THE RETRO UNIVERSE ZINE
ISSUE 2

mhj@sdf.org

03/01/20

Contents

FOREWARD

Issue 2 already? Pretty much! This time I'm gonna cover as much as I can, and provide as much info and so on and so forth. The BBS scene still lives on, as do all the other scenes. I don't want this zine to be a re-tread of the BBS Zine, but a way to forge new ground, and possibly find a new way to interact with the community/communities mentioned in this zine. Now, onward to the first article, please enjoy!

DOS Game Corner

Stunts

Intro

This game is legendary in my eyes. The fact that you could create your own courses just made this game infinitely replayable. Enough about that however, what is the game about? It's about racing other people on a stunt course. It's always 1v1 or you versus the clock.

You can select from many different courses and from many different cars. You could also pick from a wide variety of opponents. The ways in which you can enjoy the game are truly great.

There's still a community around this game, which is amazing. You can check them out at the link I will post. It's amazing that a game that came out in 1994 still has a following in 2020.

Graphics

The game's graphics at the time weren't mind-blowing, but they did provide a reasonable view of the world and the sense of speed. Compared to say, Need for Speed or any of the other racing games at the time however, it falls short.

Sound And Music

The sound and music quality is average, and despite the fact that the opening has a music intro, which is good and charming, when you're racing there is no

Figure 1: Stunts

music. I think that's quite a short-coming in hindsight, because at the time there were racing games such as F-Zero for the Super Nintendo that had an amazing soundtrack.

Playability

I think the controls are good, but I only played with a keyboard, and I don't know if there's steering wheel or joystick support. I imagine that there isn't, but I will double-check and provide an update to this article if I find it. There's only major issue I encountered when playing the game as kid, and I don't know if it has been worked on, but whenever you do a loop, it's hard to control the car during it and it makes it almost impossible to pass sometimes.

In regards to the track editor, that is the game's greatest strength, because of so many different options you can choose from in designing your courses. In the link I included below, apparently it features a terrain and car editor to boot I believe, or at least, I've heard of those utilities being made for the game.

Final Thoughts

If you haven't played this game you're seriously missing out, and with a DOS emulator like DosBox, you can easily grab the game from the link and jump right in! Overall, I'd say that this game is 5/5.

Link: Stunts

SID Hustle

High Voltage SID Collection

Quick Review

The High Voltage SID Collection is an easy way to experience what the Commodore 64 offers in terms of musicality. It's a great downloadable collection you can get and play right away using something like VLC.

Final Thoughts

All the files in the collection are in sid format, so be sure that whatever player you choose has support for that. Other than that, I'd say that this is a wonderful collection and I've heard many great compositions I didn't think could be done on a Commodore 64.

Link: High Voltage SID Collection

Youtuber Spotlight

Lazy Game Reviews

Intro

Lazy Game Reviews, or LGR as he is popularly known, is a youtuber who is mostly known for his love of DOS and older Windows games and older computer hardware. He has done reviews for all kinds of DOS games, and much more.

I'd say his main loves are Duke Nukem and the Sims, as far as games go. He's also covered things like older cameras and sound systems, such as the Roland SC-55 and many, many more.

His style is top-notch and very informative and at the same time, very relaxing. When you hear him speak, it's like listening to a narrator reading a book. His filming and cinematography is great as well.

Recommended Videos

If you were to start watching him right away, I would say to start with his reviews on anything DOS game related or camera focused, those videos were very in-depth and also quite charming.

Final Thoughts

If you enjoy anything retro-related as I do, you'll find that LGR should be right up your alley.

Link: LGR

Emulation Station

DosBox

Intro

I mentioned the DOS game Stunts above, but I thought I'd go in depth about the emulator DosBox. DosBox provides a method, whether you're on Mac, Windows or Linux(Or even a raspberry pi) of using DOS utilities or playing DOS games. It's very nice and doesn't usually require a lot of tweaking.

I've heard of people getting BBSes running under it, It can covert IPX I believe to TCP/IP. So for instance you could easily play a game like Descent with another person over the LAN with it.

Compatiblity

DosBox doesn't have perfect compatiblity, but it's still very high. You can even play CD-based games with it, although that is more involved. I believe they also have support for what's called booter games, which are games that only worked if you reset the computer with the game's floppy disk in the drive, and it would boot straight into them.

Final Thoughts

Not much to say here other than that even modern gaming online stores such as Good Old Games and Steam use DosBox for their games. As computers get faster and faster and further away from anything DOS-related, it's always good to have a emulator like DosBox so you can fire up those old games again at any time.

Link: DosBox

Community Colosseum

Retro Game Boards

Quick Review

The Retro Game Boards is a gaming forum established by former NeoGAF/ResetERA folks who had had enough of that forum not having a section dedicated to retro gaming. Needless to say that now the Retro Game Boards forum is bursting with lots of activity.

Getting an account is quite easy and they also have a Discord chat channel. I imagine that if you wanted to do multiplayer things with them, all it would take would be to create a forum topic on it and start taking names!

Final Thoughts

Check it out, they're an interesting community and so long as you don't try to troll/spam them, you should find yourself at home.

Link: Retro Game Boards

Gopher Gaps

SDF

Intro

The SDF gopher space is the largest space for gopher blogs out there. SDF itself has been around since the 80's too. Now I don't know if you have to pay for an account in order to get a gopher space there, but I imagine that it helps. I paid for the second-tier membership a while ago, about $36, and I think it's been very worthwhile.

It's also a good way to learn Unix there, as the system runs on NetBSD. NetBSD is a Unix-like system which has been around as nearly as long as SDF has been around. It's a highly portable and secure system based on Unix principles.

The community itself is very welcoming and I've never had any qualms with them, they don't seem to have a sort of in-group clique you find in a lot of online communities.

Setting Up

Getting your gopher space off the ground is quite easy, they provide a guide for that and so much more. In my opinion though, they could stand to work on it because some things in the guide are a bit outdated.

Dipping your toes into the gopherverse is very easy once you get the hang of it, so I'm glad SDF makes it approachable to newbies.

Final Thoughts

If you've never gotten into the retro scene before, SDF is a great place to start. Of course, there are many other public access Unix systems nowadays, but SDF really was one of the first. Don't walk, run to your nearest terminal and get a SDF account!

Link: SDF

Outro

I hope you enjoyed this issue. If you have any questions or comments, please email me at mhj@sdf.org. Thanks!