

# WASTELAND 2

## Prologue

In the early seventies, an astronomer located a cluster of meteors that would cross Earth's path in the summer of ninety eight. Keeping this secret was the government's top priority. First, they did not want to panic the populace. Second, they saw it as a way to get the upper-hand against the Soviets. Building a meteor defense platform became the United States' number one priority. It took 15 years to build the Citadel Starstation, a highly advanced orbital nuclear anti-meteor missile platform. The United States' Citadel Starstation was slated to be fully operational by March, just months before the meteors were believed to be arriving. Tensions grew with the coming of 1998, the Soviets charging that the space station was merely a military launching platform, alarming a number of nonaligned nations.

Two weeks before Citadel was due for full operation, the station transmitted a distress signal. Undetected, a cloud of small meteorites preceded the main cluster. Though they were no threat to Earth, Earth's satellites were a different story. Immediately after the message was sent, most of the satellites orbiting the planet were swept clean from the sky, leaving the great powers blind. In military panic, each sent 90 percent of their nuclear arsenals skyward. Although the destruction was tremendous, it was not complete. Pockets of civilization remained, some even oblivious to the military exchange.

The world of today is the antithesis of the clean, futuristic society that came before. Wasteland is a world in decay. The once glimmering cities of glass and steel lie in ruin. Rusted hulls of cars litter the urban environment as a reminder of the world that once was.

The survivors of the cataclysm have banded together into small frontier communities. Not unlike the Wild West hundreds of years prior, the world of today is an age of rugged individualism; a society where the ties between individuals are loose and everyone is expected to look after himself and his own.

Some towns have the benefit of a pre-cataclysm renewable power source, such as a small wind turbine or solar dish. In the midst of a technological dark age, few have the knowledge and means to recreate these power sources, making them coveted and often fought-over commodities. The few who have the know-how to maintain the old technologies are highly sought after and often command a lot of influence.

On the same day destruction rained down from the sky, a company of U.S. Army Engineers were in the southwestern deserts building transportation bridges over dry riverbeds. They worked deep in the inhospitable desert valleys, surrounded by a number of survivalist communities. Located directly south of their position on that day was a newly-constructed federal prison. In addition to housing the nation's criminals condemned to death, the prison contained light industrial manufacturing facilities.

