

## More Post-Mortems, Shareware

CMPUT 299

Winter 2005

*February 16*

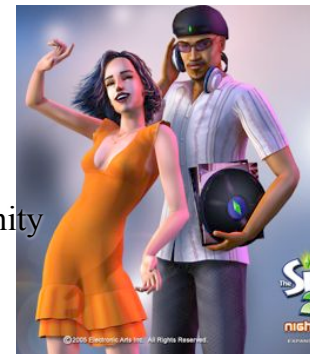
## The Sims 2



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## The Sims 2

- What went right
  - Prototyping
  - Understanding the audience
  - Kleenex testing
  - Custom content and community
  - SWAT Teams



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## The Sims 2

- What went wrong
  - Noisy feedback
  - That's a lot of content
  - New engine, new pipelines, learning curve
  - Sequelitis
  - Big team communications



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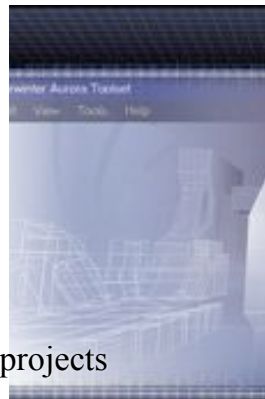
## Neverwinter Nights



Game Postmortems

## Neverwinter Nights

- What went right
  - Constant communication
  - Extensive tool effort
  - Multiplayer integration from the outset
  - Experienced team members focused on quality
  - Sharing resources with other projects



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## Neverwinter Nights

- What went wrong
  - Resources added at non-optimal times
  - Incomplete prototypes
  - Delayed rule implementation (including tools implementation delay)
  - Late feature additions; innovation for its own sake
  - A lot of demos



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## Shareware

- How many people have played shareware?
- How many people have bought shareware?

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## First Shareware - 1981

- PC Talk
  - Andrew Fluegelman
- Easy-File
  - Jim Button

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## First Shareware

1. Reference each others programs in their documentation
2. Changed Easy-File to PC-FILE
3. Voluntary donations of \$25.00

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## More Software

- 1983 - PC Write, Bob Wallace
- 1983 - Public Software Library, Nelson Ford
  - Contest for general name for new software
  - Shareware - coined by Bob Wallace

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- Wrote platform side-scrollers

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## Methods of Distribution

- Word of mouth (disk)
  - Copying for friends
  - Distribution services
  - Magazines
- BBS
  - Other early online games (Trade Wars)
- FTP
- WWW

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## Speed of Distribution

- Word of mouth
  - Days, weeks
- BBS
  - Days, hours (limited users/access)
- FTP
  - Days, hours (increased users)
- WWW
  - Immediately (increased users)

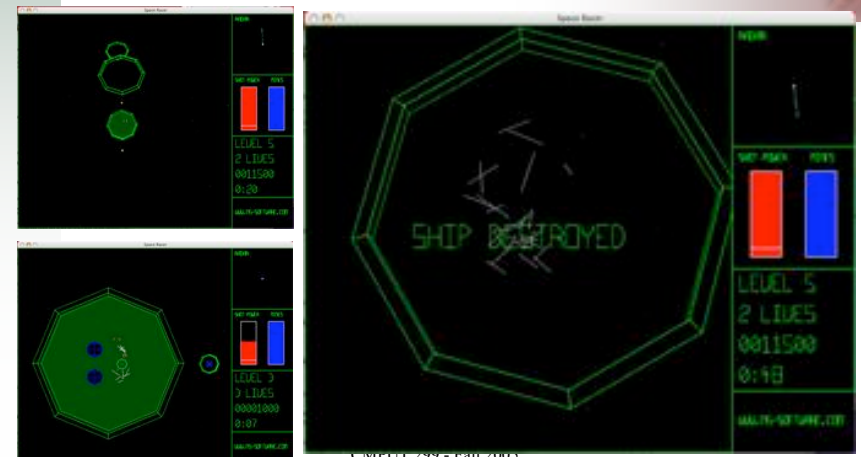
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## My own experiences

- From Asteroids to Vectrex (GCE's system), vector graphics have a special place in the history of gaming. First pioneered by Cinematronics in the 1977 game "Space Wars", the method of drawing sharp geometric shapes with straight lines harks back to the days when "simplicity and intense gameplay" were the mantra of game players and developers. For the next 21 days, iDevGames invites Mac developers to go retro by developing a game that captures the glory and spirit of vector graphic gaming.

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## SV Racer



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# SV Racer

- What went right?
  - Learned OpenGL
  - Good initial code design
  - Object system allowed innovative levels
  - MIDI sound/music

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## SV Racer

- What went wrong?
  - Didn't win contest!
  - What was the contest design goal?
  - Not enough time
  - Controls too complex



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