

RYZOM: BEHIND THE SCENES #1

WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF '*BEHIND THE SCENES*'!

Let's dive into the world of codes and graphic design. A world where translators and animators work hard for your pleasure. A world with lorists and CSRs to help with important questions and where marketers find more homins to join your next boss hunt or OP war. We are working hard to make Atys even more interesting for you, day-by-day.

This blog is to give our passion a voice and bring it to our most important target: you.

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I

WE WILL START WITH THE NEXT UPCOMING
THING TO EXPLORE: GUILD ISLANDS.



INTERVIEW WITH ULUKYN

Hello Ulukyn. First of all, please tell us how long you have been a member of the Ryzom team?

Ulukyn: I joined the Ryzom team just before Winchgate reopened the servers after the closure by Gameforge. I had already worked with the NeL (Ryzom's 3D engine) to make a mini-game based on Ryzom data which allowed players to create a character and to travel in the map.

Let's focus on guild islands. Can you explain us what it is about?

Ulukyn: Guild Islands are a simple idea, to have a space large enough to allow a guild to install its home sweet home. We talk about island even if, in fact, most of the time, it is not a place surrounded by water. New creatures, NPCs and buildings will be added through patches and will provide various services. Guild Islands are made with the PocketWorld (PoWo) engine, using the Scenographic Editor for scenery, which gives a guild the complete freedom to customize its island.

What was the biggest problem during the development?

Ulukyn: The PoWo system, that allows us to create instanced area (where each groups of players can be in the same place but in a different environment) was initially intended for free access. We had to rebuild it to make it more flexible. For example, being able to open a PoWo to one player, a team or even to a whole guild as in the Guild Islands.

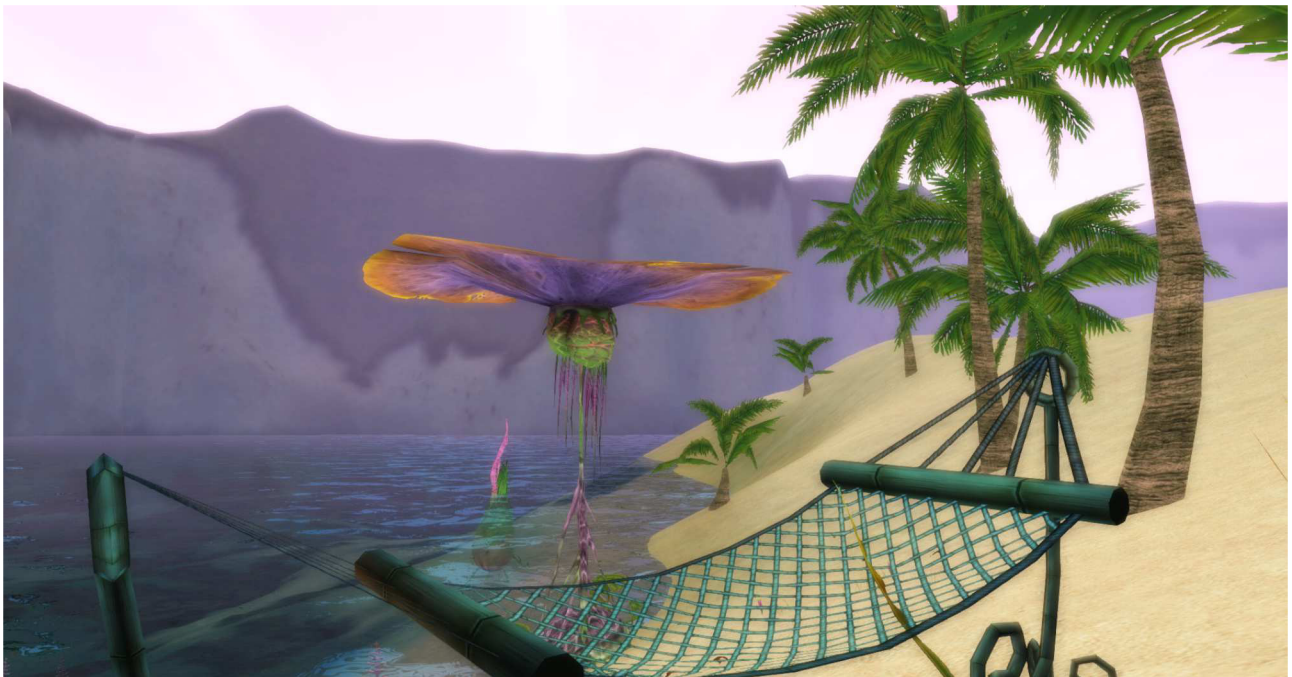
We went even further, because a Guild Island can be open at the same time, to a guild but also to others players.