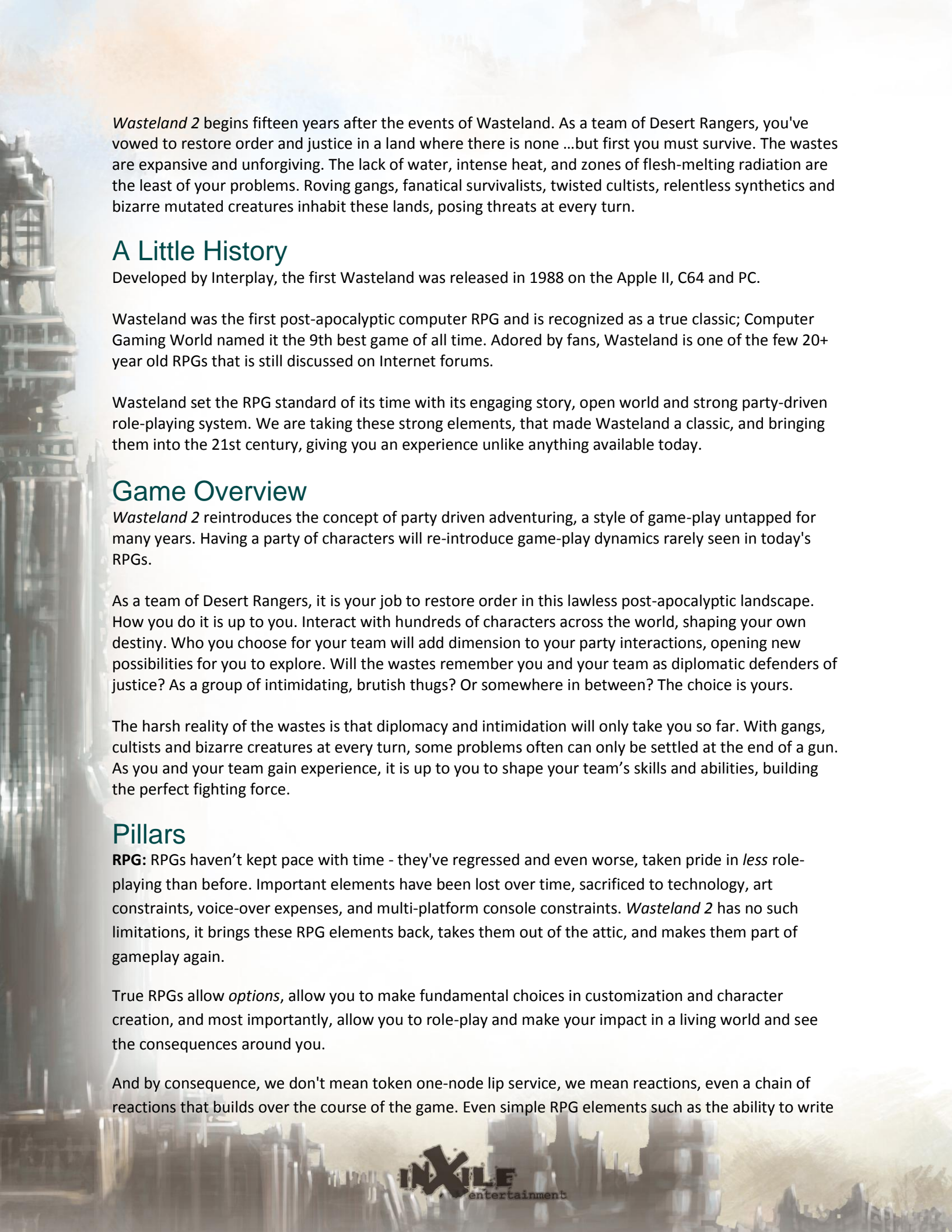
Shortly after the cataclysm began, the Engineers, seeking shelter, took over the federal prison and expelled the prisoners into the desolate desert to complete their sentences. As the weeks passed, they invited the nearby survivalist communities to join them and to help them build a new society. Because of each community's suspicions towards one another, times were difficult at first. But as time nurtured trust, this settlement - which came to be known as Ranger Center - grew to be one of the strongest outposts. Ranger Center even proved powerful enough to repel the hands of rancorous criminals who repeatedly attacked in attempts to reclaim what was once "rightfully" theirs.

The citizens of Ranger Center, after first believing that they were the only ones who survived the nuclear cataclysm, soon realized that communities beyond the desert's grip had also survived. Because they had such success in constructing a new community, they felt compelled to help other survivors rebuild and live in peace.

Toward this end, the Desert Rangers, in the great tradition of the Texas and Arizona Rangers a century before, were born.







*Wasteland 2* begins fifteen years after the events of *Wasteland*. As a team of Desert Rangers, you've vowed to restore order and justice in a land where there is none ...but first you must survive. The wastes are expansive and unforgiving. The lack of water, intense heat, and zones of flesh-melting radiation are the least of your problems. Roving gangs, fanatical survivalists, twisted cultists, relentless synthetics and bizarre mutated creatures inhabit these lands, posing threats at every turn.

## A Little History

Developed by Interplay, the first *Wasteland* was released in 1988 on the Apple II, C64 and PC.

*Wasteland* was the first post-apocalyptic computer RPG and is recognized as a true classic; Computer Gaming World named it the 9th best game of all time. Adored by fans, *Wasteland* is one of the few 20+ year old RPGs that is still discussed on Internet forums.

*Wasteland* set the RPG standard of its time with its engaging story, open world and strong party-driven role-playing system. We are taking these strong elements, that made *Wasteland* a classic, and bringing them into the 21st century, giving you an experience unlike anything available today.

## Game Overview

*Wasteland 2* reintroduces the concept of party driven adventuring, a style of game-play untapped for many years. Having a party of characters will re-introduce game-play dynamics rarely seen in today's RPGs.

As a team of Desert Rangers, it is your job to restore order in this lawless post-apocalyptic landscape. How you do it is up to you. Interact with hundreds of characters across the world, shaping your own destiny. Who you choose for your team will add dimension to your party interactions, opening new possibilities for you to explore. Will the wastes remember you and your team as diplomatic defenders of justice? As a group of intimidating, brutish thugs? Or somewhere in between? The choice is yours.


