

Excerpts from UBI's Forum ([Reference](#))

[CyanBill](#)

posted Wed February 04 2004 02:58 PM Wed February 04 2004 02:58 PM

Just to clarify: Uru continues to sell very well, garner accolades and wonderful reviews. It's currently Ubisoft's best-selling PC Game.

Administrator

The decision to switch from online broadband-only content delivery to expansion packs really IS about the small proportion of people who signed up to try Uru Live. The overwhelming majority of people apparently bought the game solely for the singleplayer experience. It's possible a proportion of people have been waiting for one reason or another to sign up for live, but there's no way to know what those numbers are.

There were certainly other challenges. But we were on track and on schedule to overcome them until a few weeks ago when the decisions were made and we started to transition to the expansion pack production. Sincere apologies for the lack of attention we've been able to give to Live over the last few weeks. It's really been a skeleton crew manning the ship. The positive side of that is that the first expansion pack in the form of a free download will be available next month.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

[CyanBill](#)

posted Wed February 04 2004 03:13 PM Wed February 04 2004 03:13 PM

The folks who decide where money goes believed that the number of people who would pay to play would be less than the number of people who signed up to try it free.

Administrator

Where you read subscribers, please read the intended "potential subscribers."

We did NOT get Uru Live to a state ready for a public opening before the decision was made to cancel it, but if numbers had been tracking higher for people even wanting to try it, there would have been more resources to dedicate to getting it ready faster...and so it goes, and so it goes.

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Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

[CyanBill](#)

posted Wed February 04 2004 03:29 PM Wed February 04 2004 03:29 PM

My sincere apologies Kadishan. We honestly moved as quickly as we could. We were also delayed by over a week in delivering information because of Ubisoft's corporate quiet period (a period of time between fiscal quarters when publicly traded companies are, I believe, prohibited by the SEC from making major announcements).

Administrator

Bill Slease
Content Director

CyanBill

posted Wed February 04 2004 03:41 PM Wed February 04 2004 03:41 PM

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by nmzero:

You knew about this weeks ago, and kept us going, kept pushing us to chase after markers, little promises of things to come. I would have hoped you had a little bit more respect for those of us who signed up for Live.

I hear you nmzero, but let me try to explain this all again...it's not like two companies in three countries woke up one morning and knew everything you know today and decided not to tell anyone. It's taken this long to work out the details, come to agreements, analyze contracts, chart business models, etc. As time went on, people worked double-duty on live and new, then transitioned off live to new. I ask again, how long, in your mind should a process like that take?

I'm sorry that you felt misled. It was not intentional by any means. What motive would we have of doing that? It costs us to keep the servers running...we're giving away things for free that some of us have worked on for years.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by rdfeather:

OK, I guess I'm still confused. Why did they expect people to pay, or sign up for, something that isn't available yet? I. Just. Don't. Get. It.

SCENE: Man on a busy city street with an empty bucket in his hand. It is pouring rain.

Man: Umbrellas for sale! Umbrellas for sale!

Lady: What a great idea! I'd like an umbrella, but where are they?

Man: Well, you have to pay me for the umbrella first, and if I get enough people to give me money for umbrellas, then I'll go and get some umbrellas.

Lady (aside): I think I'll wait until he gets the umbrellas. THEN I'll buy an umbrella.

Same conversation repeated many times with different customers over the course of several weeks/months. Then...

Man: I guess I'll have to shut down my umbrella business. Not enough customers.

Still just trying to explain - 'pay' is not equivalent to 'sign up for' - the number of people who pay is assumed to be less than the number of people who would sign up for free.

In your scenario it's more like the man handing out umbrellas with no handles for free and when not enough people would take the free handleless umbrellas he figured there wouldn't be enough people to buy umbrellas with handles to support his business. It could be (and is being most passionately) argued that the two figures don't really relate: people who take free handleless umbrellas vs. people who will pay for full working models.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Wed February 04 2004 05:15 PM Wed February 04 2004 05:15 PM

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by AngryManWithDog:

Please CYAN think this thing through and don't just give up the empty online portion as the first expansion. That plan blows.