The other challenge was to manage island's creatures. They had to be added first of all when a player enters the island and then after each server reboot. We used a method that we had previously added to test dynamic events.

*In the end, to save as much time as possible, we try to create very flexible, generic systems, we test them and use them in as many projects as possible. This way we can save time and do very nice things with few resources. *smiles**

Are there any features planned for future, and if yes, which ones?

Ulukyn: We would like to give access to Guild Halls and some guild inventory extensions, also to add some guild missions and maybe, some volunteer players will learn how to use ARK, to create activities in Guild Islands. However, most of the NPCs and services that are already available, will remain in the social centres of the game, i.e. the Capitals and villages.



Thank you very much Ulukyn, I can't wait to get my own island!

II

LET'S GO OVER TO THE NEXT TOPIC,
THE NEW BOSS ON SILAN: YUBOKIN.

YUBOKIN



This boss was made by **Teanwen** and **Inky** (thanks a lot for scripting!). However we want to take a look at the graphic design now. **Aileya** worked for the past few weeks on the shape and texture of the new yubo boss.

INTERVIEW WITH AILEYA

**Hello Aileya! Let's start by talking about yourself.
When did you start playing Ryzom?**

Aileya: Hey there! That's difficult to date. I guess something around 2004 or 2005. Today I am not playing Ryzom anymore as much I once used to, but it surely is still in my heart and always will be.

And when did you joined the Ryzom team?

Aileya: I first joined the Ryzom Team in 2009 as a supporter and later as member of the graphics team in 2013.

When you started to work on Yubokin, did you have a clear idea of what you wanted to do?

Aileya: Of course. I usually have a clear vision what I am going to do, and even if not, I am playing around with uncertain ideas or "visions" until I reach a point, where I guess it might fit well enough so that I can build on it.

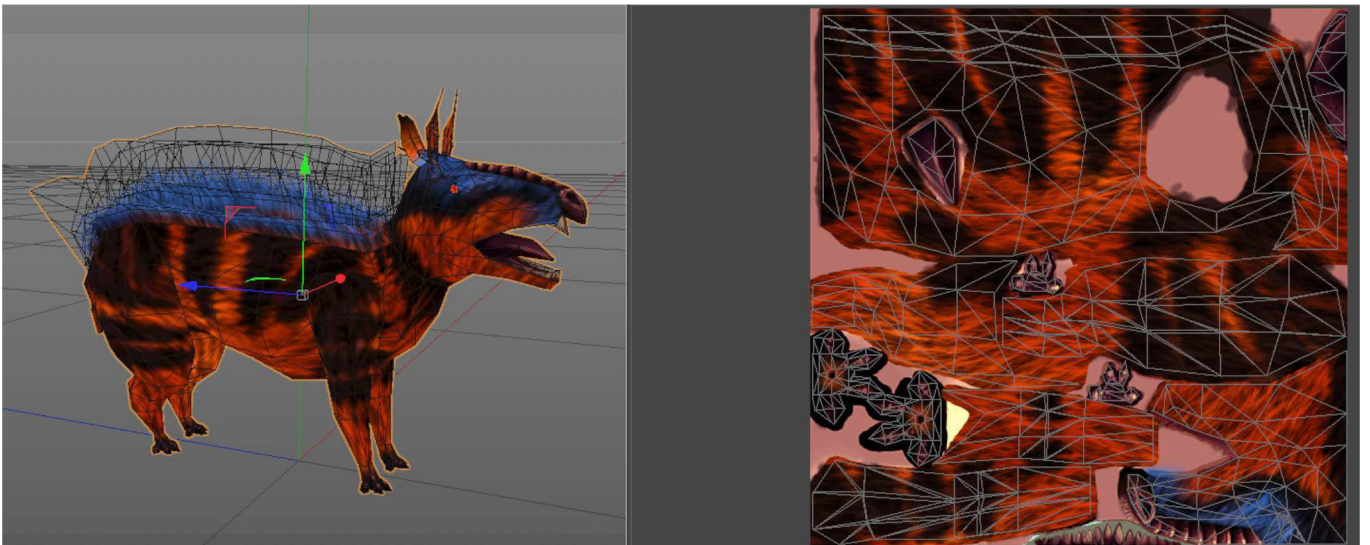
What kind of sources did you use for inspiration?

