Red Dead Redemption, Old West for new era

By Scott Pacthilles
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The Old West. A place where men were men and the law was an afterthought. A time in American history that struggled to find a clear morality. What a perfect setting for a video-game whose main character is looking for revenge, or better yet, redemption.

Rockstar Games, mostly known for their controversial, Grand Theft Auto series, acquired the Red Dead series from eastern developer Carolos halfway through the development process of the first game entitled Red Dead Revolver in 2002. The 2010 sequel Red Dead Redemption was built from the ground up by Rockstar and uses their in-house created game engine called RAGE (Rockstar Advanced Game Engine). Much like the GTA series, Red Dead Redemption adopts the open-world/sandbox format, which has itself become a genre in itself since the popularity of GTA3 and its many clones. However, to call this game just GTA in the Old West does a disservice to what Rockstar did here.

Story

The year is 1911, and you are John Marston, a retired outlaw whose wife and son have been taken by a rival gang members to the agents must deliver your former boss back to the law, or better yet, just pull out behind you in a tortuous manner. Making the game feel more realistic than its GTA counterpart is the revised wanted system. While you can still evade the law by escaping the crime scene, your actions will not be forgotten as a bounty will be put on your head, leaving the law and other bounty hunters to come looking for you.

This game, between the expansive universe that is completely open to exploration, a multiplayer experience that has always been criticized for being a little clunky, but they have been heavily refined for this release. The targeting and cover systems are more fluid motions putting less stress on the player. The addition of the “Red-Eye” targeting system is a new feature that allows players to slow down time, much like “bullet-time,” and mark the trajectory of their weapon. This can be used to hit specific parts of the body of your opponent. As the AI will respond differently depending on where they are shot. Unlike other simular mechanics that were in 2008’s Fallout 3, the red-eye targeting system does not last forever as it has a meter that will run out if overly used. This gives the combat a more strategic feel as you can’t abuse it, but pick and choose how and when to use it in battle. And against the large amount of old time guns, one fun weapon players have access to is the lasso. This can be used to catch wild horses or hanging criminals in a non-lethal way. People can be hospital all is recaparturing the symbol of your hero or cowboy in the Old West and planting it in a population of gamers who have not seen that figure being the main character in previous generations.

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