life engine, but which is now being designed for the Half-Life 2 engine. Adding some other modifications to give the original players of Counter-Strike the opportunity to play it with a new and improved game engine might also prove to be a great success. Time will tell.

Pay to play

One of the things Valve is trying to do with Half-Life 2, is making it available through the internet, via a system called Steam.
Steam is a new broadband content delivery platform from Valve software which allows gamers to play Half-Life, Half-Life 2 and their respective mods online.[76]
Gamers who would like to play the latest games developed by Valve will be able to download them straight from the internet. Use of the system is acquired by gamers who pay a monthly subscription fee, so instead of having to go out and buy the games, you can download them directly from Valve. However, the system is quite new and some

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[74] http://csnation.counter-strike.net/articles.php/counterpoint_154/
[75] http://www.lastgreatwar.com/
[76] http://www.steampowered.com/

bugs have to be worked out, and the gaming community is not very enthusiastic about the way it currently performs.

Making games available via the internet, or having to pay a subscription fee to play them is not a new development in the gaming industry, but it does look like it is finally catching on, or at least the companies developing these games would like it to catch on. More and more Massively Multiplayer Online Games (MMOG) are being released.[77]

Star Wars Galaxies, PlanetSide and Ultima Online are currently available. However, Half-Life is one of the first FPS type game offered online for a fee. It will be very interesting to see how the gaming community will respond.

From friendly LAN parties to Organized LAN competitions and Professional Gaming

The popularity of LAN parties led to the organization of bigger LAN parties on college or university grounds or in Sports halls. People would come from far away to exchange files, play games or have coding competitions. Eventually, these events started to become more organized, and with it came the involvement of the commercial sector, in the form of sponsors or even organizers of these events.

The gaming industry and with it the hardware industry became involved in these events. More and more of these events would entail contests over the network, having gamers duke it out on the latest hardware playing the latest games. One such example is Quakecon 2003, were a gamers had the opportunity to play Doom 3, id Software's latest title.[78]

So nowadays, these events serve not only the gamers needs, but also those of the industry. Gamers get to play the latest games, and can give advice or comments to the developers about the gameplay. So in essence the games can be tested by its prime target audience, the gamers. In addition, these new games are becoming more taxing on the hardware, so in order to play the latest games, you will probably also need the latest hardware. Some game developers have made specific deals with the hardware industry. For instance, when released, Half-Life 2 will be sold with the new Ati video cards. It's clear that game developers and the hardware industry work together closely. Both will try to meet the demands of the Gamers. They know what the gamers want (better games with better graphics), and they now what they need (the gamers input). These LAN parties are a huge potential Research and Development event, and often gamers are asked to fill out questionnaires about their likes and dislikes about certain games.

The rise of gaming contests held at LAN parties signaled the arrival of Professional Gaming.

Contests involving money prizes have become more common, especially in Asian countries where the internet and online gaming is a booming business.[79] An example of this is South-Korea, where they have television shows broadcasting matches between top players.

It is also in Asia where the World Cyber Games originates from, an annual Gaming contest which tries to promote competitive gaming as a sport.[80]

However, Professional gaming is still in its infancy. Big nationwide and international tournaments, like the Summer 2004 Extreme Championship organized by the Cyberathlete Professional League (CPL), or the World Cyber Games are just beginning to appear.[81]

The same goes for the institutions and organizations which represent the gamers. On the Game Research site, researcher Jeppe Bo Anderson mentions some of these roadblocks on the way to gaming as a competitive sport and professional lifestyle. The

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[77] http://www.gamespy.com/amdmmog/
[78] http://www20.tomshardware.com/game/20030816/index.html
[79] http://www.gamespy.com/gdc2003/korean/
[80] http://www.worldcybergames.com/
[81] http://www.thecpl.com/league/

greater part of his research is made up of an analysis the results of a survey he held among gamers. Here he investigates the realities and dreams of professional and casual gamers.[82]

