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## War World - Tactical Combat

### *It's good to be the robot*

What is it with robots that attracts us so much? How come we get to remember so well some cartoon we used to watch 15 years ago? Is it because it featured a giant robot? Being or controlling a robot is one of our hidden wishes starting from childhood and it manifests itself when we are supposed to be kind of grown up (I guess I'm not because here I am playing with a robot, not on a carpet but on a computer monitor and loving every minute of it). This isn't uncharted territory for game producers. There have been some attempts, some even quite successful like MechWarrior, the series, where Microsoft took it to the limit, ultimately constructing a simulator for something that doesn't exist. But in my humble opinion, the most intriguing game is by far Shogo. Some of the young readers probably won't remember this title, but this is practically the best ever made. The preview version we got had only 142 MB, but even so it packs a lot of features, maps and some cool robots. I wasn't expecting much, but when I started the game and entered the main menu, I was greeted by two living giants that suddenly made me more interested. I wasn't given any specific introduction of storyline, but here's what I got from Lighthouse Interactive: "War World is a planet dedicated to conflict and battle. A world where powerful armored mechanized warriors compete in savage battles in breathtaking outdoor arenas. War World features 50 different weapons systems from long-range missiles and mortars, through to the brutal, close-action mini gun, pinpoint accurate laser cannons and many, many more. Combined with an unreal range of electronic weapons systems, countermeasures, surveillance technologies and a range of different mechanoid chassis to customize, War World offers a totally new experience for fast paced shooter fans and gamers worldwide." I have no idea if this game has a storyline or the robots are just an excuse for some butt-kicking with 4 ton giant dudes, but it's still fun. Now let's take care of the graphics. How can I put this... the game looks great especially when you compare it with most of the titles that came out this year. I can't quite put my finger on it but I could swear that this is a heavily modified Unreal engine. If you look quickly just for a second, you just can't get the feeling you saw the models somewhere before. Which is not a bad thing, considering the term of comparison. I never thought I would say this, but these are the best looking robots I have ever seen. I know it sounds a little corny but it's true. The joints move and you can clearly see that they're made from a lot of parts. They have a lot of scratched paint and what appears to be some metal fatigue. They run really well and in a realistic way, with the torso moving independently from the body and the bullets and particle weapons have a true impact. The environments aren't too bad either. Rocks, deserted towers, barrels and generally mayhem are the basic bricks the maps are build upon. Nothing special in this department. What I was amazed to find is that the game is almost perfectly optimized. It runs smoothly at a 1280\*1024 resolution without any hiccups on a fairly medium machine and even with some hope on weaker machines. The gameplay is like a third person Unreal Tournament 2004 and again, this is not a bad feature. I prefer you get the recipe from somewhere else and use it well, instead of trying to develop something "revolutionary" that's going to mess up your game. The main gameplay feature is without a doubt the upgrade system. Every battle you win earns you more money which can be further reinvested in making you a better killing machine. The robot has several slots like right hand, left hand, backpack (with three different slots) and system. Every component can be upgraded up to nine times so there are quite a few combinations to have. And that's for one robot. In this demo version there were only 5 units. I suspect there will be more in the final version, making the multiplayer modes more interesting. And yes, it has multiplayer with

deathmatch, team deathmatch capture the flag and assault (any of these sound familiar?), practically all the goodies to make a great LAN party. What I didn't like about this game is: The sound doesn't have a real punch and seems to be made in a hurry. The only voice I heard was some mechanical-baritone voice saying over and over "incoming". I hope these issues are going to be corrected, because what's the use of such a beautiful and fun game if the robots have no personality whatsoever and the bullets sound like firecrackers. The implementation of physics is minimal. The machines have a weight factor but that's about it. I'm not talking Havoc here, just a little more realism in the final version would be nice. Conclusion: Let's face it, this is not a major publisher; and yet War World: Tactical Combat is one of the most fun and promising titles I played in 2005. The potential is there and if they play their cards right, this could be a great success in 2006 when it's going to be launched.