The harsh reality of the wastes is that diplomacy and intimidation will only take you so far. With gangs, cultists and bizarre creatures at every turn, some problems often can only be settled at the end of a gun. As you and your team gain experience, it is up to you to shape your team's skills and abilities, building the perfect fighting force.

## Pillars

**RPG:** RPGs haven't kept pace with time - they've regressed and even worse, taken pride in *less* role-playing than before. Important elements have been lost over time, sacrificed to technology, art constraints, voice-over expenses, and multi-platform console constraints. *Wasteland 2* has no such limitations, it brings these RPG elements back, takes them out of the attic, and makes them part of gameplay again.

True RPGs allow *options*, allow you to make fundamental choices in customization and character creation, and most importantly, allow you to role-play and make your impact in a living world and see the consequences around you.

And by consequence, we don't mean token one-node lip service, we mean reactions, even a chain of reactions that builds over the course of the game. Even simple RPG elements such as the ability to write



your own character's bio (frequently lost in the console generation), importing your own portraits of your characters that you like better than what a developer gives you, to larger, more important goals such as tactical combat and extended options to approach battles and fights.

In *Wasteland 2*, these RPG mechanics are there to be discovered all over again:

**Customization:** The ability to customize, alter, and improve your characters is as important as changing the world. Like the original *Wasteland*, your choice of what statistics and skills you invest in gives your characters personality, gives you multiple quest solutions, and gives you the ability to role-play beyond simply Thief, Fighter, or Mage archetypes. A low Charisma, low Agility, and high Strength character who specializes in medical skills and brawling can flesh out your characters with a sense of personality that other RPGs don't allow for... perhaps that of an injured pit fighter who learned to tend the wounds of others in arena brawls in Needles and Vegas. Or a down-on-their-luck boxing coach who signed up with the Rangers as an instructor then graduated to going on missions to watch his new students in action. An ex-soldier who has forsaken the use of firearms after she was shot in the leg.

The amount of customization you can assign to your skills and stats help paint a detailed, vibrant personality for your characters... and give you added options when exploring the wasteland. That same injured pit fighter who knows how to talk about hand to hand combat with brawlers may gain information others cannot... or be able to earn money or earn respect through fighting in the arena itself and with enough medical knowledge to keep them going in-between matches. An assassin that specializes in lockpicking may unlock the back entrance to a hideout of Leather Thugs, take out their leader while he's sleeping, and then leave quietly before the other dozen gang members know he's there. A laser-toting doctor may be able to gain access to a community with his medical know-how, and when they get within range of a target, use their laser weapon skills to surgically take out a town's gun turrets and pave the way for other Rangers to storm the place.

Assigning points over the course of the game into your chosen skills and stats can allow you to decide how each character grows as an individual. Your wounded pit fighter might gain new strength in his arms and have his cartilage repaired at Ranger Center, gaining more Agility. Your boxing coach may develop into the most skilled doctor the Rangers have ever known, and your ex-soldier may discover that some recently discovered horrors requires she take up the Rifle again and become a sniper to help her comrades... and herself... survive.

**Customization Plus:** We don't stop there. Customization extends beyond creating your characters' stats and looks; it translates to the user interface, customizing and outfitting your own weapon from what you can scrounge from the environment, swaging your ammo and even what portraits you want to import in the game to represent your character (Why settle for what we give you? Choose whatever you want, draw your own, or find something better on line, or




even round out your party with pictures of your family members and co-workers!). Make the world, the interface, the playstyle, and your character *yours*, and role-play the way *you* want to.

**Interface that Caters to You:** *Wasteland 2* allows not only character and world customization, but interface layout and design customization as well. With the range of game mechanics permitted inside and outside of combat, we don't want to limit you solely to customizing your character - we allow you to customize your interface to match your playstyle and choose the "language" and format with which you communicate with the game.

**Band of Brothers:** Like the original, *Wasteland 2* is a party-based game - you and your Rangers are a team, a band of brothers. Creating a party of individuals with depth and freedom is something unique to *Wasteland* and reinforces the Rangers as an organization – not only are you fighting to build communities, your Rangers are a community, too, and you can feel that in the gameplay mechanics and interactions.

