



Frontier Biography

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Frontier Developments' Biography

'About Frontier' Boilerplate

Frontier is based in Cambridge, UK and is one of the games industry's leading independent developers, having built upon the work of founder David Braben, co-author of the seminal 'Elite'. Frontier is expanding and working with a number of top publishers, developing for consoles such as PS2, GameCube, Xbox and PC, and mobile platforms such as Pocket PC. The company has a proven reputation for original game design and commercial success, and aims to revolutionise perceptions of what gaming is all about by using innovative technical and artistic approaches on all leading-edge gaming platforms.

Background information on Frontier and current artist, animator, programmer and level designer vacancies is available at <http://www.frontier.co.uk>

More Detail

Heritage

Frontier was incorporated as a limited company in January 1994, though David Braben's work started way back in 1982 when David wrote the seminal game "Elite" together with Ian Bell, while both were still at University. "Elite" is still viewed by many as one of the best computer games of all time, containing many 'firsts' – for example first game 3D game on a home computer, first to use save positions - and is still dear to many people's hearts, ranking highly in polls after nearly twenty years.

"Zarch" and "Virus" followed during the late Eighties, winning various awards. These carried forward the tradition of innovation, being the first to have real-time lighting and shadowing. After these the development of the epic "Frontier" was started. "Frontier" was released to critical (and commercial) acclaim, also with many 'firsts' to its name - first to use curved surfaces for example - and remained in the

top few positions in the charts for most of the following year. Frontier's first product was a version of the game "Frontier", which was the best selling home computer game in Europe in 1993.

Subsequently, Frontier Developments took on the famous 'Elite III' sequel game "First Encounters" in 1994. The first title to use the in-house development tools and game engine we had been working on was V2000, launched to critical acclaim in October 1998, including a nomination for best game in the inaugural BAFTA awards. This was followed by the development of a sequel to V2000, called "Infestation", that was released in 2000.

Today

Frontier is focussed on being a truly great games company, developing innovative, stand-out games for popular games platforms, both consoles and mobile devices such as PDA's and phones.

We have built an experienced, enthusiastic team, including Managing Director David Walsh. He joined late 2001 from outside the games industry and has extensive commercial experience and track record with companies including Cambridge-based Intellectual Property and chip designer ARM. David Braben is Chairman of Frontier and devoting his full attention to our game projects. We are expanding by working on a healthy variety of different genres, using our transferable skills as games designers and implementers and working with a number of top publishers. We are balancing using our own game IP with 'Tier 1' license(s), with the objective of creating a strong mix of products / franchises across genres and console / mobile platforms.

We use unique in-house technology to supplement industry-standard tool chain elements – for example our "R-TAG" inverse kinematic-based animation libraries allow us to blend and layer animations in real-time, which means we can add natural variations to our animations and avoid robotic repetition. This brings our games to life and lets us communicate with the player using the subtlety and emotion of body language. Our console game engine also allows us to deliver all animated content to pre-rendered quality using very high-polygon models (10,000+ for main characters) with automatic, continuous in-game 'Level of Detail' scaling, a the full set of dynamic lighting and shadowing effects plus other special effects such as depth-of-field, interactive water etc. Our mobile technology has received rave reviews on its launch, delivering console-quality gaming on mobile platforms.

In the hands of Frontier's talented artists and technologists the whole effect is to make the playing experience so believable that it fully immerses the player in our renowned gameplay. This fusion of our cutting-edge art and technology skills with a unique gaming heritage, focussed on entertainment, gives Frontier's games a compelling advantage.

Significant Awards / Achievements

Elite

"Probably the best computer game ever" (The Times)
Numerous awards (too many to mention here ;-)
First non-US game to get to No. 1 on US Billboard Charts

Zarch

Top selling game ever on Archimedes computer (only platform it was released on)
Top review score to date in ACE (forerunner of EDGE magazine)

Virus

1988 Computer Industry's InDin awards "16 bit Game of the Year"
Top review score ever in ACE (pushing Zarch into 2nd place..)

Elite II: Frontier

Best Selling European Home Computer Game 1993 (Gallup)
1994 ECTS 'BBC Live and Kicking Award'

Frontier: First Encounters

Detailed modelling of planets and our galaxy arguably still not surpassed
No. 1 for four weeks in the UK Gallup chart

Darxide

'Best SEGA 32X Game'

V2000

1998 Inaugural BAFTA 'Best Game' Nomination

Infestation

"Infestation turns out to be something of a Russian Doll. Revealing layer after layer, it ultimately proves to be as blessed with curiosities, subtleties and idiosyncrasies as the very best Nintendo games." (PC Format)

Darxide EMP (for Pocket PC)

"Possibly the best game available for Pocket PC....It looks great and plays great - what more is there to say?" (InfoSync: 100%)

"One hell of a game; it's easy to pick up, fast paced and thoroughly entertaining...This game puts the capital A in Action!" (Pocketgamer: 90%)

"Quite simply a revolution for gamers on Pocket PC...exceptional 3D engine. " (Mobi-Mania: 95%)