
Subject: Re: Have their been any good moddable first person games since Renegade?

Posted by [Mad Ivan](#) on Mon, 23 Apr 2012 11:52:13 GMT

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Hope this helps!

Something that I've been getting into recently is Unity. The non-pro version is free and the scripting is done in C# (or JavaScript or Boo if you are adventurous).

Although they are both technically engines and not games, I've tried UDK on my university machines and in my opinion UDK feels a bit more like programming, while Unity feels more like modding (interpret it as you wish). I've modded Tiberian Sun, RA2 (before Ares), Renegade (before scripts.dll) and Generals before and I also have some experience with programming (some C/C++ and Python, less C# (Silverlight 3.5) and AS3, little to almost none Scheme and Prolog).

Both engines don't let you do "hardcore" memory-level programming (except Unity Pro which allows it).

Unity has less features than UDK, though (especially the non-pro version), but it's lighter than UDK, thus I think it's better if you're doing it for the fun of it (just like modding). Both engines are free (if you're making a free game) and UDK has an advantage that you can make iOS and Android apps for free (unlike Unity).

The licensing options are pretty nice as well if you want to take it further.

Spoiler is performance and licensing information:

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To give you an example on performance, my machine often bluescreens when running the UDK editor and Renegade X runs at about 5-10FPS with my fans going nuts for a while before crashing. The Unity demo project (which comes with the dev kit) runs with no problems.

I use a Toshiba Satellite laptop with Core2 Duo @ 1.50GHz each core, 2GB RAM and onboard graphics running Windows 7 (classic theme so I won't kill the performance too much). As you can see it's not a gamedev/gamer laptop

Spoiler is licensing information:

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The licensing works differently if you're thinking of selling your stuff.

If I remember correctly (but you need to look it up) you need to pay a small fee (a few 100\$) if you want to do commercial projects in UDK and need to pay a percentage if your revenue is bigger than \$500,000, but you can deploy on the PC (web and desktop), Android and iOS.

With Unity you can deploy desktop and web apps with the free version, but must buy a pro version if your revenue for the last financial year was more than \$100,000. You must also buy separate licenses if you want to develop iOS or Android versions of your game.

There are also different schemes that can generate some revenue like

<http://www.kongregate.com/>.

Quote: Westwood made the most openly moddable games where you could easily change every aspect of maps & gameplay other than the core game engine programming.

EDIT:I agree - Westwood games were quite easy to mod. EA kind of raised the bar with Generals, but it was still ok modding-wise(probably because they hired DeeZire to help them with mod support when designing the engine), but BFME and later C&C games really killed it for me. Tried C&C3 but really couldn't get far and I never really bothered with RA3 after that. I don't really understand why did they do that whole compiling thing in the first place? I remember they claimed it speeds up loading times, but that doesn't make a lot of sense to me... jonwil?

The following are more game engine-y (yes, I invented a word just now) rather than modding and you may have to do core stuff.

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If you have a programming background you can also give Valve's Alien Swarm a go. It's a free game and comes with the Source SDK (usually you need to buy one of Valve's games to gain access to it). I think most of the coding is done in C/C++ but I think I've read that you can embed LUA and/or Python. I've never used it.

Blender is a game engine/art tool hybrid. It sounds quite exotic, since it's an "alternative" to Maya and 3DS Max, but it also has a built in game engine. I've never used it, but I want to use it some day. IIRC the coding is done in Python. It's free. I dunno if/how can you distribute "games" made in it.