Aileya: I always have a big repertoire behind me, which I can lean on to find my own inspiration. This is an endless collection of sources: eg. from movies, artworks, TV adverts, my earlier works, my mind, or even just Google research. The most important, for the new boss Yubokin, was to find a good balance between the original Yubo, its "further evolution" and to stay within a real frame of reference.

After all the Yubo is still a herbivore, even when it is only digital. For this project I have had more than 30 references in use.

What were the biggest problems you faced during the creation?

Aileya: The biggest problems, heh...where to start?! I guess, to keep it short, was the technical parts. I had to rebuild a lot of the pre-existing material to "reanimate" the Yubo in its new appearance, so it is tinkering around until we reach what we have today. That took me a lot of head-scratching and coffee. Currently, as we are doing this interview, I am still not completely finished with the new boss. A lot of ideas have been dropped already, but I hope that the players will like it when it is finished.



**You did a great job, Yubokin looks fantastic!
Thank you Aileya for this interesting look into your work.**

III

WE HAVE SOME MORE TO SHOW YOU, DON'T WORRY!
LET'S GO ON WITH GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS.

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748 .....size="15" />
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750 .....id=""
751 .....parent="parent"
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754 .....y="0"
755 .....z="34"
756 .....texture=""
757 .....value=""
758 .....group id="#id"
759 .....x=""
760 .....y=""
761 .....z=""
762 .....parent="#parent"
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766 .....texture=""
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774 .....value="UI:TEMP:GUILD_CREA_BACK:value"
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789 .....
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791 .....proc id="change_flag_symbol"
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.....
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GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS

INTERVIEW WITH RIASAN

Hello Riasan, please tell us something about yourself first. Since when do you play Ryzom?

Riasan: Since the open beta in 2004.

How long have you been a member of the Ryzom Team?

Riasan: I joined the team in December 2014.

What kind of improvements are you working on?

Riasan: I have renewed several ark scripts for the Marauders. It was a lot of background work, like bug fixing, so not much to see for the players, but it's also really important work. ARK v4 is running faster than the old version and also offers more possibilities for us to implement things faster and in a better way.

Which problems did you faced?

Riasan: There were some general problems. For example the source-code is old and it wasn't considered that some functions would need to be changed or extended later on. I had to use the "trial-and-error" method. It takes a lot of time to fix small things, but it's the only way to do it. Also, there is no documentation, so I have to relearn everything. Furthermore, there are no good tools, especially for the User Interface (UI). There is no real-time editor for it, so I have to fix the code itself with a text editor.

