

CSI: CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION™ 3 DIMENSIONS OF MURDER

Q&A with Game Producer: Christopher Ferriter

1. The CSI video game series is obviously rather successful. Do you feel that the series has achieved an almost "independent" identity, or does the popularity of the television series still affect the success of the game?

I think part of the reason we have been successful is due to the popularity of the show. Our goal has always been to immerse people into the world of CSI. I hope that the game serves as an extension of the show - to give fans the opportunity to interact with this world.

2. The cases seem to be getting more and more difficult. Any clues about the next instalment of the game?

For CSI: 3DoM, we wanted to build a game that challenged people to really think like a CSI – to look at the story the evidence tells. I don't think the cases are necessarily harder to solve, but you'll definitely want to think about whether the evidence you find really creates a concrete link between the suspect and the victim, or the suspect and the crime scene.

3. Each CSI game has seen something new - a little added extra for fans. What can we expect in this next version of the game?

The biggest change you can expect in CSI: 3 Dimensions of Murder is an all new real-time 3D game engine. Going to 3D gives us the opportunity to interact with the CSI world in a completely new way. Our characters can now act and show emotions, we have cinematic camera movement that enables us to replicate the look of the show, and players now have unprecedented maneuverability and access to the objects in the environments. It completely changes the way look and feel of the game.

4. What are the biggest challenges a developer faces with a game like CSI?

CSI is such a great show on so many levels. The biggest challenge we face is trying to deliver a game that's worthy of the CSI name. Every step of the way we're constantly evaluating our cameras, lighting, dialog, etc., asking ourselves "Would they do this on the show?" We have very big shoes to fill.

5. What are the challenges when writing the script for the game? To what level do the producers of the television series get involved?

Writing the scripts is certainly the most difficult part of creating this game. First and foremost, the storyline needs to be interesting. We also need to make sure that it's accurate from a technical perspective, and that players can progress through it in a non-linear fashion without breaking it. The people at CSI Productions are always a great help to us, and Max Allan Collins (writer of the CSI novels) helps us with our storylines and writes our dialog. We even have a real-life Las Vegas CSI as our technical advisor!

6. What kind of inspiration (other than the TV series) is used for the cases featured in the game?

Books, current events, stories, personal experiences – we take the inspiration for our cases from a lot of different things.

7. Other than providing voices, are the actors involved in any of the game making process?

They really help us get the dialog character correct. I think we do a good job on our dialog, but many times the actor will read it and say “[my character] would never say that!”, and we’ll work with them to change the line. Some of the most well delivered lines in our game were improvised by the actors. They just know their character best.

8. While the cases get pretty complicated, the nature of the game itself has remained simple. Are there any changes to this coming, or are you sticking with a formula that works?

For the most part we try to stick to the formula, but going to 3D has allowed for some interesting changes to gameplay. Players can now look behind objects for evidence or look on the underside of a doorknob for a fingerprint. You have to look at the objects at the crime scene and really think about where the evidence *should* be.

Another new addition is the GMC mobile crime lab, which allows you to process time sensitive materials at the crime scene. It's a Yukon Denali that's completely loaded with high-tech forensic equipment. It's new for the show, so we were really excited to get it in the game.