

Game Development: Starting by Healing the Players

Chapter 1: Parallel World

"I'm never drinking again. My head is killing me."

Rubbing his aching temples, Chen Xu grumbled as he sat up in bed.

He rubbed the sticky sleep from his eyes. The moment he opened them, he froze.

The room around him was completely unfamiliar.

"Wait... where is this?"

Before Chen Xu could make sense of what was happening, countless memories flooded into his mind.

It took him nearly an hour to sort through them.

The conclusion was obvious: not only had he transmigrated, but he had also arrived in a parallel world.

According to the memories he had inherited, something had diverged from his previous world at some point in history. As a result, this world was vastly different from the one he had known.

Advances in technology have transformed nearly every industry.

Exactly how different they were was difficult for Chen Xu to judge, but one industry stood out immediately—gaming and entertainment.

Following the war, the world had entered an era of lasting peace. Rapid technological progress meant that problems like widespread hunger and unaffordable healthcare, which had plagued his previous world, were virtually nonexistent.

The economy had rebounded with astonishing speed. Since people no longer had to struggle for survival and had disposable income to spend, the entertainment industry flourished.

The gaming industry, in particular, became one of its central pillars.

In Chen Xu's previous life, video games had long been treated as a convenient scapegoat. At home, they were often portrayed as a harmful influence. Abroad, things weren't much different.

Why did shootings happen so often?

Because games promoted violence, of course!

Instead of restricting firearms, some people would rather remove the supposed "root cause"—video games.

This parallel world, however, viewed games very differently.

Outstanding games were recognized as genuine works of art, and the greatest game designers enjoyed social status comparable to that of literary masters.

At the same time, there was another striking difference.

Game companies like Ubisoft and EA simply didn't exist here, replaced instead by studios Chen Xu had never even heard of.

As for the legendary developers of his previous life—not a single one of them existed in this world.

Hidetaka Miyazaki, who left Oracle to join FromSoftware and created the Souls series.

Masahiro Sakurai, who redefined hardcore platformers and built Nintendo's legendary fighting game franchise.

Sid Meier, the man who defined the 4X strategy genre.

Hironobu Sakaguchi, the father of the Final Fantasy series and one of the pioneers of Japanese RPGs.

The Houser brothers, who pushed the concept of the 3D open world to new heights.

Hideo Kojima, the creator who pioneered stealth games and cinematic storytelling.

Shigeru Miyamoto, one of the most revered figures in video game history.

Every one of these iconic names had vanished from existence.

As for Chen Xu himself...

He was now an ordinary young man who had graduated less than six months ago and dreamed of becoming a manga artist.

"This world... it's truly a paradise for creators."

After reviewing his inherited memories and browsing information on his computer, Chen Xu couldn't help but sigh in admiration.

Strict laws and robust copyright protection for creative works—such things had been almost unimaginable in his previous life.

"Illustrations?"

While familiarizing himself with this world's basics, Chen Xu noticed several sheets of artwork lying on his desk.

They were all illustrations he had drawn before.

After graduating, the original owner of this body had devoted himself to becoming a manga artist.

Unfortunately, despite submitting his work many times, he had never managed to pass an editor's review.

He had also serialized comics online, but they had never gained much popularity.

To make ends meet, he relied not only on the modest income from his web comics but also on freelance work—drawing character illustrations for novelists and concept art for game companies.

Without much of a reputation, and while reasonably skilled, he wasn't considered a top-tier artist.

Depending on the client's requirements, a single illustration typically earned him around 1,200 yuan. And if he happened to encounter a particularly demanding client, endless revisions would quickly eat away at his profits.

"Manga? I don't know the first thing about drawing manga."

Searching through the inherited memories, Chen Xu pursed his lips.

Although the original owner's artistic techniques had become his own, that alone wasn't enough.

After all, the original owner had still ended up surviving on freelance illustration work.