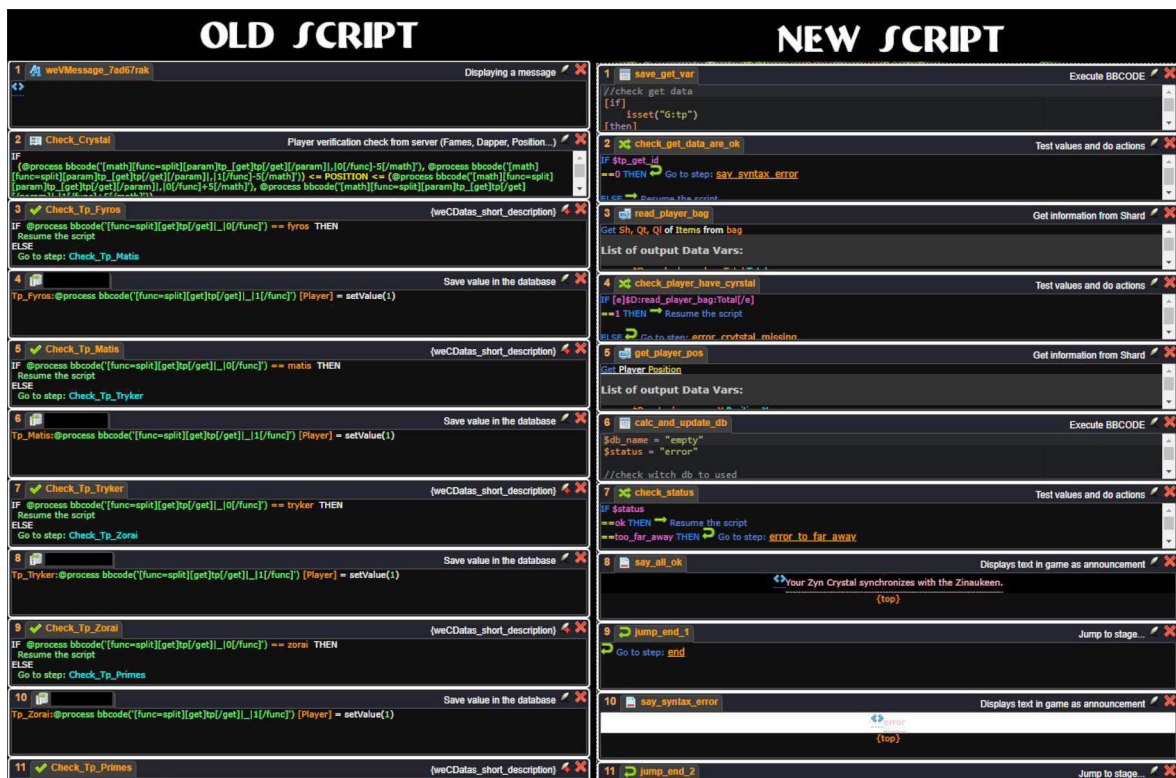
Everytime I change something, I need to relaunch the game to see the result.

It is a time-consuming process, but it's worth it.

Also many of the source files are lost. They are compromised in the server data. The client can extract the data, but it is very difficult for us to read it (to extract work files from it), which makes it much more complicated, if we want to change or add something.

Will there be more improvements in future?

Riasan: Yes, of course! Besides me, also Ulukyn, Kervala and Nimetu and now Inky are constantly working on improvements, bug and exploit fixes, as well as bringing the code up-to-date.



Thanks for your time Riasan, seems like you have a lot to do!

IV

NEXT TOPIC. WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE EVENT TEAM?

There are a lot of members in the event team. Too many to interview each one of them today. We picked two members to give you a small insight into this team.

A very new member, **Drecyan**, and another member that returned after a long break, **Zeligmane**.

INTERVIEW WITH DRECYAN



Hello Drecyan, let's talk about yourself first. When did you start playing Ryzom?

Drecyan: I started Ryzom - I mean, Saga of Ryzom! - in January 2005, a few months after its release. I quickly invested a lot of time and energy into it, until the servers were closed. I have returned several times since the reopening, mainly in 2013 and 2016, and more recently in the summer of 2018.

And when did you joined the team?

Drecyan: I joined the Ryzom team at the beginning of January 2019.

**So you are a new member. Welcome again at this point!
What experiences have you had so far? Have you already played an event?**

Drecyan: I have had the opportunity to participate in two events: a meeting of the Matis Court and another in connection with the construction of towers in Thesos. I liked that a lot.

Will you play more events in future?

Drecyan: For now I am still learning the ropes of the trade, so to speak, there is so much to learn, Ryzom is such a rich world from a role-play point of view. So my first objective is to improve myself in order to "do things right".

Thanks for your time Drecyan and welcome into the team!

INTERVIEW WITH ZELIGMANE

Hello Zeligmane, can you please tell us first a little bit about yourself.

When did you start playing Ryzom?

Zeligmane: Well... I tried Silan like a week before 1st Ryzom shutdown. Something like... 2008?

And when did you join the Ryzom team?

Zeligmane: I'm trying to find back the date. Maybe 2010.

Can you remember the reasons for joining the team?

Zeligmane: Yes, it was during an event where my character was deeply involved (and a bit in conflict with npc). I started to communicate with event team and joined shortly after. I also have been roleplaying (tabletop, including game master) for around a decade at that time.