In another article, Richard Millington, who posted an article under the name Meyers, called *Professional Gaming: Myths, Facts and Reality*. In it, he tries to describe what it must feel like to become a professional gamer, including his own experiences and views on the subject.[83]

The questions I formulated for my own research were partly inspired by these articles, and by what I had read on the internet in articles and forums about professional gaming, and the relations of gamers to the game developers.
When we designed the questionnaire, each one of us was allowed four questions which would be about their subject. I couldn't help myself and formulated many more, but eventually I had six questions ready which I hoped would give me some answers. Right after I got the results back from my questionnaire, I realized I could have put more emphasis on the Clan aspect when talking about the relation between the gaming industry and the gaming community.
However, combining the above information with the results from the questionnaire still gives enough information to draw sensible conclusions about the Gaming Industry and Clans.

The Questionnaire

In this last piece I will discus the results I got from the questionnaire which was filled in by several gamers. Most of the answers are pretty straight forward, and need no explanation. Some of these answers are from an employee of Electronic Arts in the UK, (which I named EA Q&A from here on since I never got his name) the other answers are from the Terran Confederation Clan.[84]
Especially EA Q&A and =TC= Lt. Dr Soccer were very helpful by answering all the questions, which helped a lot.

The questions and answers

1. *Have you ever been approached, or in any other way been in contact with the gaming industry (i.e. Electronic Arts) regarding Medal of Honor (or any other game)? If yes, in what way? Do you even think there IS contact with the gamers?*

None of the respondents have had any contact with the gaming industry whatsoever. Some feel that there is not enough communication between the industry and the gamers:

> "I have not been in contact/contacted by anyone in the games industry... and I dont think their is enough contact between the companies and the consumer as to what is good and what is total bs, e.g. mohaa expansions." (=TC= Lt. Dr Soccer)

Others dislike the lack of the communication of the industry towards the gamers:

> "Nope, and i doubt I ever will. Electronic Arts DONT GIVE A DAMN about what happens to this game. All they are interested in is making money. 2 expansion packs for example, they are practically identical to eachother, s the second one is

[82] http://www.game-research.com/art_pro_gamers.asp
[83] http://www.ukterrorist.com/articles/progaming/
[84] http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk/

just easy money with low work. 2015 basically made the original Medal of Honour, which is why it is so good, they actually cared about it. Another example, there are so many cheats out there, but EA wont do shit to help fight them." (Clanhopper Regus)

2. *Would you appreciate being asked to help develop a game or make a living out of it? What if that meant that you would be able to play games, individually or as a clan, which are still being developed, but you would have to play them on a closed network at one of the offices of the game developer? In other words, you would have to be there, from 9:00-17:00, playing against other "testers" (Sufficient measures would be taken to prevent leaking the new games (no internet, no removable data storage)).*

Most of the respondents would like to be involved in some way or another:

"9 till 5...lol i start at 7am and finish at 7pm most of the time (the rest i start at 7pm and finish at 7 am) and i must admit it can get a bit tedious after a few hundred hours on the same game but the multiplayer work the BF1942 expansion pack was a blast :D " (EA Q&A)

"I guess it would be something I'd do if asked, I've played in some testing stages of games, e.g. planetside beta and a couple of others but it would be something else to be a tester for a game still in early development but I dont think i'd want to do it more than once." (=TC= Lt. Dr Soccer)

"I'd like to help develop a game(s) because of my interest in gaming. I enjoy it and I would like to do it also." ([EVO]-Phoebian-)

"Definitely, but I don't think that's something for me. For one I'm not that good at games, for second there are so many people that want to do it, I have no chance of being selected or somewhat, and I cant make games either, im not good at all that stuff, all I can do with my pc is play games, and even at that I suck." (Clanhopper Regus)

3. *Please describe what you expect from working with game developers if applicable (based on experience, what you've heard etc.)*