**NPC's:** In addition to your ranger party you will have NPCs join the group each with their own personalities, motivations, and agendas – while they may excel in lockpicking, swinging a chainsaw through Leather Jerks, or sniping a War Droid and clipping its sensors at a block away, they have their own opinions they'll act on over the course of the game. They don't always blindly follow you into radiation-infested buildings, they may quietly hoard drugs and money that they find, or even possibly decide to borrow things from you as needed. They may have a childhood fear of rats that causes them to burn SMG clips in fury whenever those creatures appear. If they don't like someone in the party, they won't be shy about it – or they may actively encourage you to send certain characters on solo missions provided they leave their canteen and supplies behind. The feeling is that you'll be traveling with characters, not drones with certain skill sets, and knowing their personality strengths and motivations is one of the most important tools for survival.





**Open World:** Adventure lies in the ruins of every city block, in the irradiated glow of distant mountain ranges, and in the depths of Devil's Crater. It can be heard whispering and begging in the frequencies on your radio, bristling with threats from unseen enemies or people begging for help – this world is buzzing, burning, and alive around you. It isn't a world you *have* to explore, it's a world you *want* to explore.

Presented through an easily-traversable world map and close-quarter gameplay maps for detailed explorations, we allow you to explore the Wasteland at the pace you want. Go anywhere you want, test the limits, test your enemies and gauge their strength (taking the bad road is your choice, and you own your mistakes if you don't heed rumors or don't proceed cautiously).

**A Beckoning World, Not a Forced March:** *Wasteland 2* baits you and lures you into exploring a variety of ways – the promise of what lies in a ghostly skyscraper in the depths of downtown LA, in the floating wreckage of submerged harbors and in the lower decks of abandoned cruise liners, tracks that lead to an old mine shaft in a mountain side... but no tracks leading out, and a mysterious broadcast whispering in Russian, a rapidfire Morse code signal, or the staccato of insane cult-speak hammered out on the radio... all of these events are fishhooks dangled throughout the environment to pull you in.

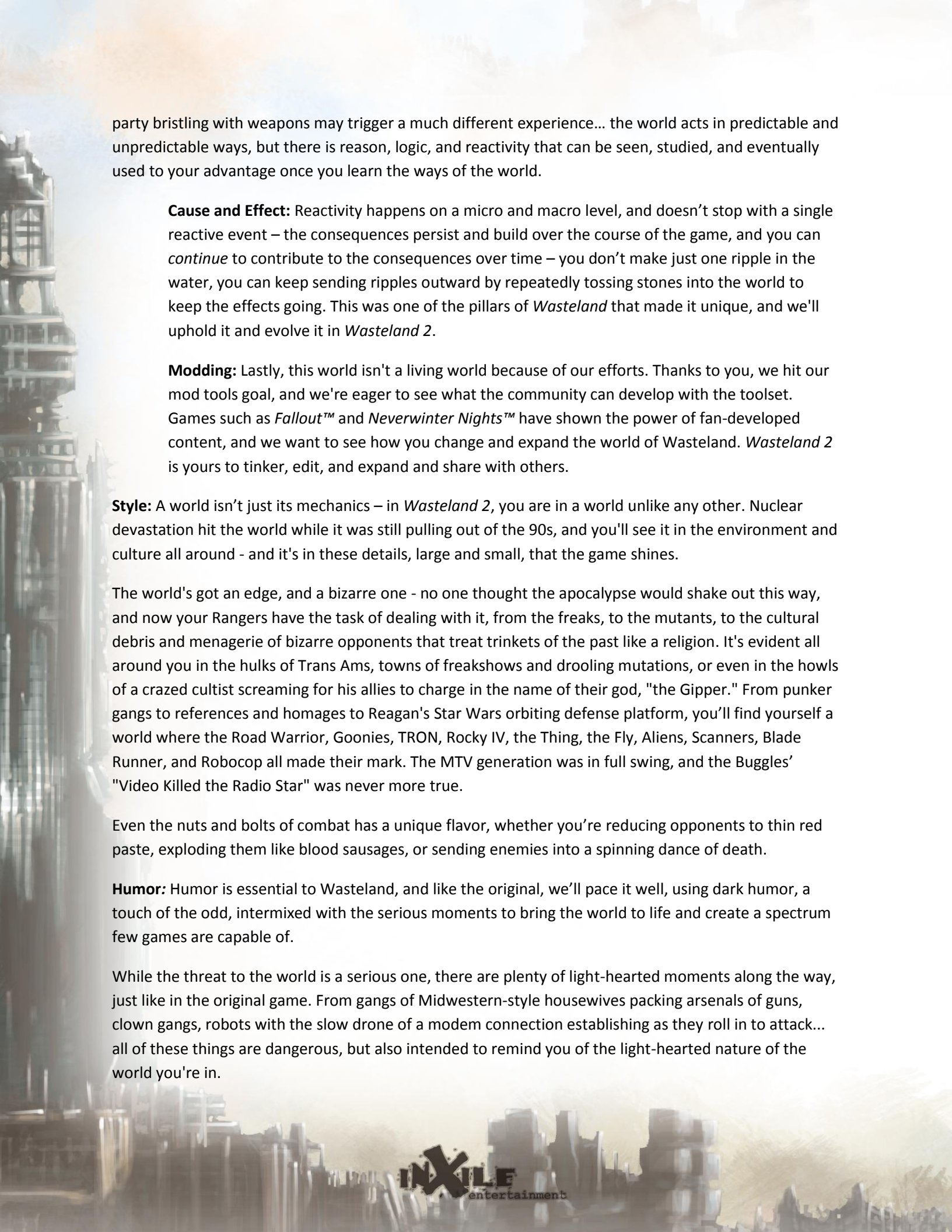
**Narrative Depth:** Words help you navigate the world - and define it as well. Dialogue and interactions in *Wasteland 2* are intended to carry the same thrill of reward and knowledge that exploring an abandoned weapons factory might... and provide one of the best ways to learn about the culture and attitude of a faction, cult, or gang in a region.

