

Dark Age of Camelot Beta 4 Preview Author: Greg Harmon

Beta 4 is near a close and DAoC has gone gold
Dark Age of Camelot has been coined as a 2nd generation online RPG and rightfully so. game cheats However when you look at the other 2nd generation online RPG that has already been released, Anarchy Online, it doesn't seem too appealing due to all the bugs and problems AO has had and still has. game cheats Then there is World War II Online which from what I hear, has been a total failure really. game cheats If Mythic Entertainment wants DAoC to be a success, it has to be released with very few bugs, solid gameplay from the start and an environment that immerses you in the game world. game cheats In my original preview I laid out all the details on the various classes, races, realms and so on. game cheats In this update I will cover things that are more up to date and provide a better look on how things will be at release. game cheats I encourage you to read my original preview or reading the official FAQ before reading this as it provides a better foundation for anyone who hasn't read anything else at all about DAoC. game cheats

A Solid Foundation

Mythic didn't have to do everything from scratch with DAoC since they have done Online RPGs before with their title Darkness Falls: the Crusade which is a realm-based, online PVP text MUD. game cheats At first it seems that they couldn't have gotten anything from an old out dated text RPG, however that's not the case. game cheats Darkness Falls has influenced the gameplay and overall experience in DAoC according to Mythic producer Matt Firor who says that they took many concepts from the game and incorporated them into DAoC. game cheats In addition to this, Mythic didn't have to write a 3D engine or server technology from scratch either, they used a modified Net Immerse engine in which they originally wrote for Spellbinder, which was a huge help on meeting the release date and improving stability since they're using proven technology. game cheats They also used some of the server code they already had written for Spellbinder, which definitely didn't hurt either. game cheats

The Immersion factor

The environment in Dark Age of Camelot is amazing. game cheats All three realms have detailed landscapes with various structures here and there that help make the game world a place in which you can truly feel as if you're in a fantasy world. game cheats The land isn't barren and boring with nothing to see as you explore like some other online RPGs. game cheats The graphics in DAoC are beautiful with highly detailed character models and landscape graphics that are very convincing as well. game cheats The animation for character movement is great, however not what you would see in most cutting edge FPS games like Max Payne of course, although it is better than any other online RPG I have seen to date. game cheats Spell animations will blow you away, as they did me because of their beauty. game cheats The spell effects are certainly way ahead of any other game in this genre. game cheats Sound effects and music shouldn't be underestimated as a non important factor for online RPGs as well since sound certainly helps to immerse you and spice things up. game cheats DAoC has good sound effects and great music that really helps capture you within the game world. game cheats For example, if you go into an outpost you will start hearing music play that is appropriate for whatever realm you are playing. game cheats Music will also start to play when you engage in battle to heat things up. game cheats Mythic certainly did a great job with the audio portion, for sure. game cheats

Performance and Reliability

Seems that a lot of game producers are rushing their out the door with many bugs and sometimes even game breaking flaws. game cheats Anarchy Online and World War II Online were certainly victims of this problem. game cheats As I mentioned earlier, Dark Age of Camelot has used Mythic past technologies somewhat and that has helped this game not only look great, but perform great as well. game cheats I have been playing the BETA for weeks now and I haven't crashed once! Compare that with crashing many times per day when playing the other 2nd generation online RPG and it makes my jaw hit the floor. game cheats I'm simply not used to games that don't crash, which is a true shame. game cheats

This reliability doesn't make the game run choppy either. game cheats I was within the presence of about fifteen or twenty other players a few days ago and I didn't lag at all with a 1 GHz processor, 256mb RAM and a GeForce2 Pro based video card. game cheats This game certainly won't run silky smooth on a 400 MHz processor with 64mb ram and an original TNT 1 video card; however that is expected I believe. game cheats Mythic is certainly on the right track so far, let's hope they stay on that track although I have no reason to believe they won't. game cheats From what I can tell thus far, they are top notch developers that know what they're doing. game cheats It's about time. game cheats