"Long hours, bleary eyes, expanding waistline (pizza and coffee diet), declining social life (working while your mates are in the pub drinking), crap pay compared to other areas of the software industry...on the other hand free food, free trips, free (or nearly.. eg i bought gp2002 for £1.00) games, a constantly challenging job that changes with each new project and last but not least getting up in the morning and smiling on your way to work because there are far worse ways to make a living :) " (EA Q&A)

"Long hours, low pay" (=TC= Lt. Dr Soccer)

4. *Would you like to become a sponsored gamer? For instance kind of like the players in a national soccer or football league? Would you want to play in a selected team (steady job) against other teams, or would you rather be a kind of freelance agent (uncertain if you win/get paid next time)? (((What if it didn't really pay a whole lot more than the rent and food? (If you had a wife and kids it wouldn't be enough))))*

"No, I play games for fun and I play games for a living and although its fun compared to most jobs it is no where near the fun I get from pure playing, win or lose, (and im sure its not just the booze thats responible :). Going pro would ruin that sense of fun and just turn it into a pressure environment although I can understand how some would like it as they pressure themselves to be the best all the time (and never seem to be as happy as others even when they are winning, still thier loss)." (EA Q&A)

"This would be something interesting to do for a while, maybe a year but not much more than that because you'd have no money and need a real job." (=TC= Lt. Dr Soccer)

5. *What's your opinion about 'Pay to Play' games (p2p), like PlanetSide?*
Would you play (and pay for) those sorts of games?

"I have subscribed to PS (PlanetSide) since day 1 and have no problem with it as it costs me no more than my share of my clans server rental and with the halflife2 steam system (if it works) id be more than happy to pay a little to see the end of both the cheaters and the cheat accusations that have become the curse of online gaming." (EA Q&A)

"Pay 2 play.. It depends on what the game is about, for instance Star Wars Galaxies was a game I'd been waiting for years to play, so I was willing to pay 2 play, especially as I have alot of friends playing it from real life, as well as from playing in some older star wars online games (e.g. Xwing Vs Tie Fighter, Jedi Knight series etc). Normally I make the most of the free 30 days and try as many things as I can before deciding." (=TC= Lt. Dr Soccer)

"Nah I don't see the point I'd rather play official games release by top developers." ([EVO]-Phoebian-)

"NOPE, dozy buggers, pay to play, HA HA HA, soft in the head they is! 😜" (<<)GRUNTS(>> SYDNEY)

6. *How would you feel if they brought out fewer games, but focused more on those games which are successful, and keep improving its game-engine and gameplay.*

"It would be sad day as the big buget pioneering games would be lost as they have no previous track record of success (e.g. republic the revolution) however an end to the sub standard clones of every new idea would be nice still at the end of the day the customer that controls what sells and what does not so there must be a lot of people that like 2nd rate games and who am i to deny them thier choice." (EA Q&A)

"Whilst this sounds good I think it would become a bit boring eventually, with companies just making games on the same things over and over again e.g. star wars or ww2, with no originality." (=TC= Lt. Dr Soccer)

"It would get boring after a while, sure it would be nice to have the same game but better? :-s but if you play the same game over and over it would defiantly get boring." ([EVO]-Phoebian-)

"They should keep bringing stuff out, but, at the same time those things that are succusfull should be expanded on, BUT, the expansion packs shouldn't take the p.ss and need a cray to run them with, i.e., Shitehead." (<<)GRUNTS(>>

SYDNEY)

In the responses to the questions we can see that apparently, communication between the industry and the gamers is insufficient, yet desired by the gamers. Support for the game Medal of Honor in the form of anti-cheat software seems to be absent. Almost everyone would like to help develop or be involved in games, simply because they like gaming. Going Pro is not on everyone's mind. Most of the gamers who answered this question fear it will take the fun out of gaming, or won't make them enough money to sustain themselves. Pay 2 play meets with mixed reactions, and simply updating game engines is something which might stop the development of new innovative games.

