

2 October 2006

By: Tudor Stefanescu, Games Editor



[Non-Combat MMORPG Seed Forced to Shutdown](#)

Online games hitting rock-bottom might become a common sight

Things don't always go smooth with video game launches and developers sometime feel the bitter taste of commercial failure firsthand, especially when there is no strong publishing house to back them up. This is a pose we came to be accustomed to, yet the gaming scene now sees a different kind of downfall. Runestone was the company that developed and released Seed on May 2nd 2006, a non-combat cartoonish MMORPG placed in a post-punk sci-fi universe. Unable to secure a deal with a publisher, Runestone eventually ran out of money and is now forced to completely shutdown servers, service and further game development. An in-game "burial" ceremony took place yesterday with players and developers attending, but while servers are still online, they are slowly drifting towards an impending death. The game in itself is a novelty to the scene since it takes out combat, the major driving factor in 99% MMORPGs out there, and instead focuses on the role playing aspect. Seed, being a non-combat MMORPG, put players up to the task of facing the many challenges of a post apocalyptic home: chronic overpopulation, lurking cabin fever, violent weather and alien bacteria hungry for human hosts. You shall overcome all obstacles using inane weapons, making good use of knowledge, cooperation, intelligence, humanism, ambition and science. Official Kristensen admits the failure wasn't entirely the industry's fault: "We've made some major mistakes, and some smart moves along the way, but in the end, we simply tried to do too much, with too few funds, which I guess is a typical 'Rookie', and even veteran error. I, for one, would do it all over again, although I would do a great many things differently next time around." Players generally agreed on the opinion that Seed never rose to its retail status, requiring additional testing and whole batches of new content. Plagued by technical issues, lack of players and a limited plotline, the game eventually caved-in. This isn't to say developers didn't do their best, since regular fixes solved part of the problems and content was steadily streamed to paying customers. Unfortunately, it wasn't enough and eventually, developers ran out of money to keep working on the title. However, developers stressed the reason for Seed going under has nothing to do with the fact that it's a non-combat MMORPG, so maybe the idea is not doomed into oblivion yet.