You also left the team, right? When was that and what was the reason for it?

Zeligmane: I left around 2013 for Real Life reasons : I failed a university year pretty badly and I had to focus on my studies. Afterwards, I've kept finding some university challenges until this winter, and I think I'm now done with studying (after ~11 years :p)

Good things need time! How long have you been back this time?

Zeligmane: A very long time... almost 15 days.

Welcome back at this point! What experiences have you had since you returned?

Zeligmane: I've not been in-game yet, outside re-learning event commands. I'm revisiting every point of Ryzom history since I've left, and learning the upcoming events. I'm getting more at ease with the new, so I hope to start playing during events soon.

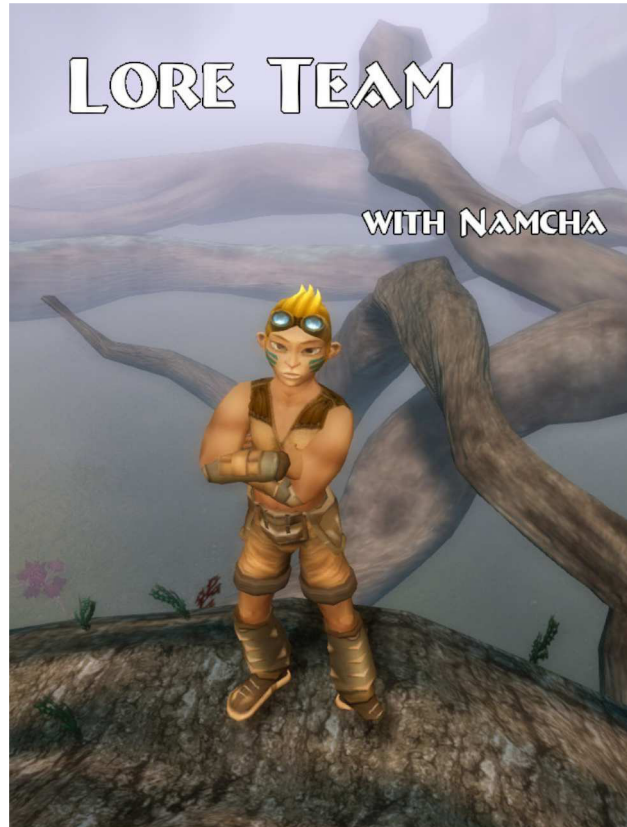
Sounds like you have much to do. So your plans for your future in the event team is to play regularly events?

Zeligmane: Play events, participate in writing and maybe managing a community like I used to. Yes, first of all, being part of events again.

Then I'm sure we can expect great things from you. Thank you very much for your time and this small insight in your story.

Zeligmane: You're welcome and I'll do my best to give you the "great" things you are expecting of me :)

What a nice talk with you. Thanks Zeligmane and welcome back!



INTERVIEW WITH NAMCHA

**Hello Namcha, let's start to talk about your own history.
When did you start playing Ryzom?**

Namcha: I started the game in 2012, it was my first long experience with mmorpg, after having played on several solo rpg games from ©Bioware suites and online hack'n'slash.

When did you joined the lore team?

Namcha: I joined Lore Team (LT) in 2016 and now also Game Design Team in 2018.

I see that you chose a Tryker as a toon, is it relevant to your personality?

*Namcha: It's funny because once we know the game well, we tend to judge Real Life people by their Trykerness, Fyrosness, Matisness etc... we could imagine a Ryzom 4D personality diagram *smiles* As for "Namcha" there is no roleplay, it's true my choice wasn't random. I hesitated with a Zoraï but finally I opted for believing I still have a young mind despite my fortyish body, inside which ideas bounce like ping-pong balls. Also, I didn't want to be seen like a teacher or dogmatic person. In that way I preferred a mere Tryker.*

I am wondering how the lore team works. Are you using papers to share your ideas? Maybe you can explain to us how the lore team works in general?

Namcha: Yes, like many other teams we have this set of 3 tools than consist of spaces with documents and PADs (cloud.ryzom.com), a private chat (chat.ryzom.com), and a board with tasks to do (board.ryzom.com).

This is for internal works, lorists are also dispatched among other teams' tools (events, translations...) and project-specific tools to interact with others volunteers.