Conclusion

At the end of the day, I think the relation between the gamers and the gaming industry is still in need of strengthening. We have seen however that there is a trend set in the form of Mods, where the Game Developer gives the gaming community the chance to adjust the gameplay to the wishes of the gamers, and to invent new forms of play. More then not these Mods are designed for Multi-playing, which in turn attract clans. What is also evident is that Clans will probably be around for a long time. They have been around for a while now, and more and more games are being designed with Online Multi-playing in mind. On the other hand, there is little evidence to suggest that Clans as groups are made positive use of by the gaming industry. The Developers make no use of them. My opinion on this is quite contrary to the facts. I think Clans can be of great use for game developers. When playing in a Clan, you build up all kinds of expertise, which you share with your teammates. Giving Clans the opportunity to test new games would not be a bad idea.

This research is of course too limited in its scope to summarize all that can be said and has been said about the history and the future of online gaming and Clans. I certainly advise everyone interested in this particular subject to scour the internet, to look for opinions about gaming and academic articles written on this subject. It is the best place to begin. One place to start is the links listed at the end of this paper.

Final Conclusions and Afterthoughts

In our research paper we have tried to give some insights in the world of clans, and how they relate to each other, to the online community and to the gaming industry. In this research paper, five different views were presented on this subject.

In the first article Dennis Spaans has tried to explain what it means to be part of a Clan on a social level. He describes this from the point of view of an insider, being part of a clan which performs well in national and international competitions. He found that being part of a clan does not significantly differ from being part of a sports club like for instance soccer. In both kinds of play, communication between players and good strategies are vital for achieving the clans' goals.

The second article by Robert Hoogendoorn takes a closer look at Mods, cracks and patches, and the kind of impact they have on the gaming community on the levels of gameplay and social relations, and on the gaming industry and how they react.
Here he tries to define and separate Mods cracks and patches and where they originate from. Many gamers resent the fact that there are players out there that simply don't play by the rules. In respect to clans, cheaters are most usually banned from servers, and not accepted among clans.
From this research it becomes clear that there are still too many cheats out there, and that the gaming industry should do more to prevent the use of cheats in their games.

Researcher Bas Schutte looks at the social networks which are being formed in the off-game community around Clans. Many written and unwritten rules exist, influenced by normal social interaction, the game rules, army rules and behavioural rules which come from the game. In-game character traits, including rank and ability, may influence the way how players communicate off-game. However, in-game and off-game communication and social interaction are hardly ever mixed up. In-game, a player might achieve a high rank and garner much respect from other gamers, but off-game, every player is equal. Most part of the off-game communities is simply a result of the enjoyment of playing together, as a close team, against other teams.

In the fourth article, Brendan Dekker looks at what makes an online multiplayer game best suitable for Clans. He finds that the game Medal of Honour stimulates cooperation between the players within the Clan, in order to achieve the goals within the game when playing in the objective mode. Training together makes all players and the clan as a whole a well structured and well organised team, working on strategies while playing the game, and giving each player the chance to improve their own abilities. Playing in a clan also adds a higher sense of involvement, since you are more focused on what happens around you in the game, and what the clan is doing.

In the fifth and final article, Rutger Bruil looks at the relationship between the gaming industry and the game community. This is a relationship where there is still room for growth. One of the relations between the gaming industry and the game community comes from Mods. The Mods which are made by the game community change the games produced by the gaming industry into new games. The Modding community could become a place where creativity has the upper hand, where more attention is paid to the input from gamers themselves, simply because the Modmakers are gamers themselves.

When we put all our findings as shown in these previous chapters together we can fairly say that clans play or can play a significant role for the gamer, the community and the developer. They provide the gamer not only a better gaming experience, but also friendship. And the community becomes even more involved, for example with modding. The developer can get valuable information from clans and thus make better games,

which is good for the developer (more money) as well as the gamer and the community (better games)

What becomes obvious in this study is that the gaming industry and the game community are still very much alive, and are still only at the beginning of a journey to making better games. Working together on this will be vital for their mutual success. We hope this research is not only the first step in a better cooperation between the industry and the gamers/communities, but also a first step for further research in this area.