Many of the greatest moments in *Wasteland* were communicated via text and lore paragraphs, and it elevated the story, not detracted from it. We're not afraid of text, and we're not afraid to use it to emphasize and support the world in ways the environment can't show visually. We want to use it to provide a deep narrative experience, and we'll have a strong conversation system to support it – you can type in keywords as part of your arsenal to unlock secrets and text fragments... paying attention to the world and key words can often create new paths in a conversation or give you new clues, hints, and even passwords to unlock new areas for you to explore.

**Words as Weapons:** There's nothing like the threatening urgency that comes when a guard with an itchy trigger finger stops you to demand the password, and you're wracking your brain to try and find the right word that comes to mind - and for those looking to provoke a firefight, the wrong word dropped at the right time can cause an effect-chain that even a gunfight would be hard to top.

**The World is Watching You:** The world reacts to who's in your party, your appearance, your choices, your health – and more. It's a world that's watching *you* and reacting in ways you would expect the inhabitants of the world would... encountering a horde of Leather Jerks shortly after being bloodied and out of ammo from an unexpected Reagan Hover Tank fight is going to spark a much different reaction than rolling onto the scene with upgraded automatic weapons and proton axes while riding the same Hover Tank you were fighting previously. On the flip side, entering a room with security robots while wearing normal clothes and no weapons displayed may allow safe passage where a fully-tricked out





party bristling with weapons may trigger a much different experience... the world acts in predictable and unpredictable ways, but there is reason, logic, and reactivity that can be seen, studied, and eventually used to your advantage once you learn the ways of the world.

**Cause and Effect:** Reactivity happens on a micro and macro level, and doesn't stop with a single reactive event – the consequences persist and build over the course of the game, and you can *continue* to contribute to the consequences over time – you don't make just one ripple in the water, you can keep sending ripples outward by repeatedly tossing stones into the world to keep the effects going. This was one of the pillars of *Wasteland* that made it unique, and we'll uphold it and evolve it in *Wasteland 2*.

**Modding:** Lastly, this world isn't a living world because of our efforts. Thanks to you, we hit our mod tools goal, and we're eager to see what the community can develop with the toolset. Games such as *Fallout™* and *Neverwinter Nights™* have shown the power of fan-developed content, and we want to see how you change and expand the world of *Wasteland*. *Wasteland 2* is yours to tinker, edit, and expand and share with others.


**Style:** A world isn't just its mechanics – in *Wasteland 2*, you are in a world unlike any other. Nuclear devastation hit the world while it was still pulling out of the 90s, and you'll see it in the environment and culture all around - and it's in these details, large and small, that the game shines.

