

“Wastelands”

Alternate conceptual treatments for XGRA

Mission: To re-imagine the XGRA project in an effort to deliver a more main stream, marketable product with greater sales potential.

Issues: XGRA is too far along in development to allow us to be too radical with any additions or changes that need to be made to the game without adding both time and resources to the project. Even if as much as 3 months was added to the project timeline, the game would still be XGRA in many respects. To expect otherwise is slightly unrealistic at this point. Additionally, while we may adopt a new look, feel, title, and story for the product that is more appealing, given the constraints of time it is not possible to accurately predict how these changes might affect the sales of the game.

This document is simply a proposal for a new direction, and no detailed conversations have taken place between myself and the team in the UK. This document will put forth 2 different alternate scenarios for the game, and will mention many features and ideas that have not been properly evaluated at this point. The first proposal will be more detailed than the second, and will address more specific issues. The second proposal is an alternate back-story and title proposal that will need to address all of the same basic issues as the first treatment. Both high concepts are designed to take advantage of certain parts of the XGRA game as it stands, and are geared towards intense action, carnage and good ‘ol road splattering fun. Once a concept is Ok’d more time can be spent working out the details.

If one of these proposals is favorable to the NY team, it will be necessary to create a detailed treatment for the game, and a detailed audit of all changes necessary. A schedule can then be created and presented to the executives.

It is important to note that Any alternate treatment for the game will require significant reworking of many of the game’s key components in order to differentiate the product enough from XGRA to make any real difference in the perception of the game to both retail and consumers. Here are just a few of the main issues that will need to be reworked regardless of what choice is made:

Front End: The entire front end of the game will have to be reworked. Artistically, there has been concern raised with regard to the current front end, and in order to create any new look for the front end, every screen will have to be redesigned. This is not only an issue of time, but may also be an issue with regards to memory.

Vehicles: Nearly all of the vehicles in the game would need to be redesigned.

Characters: Every character in the game will most likely need to be reworked significantly to reflect the changes to the game’s theme and purpose.

Weapons/weapons systems: Design, artwork, and effects of each weapon would need to be revisited, and the collection mechanism for acquiring weapons will need to be reevaluated.

Audio: An alternate treatment of the game will most likely require significant audio changes in terms of sound effects, special effects, speech, and music.

Tracks: This is a huge issue, because the tracks in the game have been designed to accommodate a lap style racing experience, not a mission based 'Point A to point B' experience. This is an issue that can be examined with greater detail once a basic game direction has been set. Not only the design of the tracks from a layout standpoint must be examined, but also the entire graphical look of each track needs to be reworked. This is a significant amount of effort, and the complexity of the issue must not be underestimated.

Multiplayer: This aspect of the game will also need to be evaluated, though it is quite possible that the changes that would be necessary would be less significant than the single player game. My own knowledge of the MP feature set of XGRA is limited, but it would be acceptable to maintain the racing feel of XGRA for the multiplayer component of an alternate treatment. One positive note is that I am told that the team has created some arena style deathmatch levels for XGRA, which is great, as it could become the main focus of the MP mode for the game.

Concept 1: “Wastelands”

Back Story: Come closer my brothers, so that I can see you. Alas, my eyes have begun to fail me, and I grow frail. My mind, however, does not suffer, and the stories handed down to me by my father are as clear to me as the day he told me of the death of humanity.

Countless centuries ago, the world was different. Mankind gathered in great nations, and built wondrous cities that stretched as far as the eye could see. Commerce and technology were their Gods, and these Gods favored their children. But man grew greedy, his need for power and wealth were insatiable, and this in turn fueled conflict and war. The nations of the earth possessed weapons of horrible power, weapons that they became all too willing to use as their conflicts escalated and their hatred for one another grew.

There are none who now live that saw the age of man end, but the legends say that amidst the turmoil and deception of nations evil men loyal only to their own hatred and lust for carnage stole one of these great weapons and unleashed it upon civilization. The plagues that followed killed millions. Each nation blamed the others for the catastrophe, and as alliances crumbled, war followed. War led to genocide, and genocide led to Armageddon, for soon, the great nations of the world unleashed their most horrible weapons, and threw fire down upon the earth. Civilization ended, and the reign of man was over. In the wake of the great fire came more disease, famine, and suffering. Look around you, my brothers, we live amongst the bones of giants.

After the fires had burnt out, and the plagues subsided, the survivors banded together and the tribes were formed, and even in the aftermath of the Great War they fought. Famine and misery drove brother to kill brother as each tribe desperately fought for survival. Centuries of battle forged a new world order governed by the strong. Alliances were made and broken over a few precious gallons of pure water, and trust had all but vanished from the world. The humble beginnings of civilization that humanity had begun to rebuild crumbled until the wisest leaders came to understand that unless the carnage stopped, mankind was doomed. These leaders met for the first time not to kill, but to speak.