Thank you for reading our research

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http://www.pscw.uva.nl/emca/ap.htm (07-12-'02)

Forums

http://cmohl.burstfire.net/forums/forums.php
http://www.terran-confederation.co.uk/forum2/forum/
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Websites*:*
http://www.clanbase.com
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http://www.igda.org/
http://ludology.org/index.php
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http://www.gamespot.com/features/virtual/p6_01.html
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http://www.game-research.com/
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http://www.forbes.com/forbes/2000/0320/6507102a.html
Henry Jenkins' website'
Game Research - Action Games
Greenhill - The Future of MP gaming
Collection of references
History of Online gaming
History of OG, continued
Game Culture
Interview with developer of MoH
Game modes van MoH + info

Websites with regard to Medal of Honour:
Interview with MoH's producer Erik Kraber
http://mohaa.ea.com/
http://medalofhonoralliedassault.pagina.nl/
Medal of Honor Cheats
Medal of Honor Cheats (2)
Medal of Honor - Files to Download
Collection of links to MoH-Download pages
Interview with developer of MoH
Game modes van MoH + info
Interview with MoH's Producer Erik Kraber
Review #1
Review #2

Interesting Books:
http://web.mit.edu/sturkle/www/Life-on-the-Screen.html
http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0684833484/002-9920518-
1524026?v=glance
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Questions regarding clans

Please read and answer the questions given. You are participating in a research considering clans and the game Medal of Honor.

Modifications / Cheats

1. How do you define the difference between mods and cheats?
2. Did you ever use a mod and/or cheat? If yes, which one and why?
3. Which kind of modifications should be allowed in Multiplayer mode, and which ones should be banned?

Social organisation

1. Clans are build around the game Medal of Honor, which is an army type of game. How strictly do you follow the rules, ranks, and other parts of an army in your clan community outside the game? Is this very important for you and the clan community?
2. Which social codes or rules are there inside the off-game clan community? Especially pointing towards the unspoken/unwritten ones. Ex. How to react upon a dismissed member? or How to handle problems/fights inside the clan community?
3. How important is the off-game community for the clan? Ex. What is the balance between the off-game community and the in-game community? Or real-life contact versus online contact.
4. Is the clan build upon friendship or is it build upon skills? And what is the balance between these elements in the clan?

First Person Shooter

1. What do you think, makes Medal of Honor (a first person shooter), such a good game for building clans? Or, in a broader perspective, what makes first person shooters suitable for building clans?
2. What is so special about playing Medal of Honor? And especially playing it online (multiplayer)?
3. Would you say that first person shooters are best suitable for building clans? Or are there other types of games which may be equally suitable or even better for building clans?
4. Why are you in this clan? Why don't you just play it online without being in a clan? What is so special about being in a clan?

Gaming Industry

1. Have you ever been approached, or in any other way been in contact with the gaming industry (i.e. Electronic Arts) regarding Medal of Honour (or any other game)? If yes, In what way?
2. Would you appreciate being asked to help develop a game? Make a living out of it? What if that meant that you would be able to play games, individually or as a clan, which are still being developed, but you would have to play them on a closed network at one of the offices of the game developer. In other words, you would have to be there, from 9:00-17:00, playing against other "testers" (Sufficient measures would be taken to prevent leaking the

new games. (no internet, no removable data storage)).

3. Please describe what you expect from working with game developers (based on experience, what you've heard etc.)

4. Would you like to become a sponsored gamer? For instance kind of like the players in a national soccer or football league? Would you want to play in a selected team (steady job) against other teams, or would you rather be a kind of freelance agent (uncertain if you win/get paid next time)? (((What if it didn't really pay a whole lot more than the rent and food? (If you had a wife and kids it wouldn't be enough))))

5. What's your opinion about 'Pay to Play' games (p2p), like PlanetSide? Would you play (and pay for) those sorts of games?

6. How would you feel if they brought out less games, but focused more on those games which are successful, and keep improving its game-engine and gameplay.

Thank you for participating in our research. You can follow our results and final outcomes at our site, http://www.gametheories.tk