

February 17th Discord QnA

Transcribed by @Shaze7493. PM for any edits.

Notes are transcribed based on Steven's discussion in the Ashes of Creation discord during a mini QnA.
Meant for sharing and promoting discussion only.

Q: Why does the game feel unfinished?

A: This is testing. Not a launch. Need to test these network changes in preparation for launch. Part of our development is having an open window to the process. Ugly, beautiful, good or bad. Last Thursday was a preliminary test of some of that new architecture. Needs polishing. But 200 players and much more should be possible. I can say, without a doubt. There is no more dedicated team of developers than who I see at Intrepid everyday.

Q: Has Apocalypse actually helped with testing of the MMORPG?

A: Apoc revealed architectural issues that would have been revealed later (which was partly its purpose) and while development is split into separate departments (engineering, design, art etc) some of these issues needed rebuilding from the ground up. I will go into more detail and our plans in the directors letter. Which I plan to have done within the next couple weeks. But am waiting on a few definitive answers first.

Q: Is Apocalypse considered a failure?

A: APOC's qualification for success is to simply provide a tool by which we could identify necessary adjustments or changes in preparation for Alpha of the MMORPG. Anything beyond was extra.

Q: What about the reason for monetizing Apocalypse?

A: Monetization was intended to support high player counts. Since Apoc is free to play.

Q: But Apocalypse got spun off as its own product, right?

A: In an attempt to limit confusion about it as a testing ground yes.

Q: Still will never understand why utilizing the MMO world and creating battle arenas couldn't of had the same effect though.

A: The desired timeframe of the testing was before the mmo alpha timeline.

Q: If I'm misremembering/misstating, couldn't the Alpha 0 world have been utilized?

A: Not in the way we needed to test the new backend infrastructure.

Q: Forgive me for asking for details, and if you can't give details that's fine I suppose, but what sort of backend had to be tested, if you can put it in simple terms? I'd assume server stability, able to handle animations/multiple players fighting at once, seeing how it operates when put under stress, but what else was there to it?

A: Soooo, to recap the reasoning we developed APOC (or originally what we intended Alpha One Phase 1 to be) was to address concerns about combat, and specifically how we would integrate action combat into a hybrid combat system for Ashes. When we planned how to best accommodate this intent, we desired massive design data from skill usages, reticle accuracies, camera pov, high frequency player populations, etc (long list) and we wanted to do all of this in a design that could be quickly made and adjusted sizewise (hence battle royale= little to no designs and a proven enjoyable game mode format). This was also the perfect opportunity to begin to lay the foundation for the new account services and matchmaking backend for the in-game arena systems. In addition, we wanted to use our proprietary AND patented distributed server backend that is intended to accommodate the massive amount of players we will see in the MMO, at battles like node and castle sieges, and we wanted to do this testing of THESE specific systems with enough time to implement the changes we discovered from the testing results, hence why we crunched to get APOC in the hands of testers.

Now, what happens in active development is the need to be agile and reactionary, and sometimes that is lost on many people who are watching our development, which is ok. When the MMORPG begins it's alphas and betas, people will tend to judge based on the merit of the content they are watching at that moment, and not content that is dated previously in the development cycle. Additionally, during the testing of Alpha One Phase 1, it became quite confusing for those not following the project, that what they were seeing in this arena style battle royale was an atmosphere designed to test the aforementioned systems and services, in an attempt to alleviate that confusion we decided to brand it away from the mmorpg aspect, since it wasn't clear enough for those less informed about the project and the reasoning for this testing phase and how it related to the mmo development, which of course had a secondary effect that caused confusion about the direction of the project being focused on creating a BR lol... Soooooo long story short, we are literally developing one of the largest mmos and with some of the most talented people in the mmo business, and development sometimes can require revision and fixing, I will more eloquently state these insights in the director's letter.

Q: Looking forward to that letter, be sure it sticks with the honest train there Maggie. Even if some of the paths have ulterior motives as to why they're taken by Intrepid Studios, give the honest answer, we'll appreciate you all far more for it.

A: Don't misunderstand the statement about BR being an easy to make, fun format. It wasn't chosen as a monetization model, but rather the easiest mode that's fun for testers and achieves what we wanted to achieve for development of the MMORPG in the timeline we wanted to achieve it in. There was no ulterior motive, that's the type of commentary that is sad to see from us developers who are working night and day for one motive, the greatest mmorpg possible. It only had to do with 3 things; Testing the systems we wanted to test, spending as little time as possible creating something to achieve the previous point, and getting it done in a

timeline that allowed us to fix/change what needed to be changed before alpha/beta of the mmorpg

Q: I see a lot of similarity between ashes and log horizon. Thats also how I hope legendary work. Steven will we be able to harness corruption to warp profession items into demonic and decayed things?

A: At the moment that is not in the cards.

Q: Can you use boats in rivers? or is ships stuff only in the ocean?

A: It will depend on the depth of the water.

Q: Steven, you're also evading the 100x100km question (For Alpha 1). Does that include water content or just land.

A: The 480sqkm includes water and land content.

Q: Steven will fighters be able to play a life leech build?

A: The Highsword may have some of those features

Q: Steven do you think that in a future expansion possibly increase the map size like most mmo's do, and with that add one or more castles, and metro spots.

A: That is a discussion for our expansion parameters.

Q: Steven do you think this game can go from A1 to Launch in 6 months?

A: Depends on revision and fixes necessary, but yes based on what I am told it is possible.

Q: How long before we can have a crafting systems blog post Steven?

A: Depends where it is on the community content roadmap. I think once the content release schedule gets finalized, the regularity of blogs/videos/and leeks will be robust. also the 25th of this month we have 3 more very talented people starting at Intrepid.

Q: 800 blizzard employees now jobless might find a few good ones.

A: Since December, we have brought aboard 12 new people, I will be spotlighting them as part of our next newsletter and we are still hiring more! so spread the news.

Q: Steven, will Ashes of Creation ships have Radar? If radar is being considered - is it being considered for all ship classes or a select few?

A: That's been a design topic of some debate. One of the prevailing thoughts, is having more of a spyglass approach that gives a direction and skims the horizon. Additionally, radar becomes less necessary when ships must be launched from land imo.