Current team is composed of 5 Lorists + Tamarea as leader. Our internal decision process is mostly collegial, and we seek for unanimity support on a solution rather than voting a choice.

We can separate our missions into 3 categories :

- *help and validation : helping other teams and players to create content compliant with Lore.*
- *writing stories : role-play scenarios for the event team to play them. Also writing meta-storyline or just complicated dialog like the tells of a kitins expert.*
- *documenting : defining the background of Ryzom, meaning the explanation of all things. Ryzom is neither fantasy nor space opera but hard SF kind of story.*



PRETENDING TO SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION TO A LORE DILEMMA

Being a Lorist is something more than just a documentation keeper. It's about being able to write new ideas compliant with the existing. It's about being able to fill the holes in the existing. It's about understanding the "spirit" of the background. This cannot be achieved by only reading documents, but kind of "oral" -- if typed chatting can be equated to oral transmission -- during long discussions on concepts and stories which compose the background, repeated times.

*oh ! ... It's also important having played the game a significant number of hours, in my opinion *smiles**

This is for pure Lore but then a lorist has to work with other teams too ! This mean understanding their needs, their wishes, their creativity. Finding compromises, making suggestions, hearing suggestions, avoiding causing frustrations. Explaining without revealing.

Are you still following Nevrax Lore?
If not, who is responsible for the development now?

Namcha: First I'd like to change this concept that we (LT) have a "Ryzom bible", that would be a reference we jealously keep. There are indeed some docs, tidied on a shelf, and it's very incomplete. Lore is rather the sum of what people know.

We in the LT count for a lot but also other teams, players...

Documentation is a tool for not forgetting and to help transmission.

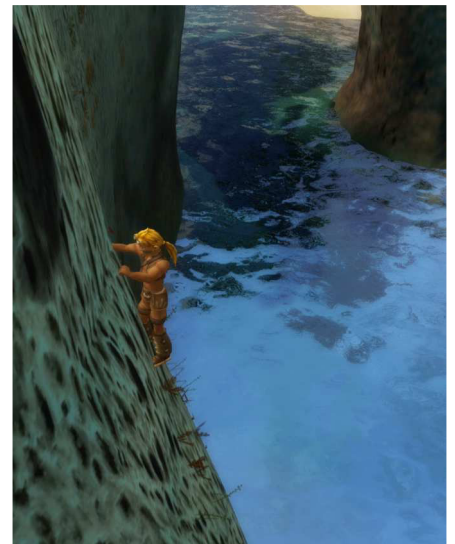
But documents becomes a bit tasteless once you've experienced conversations with expert Lorists. Anyway each team writes its own documents, we are no exception.

About past documents, yes, most things described in them are kept.

Are we following it ? No, because what was planned is neither feasible nor desirable at the moment.

People have to realize that the Lore Team is not the same since the game was launched. There even were some years with no Lore Team.

We are achieving a good description of the Ryzom background. We could even call it a "modelling". This knowledge will allow consistency for replying on many points. We are also responsible for writing the storyline.



**SOME BARK CLIMBING IN LAKES,
IT HELPS TO EMPTY MY MIND**

Where are we on the Lore timeline right now?

Namcha: In a way, we navigate by sight !

A storyline has just been proposed to event team and should last the next two years. We still have a good idea of what's next. But the future does not depend only on us, other teams have also their own initiatives about the game evolution. It's also about what is feasible or not, at a given time, and it seems possibilities are increasing. Player's choices influence the course too.

Can you give us any hints about the future?

Namcha: Some of internal questions we had about the future is what would be the consequences of the rise of Marauders on other civilisations ? what would be the reactions from Powers ? what would the changes be in Ranger organisation ? Another hint is that people understood that Atys planet is much bigger than current maps.

We are often asked what it is like outside the New Lands ? What are the Old Lands ? What are the other parts of the Atys planet ? But for a clearer schedule, it's in the hand of the Event Team !

**HARD LIFE ESTABLISHING
COMMUNICATION WITH CUTES,
PRIMITIVES KNOW LORE SECRETS**



That was a very interesting look into the Lore Team. Thanks a lot Namcha!

VI

LAST BUT NOT LEAST:
DYNAMIC EVENTS.



