XCOM 2 Analysis

Product Details

Attributes

* The game was released on PC, and later PlayStation 4 and Xbox One
* It is a tactical, turn-based strategy game
* It had 500,000 sales on Steam in the first week, and peaks at 8,000 people every month

Overview

*“Earth has changed. Twenty years have passed since world leaders offered an unconditional surrender to alien forces. XCOM, the planet’s last line of defense, was left decimated and scattered. Now, in XCOM 2, the aliens rule Earth, building shining cities that promise a brilliant future for humanity on the surface, while concealing a sinister agenda and eliminating all who dissent from their new order.” - Steam description*

XCOM 2 is a turn-based strategy game where you have control of a mobile operations base and can send teams out on missions. The base can travel around the world, and you have full control over what you build inside it. You also have full customisation of the soldiers and can specialise them into five different classes, which allows you to bring varied combinations for different mission situations. With the goal of taking back control of the planet, the player must make tough decisions, juggle a variety of scarce resources, and fight the clock to succeed.

Target Market

The target audience for XCOM 2 are people who enjoy:

* Challenging strategy games
* Consequences for in-game choices
* Long game experiences
* Sci-fi and dystopian adventures

It is also aimed at:

* More mature/developed gamers, as it’s a punishing game and is expensive (main game - $90 dlc - $55)
* Players of the first game

Unique Selling Point

The first XCOM game was about a secret government agency defending Earth from the alien invaders. The special thing about XCOM 2 is that the aliens have already defeated Earth and you control a more militia-like force, performing operations to create a rebellion and tear down the new alien-controlled society.

The game factors that make it unique:

* Really tight and defined game rules
* Deterministic and chance-based gameplay that blends reliable systems and risk vs reward scenarios

Gameplay Details

Game Objectives

* Manage limited resources
* Defeat the alien overlords
* Win before time runs out (Avatar Project)

