

Level Up!: The Guide to Great Video Game Design

By Scott Rogers

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Level Up!: The Guide to Great Video Game Design By Scott Rogers

Design and build cutting-edge video games with help from video game expert Scott Rogers!

If you want to design and build cutting-edge video games but aren't sure where to start, then this is the book for you. Written by leading video game expert Scott Rogers, who has designed the hits *Pac Man World*, *Maxim vs. Army of Zin*, and *SpongeBob Squarepants*, this book is full of Rogers's wit and an imaginative style that demonstrates everything you need to know about designing great video games.

- Features an approachable writing style that considers game designers from all levels of expertise and experience
- Covers the entire video game creation process, including developing marketable ideas, understanding what gamers want, working with player actions, and more
- Offers techniques for creating non-human characters and using the camera as a character
- Shares helpful insight on the business of design and how to create design documents

So, put your game face on and start creating memorable, creative, and unique video games with this book!

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Want to design and build cutting edge video games? Not sure where to start? Or just want to tweak the projects you're already working on?

Then this is the book for you!

Written by leading video game expert Scott Rogers, who has designed the hits; Pac Man World, God of War, Maxim vs. army of Zin and SpongeBob Squarepants. This book is full of Rogers' wit and imaginative style which demonstrates everything you need to know about designing great video games.

Level Up! has been written with all levels of game designers in mind. From beginner level through to the more experienced game designer.

It covers the entire video game creation process, allowing you to learn:

- How to develop marketable ideas
- What perils and pitfalls await them during a game's pre-production, production and post-production stages
- Creative ideas to serve as fuel for your own projects from game theme and environments to gameplay mechanics

All in all it's an indispensable guide for video game designers both 'in the field' and the classroom.

Other topics covered:

- Understanding what gamers want
- Compelling character design
- Working with player actions
- Techniques for non-human characters
- Camera techniques - the camera as a character
- Designing UI and HUD
- Use level design to tell game's story
- What game designers can learn from theme parks
- Combat, puzzles and game mechanics
- Fun and UNFUN
- How to make the world's greatest Boss battle (and why not to do it)

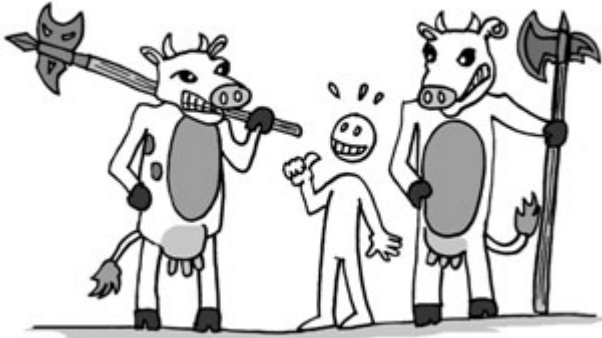
and tons more - including the business of design, creating design documents, the pitch and more. The book also contains templates to create your own pitch and design documents.

Tips for Creating Virtual Easter Eggs

Amazon-exclusive content from the author



On second thought, I think I'll go attack the chicken level instead...



For some reason, I thought "Hot Coffee" mode was going to be more exciting...



Spring is here! The sun is shining, the flowers are blooming and the bunnies are doing what they do best... hiding Easter eggs. Video game designers hide Easter eggs too, but not the kind of Easter egg that you smell in September if you don't find it in April. In fact, in video games, the term Easter egg has less to do with the egg itself, and more to do with it being surprises hidden within a video game for the player to find - like a virtual Easter egg hunt. The first Easter egg appeared in Adventure (Atari, 1979) when programmer Warren Robinett hid his in-game credit behind a secret wall. This kicked off a tradition of developers putting themselves (and loved ones) into their games. Can you find the developers in Doom II, Maximo: Ghost to Glory, Saints Row 2 and Drawn to Life? (I'll wait.) Easter egg cameos aren't limited to real people. Players can discover Yoshi in Mario 64 (Nintendo, 1996), battle Reptile in Mortal Kombat (Midway, 1992) or play as Cloud Strife in Final Fantasy Tactics. (Square, 1997) Easter eggs come in all shapes and sizes - from hidden images, music tracks and secret encoded messages to full blown additional game experiences. Blizzard, for example, has a fine tradition of Easter eggs in their games. Diablo 2 features an entire level filled with killer cows while World of Warcraft treated their subscribers to a literal Easter egg hunt for eggs filled with virtual candy and costumes. The Metal Gear series is infamous for its Easter eggs including ones where you can shoot Nintendo's mascot Mario, battle zombies and spy on scantily clad women. Not all Easter eggs are filled with delicious candy; a few rotten eggs have spoiled the basket. The most infamous Easter egg is "hot coffee" a sex themed mini-game in Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas. (Rockstar, 2004) The mini-game was "remmed out" by the game's developer before release but was accessible by hacking the game's code. Despite the fact that the average consumer could not access the mini-game, its discovery caused the ESRB to change the game's rating to an AO - the gaming industry's equivalent to an X rating. Retailers refused to carry the game, all copies were pulled from store shelves and the entire stock of the game with the hot coffee code removed had to be reprinted. Here's a few more tips what to do (and what not to do) when creating Easter Eggs for your game: **1) Use common sense**