INTERVIEW WITH DÆMONIXUS

Hello Daemonixus. How long have you played Ryzom?

Daemonixus: Since the open beta in 2004.

And when did you joined the Ryzom Team?

Daemonixus: I signed the NDA on May 19, 2016.

Can you tell us more about your personal experience with Ryzom?

Daemonixus: Ryzom is still for me a unique MMO, I can't find anywhere else such a living fauna, such successful seasonal changes.

It's the only MMO where, even more than ten years after, I stop to look at the scenery or pay attention to creatures living their own lives.

In other words, for me immersion is the most important thing.

I'm still playing Ryzom and I'm happy to be able to contribute to it's evolution.

**You are working on "Dynamic Events".
What is that?**

Daemonixus: A Dynamic Event DE is a classic event that is started automatically. So it is not the players or an animator who launch it. Have a look at Atys' map, classic missions represent the NPC's demands that players can satisfy if they wish. Now, let's imagine the same Atys' map, but, this time, it will be the NPCs who will indicate their demands, and this, during a given time. Example, a barman may have an important order to provide to a NPC in a short time. The players will have to help to do a part of this order. So you will have to look regularly at a kind of map - You can see an old version below - to know what is ongoing on the Bark.

There are also kitin invasion type DE, which will also be launched automatically, at any time. On the other hand, only players will be able to close them, fighting against the invasion. I must confess, that reboot of the server will do the same, but it's less amusing. These invasions will be able to adapt themselves to the number of players in the event.



| Localisations | Temps |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Marchant fédéral a Fairhaven | 15 mn restante(s) |
| Caporal, Porte de Cerakos a Pyr | 3 mn restante(s) |
| [HRP]-Puzzle_picture | 15 mn restante(s) |

Carte (YUBO)
Marchant fédéral a Fairhaven 50m

How long are you working on this project now?

Daemonixus: Around two years. I started by wanting to create kitin invasion that would be totally automatic in their operation. During development of this first version of DE, I realized that the principle could also be suitable for classic missions. So I started again almost from the beginning to create the 2.0 version of DE, to have a joint part of the coding. At a more advanced stage, I wanted to duplicate the coding from my first mission, the Fairhaven federal merchant, to create another one, the Pyr Corporal. In hindsight, I saw that too much coding dedicated to DE management was still mixed with the coding for the mission itself. That was making DE duplication more difficult. So, I create the 3.0 version, the actual version, that looks like a little framework where the coding for DE management is really different from the coding of the DE themselves, which makes them more readable. That is the background.

What were the biggest problems you had during development?

*Daemonixus: One and only problem, even before DE, understanding ARK *smiles* and all that is around it, and the only way to progress is to make mistakes, so I have made a lot... And I have still things to discover. I also had to choose the place of the NPCs that will be used because they are not all adapted to DE. So you have to look for the good NPCs and test each DE with each NPC.*



*For the rest, it's not a problem at all, but a facet I didn't know in events: the steps back and forth between the first tests and remarks, and the DE I proposed.
Remarks that lead to changes, followed by new proposals and new tests.*



But the result is here, they are much better integrated to game than the first versions I imagined, the team work is essential.

When will dynamic events be ready for Atys?

*Daemonixus: 2019, finally! *smiles**

Do you already planned future updates? If yes, which ones?

*Daemonixus: In my jargon, I call them multiDE. It will be more basic DE than the FH federal marchand or the Pyr Corporal. But they will each propose several dynamic missions, giving players, on a regular basis, various DE.
Forward, I would like to create other DE with animated NPCs as in Fairhaven or Pyr. Of course, you have to be here just in the beginning to see the entire animated sequence, but for the ones present, it gives a little magic touch. I have other projects in mind, but above all, I would like to have feedback from the players, to know what they think about DE, it's the most important.*

Thank you Daemonixus! It seems like a really nice project and I can't wait to see it live!

We hope you enjoyed this journey.
Besides the project named here, there are many more projects to show you!
Next time - among other things - we will take a look in the translation and the support teams, as well as the game design and marketing teams and more projects for you to explore!

So stay tuned for the next edition of 'Behind the Scenes', coming JA 2603 (mid of april).



SEE YOU NEXT TIME!

RYZOM TEAM