The world's got an edge, and a bizarre one - no one thought the apocalypse would shake out this way, and now your Rangers have the task of dealing with it, from the freaks, to the mutants, to the cultural debris and menagerie of bizarre opponents that treat trinkets of the past like a religion. It's evident all around you in the hulks of Trans Ams, towns of freakshows and drooling mutations, or even in the howls of a crazed cultist screaming for his allies to charge in the name of their god, "the Gipper." From punker gangs to references and homages to Reagan's Star Wars orbiting defense platform, you'll find yourself a world where the Road Warrior, Goonies, TRON, Rocky IV, the Thing, the Fly, Aliens, Scanners, Blade Runner, and Robocop all made their mark. The MTV generation was in full swing, and the Buggles' "Video Killed the Radio Star" was never more true.

Even the nuts and bolts of combat has a unique flavor, whether you're reducing opponents to thin red paste, exploding them like blood sausages, or sending enemies into a spinning dance of death.

**Humor:** Humor is essential to *Wasteland*, and like the original, we'll pace it well, using dark humor, a touch of the odd, intermixed with the serious moments to bring the world to life and create a spectrum few games are capable of.

While the threat to the world is a serious one, there are plenty of light-hearted moments along the way, just like in the original game. From gangs of Midwestern-style housewives packing arsenals of guns, clown gangs, robots with the slow drone of a modem connection establishing as they roll in to attack... all of these things are dangerous, but also intended to remind you of the light-hearted nature of the world you're in.



**Game Mechanics that tell the Story:** The best moments and stories in games come from systems, not through extended exposition or long cut scenes. Sneaking, fighting, and talking your way through a problem are all possible in *Wasteland 2*, and more – sometimes simply presenting a stolen pass or saying the right password can cause enemies to ignore you or lower their guard enough to get by (or give you a chance to slit their throats and silence them). Other times, firing an RPG-7 into a hideout crawling with pistol-packing priests is the best, expedient way to settle a problem – although gassing them, joining them, bribing them, or luring a bloodthirsty nest of Sewer Lizards into their lair can be a lot of fun, too.

The story is in the moment, and you create and observe the consequences of those systems playing out. While we'll still have numerous colorful characters you can interact with, interesting quests, and clever dialogue, it's not done at the cost of telling your friends about how Vicki Stixx unloaded her SMG clips into a horde of rats because she's terrified of them, how you survived a mutant mob by luring them into a narrow trash alley and felling them one by one with a Proton Ax, or how you managed to crawl out of the wasteland after your canteen got stolen then made it back to base with one hit point just in time to kick the shit out of the bastard that stole it from you... or put a bullet in his skull.

**One Goal, Multiple Rangers:** Your party isn't designed to be bunched up like a pair of panties after 5th period competitive wedgie class. You can control up to seven individuals (four rangers and three NPCs), all of which you can command (and in the case of companions, *suggest*) to perform specific actions toward a higher goal. Split them up to cover more ground, perform multiple tasks at the same time, reform them, and then strike while your opponents are trying to figure out what the hell just happened.

You can divide and conquer in combat. If you need someone to move quickly and quietly to pick a lock while your sniper covers the door from a nest across the street as your resident brainiac reprograms the ventilation system to spew out exhaust, then split up your party and act like Desert Rangers do - you're a unit, but a unit that you can split and assign individual tasks to defeat opponents or solve puzzles and quests in the environment.

There'll be times where splitting is to your advantage... and other times where it could put everyone at risk.

**One Goal, Multiple Paths:** An RPG's main strength is allowing you to approach a quest, situation, or even an adversarial character in multiple ways and using your attributes, skills, or items to solve a problem. In *Wasteland 2*, even the range of options for something as simple as a locked door puzzle provides multiple choices for strategy – strength, proton axes, TNT, lockpicking, and crowbars can all be a means to bust down a stubborn door... but each one can lead to different results depending on what's on the other side. Giving options is the goal, not narrowing your choices.

