

## The Necessity of Visual System Expression

In Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2, we were presented with 2 distinct PVP modes: normal mode and hardcore mode. Hardcore mode gets rid of the UI elements that are in the normal mode, for example, small maps, ammo amount, and scoring, as well as introduces the idea of one-shot: hitting the player inside the hitbox would cause instant death. Us switching back to normal mode after only one round of hardcore mode makes me think of the necessity of a visual system expression in the game, even though it breaks the magic circle from time to time.

The most important UI element in the normal mode is the small map. On the map, we could see the opponent's location as well as teammates' location. In the hardcore mode where there is no map, we often run into the situation where we are running in a circle chasing each other's tails constantly, never being able to engage in combat for a long time. However, with a small map, we could clearly see where our opponents' locations are and move towards them. Gameplay wise, more encounter is added to the game because of the map as well as more fun, since FPS's core gameplay is combat. Even though the addition of the map dims the effect of the immersive experience, it added a lot to the game strategy wise and flow wise. Also, if UI is well fitted in the game, like COD where the small map is a high-tech device that could detect enemy movement and could be distracted by EMPs, it will not create an anti-immersive experience at all.

The second most important UI element is the ammo amount and magazine size. Hardcore mode gets rid of it mainly because of the one-shot mechanism. However, if not for the one-shot mechanics, the game just wants to create an immersive experience and excludes the ammo UI, disaster will happen to the players strategy wise. First of all, players are not getting an intuitive way of learning how the gun works. Magazine size is the only information player could get with the gun. Without reading the introduction of the gun and having any previous knowledge of firearms, which most of the player never do, looking at max magazine size is how we learn about the gun. If the magazine size is huge like 300, we will know the gun is intended to be used by keep firing. If the magazine size is small, we will know the gun is most likely a sniper rifle. Getting rid of that information will keep players without previous knowledge of the game at disadvantage since they are not familiar with the gun. So, ammo amount and magazine size UI component are vital to the game.

Last but not least, the scoring UI is also vital in the game. The scoring system creates an experience of desperation if you are losing, and smugness if you are winning. The strategy of the game will also change based on it. Without the scoring, we had no idea of the current state of the game we are at. Thus, the game became a very leisure play experience for me since we have and will always have no idea of who is winning. Removing the scoring did not bring the immersion that the game intended.

In all, the UI component is a vital component of Call of Duty. Without it, the game will break in so many ways like the hardcore mode.