Don't create your Easter egg from pornographic or copywritten material. A programmer was fired because of a mature themed Easter egg added in SimCopter (Maxis, 1996) and an entire print run of Tiger Wood 99 PGA Golf Tour (EA, 1999) was recalled because it housed an unauthorized episode of the cartoon South Park. Instead, think about what your audience would want to find. Will what they find be worthwhile to player? There's nothing sadder than an Easter egg that isn't filled with candy. **2) Foreshadow**

Participants on a real Easter egg hunt know they are looking for eggs - your player should too. Drop clues throughout your game levels to let the player know there are things to find. Use hidden messages, character dialogue or world geometry to let the player know there is something to look for. The aforementioned cow combat level in Diablo 2 started as a series of running jokes in Diablo and Starcraft. Players were expecting a cow level even before it came out. Reverse psychology works well too - a sign in Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas reads "There are no Easter Eggs here" even though there are several Easter eggs hidden throughout the game. **3) Hide in plain sight**

Just like in Poe's classic detective story "The Purloined Letter", players never expect Easter eggs to be hidden in a "logical place". They will search in the most unobvious places, using unusual methods of detection because they are looking for a "hidden object." But while hiding objects can be a battle of wits between the designer and player, I prefer to err on the side of the player. Players love to experience that "ah-ha!" moment when they find your Easter eggs - after all, that's why you created them! When all is done, I've always found that watching players discover Easter eggs is just as much fun as hiding them. Just remember to be fair; make it fun for you as well as the player and give 'em the "good candy" for their reward! (And not that ribbon candy your Grandma buys.)



From the Back Cover

Want to learn how to create cutting-edge video games? Need some advice to improve your current game? Then get ready to Level Up!

Scott Rogers, the video game designer behind hits such as Pac-Man World, God of War™, the Maximo Series, and SpongeBob SquarePants, shares his years of knowledge and experience with you on how to make video games great. Learn how to:

- Create what gamers want
- Bring compelling (and playable) characters to life
- Build game levels that tell stories and challenge players
- Design everything from controls to cutscenes to combat
- Structure your game documents for success
- Pitch your game like the professionals

Level Up! has been written with all levels of game designers in mind. Over 400 drawings illustrate design concepts and common pitfalls of game design, making *Level Up!* an indispensable guide for video game designers both 'in the field' and the classroom.

So what are you waiting for? Grab this book and prepare to Level Up!

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gary Glover:

Book is to be different for each grade. Book for children until finally adult are different content. As we know that book is very important for us. The book Level Up!: The Guide to Great Video Game Design was making you to know about other knowledge and of course you can take more information. It is rather advantages for you. The book Level Up!: The Guide to Great Video Game Design is not only giving you much more new information but also to get your friend when you sense bored. You can spend your own spend time to read your e-book. Try to make relationship together with the book Level Up!: The Guide to Great Video Game Design. You never truly feel lose out for everything when you read some books.

Stephan Partin:

The reserve untitled Level Up!: The Guide to Great Video Game Design is the guide that recommended to you to learn. You can see the quality of the publication content that will be shown to you. The language that creator use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The author was did a lot of exploration when write the book, and so the information that they share to you personally is absolutely accurate. You also can get the e-book of Level Up!: The Guide to Great Video Game Design from the publisher to make you considerably more enjoy free time.

Jess Bolan:

Playing with family inside a park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with close friends is thing that usually you have done when you have spare time, subsequently why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not sensation tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition associated with. Even you love Level Up!: The Guide to Great Video Game Design, you may enjoy both. It is excellent combination right, you still desire to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh can occur its mind hangout folks. What? Still don't buy it, oh come on its named reading friends.

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