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THE RISE AND THE FALL OF ASSASSIN'S CREED FROM UBISOFT

Abstract. The development of Assassin's Creed, created by Ubisoft, was analyzed in this article. In this research was used the information, which was based on: my own gamer experience, processing the information which was taken from the game forums. The facts which video bloggers found in their review for these games were taken into account. The key moments of gameplay process and the mistakes of the developers were considered. The variants of solving the problems which were mentioned before were offered in the article.

Keywords: creed; game series; Assassins; templars; developers.

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РОЗКВІТ ТА ПАДІННЯ ASSASSIN'S CREED ВІД UBISOFT

Анотація. У цій статті був проведений аналіз розвитку ігрової серії Assassin's Creed, яку створила компанія Ubisoft. В самому дослідженні була використана інформація, котра була зібрана на основі: власного досвіду проходження ігор з цієї серії, обробки інформації, отриманої з ігрових форумів, також до уваги були прийняті факти, викладені відеоблогерами у їх оглядах на ці ігри. У статті охоплювалися ключові моменти ігрового процесу, помилки розробників. Також були запропоновані варіанти рішення вищевказаних проблем.

Ключові слова: кредо; серія ігор; асасини; тамплієри; розробники.

The Statement of the problem. It is well known fact that famous company Ubisoft became so popular because of creating new type of video games – stealth action. One of the best example of such thing is Assassin's Creed anthology. From 2008 mystical story about shadow warriors attracted millions of players all around the world and nowadays also. But lots of gamers are not fond of the few games which use the name of their favorite game series. So, what the reason of such dissatisfaction? In my opinion current situation was caused by the big differences in gameplay process between new and old parts of story.

Social research and its analysis. In the 21-st century one of the best ways to find out players opinion about the game is surfing the Internet (watching videos on YouTube and reading comments below them, making new surveys or reading common chats on forums or discord channels). According to all of those sources of information, I can say that we have two groups of players: new ones and old ones. Older generation of gamers in most cases has very high expectations about the new release from the famous game studio, but their wishes sometimes can be too difficult to implement into reality. That's why the majority of game studios prefer to adopt games to the new generation of players.

Another thing which should be admitted is amount of benefits (money), which developers are able to get from making partly old game project in new settings. So, this is the real reason, why Ubisoft creates almost new games and doesn't give them all that traits which are so familiar for us from the previous part of the game.

For example: in original trilogy about Desmond Miles we were able to see very unusual path of the main character for those times. His historical avatar Altair has very difficult way of life. When gamers played Assassin's Creed 1, they saw his personal growth in every mission of the main plot. Philosophy is one of the basic foundations of this game. We should remember that the majority of gamers plays for fun or in order to relax, but not for searching hidden sense in the words of characters. There is nothing surprising, that the company decided to reduce the amount of mind pressure for the audience in the new project. Unfortunately, Ubisoft follows trends of nowadays too much.

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Speaking honestly, major part of video games attracts us, not only by innovative technical features, but mostly by the main plot. Playing games on your PC, Xbox or PS at the current time is associated with reading novels. The more, catchy and intriguing your storyline, the more users you will attract to your project. Few parts of Assassin's Creed games seem to be the masterpiece in those directions. Here they are: Assassin's Creed 1, 2, Brotherhood, Revelations, AC IV Black Flag and Unity. Projects from that list had really good story for the main characters. All the plot is based on versus between two ancient organizations: **Assassins** and **Templars**. In the story of Desmond's journey we can see really bright border between light and darkness. On the one hand, the brotherhood of assassins fights for freedom as it is and on the other hand, we are able to see an evil in the face of templar's order. But, from 2013 Ubisoft decided to show us a bit different side of that infinite shadow war. In the IV-th part we watch over the friends of the main character and how some of them, easily betray those ideals, which they had been fighting for many years. I think that such kind of innovation can intrigue players and give them more reasons to buy and play exactly this game.

In new parts of the series, I noticed that the main story is not so catchy as it was before. I suppose, that it happens because developers try to focus on new gaming trends in order not to lose the audience. As a result, they concentrate much more on the gameplay process than on detail elaboration of the main character and its heartrending story. Of course, everything has its own price. So, there is nothing surprising that older generation of players is dissatisfied.

Unsolved tasks. The most difficult target in that campaign is to find the golden mean between wishes of players and in current business conditions. It is the well-known fact that the plot of the game is important, but not less than the gameplay process.

As far as I know most of the gamers enjoys not only the interactive book, where they are the owners of the fate, but also methods of making decisions and implementing their plans into virtual reality. During our play we want to find something new, figure out the main mystery of the character or even this imaginary world. That's why, game-develop team tries to create such model of universe for players which won't remind another game or its previous part.

Let's have a look at the way of assassin's creed gameplay. We will be able to find basic fighting system which is much closer to reality than in Prince of Persia (an inspirer of these games), the beginning of stealth-system which we used to. Also, in the first parts developers show us that the virtual world has its own reaction on our deeds and we are able to interact with it. In the next parts we see that our game universe becomes brighter and more interesting.

It is well-known fact that the size of the world is important for gamers in order to get as much entertainment content as it is possible. I want to admit that the creators of AC made the size of the game map bigger in every part. Honestly, it was interesting to use all these fitches which new game offers to us, like: hunting, racing, finding some mysteries, solving riddles, looking for pieces of legendary armor sets, capturing forts or have the greatest battles ever with legendary ships. There is one important fact that the developers forgot its limit of the time which the major part of gamers has. It follows that approximately 63 percent of players don't get to the end of the game. That happens because not all people have so much patience and in some cases they don't want to waste their time completing stupid tasks like: go to the point A and return that item to me. In the latest parts of the game, its world is too much overwhelmed with boring events, which can be substituted by well-done main plot.

