

Avara Update

by Andrew Welch

NOTE WELL: This product is still under development. This is a preview: everything mentioned here is subject to change without notice, because the product is a work in progress. Please don't ask us when it will be released -- that'll give us more time to finish the product up and get it to you all that much sooner. We'll let you know just as soon as it is released, we promise. The best way to stay informed of product releases is to sign up for our [announce_list](#) mailing list, or check our web site periodically.

h boy, do we have some big news for you. I mean

Big News!

Yes, in case you haven't guessed already, Juri has worked what amounts to a programming miracle, and has put direct Internet support into Avara. This means that instead of reaching out and touching someone with AT&T, you can reach out and blow them to bits over the Internet! What better use is there for technology, after all?

ssuming you have an Internet connection (through an ISP), and a reasonable connection, you'll be able to play with people all over the world. Heck, I even had the honor of being romped by a certain Finnish character, who was playing from his homeland.

Yes, I was "introduced" to the new grenades and missiles Juri recently added to the game by being blown to bits from across the Atlantic.

e're working on an "Avara Tracker" that will allow you to look up who is playing network games of Avara, and join in if you wish. Previously the sole dominion of the excellent shareware game Bolo, Avara's direct Internet support provides for a much better connection than the various attempts to retrofit it to games such as Marathon, Doom, et clones.

or the vast majority of folks who have modem connections to the Internet, you'll be glad to know that Avara works well with PPP/SLIP dialup connections. Assuming you have a reasonably good ISP, you should be all set to lock-n-load.

e've also had level-designer extraordinaire Jason Fowler hard at work on a collection of deviously designed network and solo levels for Avara. We plan to ship Avara with a number of solo levels for practice, and for those who are network-challenged -- providing an enjoyable gaming experience even without any kind of network connection. You're seeing a smattering of screenshots from the levels that Jason has designed here, brought to virtual life by Juri's 3D gaming engine.

ne of the most interesting things about Avara is that it is easy to create your own levels. While Avara ships as a complete game in its own right -- whether played solo or networked -- it also serves as a "game construction kit." You can easily create your own Avara levels using a MacDraw-style graphics program and a simple yet powerful scripting language that defines object interaction in the game.

ou can even import your own 3D models for use within Avara levels, and create tricks and traps devious enough for an Indiana Jones movie.

We feel that Avara's Internet networking and expandibility are two features that will send it over the top. We hope you feel the same. See you on the battlefield. Berserkir out.