Those that wished for peace became known as the “Tribes of the Light”. But some men would not hear of it, for they considered themselves the rightful rulers of the world. They grew certain that the council was devised in order to unite the weaker tribes against them, and opposed any talk of peace. These men became known as the “Shadow Clans”. One of these evil men took aim and struck down the council leader, determined to put an end to the talks and proclaim himself ruler of the land. The Tribes of the Light united against the Shadow Clans and a great battle followed.

When the dust had settled, the Shadow Clans had been all but exterminated. The few hundred that managed to escape took refuge in the wastelands. There they licked their

wounds and nurtured their hatred. For decades they were not seen or heard from again. Soon they became little more than myth.

But the Shadow Clans were not gone, and they had not forgotten their defeat. Without warning, supply convoys and refugee transports began to be attacked in the wastelands. Though armed and escorted, each group was slaughtered without mercy. The attacks continued and one day, a lone survivor was found. He had been spared in order to deliver a message; "The Wastelands belong to the Shadow Clans"

The Game: The player may take on the role as a member of the Tribes of the Light, or of the Shadow Clans (this will substitute for the 'team' and 'character' selection in the XGRA interface), and is tasked with varying missions throughout the game. While XGRA dealt with completing races, Wastelands gives the player a variety of combat intensive missions to complete for the forces of good or evil. These are based on existing track design, which may or may not need to be reworked and redesigned in order to facilitate the new gameplay dynamic. Of great concern is the length of these missions and the 'lap' style racing that was integral to XGRA. Transforming a three-lap race into a mission based combat scenario is not easy, but I am confident that in working with the team it can be done. One example would be to incorporate 'back and forth' type missions into the game that would have the player begin at the start of one track, then turn around and race backwards through the same terrain. The game basically takes on a campaign façade rather than a race circuit façade, with the cumulative results of their performance determining whether or not the world will be ruled by the benign Tribes of the Light, or the evil Shadow Clans. Example missions follow:

Tribes of the Light mission 1 example: The player is tasked with delivering precious medical supplies to a remote outpost suffering from an epidemic. Along the way, the Shadow Clans will attack en masse in order to steal the medical supplies and seal the fate of the outpost.

Shadow Clans mission 1 example: The player must deliver a plague ridden explosive device to a remote TOTL outpost. The TOTL will attack ferociously in order to prevent this from happening. Success will result in the entire outpost being destroyed, and see the Shadow Clans gain an important foothold in the region.

TOTL mission 2 example: The Shadow Clans have are mounting an assault on a TOTL base camp. Under equipped and poorly supplied, the base cannot survive a full-blown assault unaided. The player must engage all enemy vehicles that they encounter along the way and must destroy a certain percentage of them in order to succeed.

Shadow Clans mission 2 example: The TOTL are building a new base camp that threatens the Shadow Clans' power in the region. The player must attack the TOTL forces and clear the way for a full-blown assault that will destroy the base camp while it is still poorly supplied and vulnerable.

TOTL mission 3 example: A spy from the Shadow Clans has stolen maps and charts detailing the supply routes and delivery schedules for TOTL weapons supplies. The player must hunt down the spy and recover the documents or the Shadow Clans will wreak havoc on the TOTL's supply routes and secure weapons that can be used against them.

Shadow Clans mission 3 example: An entourage from the TOTL is moving out with detailed plans of their supply routes, and delivery schedules. You must overtake the TOTL envoy, destroy its armed escort, and steal the documentation. Doing so will make new weaponry available to the Shadow Clans and significantly increase their offensive power in battle.

These are just some quick examples of how the player's purpose in the game can be changed from a straight out racing game to a mission based racing game with single or multiple objectives. However, these are just ideas at this time, and it is not likely (and indeed may not be possible) that such radical changes can be made to the game within the team's current time constraints. Any retooling of the basic game premise, its look, and its feel will require serious work in just about every area of the game (see page 1).

Winning the game: Since the game itself would become a battle campaign, victory for either side would be determined based on the campaign score that the player has amassed, with either the Tribes of the Light, or the Shadow Clans being declared the victor. It would be necessary to complete every mission in the game in order to see the outcome of the war, and it may be possible to create alternate endings depending on which side is declared the victor.