As for the famous manga from Chen Xu's previous life, he'd certainly heard of plenty—One-Punch Man, One Piece, Bleach, Naruto, Detective Conan, and countless others.

But actually reading them?

Not a chance.

He had only watched the anime adaptations.

How was he supposed to recreate the original manga panels?

"Looking at it this way... I guess I'm going back to my old profession—game development. And this world's game development pipeline is surprisingly efficient."

After digging deeper into the industry's background, Chen Xu couldn't help but marvel.

Unlike his previous world, where every major game studio typically developed its own proprietary engine, domestic developers in this world had access to an official game engine provided by the government, while overseas companies still largely built their own.

It was common knowledge that game development involved many different disciplines—game balance, art, story, level design, and programming.

Among them, however, the most important and fundamental element was the code.

Code directly determined how well a game performed. It was the game's skeleton.

No matter how excellent the gameplay or visuals were, poor programming and optimization were enough to doom a game to failure.

But in this world, thanks to the rapid advancement of information technology, artificial intelligence had already taken shape and was widely adopted across countless industries. The gaming industry, in particular, had undergone one of the biggest transformations.

Instead of writing code manually, game mechanics and system logic were implemented through the government's official game engine using AI-assisted development.

As a result, the old joke from Chen Xu's previous life—"sacrifice a programmer to fix the bugs"—had become obsolete.

If anyone was getting sacrificed these days, it was usually the game designer.

Of course, convenient as it was, AI-assisted development wasn't something designers could use without limits.

Generating code through AI required enormous computing power.

As such, every certified game designer received a fixed amount of computing resources each month, with the allocation depending on their professional rank.

Alternatively, designers could build their own dedicated servers to handle the computations independently. All they had to do was pay the required licensing fees.

That said, the cost of setting up and maintaining private servers was anything but cheap.

There were three official ways to become a certified game designer.

The first was to take the annual summer examination administered by the Ministry of Games. Passing the exam granted the applicant official game designer certification.

The second was to join a game company, work there for two or three years, and then apply for certification through the company's internal recommendation process, which would then be submitted to the Ministry of Games for approval.

The final route was intended for ordinary gaming enthusiasts without a professional background: develop an independently produced game that earned recognition in the marketplace.

To qualify, the game only needed to meet one of the following criteria:

- 1, Sell at least 150,000 copies.

2, Accumulate at least 5,000 player reviews while maintaining an average rating of 8.5 or higher.

Meeting either requirement was sufficient.

As for artificially inflating sales figures or buying positive reviews, such practices were virtually nonexistent.

They were illegal, and anyone caught doing so faced severe penalties.

"The whole system is surprisingly well regulated. At least getting certified as a game designer shouldn't be too difficult for me."

After reading through the available information, Chen Xu stroked his chin thoughtfully.

After all, he wasn't alone.

Behind him stood the collective experience of countless brilliant game developers from his previous world.

He had no intention of attempting a AAA title—not yet. He lacked the skills, manpower, and financial resources.

But small indie games?

Those were another matter entirely.

He knew countless outstanding indie games from his previous life like the back of his hand.

Now that he understood how this world's game industry worked, recreating them was well within his capabilities.

"Wait... what's this?"

As Chen Xu pondered his next move, something suddenly caught his attention.

On the back of his hand was a translucent blue spherical mark that looked almost like a birthmark.

Curious, he rubbed it with his thumb.

The next instant, a transparent holographic UI window popped up before his eyes.

"A system?"

The word instantly flashed through Chen Xu's mind.

Then again, he'd already transmigrated into another world.

Getting a cheat system on top of that didn't seem particularly unreasonable.

What did catch his attention, however, was the system's name.

Emotion Collection System

Staring at the flashy golden interface—which looked suspiciously like the gaudy UI of the low-budget Chinese browser games from his previous life—Chen Xu fell silent.

It's so over-the-top...

This doesn't exactly look like a trustworthy system.