

by Jules Grant

RAM,

haven't
track of the
suggested you
off two
saucer shaped
humanity
could tip the
price of grain
All of this
Override, a sequel
and you can
Maybe then you
threat, the

Ambrosia Software, \$25. Requirements: 68040/PowerPC, 8MB
System 7.5.3. Contact Ambrosia at <http://www.ambrosiasw.com>.

It's four in the morning and your eyes are red and swollen. You
slept for three days. There just isn't time. You are hot on the
kidnapped ships architect and your underworld contacts have
meet with them in the bar. During the past week, you've fought
renegade fleets, seen with your own eyes an unidentified,
space ship and heard terrible rumors that the enemy with which
has long been at war has built a mammoth dreadnought that
strategic balance. Worse still, the bottom has fallen out of the
and your ten thousand dollar investment is rotting in the dock.
can only mean one thing: Ambrosia Software has released
to their popular Escape Velocity. If only your contact shows up
track down the renegade dogs who abducted the architect.
can get some sleep. Then again, there will still be the Voinian
unidentified aliens and the Pax Nebulae to investigate, your

cargo hold to

plain game,
adventure
twitch/arcade
Players are
out and comp-
with the bad
and actions
factions. All this and
You could even

Velocity a
and guide
creating
available new ships
efforts went so
allowed players
Imperials above
resources are
fifty hours
hundred hours
with the

10,000
spaceport and
explore the

swab, and who knows what else...

Escape Velocity was 1996's shareware game and arguably, just of the year. Gamers, used to being pigeonholed through linear games, bored of simulations and missing a little plain old action found welcome freedom in the Escape Velocity universe. free to concentrate on the trading aspect of the game, search lete the adventure type missions or to just plain shoot it out guys, or, maybe even more fun, the good guys. Player choices even impacted the galactic contest between the warring more for a quick download and a painless \$20 shareware fee. try it out before paying.

Great genre busting game play aside, what truly made Escape classic was the editing resources. Ambrosia provided an editor which enabled anyone to tinker with the universe by means of plug-ins, and tinker they did. Some modest efforts made and weapons with an extra mission or two. More ambitious far as to morph the universe into the Star Wars mold which to pilot x-wings for the Rebels or star destroyers for the the worlds of Hoth and Endor. Multitudes of web sites and available for the original Escape Velocity. One can easily spend on the original, and if you are willing to learn how, another playing plug ins and many more creating one's own missions editors.

You begin as the pilot of a banged up, old shuttlecraft and credits(money). You will have to begin by landing at the taking on some cargo deliveries. As you deliver the cargoes and universe your bankroll will grow. It's not easy. Renegade pirates

and alien
escape pod is the first
better ship and
bars you may
usually
saved enough
can stop run-
as a combat
you with
wish to accept
spheres.

enemies abound and they all seem to want you dead. An
thing to buy. Eventually, you will have the money to buy a
take on bigger cargoes and make more money. In the spaceport
be approached and asked to perform special missions which are
more dangerous and pay much better. One day, you will have
for the sleek warship you have had your eye on and then you
ning from all the renegades. Pay back time. As your reputation
pilot and explorer grows, more and more people will approach
sensitive and important missions. You choose which ones you
and go from there. The plots grow and twist in ever widening

Velocity Override.
and human
missions can

It's all back, bigger, badder and more dynamic in Escape
The universe is twice as large and there are many more alien
factions to war or ally with. Involvement in key battles and

ship design
be available to
strategic aspect to
over 250 of
Players can
themselves

missions,
Voinian
Ji and
turns. In
never played
Dollars per
absolutely
unconditionally love
part of this

disappointment to some
take the next
not to fix
like they've
new. In fact,
played
QuickTime
them but
but not
programmers do.

permanently alter the universe. Each race of aliens has its own and weaponry which depending on alliances, may or may not the player. Mixing and matching weapon upgrades adds a the arcade action space combat. The missions, Ambrosia claims them, are better designed, better written and more interesting. ally with any of the races and most will want to find ways to ally with all of them just to see. It's a whole new universe.

In Override, besides the diverse fare of side plots and random there are three core objectives: Initiating the decline of the Empire, Destabilizing the Strand War and the Exploration of the Proxima Nebulae. Each core objective is led up to by twists and short, if you enjoyed Escape Velocity get Override. If you've Escape Velocity, get Override. Read my lips, get Override. donuts, there is nothing better. The only caveat is that if you cannot abide arcade action shooters then you might not it. Space combat, in a glorified Asteroids form, is an integral game.

That said, the game isn't perfect and may come as a of those Escape Velocity fans who were looking for Ambrosia to step, whatever that might have been. It was obviously decided what ain't broke and dedicated EV players may be left feeling simply been sold a monster plug-in. Nothing in the interface is there is little, if anything, which will feel new to those who have Escape Velocity. What is new, is the possibility of including movies. The game engine has been made capable of handling Ambrosia took the bizarre course of providing the technology including any. We'll have to wait and see what plug-in

will continue
Gamers new to
running
credits required
available as your
early in
with more
core objective

Override is slow to start. Experienced Escape Velocity players because they remember how interesting the original got. Escape Velocity may find themselves lost and bored in hours of cargo missions in order to save up the required millions of to buy a ship sufficient for combat. Missions only become pilot's combat rating improves. There are precious few available the game. Persevere. If you stick it out you will be rewarded interesting missions than you can possibly keep up with. The missions are entertaining, well conceived and written.

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of closure
hoped for
awards on,
performance of the

interest and

The core objectives give the gamer a larger goal to pursue, but the completion of these objectives, the game still lacks a sense (Perhaps a QuickTime movie or two would have helped). I had better characterization. At least a chest to pin medals and perhaps learned abilities which would influence the spacecraft?

While all of the different alien technologies, increase the strategy in space combat, it can also be awfully frustrating

having to run
which are only

game and a
game is
have real
rendering.
cheded
Velocity
download and costs
already
hard at work.If
would score
now.

all the way across the galaxy to reload your weapon stocks
sold by the race which produces the weapon in question.
Minor complaints aside, Escape Velocity Override is an excellent
great reminder to all the glitzmongers, that what makes a great
great game play and interesting and difficult decisions which
consequences. Not glitz. Not full motion video. Not fantastic 3D
Not blood and gore and with apologies to Lara Croft, not large
animations. Nothing other than great game play which Escape
Override has in plenty. Escape Velocity is about an 8 meg
\$25, \$15 if you've already registered Escape Velocity. There are
web sites dedicated to Override and plug-in developers are
this was 1996 and the initial launch Escape Velocity Override
5. As a 1998 sequel it only gets 4. Download it and try it. Do it

other peoples
game that
jealous)
unofficial

Highs:

- Open ended, non linear, genre busting gaming freedom
- You can play it on your old 040 machine
- Hundreds of interesting missions to explore
- Ability to create your own plug-ins, or more likely, to play
(you may never get any sleep)
- It's a Mac only product (for once you can show off the great
your Windows running friends can't play and they can be
- If you get stuck, there is tons of online help at the official and
web sites (don't spoil it for yourself by over indulging)
- It's try before you buy shareware (you'll want to buy it)

Lows:

doing nothing

- The game starts slowly, stick it out
- No real advance in game play over original Escape Velocity
- Open ended, non linear freedom results in a lack of closure
- Marriage counseling is not included (you may need it after
but play Override for months)

