

Bold new video game 'Destiny' manifests on Tuesday

September 7 2014, by Glenn Chapman

The video game studio that won players' devotion with blockbuster hit "Halo" is out to eclipse its enviable success with the Tuesday launch of massive new science-fiction action title "Destiny."

"We're really proud of the world we created with 'Halo,' and the millions of gamers we attracted, but with 'Destiny' we wanted the worlds to be bigger and feel more alive," Bungie studio chief operating officer Pete Parsons told AFP.

"To do that, we added in the most exciting and unpredictable ingredient we could think of: [players](#). Destiny's worlds are connected and alive."

The [game](#) puts players in the role of guardians of the last city on Earth, with enemies to battle; special powers to wield, and planets to explore.

Console processing power and Internet capabilities have been taken advantage of to create "an unprecedented combination" of play options from spontaneous co-operative online skirmishes to immersive solo action.

"Destiny" launches on Tuesday for play on PlayStation 4 and Xbox One consoles as well as their predecessors the Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3.

The game's creator's tout it as "the next evolution in interactive entertainment and an epic adventure."

Big money bet

While talking about the money pumped into developing and promoting "Destiny," publisher Activision Blizzard has referred to it as a \$500 million bet that it will be a winning new franchise.

Armies of players joined the virtual fray during a test run of "Destiny" online capabilities in recent months.

"Proving out our technology was a huge win for us," Parsons said of the beta period.

"We also learned that a lot of people were compelled to spend a lot of time in our worlds."

The number of players topped 4.6 million, making it the largest test run ever for a new video game franchise, according to Activision Publishing.

At one point during the test run, more than 850,000 people were playing simultaneously.

"Destiny is a great action game," Parsons said.

"It's a lot of fun. Even better, you can play every single activity with your friends."

Players inspired to invest lots of time in the game can form clans, customize characters, or tackle challenges.

A compelling aspect of "Destiny" is that players can move easily about a seemingly boundless virtual universe, slipping into or out of battles raging between online players.

After years spent creating the game, the prospect of players finally getting their hands on copies is "amazing, relieving, nerve racking and exciting," Parsons said.

Place worthy of heroes

The game is priced at \$60, but special edition versions with added perks and higher prices are being offered.

"The world is a stage - a place worthy of heroes," Parsons said.

"We love telling big, epic stories with legends and villains, but we also do everything we can to make players the star of the show."

Microsoft bought US-based Bungie in 2000 and the studio came out with "Halo" games that scored as a blockbuster franchise exclusively playable on Xbox.

Some in the industry credit "Halo" with being the franchise on which the success of the Xbox was built.

Bungie split from Microsoft about seven years ago and went on to align itself with Activision Blizzard, the publisher behind "Call of Duty" and other hit franchises.

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