AMWD

"If Jesus had been killed twenty years ago, Catholic school children would be wearing little electric chairs around their necks instead of crosses. " - Lenny Bruce

"Like Father, Like Son, One Term For Bush and Then He's Done" - Vote for John Kerry

The first expansion is not empty in any sense of the word.

From the point of view of the people who bought Uru but didn't play beta or prologue (the overwhelming majority), here's my rough count:

- 8 new Ages or significant areas
- 10 new puzzles
- 5 new Relto customizations (including 2 new technical features)
- 17 new pieces of clothing
- 43 new journals or monologues

For people who played beta or prologue:

- 4 new (small) Ages or significant areas you've never seen even if you hacked prime
- 10 new puzzles you haven't solved though 2 involve the marker system in a way that will be somewhat familiar
- 2 new Relto customizations you've never seen (including two new technical features)
- 4 new pieces of clothing
- 34 new journals or monologue

plus a continuation of the storyline

Update for clarification:

Apart from the city, the Ages and areas listed above are all about the size of a neighborhood or smaller. I don't know how the 'final' count will be decided for press (hence my 'rough' qualifier. I've heard gamespot is saying 1 new Age...they are probably counting only the city. Just didn't want people thinking there was something like 8 new Teledahns in an expansion pack. Sorry if this was initially misleading. Puzzles, as well, are difficult to count. My numbers lean towards liberal.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

[This message was edited by CyanBill on Thu February 05 2004 at 05:12 PM.]

CyanBill

posted Wed February 04 2004 05:15 PM Wed February 04 2004 05:15 PM

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Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

[This message was edited by CyanBill on Thu February 05 2004 at 05:12 PM.]

CyanBill

posted Wed February 04 2004 05:20 PM Wed February 04 2004 05:20 PM

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by Kadishan:
I think your theory is kinda flawed CyanBill..
...snip...
So basing this whole shamble on the ppl who have signed up so far is
just catastrophally lousy judgement!
K

It's not **my** theory - I was attempting to explain the thinking.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Wed February 04 2004 05:31 PM Wed February 04 2004 05:31 PM

rdfeather and Ragdrazi: CyanBill is, in fact, not a businessman at all.

Administrator

rd I like the umbrella analogy - here's how it would work if I was the umbrella man:

MAN: take my umbrellas! free! they're not perfect but they're getting better!
SOME PEOPLE: these are great! wow thanks for keeping my head dry. when will the
new ones be in?
OTHER PEOPLE: what is it you're not telling us about these alleged umbrellas?
STILL OTHER PEOPLE: your whole umbrella idea will never work. I've used lots of
umbrellas and these are nothing like them.
SOME MEAN PEOPLE: Look he cries when I hit him with his stupid umbrella. I can't
believe he made these incredible promises of wonderful new umbrellas. Cry umbrella
man! Cry!

Undoubtedly this post will make someone angry. It's a good time to be angry - let it all
out.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Wed February 04 2004 09:04 PM Wed February 04 2004 09:04 PM

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by Randomos:

quote:

all the "effort" into it but after all this time.. I'm amazed they let it just die so easily.. I guess I now kinda hold a small hope UBI will go bust and leave Cyan free to find a PROPER partner.. cos seriously.. I will never believe they really tried very hard..especially when hearing that "Uru is currently UBI's best selling game" but as usual..greed wins.

K

Well... just to clarify things a bit... Uru isn't Ubisoft's best selling game (not enough guns, I think) and... I think we all held on to the hope of Uru Live's success, in every respect, as long as we could. The changes that we (meaning Ubisoft and Cyan Worlds) came up will let us reach many more people. That's really about all there is to it.

<http://www.greetersguild.com/forumlinks/ronbanner.jpg>

We've been told Uru is Ubi's best-selling PC game (the PC part is important - console games are blowing away PC games this year).