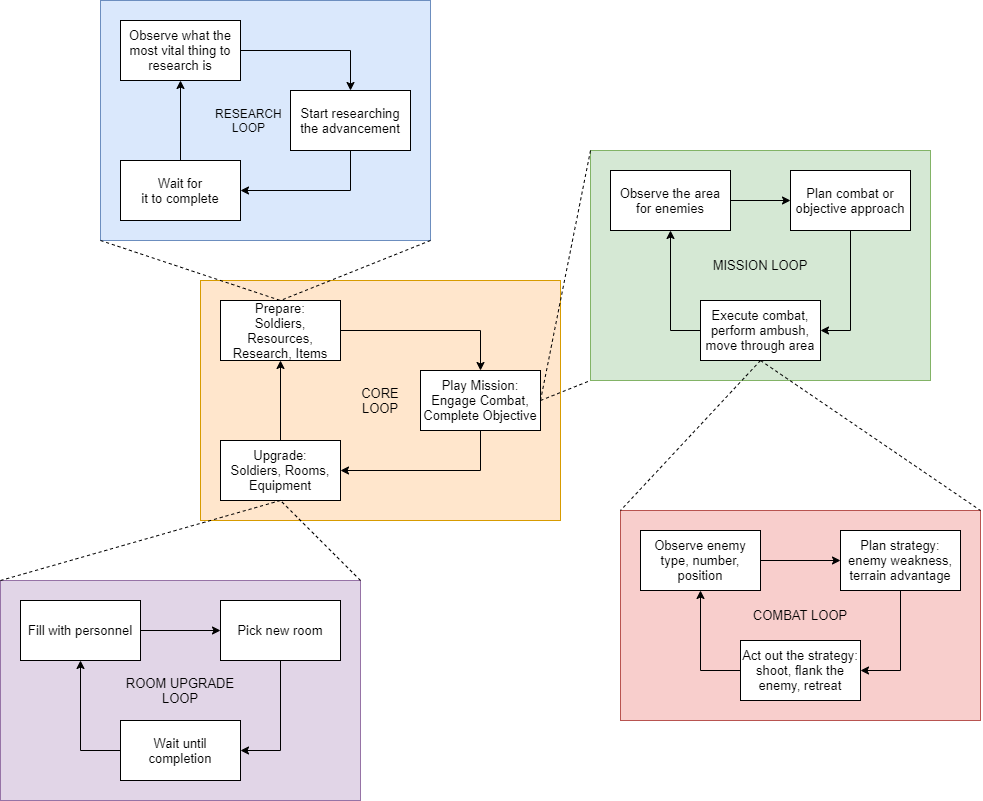
Core Experiences

* Tension
  + Actions have consequences
  + Strong characters can permanently die
* Strategy
  + Must think about many aspects at once:
    - Base layout/upgrades
    - Soldier maintenance
    - Player goals
    - Enemy time limits
    - Research
  + The combat is deep and requires thinking many steps ahead

Key Mechanics

* **Avenger (Mobile Operations Base)**
  + Can travel to a few regions on the continents, and mission locations
  + Has static rooms that cannot be altered (research, armory, command centre, etc.)
  + Has many room slots that you can clear to place new rooms with different effects
  + Can be attacked by an AI UFO
* **Upgrades**
  + There are tiers of armour that give higher defence
  + Tiers of weapons that do more damage and have more equipment slots
  + Each character gains levels and you get to choose different abilities
* **Missions**
  + You control 1-6 characters
  + Grid based movement system
  + There is a zone around you dictating how far you can move
  + You can move once and perform an action, or dash by moving twice with no action
  + All the player’s characters move, then the alien AI
  + There is a fog of war that uncovers according to characters line of sight
* **Combat**
  + If a character is next to or behind an object, they get a cover defence bonus
  + Characters can only shoot enemies in line of sight
  + There is a base chance to successfully hit a shot which is affected by cover, distance, status effects, high ground
  + There are grenades that have an area of effect
  + Characters receive critical damage if flanked
* **Avatar Project**
  + A project that the aliens are completing as you play the game
  + Has 12 progress squares and when it reaches 12 you lose
  + Gains squares over time
  + Completing some missions halt progress or remove squares

Gameplay Loops



Critical Analysis

XCOM 2’s extremely in depth systems and mechanics create a very satisfying gameplay experience, because victories feel deserved and in defeat the player knows they could have avoided it with a better strategy.

The game allows for many different playstyles, as with the saving system one could essentially turn back time to before all of their soldiers died. In XCOM you can save at any time, which enables the bad and average players to change their strategies on the fly and still have fun, whilst letting the good ones accept their actions and deal with the consequences.

One downfall of the game is the presence of several bugs such as the bug that prevents players from setting up an ambush, since the enemy AI stops moving once in the players’ line of sight. Something like this ruins the core experience, because the game is based upon a strict set of rules that the player relies on to form their strategies.

SCP: Secret Laboratory Analysis

Product Details

Attributes

* The game is on Steam
* Had a peak of 6,500 players with a normal of 4,500
* Genre: First Person, Horror, Multiplayer

Overview

*“Deep within the SCP Foundation during a containment breach, many of the anomalies have bypassed security and escaped from their chambers - without peaceful intentions. Become site personnel, a re-containment agent, or an anomalous entity and fight to take control of or escape the facility!” - Steam Description*

SCP: SL is a first person, multiplayer horror game, in which you play as one of six factions in an underground testing site. The factions include scientist, D-Class personnel, security personnel, chaos insurgency, nine-tailed fox unit, and SCP, with each having different objectives.

Game servers can have 20 to 40 players, with everyone spawning in their respective areas: D-Class in the open prison cells on the lowest level, scientists randomly on the lowest level, SCPs in their open containment cells on the upper level, and security on the upper level. After a certain amount of time, and after enough people have died, players will respawn in a group of nine tailed fox and/or chaos insurgency on the surface. The game continues until one of the teams’ objectives is completed, after which the game restarts.

