

CIS300 Spring 2005

MMORPG Discussion

March 15, 2005

Common terms used in MMORPGs can be found at:
<http://www.worldofwarcraft.com/info/basics/glossary.html>

1 Content delivery & Servers

- a. Why does an MMORPG release new content periodically?
- b. How often should new content be released?
- c. Can new content be player-driven? In what way can players determine the story of an MMORPG?
- d. MMORPG servers tend to be more populated in the evening than during school/work hours. How powerful should MMORPG servers be?

2 Challenges & Rewards

- a. Are there any challenges that work in single-player games but not in MMORPGs?
- b. Are there any challenges that work in MMORPGS but not in single-player games?
- c. How should challenges designed for groups differ from those designed for solo play?
- d. How should rewards given from challenges designed for groups differ from those from challenges designed for solo play?
- e. Given that more dedicated players will usually be more powerful than casual players, how would you design an MMORPG to make it possible for casual players and more dedicated players to play together?

3 Economy & Equipments

- a. What impact does selling items in the *outside world* have on an MMORPG?
- b. Give a reason why loot received from enemies should scale according to the levels of the enemies.
- c. What is character twinkling? What can be done to prevent it?

4 Group dynamics

- a. Explain what threat is. (Threat is also known as hate or aggro).
- b. What is a tank? What role does a tank play in a group? List 2 characteristics that distinguish a class as a tank.
- c. What happens if a non-tank class accumulates more threat than the tank in the group? Why is this undesirable?
- d. Assume that dealing damage to an enemy or healing an ally generates threat. How would reducing the tank's ability to generate threat affect the damage output of the group? How would it affect the amount of damage that can be healed by the healers in the group? How would it affect the survivability of the group?
- e. How would reducing the tank's armor affect the survivability of the group? Would it affect the damage output of the group? Would it affect the amount of damage that can be healed by the healers in the group?
- f. Assume that the tank generates x threat per second. How often can an ability that generates y threat when used be used safely? Usually, y is much greater than x .
- g. When can an ability that deals x damage to an enemy be used safely, regardless of the amount of threat generated by the ability?
- h. Suppose we want to implement a rule that enemy lowers aggro towards a character when it lands a hit on that character. The amount of aggro lowered is proportional to the amount of damage dealt to that character. Describe how this rule would affect aggro management in a group.
- i. Why do MMORPGs use threat in battles? Why don't the enemies randomly pick a group member to attack? Intelligent enemies may want to attack the weaker members of the group first. Describe what the game might look like without threat.

5 Player-versus-player

- a. One way to prevent high-level players from ganking players much lower in level is to implement an honor system, in which such behavior is punished by loss of honor points. Characters with low honor points receives a penalty in some aspect of the game, perhaps a temporary loss of stats. Describe a problem in this system. Propose a way to fix this problem.
- b. Let's suppose we want to give a class a direct damage spell that damages an enemy for x damage, has 0 casting time and cooldown, costs m mana, and generates a large amount of threat. Assume that average character has slightly less than cx health and slightly more than cm mana. How would this spell imbalance pvp battles? Why is this spell all right for pve situations (solo and group)?