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Thu February 05 2004 12:11 PM Thu February 05 2004 12:11 PM

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by Lucky2BInsane:

Ok, I'm sad about UruLive....But I have a question:

The update from Live messed up Teledahn in our PRIME game so are we going to receive a fix for that? Or are our PRIME games as useless as Live?? My husband and kids can't even finish their PRIME games due to all the bugs.....

I've heard everything from "you'll have to reinstall uru then the expansion" to "the free expansion fixes this problem" - the latest I heard was the latter.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Thu February 05 2004 12:25 PM Thu February 05 2004 12:25 PM

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by tabor_soros:

quote:

Originally posted by Alahmnat:

quote:

Originally posted by mfaulkner1982:

likewise, if the OOC persons in charge had been more open and willing to provide explanations for what was going on (if, that is, such a thing had been possible - I am open to the idea that the thing could have occurred in no other manner)

You are correct, the people involved were unable for legal reasons related to stock trading to unveil anything that would adversely or positively affect the company's stock value just before the close of the fiscal quarter, as Bill said a few pages back. It's unfortunate that this decision was timed so as to land its expected release right in the middle of the legally-demanded quiet period at the end of the fiscal quarter, but such is life.

Alahmnat

Guild of Archivists, <http://www.dpwr.net>

Uru and Myst Forum Moderator / Community Assistant

Corporate quiet period requirement from SEC is a myth, an excuse, a PR ploy.

Here is an <http://news.com.com/2100-1017-271257.html?legacy=cnet> that discusses it extensively. It's a convenient "story" for companies when they don't want to discuss something.

Thanks for the link. Please remember, I'm not a businessman. (In fact, this is the very reason when I presented this info I qualified it with "I believe"). It still looks like it's a popular thing for publicly traded companies to do despite it not being a strict requirement.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Thu February 05 2004 12:40 PM Thu February 05 2004 12:40 PM

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by dragonmac:

quote:

And on top of all that, they announce a Mac version of Uru. On every occasion when asked about a Mac version, Cyan Worlds stated that they want to do it, and that they will do it as soon as the Windows version is doing well and provides for the financial means to do it. Now they are stopping Uru Live but publish the Mac version? Where does the money come from? How do they want to generate revenue through this? I don't understand it... Marck (KI# 02058198 @ Atrus, 00124588 @ Katran)

1. Please respond to the points made above. You have skipped over these very good questions. I was given the same answer to my Mac inquires in the past, along with countless other Mac User.

I don't know.

quote:

2a. I'm not clear on this. Was the decision to kill UruLive SOLEY based on the financial projections of subscriptions?

It's my personal belief that if those numbers had been high enough, cancelling Uru Live wouldn't have been discussed. So, in my opinion, yes.

quote:

2b. Did Technical issues, the added cost to fix and maintain these unforeseen performance issues or any other Technical problems contribute to the decision to kill UruLive?(If server Spec./Perform. was at all an issue, all I have to say is Virginia Tech - G5 baby) Was monthly income the sole factor?

see 2a.

quote:

3. Was Uru rushed to market for any reason before it was truly ready? Did you really plan it this way?

Uru was delivered on time, on budget and is selling well. Uru Live was not ready to open publicly and so it wasn't.

quote:

4. Do you feel leaving out the Mac Community in your initial launch ofUruLivecontributed to its failure? (Never done before to my knowledge, Read my thread posted <http://ubbxforums.ubi.com/6/ubb.x?a=tpc&s=400102&f=6571034&m=168106>

CyanBill

posted Thu February 05 2004 12:40 PM Thu February 05 2004 12:40 PM

quote:

Administrator

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I don't know. I'm not the one to answer that.

quote:

5. When could I expect to see a Mac Version of Uru?

I don't know. I don't think anyone knows a date yet.

quote:

6. If UruPrime sales pick-up to even higher levels could Live come back? Could the influx of Mac users start Live up again if alot come?