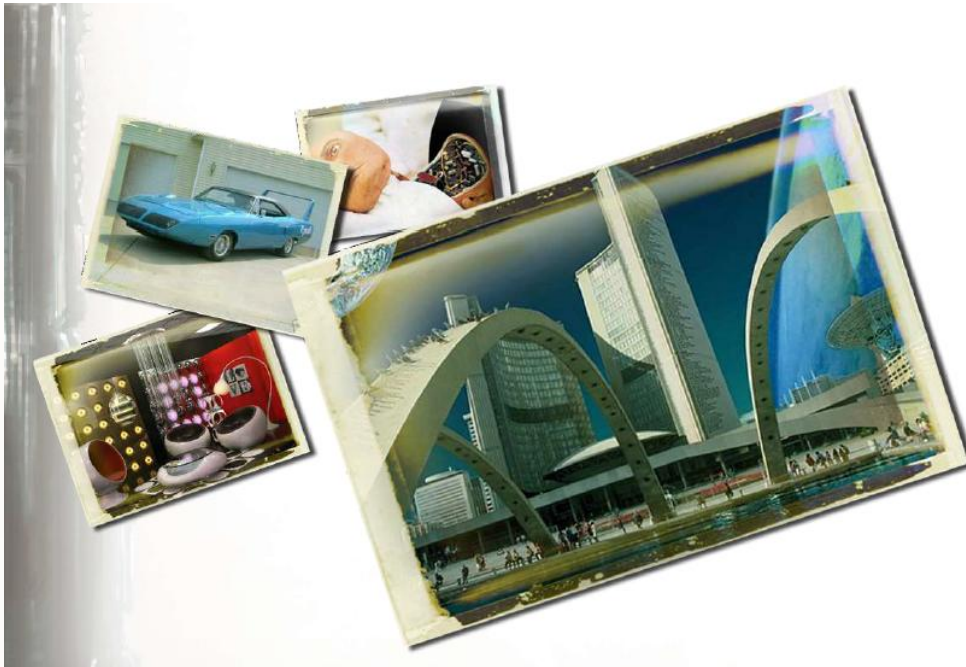
**Community Involvement:** *Wasteland 2* was funded by you and is being built based on your feedback. You have voiced the type of game you want to see and play. The fan interactions on our forums helped craft this vision document and will continue to improve the *Wasteland* design. As well, during our



Kickstarter campaign, we received hundreds of requests to get involved in building this rich world. If you're a talented artist, writer, sound engineer or any other discipline that can improve the game for all who pledged, we want to allow you to leave your mark. We are opening up a thread on our forums where you can post work samples and have a chance to work on, and be credited in, Wasteland 2.

**The Look of the World:** Wasteland also draws strength through its visual style. We don't want continual stretches of barren, desolate, single-color landscapes – we want green, vibrant overgrowth crawling across the terrain and over buildings and skyscrapers, colorful patchwork signs and facades dotting the horizon, river-cut canyons, and other environmental lures intended to draw you forward.

And as you explore the world, you'll see hints of what the world was like before as well. The world before the cataclysm was a society of towering skyscrapers of steel, concrete and glass. Styled after architecture of the 70's and 80's and 90's their striking geometric forms cut into the blue skies.



In parts of the world, the environment is shrouded in a Dust Bowl. Persistent dust storms roll across the desolate wastes, blanketing the world with caustic dust. Unlike the society before, life in the wastes is bleak and hard. In other parts of the wasteland, vegetation-covered cities and rusted hulks of cars, robots, and discarded remnants of the years before create a dangerous landscape where mutants and gangs lie in wait for easy prey.

The once glimmering cities of glass and steel lie in ruin. Cars and other futuristic debris litter the landscape as a reminder of the world that once was. The dichotomy of the harsh wastelands against the remnants of the lost future creates a truly compelling world.



**Game Mechanics and Tactics that allow for *your* approach and *your* play-style:** Combat in *Wasteland 2* is turn-based and tactical, the approach to battles requires strategy, even choices in how to outfit and customize your gun greatly modify your chance of success. Ammo is a resource. It's scarce. Healing is tough. Your fellow Desert Rangers have various strengths and weakness, and your recruits often have personality traits you need to balance and keep an eye on, depending on the encounter.

Flank opponents, switch gear, learn to use fog of war and line of sight to outflank opponents and go for quick kills before an alert can be sounded... or you can approach a combat simply and aggressively, taking a lot more damage and damaging your gear but reaching your objective quicker.

If that's not to your liking, use patience and demolitions to lure your opponents into a prepared kill zone of traps, explosives, and sniper bullets that can cut through opposition like a proton knife through butter. It's your call, your choice, and your risk – and enjoyed through *your* game-play style, not ours.

We give you great control during combat, but it doesn't have to be a slog. While tough fights are just that, you can get through minor threats quickly. Once combat is initiated, turn based progression begins, but if you have the overwhelming advantage you can just let your guys go to work without micro-managing the tactics.

We give you the tools and the rules - then stand back and let you do the rest.