It is said that almost half of the fans got lost their interest to Assassin's Creed Odyssey because full game for that project is up 128 hours. Some of my friends played in this part and their opinions about it was controversial. They said: "We are satisfied with: wonderful graphic, some references to the film of "300 spartans", new gameplay fitches. But we don't want to improve our characters with the help of donations. Unfortunately, the company makes us to do it, because they understand that we have our private lives and won't play as much as pupils at

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school would like. As a result, we don't have such a pleasant choice to play too many hours in order to get strong character and enjoy the game or pay us and we will give all what you want". Such kind of conception brings serious damage to the romance of gameplay process: reaching targets without using outer help (especially in that case – money).

There is one more example that is worth to be mentioned. It is the incident with Assassin's Creed Valhalla. It had really powerful marketing company and the major part of the world gaming society knew about the premiere. This part became really popular among the new generation of players. As it used to be, every big game project has its own online shop where gamers are able to purchase different goods. For instance: new skins for their heroes, some merch (T-shirts, caps, wristband etc. with the symbols of player's favorite game). But in that situation, developers of new part decided to cross the famous borders and they created section which is called "Time saving". Here people can buy different subjects from the game which give players superiority over the traditional game process, however the price for such buff is real money. One of the most interesting thing here is the title of the section, which tells us: "Pay or you will spend long and long hours trying to improve your character to required level". So, in this situation we see that company in really rude way extorts not small sums. They even don't try to hide this fact. In my opinion, any respectful company shouldn't go in the same way. Returning to the first parts of the series of games I want to mention that there were no donations, which would allow us to skip the path of the character and his development. Another very important Ubisoft's mistake is that they created the game that will make players to spend real money or too much time in order to get more satisfaction. As I consider, every developer team should remember that humanity created video games for entertainment, but not to spend most of their lives in virtual reality. It means that the path of the main character should be not so difficult and not so easy in the same time. One more important detail is the process of improving our character shouldn't be too long and difficult. It must bring entertainment and satisfaction to the target audience of the project.

The results of the research. The time has come to get to such point as an atmosphere of the game. This aspect is responsible for how deep players can dive in a new virtual world, how they would feel characters and their traits. Also, on this constituent depends: Would gamer grasp the idea of the main story and new universe or not? Speaking about the Assassin's Creed games, I want to admit that the atmosphere of the game is based on two subjects:

- historical setting;
- confrontation between assassins and templars, especially their philosophies.

As far as I know, the majority of the fans were attracted by partly real background of the main story. Fortunately, Ubisoft is good in selecting place for their games. One of the best their decisions was to start this large storyline on Holly Land and at the time of Crusades. It is one of the most controversial point for media industry, where directors of the films are used to show these events like something noble, which crusades, speaking honestly has never been. In the next parts, we are able to watch other, but at the same time not less popular ages. Another things which add to historical setting more interest were:

- big amount of new buildings, which we could research using the system of parkour,
- different type of cold weapon and methods of using it in fights against lots of enemies.

When we come to the question of philosophy, we come very close to the main idea of the game. But before making decisions we should look at both sides of the conflict more carefully. During the different exciting journeys of all heroes I can say that the brotherhood of assassins fights for the freedom of:

- society;
- personality;

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- thought.

In most cases they used not so humane methods of defending their own ideals. Unfortunately, most of the templars don't understand peaceful ways of solving problems and as a result they continue using tyranny in order to make others follow templar's order in the world.

The most surprising fact in all that story is that the order of templars has the same ideals as the assassins. But the ways of reaching the targets are drastically different. They think that lots of people are weak and not able to manage their freedom. That's why the order provides the policy of total control. There are a few more reasons why templars try to limit the freedom of choice for humanity. For example: people with weak will would wreak chaos and anarchy. A lot of different rulers of the countries, kingdoms, empires and governments gained power with the help of the ancient order. But in the end their plans were destroyed with the help of the assassins.

Comparing those two ancient structures, we are able to see that violence breeds violence. To sum up I want to mention some very important points which can help to end the discussion between lots of gamers: for one side (templars) it's time to change methods of achievement goals and there won't be endless war, which continuing in shadow for so long. After that both sides will be able to direct their resources on creating prosperity for future generations.

In conclusion, I want to say that: Ubisoft has to do a lot of job in order to calm down fans of the games and give them maybe the best adventure which they have ever seen. Firstly, company should return the main plot its own unique features like: drama, furious and bright versus between assassin's and templars, show the rise of the main character as a personality and a warrior during all path of the game. Secondly, developers need to do the system of fighting not so simple, in order not to make players feel bored because they win too easily. In that case, the artificial intelligence or so called NPCs have to be more careful and create some logical problems for the character as it in all stealth actions used to be. Thirdly, for such a big team of game developers the time has come to understand that the concept of the open game world should be reimagined and done in such a way, that won't take too much time for gamers to improve the abilities of their heroes and explore the virtual world. Another thing which I can't forget about it is system of donations which power must be reduced in order not to destroy the sense of the game. In my opinion, it would be much more interesting to create the fate of the main character and game universe on own some period of time, but not for 5 minutes because for instance: I payed 300$ and got the best armor and weapon sets. There is one more important idea, which Ubisoft should realize it is the way how to present possibility of donations if company really needs it and wants to get some smart profit from this enterprise: they mustn't call it "Time saving", just telling their customers "you will pay because you won't do all the additional tasks spending hours in front of your PC, Xbox or PS".

I hope that the company will hear the players and return past fame to beloved by everyone anthology of games – Assassin's Creed.

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