It's more Uru Live signups that we needed. And at this point we'd also need substantial capital.

quote:

I know I asked many "if then question", but please do your best to answer now that you are finally talking to us. I now understand the silence and might forgive you.
Edit-Might not, Ahh!! Just read this <http://news.com.com/2100-1017-271257.html?legacy=cnet> SEC Law BS. Bill your blowing smoke in my back door again

Now why'd you have to go and spoil a perfectly reasonable post with a flame. I said "I believe" it's a SEC regulation. Again, I'm not a businessman. I'm just the guy with the lucky task of spending time with you all here

CyanBill

posted Thu February 05 2004 12:40 PM Thu February 05 2004 12:40 PM

Administrator

Now why'd you have to go and spoil a perfectly reasonable post with a flame. I said "I believe" it's a SEC regulation. Again, I'm not a businessman. I'm just the guy with the lucky task of spending time with you all here today. Note, this isn't even my job...I'm not a community manager or PR...so think and read before you flame please.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Thu February 05 2004 12:47 PM Thu February 05 2004 12:47 PM

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by autoalex:

I am very disappointed with the way UBI/CYAN have treated their customers. I feel that I have been misled by some of the announcements and actions they have made in the so called 'silent period'

1) The addition of the ACHENAR server – which lead me to believe that they were concerned about the number of players trying to access the city

we were

quote:

2) The change of our expiration dates to Dec. 2004 – that URULIVE was going forward, yet behind schedule

This is out of my jurisdiction so to speak.

quote:

3) The increase from 30 to 35 players in the city – that there had been some improvement in city lag issues

There were.

quote:

4) DRC Website additions

those will continue

quote:

5) Forum tech postings – suggestions from MODS to upgrade videocards, soundcards and RAM, etc...

Any of the upgrades you mention apply to offline play as well.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Thu February 05 2004 05:16 PM Thu February 05 2004 05:16 PM

Administrator

At the [wise] suggestion of marketing, I updated my post on page 11 of this thread where I outlined the content in the first expansion pack. My numbers, while technically accurate, could be misleading...here's what I added...

Update for clarification:

Apart from the city, the Ages and areas listed above are all about the size of a neighborhood or smaller. I don't know how the 'final' count will be decided for press (hence my 'rough' qualifier. I've heard gamespot is saying 1 new Age...they are probably counting only the city. Just didn't want people thinking there was something like 8 new Teledahns in an expansion pack. Sorry if this was initially misleading. Puzzles, as well, are difficult to count. My numbers lean towards liberal.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Fri February 06 2004 11:20 AM Fri February 06 2004 11:20 AM

...Large portion of quoted text removed...

Administrator

Sincerely, I thank you for your time and your responses. I didn't think it was half the flame others have sent your way but I am somewhat anger like the rest and you did invite us earlier to "It's a good time to be angry - let it all out." In another post BacardiJim stated it was you and not Ubisoft that's was remaining silent. Cyan is not publicly traded that I know of, so if Rand or someone else told you to "zip it for now" weeks ago send the flames to him, lol. I can only imagine your frustration and sadness, I'm sure you have, in doing this. Keep up the Good work, this is what most of us wanted OPEN dialogue.

Ubisoft is our partner. We were quiet because they asked us to be.

quote:

Now to your answers, some left me still scratch my head.
2a's response does little to explain 2b. I am wondering why if 2a is Yes you don't just answer No to 2b. (Once again tell Rand or another to respond openly if you can't) So I reiterate my Question here "Did Technical issues, the added cost to fix and maintain these unforeseen performance issues or any other Technical problems contribute to the decision to kill UruLive?"

Let me rephrase my first answer to maybe make it clearer why I think it answers both these questions. In my opinion, if more people had been interested in Uru Live, the option of cancelling it would not have come up in discussion. Once the option is discussed, every aspect of the project becomes a contributing factor. So I guess the answer is no and yes? I know you want a simple yes or no, but it would be dishonest to deliver one.

quote:

Maybe your not allowed to say I don't know, but It seems odd that you can't just come out and say forthright that Technical problems had nothing to do with Cyan/Ubisoft's decision.

