



WAR FRONT: TURNING POINT

War Front has encountered a problem and needs to close

PUBLISHER: CDV Software/10tacle Studios DEVELOPER: Digital Reality GENRE: Real-Time Strategy AVAILABILITY: Retail Box ESRB RATING: Teen
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: 2GHz CPU, 512MB RAM, 128MB videocard MULTIPLAYER: 2-10 players VERSION REVIEWED: Near-Final Reviewable

REVIEW

Some developers make it hard to enjoy their games by peddling crappy controls, bad voice acting, a stupid plot, or just plain boring gameplay. *War Front: Turning Point* suffers from none of those problems. The campaign in this bizarre history RTS lets you play as the Allies and the Germans in over 20 action-packed scenarios showcasing World War II-era weaponry and some nifty "future weapons" that make a lot of noise...and look awfully cool when making things go "boom." You even get a wacky story and some memorable characters!

Then you're left staring at the Windows desktop when the mission ends, wondering what the heck just broke.

I finished the first German mission at least 16 times while trying to figure out why I couldn't go on. Ol' Roland Hellmann, the babe-loving German officer, whacked Tommies with fervor each and every time—oblivious to his story constantly getting cut short. If my Internet connection hadn't gone south while playing, I probably never would have figured out the problem, either. It turns out that *War Front* wants to do...something...online

between missions, and because it can't do whatever that is, the game just crashes. I disabled my network card (effectively sending my PC back to the period the game takes place in), and suddenly the campaign blitzkrieged on without a hitch. Germans, Americans, British, and Russians (well, maybe not the Russians) thanked me, because now I could finally save the world.

RED ALERT

The best parts of the game compare favorably with *Command & Conquer*. You crank out units en masse, throw 'em at the other guy, and replace the dead as quickly as they disintegrate, thanks to infinite production queues. Scenario triggers dot the battlefield, offering you secondary and bonus objectives while changing the main mission goal multiple times during a battle. Cinematic scenes are cheesy and exciting, and perfectly convey the game's belligerent Hollywood action-movie appeal. The musical score further perpetuates this, backing up the cacophony of battle carnage while all the characters engage in inspired summer-blockbuster-movie banter.

On the downside, it's easy to miss your orders and objectives during all the chaos, so pausing to review goals and issue commands—something

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that's easy to do—is a necessity at first. Units get built, destroyed, and replaced so fast that it's all you can do to keep a varied force out there. If you back up troops with your heroes—who all gain special abilities—and try to keep a few units alive to gain experience, eventually you can grind your way to any victory.

That same build-and-grind method works just as well in skirmish games (and we wish we could have tested multiplayer, but the aforementioned crash bugs plague this mode, too). The skirmish A.I. doesn't put up a fight for long, and units don't react well unless you're in control, but you can at least use this mode to get a handle on what endgame units are capable of. These skirmish maps have some nice designs, too—in visual and gameplay terms—so, hopefully, multiplayer gets fixed in a patch...along with the debilitating crash bugs, all of which unfortunately blow a major cloud of disappointment over *War Front's* action-strategy appeal. ●David J. Long



● "Gotta be an Irish pub on the next corner. Onward, men!"

VERDICT

➤ Lots of action with explosions galore; solid, film-style production.

➤ Bugs cause crashes unless you disable your Internet connection altogether.

5/10

AVERAGE

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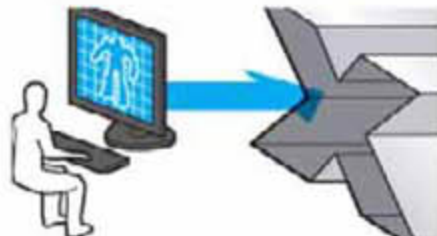
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