Target Market

SCP: SL is targeted towards people who:

* Like horror games and multiplayer experiences
* Don’t like spending money or are looking for a quick game, as it is free-to-play
* Have a mic and like talking to other players, as there is no keyboard chat feature
* Like SCP lore and are invested in the history

Unique Selling Point

The community and person to person interaction in this game is the selling point. Unlike most games the player has full freedom in their actions, and even though each faction has an objective, sometimes people befriend the enemy. The community doesn’t take the game too seriously which leads to funny scenarios in an otherwise scary game.

Gameplay Details

Game Objectives

The factions have varying objectives with different ways to achieve them.

* Scientists
  + Escape the facility
* D-Class Personnel
  + Escape the facility
  + Avoid most roles
* Security Personnel
  + Kill D-Class, chaos insurgency, & SCPs
  + Escort scientists out of facility
* Nine-Tailed Fox Unit
  + Kill D-Class, chaos insurgency, & SCPs
  + Escort scientists out of facility
* Chaos Insurgency
  + Kill scientists & nine-tailed fox
  + Escort D-Class out of facility
* SCP
  + No real allegiance but must kill nine-tailed fox and scientists

Core Experiences

* Horror - The SCPs are deadly, and can dispatch someone extremely quickly
* Teamwork - The best way to achieve the objectives is to move as a team as you are a more formidable force

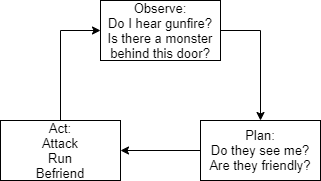
Key Mechanics

* Map
  + **Above ground**
    - Nine tailed fox and chaos insurgency spawn in separate areas
    - Nuke activation room
  + **Lower level**
    - After 10 minutes it is decontaminated and anybody inside will die
    - Forces people into the upper level
  + **SCP 914 (the machine)**
    - Has 2 rooms - entrance and exit
    - Has a button and a movable knob that says “rough, coarse, 1:1, fine, very fine”
    - When a player enters the machine with specific items, it is altered based on the selected setting (e.g. can upgrade keycards)
  + **Keycards**
    - Used to unlock special doors
    - Different levels of card that unlock higher priority rooms
  + **Nuke**
    - Requires the warhead to be armed before activation
    - After activated will start a 90 second timer
    - Once detonated, kills everything still in the facility
* Player controlled SCPs
  + **173 (peanut)**
    - Can only move when players are not looking or blinking
    - When players are looking the blinking mechanic activates and vision is obscured at regular intervals
    - When next to player it can instantly snap a human’s neck
  + **106 (larry)**
    - Slow but can move through doors
    - When next to player can transport them to pocket dimension
    - Pocket dimension is a small room with 8 exits, one of which won’t kill you
  + **96 (shy guy)**
    - Starts screaming for 5 seconds if a human looks at him, putting him in rage mode
    - In rage mode he moves twice as fast as players, instantly kills them, and can break down doors
    - 10 second cooldown for rage mode
  + **49 (plague doctor)**
    - Can instantly kill players when close
    - Can revive recently deceased into a minion that does small damage
    - The revived player respawns and is now on the SCP team
  + **939 (the dogs)**
    - Can bite, killing players in 2 hits
    - Sees environment but not players
    - When players move they are visible, and distance visible is based on speed
    - Can speak in order to trick humans
  + **914 (the computer)**
    - Has no body
    - Can only see through cctv cameras around the facility
    - Can lock doors temporarily, trapping players
    - Can activate a specific electricity trap to kill players passing through
    - Can speak to players in specific rooms with a speaker
* Escaping
  + When the D-Class escapes, they become a chaos insurgency
  + When the scientist escapes, they turn into a nine-tailed fox commander

## Gameplay Loops

A screenshot of a cell phone

Description automatically generated



CORE LOOP

Critical Analysis

The game is slightly unbalanced in favour of the nine-tailed fox/scientist team, because they seem to spawn in more often than chaos insurgency. This causes the SCPs to fight waves of constantly respawning foes who outnumber them heavily.