Combat, not so boring after all

When people think of combat in an online RPG they usually think about hitting an auto attack button and nothing more to win or lose a fight. game cheats Dark Age of Camelot isn't quite that simple however. game cheats In DAOC you have certain styles of combat depending on what type of weapon you choose to master. game cheats These styles give you special attacks such as Splitter, a special attack for axe. game cheats You use these special attacks to do combos during combat which makes for more enjoyable fights. game cheats These special attacks use your stamina fairly fast however so you can't do just special attacks during a fight with a NPC that is your level. game cheats If you are getting beaten in a fight, then it's time to run with the sprint ability, an ability that enables you to run faster for a limited amount of time, depending on how much endurance you have. game cheats Once you run out of endurance then you will stop sprinting and special attacks will not function any longer. game cheats Combat with magic isn't boring either. game cheats You have many options such as rooting the enemy, which will disable him from moving for a short while or just blasting the enemy and then switch to your melee attack once he is close. game cheats You can't keep blasting an enemy with magic once he's upon you or he'll interrupt your spells, which makes sense. game cheats In DAOC you can choose to hunt solo but hunting with a group at higher levels is more efficient and to me, more enjoyable. game cheats When forming a group, you will want a few types of players, such as healers, tank and buffers, players who use spells to enhance the other member's stats and capabilities. game cheats When working with a good group you are treated with a great gameplay experience in which you will enjoy to the utmost extent. game cheats Mythic has recently added NPCs that take more than one group of eight players to take down! These types of NPCs are only found within the most extreme regions created for higher level players. game cheats The days of tapping your auto attack key and then going to a kitchen for a cup of coffee are over for anyone who chooses to play DAOC. game cheats

Performing Tasks and Quests

Lots of times you find yourself wanting to do something besides killing things and that is fine because DAOC offers other types of diversions such as Task and Quest. game cheats Task are simple chores you can do to gain experience, various items and of course, money. game cheats You can get task form various NPCs and task range from delivering a certain item to an NPC in another town or helping a guard defeat some foes. game cheats Tasks are great for quick profitable adventurers. game cheats Quests are unlike task in that they are long and extensive in some cases. game cheats They usually require several steps and much travel; however the end result is usually worth the effort due to the items, wealth and realm points you will earn. game cheats The dynamic Quest Engine Mythic has implemented should alleviate the old problem of too many people doing the same quest, therefore interfering with each other and causing trouble. game cheats Instead every person who does a quest will be at a step of the quest at a different time than someone else. game cheats

Realm VS Realm conflicts

The main feature of Dark Age of Camelot for some is the RvR combat which will be exciting and worthwhile. game cheats It will be worth your time because you will receive bonuses to your skills and certain privileges, such as certain communication features, titles, stature and a better shot of acquiring a house when Mythic puts housing in, if you stand out in RvR conflicts. game cheats For the most part, RvR fighting will take place within the frontier regions of all three realms so level one elves aren't crushed by level fifty trolls as soon as they create their character. game cheats That type of thing simply won't happen in DAOC. game cheats Mythic has taken measures to ensure you a good playing

experience even if you don't participate at all in RvR play. game cheats You can't attack players from the same realm as you, only players from enemy realms so that grief players can't hinder the gameplay experiences of other players. game cheats You will not be able to loot the items off other players when you kill them, instead you will get realm points which I discussed earlier. game cheats With that in mind, players should be more open to RvR play and not be turned off by losing all of their hard earned equipment and so forth. game cheats Mythic feels that combat with other players should be about the strategy and skill involved and not the loot you would get. game cheats

That's it, Folks!

I was going to write details on the trade skills system but the trade skills aren't fully implemented as of when I write this so I don't want to guess on certain aspects, in fear of that may misinform you, the reader. game cheats

Dark Age of Camelot appears to have all the pieces of an outstanding Online RPG and I for one, will surely buy the game as soon as it's on store shelves. game cheats The rock solid gameplay, reliability, great performance coupled with outstanding graphics and an immersive game world makes DAoC a winner in my mind. game cheats Mythic Entertainment has great community support and interaction, a key to successfully running an Online RPG as well as proving to me they know their stuff and do it well. game cheats My hat is off to Mythic for doing a job well done. game cheats Let's hope the launch goes smoothly for them. game cheats