

Perhaps you've never heard of a world where reflexes matter, but so does strategy. Maybe you've never heard of one where your thoughts, intuition, and designs materialize in a matter of time. A world where the speed at which you advance is up to you, how you interact with your surroundings, and how you decide to position yourself within the society and culture of that universe.

That world is Vendetta Online: one I've lived in over the last nine years.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCOyHyxXc8Q>

Why is this cool? Because it's a twitch-combat MMORPG projected onto a large flat-screen HDTV, that's also available for mobile. Imagine walking into a party with your phone and being able to project the game onto a large flatscreen. Carry that same character with you wherever you go. Play on your laptop when it's time for some serious PvP. Trade or mine while you wait for an appointment, or even while taking a break on a hike. The game has enough small objectives such that it is possible to log in and make a move toward a larger accomplishment even if you only have 5 minutes. The skill based combat means it's all up to the player; not the fictitious skill of an avatar.

1: Physics

This is why I play Vendetta. You've probably heard of Newton's laws of motion: these are in play here. Check out the [ship stats](#) page on the VO wiki and you will see things like thrust, torque, and mass. $F = ma$, anyone? (There's a contingency of the playerbase that argues, on the stats page, N should actually be kN but we're not counting straws). Explosions rock ships, causing the computer to fire its thrusters to compensate. The equipment you use and the cargo you carry will affect your ship's mass, and consequently its maneuverability, leading to all sorts of debates about what equipment or weaponry to bring with you on any given mission, official or freelance. It gives the feeling of actually being *in* a physical body, in a universe that follows certain natural, physical laws.

Some limits are put in place to increase the playability of the game. Top speed, for example, wouldn't normally be a part of the physical considerations in space combat. Acceleration would be the only deciding factor (it already is one of the most important factors, however, because each ship has two top speeds, turbo and sub-turbo, it's not the *only* important factor), however in order to bring things closer together ships also behave as though they were swimming through a viscous fluid. In other words, there is a hypothetical frictional force keeping ships within their respective spheres of acceptable velocity that is proportionate to the magnitude of the ship's velocity.

Above certain speeds it feels like swimming. As one who has done both SCUBA and snorkeling, and has worked for 2 years as an ocean lifeguard, it's easy to see a fair amount of nautical influence in Vendetta's universe.

2: History

I grew up steeped in Tolkien. At age 5, my Dad started me out on the Hobbit, read aloud. Within three years we had completed the entire Trilogy. From there I moved on to authors such as Asimov, Verne, and other books like The Scarlet Letter and Watership Down. It was convenient, being homeschooled, not to be told such and such reading material was appropriate to my age level. At age 12 I had a college level vocabulary. Why is this important? Because I find just as much depth in Vendetta as I did in those books I read growing up. Take a look at the [backstory](#); it's over 25,000 words, 64 pages in Microsoft Word (double spaced), and it covers 2,292 years of human history.

In fact, there is another dimension to VO's depth, and that is the ongoing evolution of the story. Whether it's in the [PCC](#), or through player-run [events](#), players have a real impact on the ongoing evolution, and story, behind the Vendetta universe.

3: Culture

This is a big one, and one of the main reasons for VO's longevity in my book. There is an awesome following surrounding the game. This is evidenced in things like the [duel ladder](#), which ranks players according to the chess algorithm. The list itself shows only those players who have engaged in a duel within the last 30 days. Click on any name to see a list of all the people that player has dueled over the course of his/her career. I'm up there, at the time of this writing; position [#18](#). Just have to overtake "Gavan Ardgall".

VO can also be enjoyed across [multiple platforms](#). VO is a true port of a PC MMORPG to Android, and it becomes a highly versatile experience. Let me drive this home; *you can play the same character, in the same galaxy, regardless of whether you are on a PC or an Android tablet or phone*. You will be able to pick up right where you leave off when you switch devices, and you will be able to interact with *everyone* else playing the game, in one great big galaxy.

To help make Vendetta a newbie-friendly experience there is an in-game help channel (channel 1) and a mentoring system. Mentoring can be a boon to those who have been playing for as little as a week, as certain accomplishment badges that unlock special equipment require a number of "mentor points".

The game is free to play until you leave the training sector, at which point you are given an 8-hour bank of trial time. After that, subs run for less than 7 USD per month, when you purchase in bulk. Most veterans agree that this is the best option; you would probably have a hard time spending over 3 grand in one lifetime in this game. The other thing is that *no advantage* can be gained by spending real cash in game; there is presently *no cash shop*. Your success in game is entirely up to how you play.

4: Involvement

In the article linked to earlier, the author (Guthrie) argues that Vendetta may have the highest rate of involvement by the devs out of any MMORPG. This is partially due to the way they run the game; [many primary features](#) are planned for the future, and after 9 years of playing I've learned that the one constant is that everything changes. This game may look entirely different two years from now than it does today. As a [mission author](#) I've also been able to take a hand in helping to tell Vendetta's story, and through it I've been able to tell pieces of my own. The best part about it is being able to witness others experiencing *something I did*, an elusive yet common feeling. It's like rock art; it may be crude at times, but where would we be today without it?