Multiplayer: The multiplayer component of Wastelands could combine a racing combat element very true to XGRA (minus the league, etc) that will pit the player and his allies against the forces of the opposing side. Players may choose to race for the Tribes of the Light, or the Shadow Clans. Each track will be home to either side, and as such, will favor one group over the others (gun emplacements, for example, would home in on racers of the opposing side). Additionally, the MP component of the game could contain deathmatch type gameplay in combat arenas built for high speeds and violent gunplay. It would be possible to design these tracks as the sole focus of the Mp game, with game modes familiar to deathmatch fans such as capture the flag, etc in place.

Concept 2: “Lost Souls: Hell on Wheels”

Back Story: I sold my soul to Satan. Seemed like a good idea at the time. I was broke, drunk, and was loosing everything that ever mattered to me. When my racing career ended, my wife left me. Said without the races I was nothing. Wanted to know how I was going to pay the bills if I couldn't race, said I was washed up and worthless... Fucking bitch. The divorce cleaned me out. She even took my dog. Hell of a way to treat a guy with a broken back, two broken arms and a fractured pelvis, huh? That's the thanks I get for risking my ass at 190 miles per hour to give her the life that she wanted, the life I *thought* she deserved. When they came to clean out the house, I tried to stop them, of course. I begged her not to go, pleaded with them not to take everything away, but who the hell's gonna listen to a broken down feeb in a wheelchair? I thought about serving myself the 'ol lead breakfast, ya know? Eating a bullet seemed as good a way to go as any. Hell, I was too fucking tired to kill myself.

So the months went by, and the doctors told me I had a 50/50 chance of walking again, and even if I did walk again, I'd never race. What fucking good was I? The house was gone, the kids were gone, the money was gone. Somehow I always found a way to pay for the Scotch, though.

One night I was out trying to take in some fresh air, you know, a little wheelchair tour of the town, and I came across some graffiti painted underneath the little bridge near the picnic tables. Weird shit. Some of it was Latin, I think. Anyway, I couldn't read a fucking word of it, and I sure as shit didn't know what it meant, but something about the pictures and the symbols felt... I dunno... powerful the me. I felt a burning inside me, a weird sort of sickly heat that radiated from deep inside. It took me awhile to figure out what it was, but in the end, it was clear enough. It was hate. Pure, untainted, venomous hate. It burned so much I wanted to scream, but it kinda felt good too, ya know? Anyway, I looked at those pictures and that weird writing and everything sorta started changing. The pictures moved and the words made sense all of a sudden. I saw the key to my dreams, the one way I could have my life back and teach that backstabbing bitch a lesson she's never forget. I sold my soul to Satan.

And brother, you got no idea how much I wish I hadn't.

The Game: Hell On Wheels pits the player as a lost soul fighting for redemption. Every character in the game has sold his or her soul to the devil, and is serving an eternal term in the pits of the abyss. Once per century, the Lord of Darkness holds a tournament, with the promise of release from Hell as the grand prize. Those that loose will suffer things more terrible than even the minions of the pit care to imagine, and for the victor there is the chance for redemption and salvation. The Dark Lord pits these desperate souls against one another in a savage race, a race that will determine their destinies in Hell. The price is high, but what do any of them really have to loose?

Competition takes place among the competitors and the minions of Hell, each one riding a unique vehicle designed to harness the arcane energy of the underworld and capable of

amazing speed. Weapons are provided along the way, of course, and each character in the game has a personalized ride that is suited to their own taste and preferences.

Based on the player's performance in the competition, which is essentially a gladiatorial competition with liberal amounts of carnage, they will be able to unlock new tracks (each one existing on a different plane of Hell) new vehicles, and new characters. If the player is able to triumph in the competition, they will unlock the Seraphim; Warrior Angels sent to Hell to liberate the Souls of those whom God has forgiven for their transgressions even after they were sent to Hell.

Winning the game: If the player is able to triumph as the Seraphim, they can compete against Satan himself in a death match type tournament in which the souls of millions are the prize.

Multiplayer: As with the "Wastelands" concept, the MP component from XGRA can be adapted and modified to fit this alternate direction for the game.

Changes: As with the "Wastelands" concept, this change of direction will also require large amounts of rework to each of the game's main components. This will not be a simpler, easier direction for the game in any way except that we could (if we choose) maintain the racing structure of the game more easily, which would prove helpful. If the mission based structure outlined in the "Wastelands" concept is preferable, but the "Hell on Wheels" concept is more appealing, then we could adapt the mission structure to the HOW concept and make the mission parameters more in line with the game's theme.

I have kept both concepts sparse in detail for this phase of the process in order to set the new direction as quickly as possible. If either of these concepts is approved, it will be time to meet the team and set a date for a finished treatment and schedule. Once again I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to realize that changes of this magnitude at this point in any game *will* cause delays unless additional resources can be acquired for the team.