

Narrative Designers Take Notice: Space Games are the Future

With Elon Musk and his company FutureX launching their first civilian space-flight back in September, the science fiction genre is going to be at the forefront of popular media. The real question is whether or not game developers can capitalize on the craze with such long design and production cycles.

Cloud Imperium Games's Star Citizen and Bethesda's upcoming StarField are but two examples of games that potentially had simple blind luck when it came to this upcoming trend, and many companies will be racing to play catch-up. This lack of awareness could hurt their bottom line; interestingly, this situation showcases one of the drawbacks of game development: the inability to quickly produce games to keep up with the zeitgeist of the time.

So, how could this potentially be corrected? The development cycle of games is unlikely to be changed anytime soon, but this is where a solid narrative designer can truly shine. I mentioned in my previous article that teachers are prime candidates for narrative designers; however, I forgot to mention the fact that due to a teacher's close contact with so many students, they have a metaphorical ear to ground.

With a narrative designer that has extensive experience working with young adults, game companies will not need to consistently rub a crystal ball in an attempt to predict what game will sell. They can look directly to those members of staff that will have insight into the minds of target audiences. For example, my current students are extremely interested in space now that commercial space travel is slowly inching towards becoming commonplace. My students no longer want to experience the old west or traverse a post-apocalyptic landscape; they want to travel the stars and go where no one has gone before.

My advice to current or future narrative designers would be to strike now while the iron is hot and begin writing those science fiction stories that are stuck in your head.