Sorry, I honestly thought I'd answered the question.

quote:

In 3 you say Uru live was not ready publicly which we all see now, although some believe this was not quiet clear. I had heard from a Mod on another post that the Live was set to be tested 4 Months Publicly (i.e. public beta, not uncommon as others have suggested). This means you had a track that you only ran half way, 2.5 months. So to sum up in my words; you never had a finished Live product to sell, for which you never actively tried to sell yet, but you decided to not finish the project to market, based on poor potential of sales, of a product you where not ready to sell, that consumers had no idea you wanted them to buy, or at least sign up for, before it was finished to be bought.?? Ok, not the greatest business plan and your not the "suit" that made that one. Just had to be said, and I hope you find it a little funny, I do.

Funny isn't the word I'd use.

CyanBill

posted Fri February 06 2004 11:20 AM Fri February 06 2004 11:20 AM

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Funny isn't the word I'd use.

quote:

This brings up a point ask earlier by others, What was the number of online subscribers needed to make this work? How short are you?

I'm not at liberty to give out these numbers.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by mdnicegirl:

I am so confused.

I guess I just want some honest answers from the powers that be. There are so many lies and cover ups in the real world i guess i just expected something in life to be simple. And that is what uru was for me. It was a place to go to get away from things in my life in the real world. I am healthy and strong in URU, I can run and jump, I can even jump over balconies. I will miss this. But much more i would like someone to just be honest about what exactly took this away from me.

I have gotten bits and pieces from other posts but some information seems to be confusing. are the mods right? is bill telling us everything?

We have tried to get a pet. signed, even went out on a limb to find people to donate money and all this for what? If we have this much energy to save a game, why are we the only ones trying to save it?

I am not trying to flame anyone or be a "troll" I just want to know exactly what went wrong. If we come up with a million dollars will it save URU at all? if we find subscribers will that help? I have seen 1 comerial 1 time for uru. I think they depended on other ways of advertisement. Like pc mag doing a top 100 pc games of 2003.

Just want someone that has rank to say give up it wont work and it wont work because X Y Z. and be honest about it.

OK folks, this is the last time I'm repeating this answer so listen up:

I honestly believe that if there had been more people signed up to try the prologue earlier, Uru Live would still be going.

How is that NOT simple and honest?

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.

CyanBill

posted Fri February 06 2004 11:44 AM Fri February 06 2004 11:44 AM

quote:

Administrator

Aren't there questions like:

* will the Expansion pack support my KI in a manner, that I am able to chat with other UrU Expansion pack players? (this feature could be implemented into the UrU offline part, so that people could choose a chat option while playing the offline game if they like)

That's a neat idea, but I don't see it happening this year.

quote:

* is it possible to keep one shard, just containing the neighborhoods, so that gamers (communities) can meet at least at one place ? I don't know, how cost intensive this would be?, but I think it is possible at moderate costs and wish for it

I hate to turn this in to a market survey, but just out of curiosity, would you pay for something like this? How much?

CyanBill

posted Fri February 06 2004 12:37 PM Fri February 06 2004 12:37 PM

quote:

Administrator

Originally posted by Adytum:
Dear Bill,

Real numbers are what you need. We get that.

How do we help you get them? Download/buy the expansion packs, sign the petition, send letters?

Let us know, we will do it.

You can bolster Cyan's financial future by, of course, promoting Uru Prime and buying/recommending the second expansion pack (the first is free and I should mention that the contract for the second is still in the works).

As far as any sory of Uru online, repeat after me:

There is no hope.
There is no hope.
There is no hope.

Now, get people who don't read these forums to sign the petition, and sign it yourself if you haven't already.

Bill Slease
Content Director
Cyan Worlds, Inc.