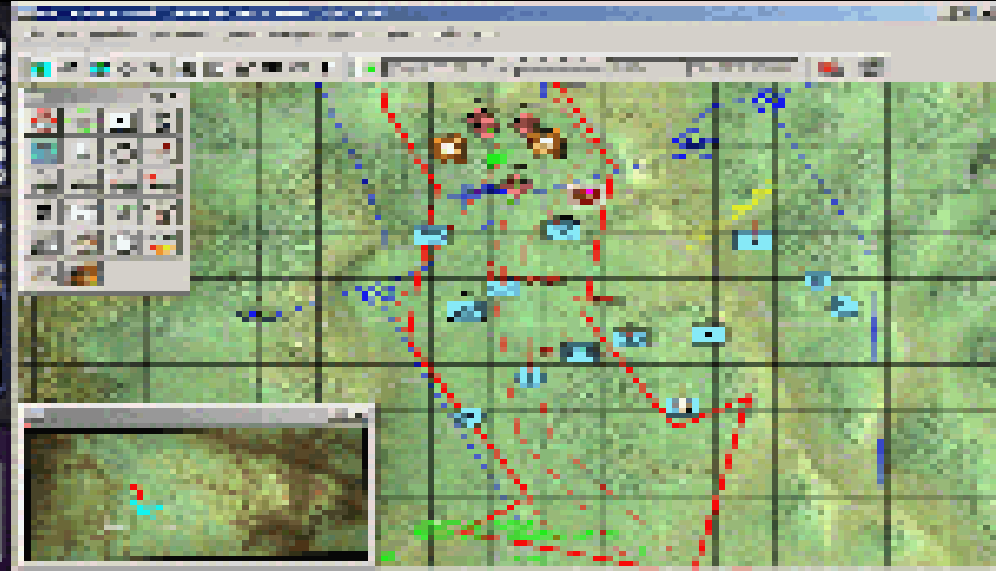


Social Impact Games



What Are Social Impact Games?

- The tagline for SocialImpactGames.com summarizes it best:
 - “Entertaining Games with **Non-Entertainment** Goals”
- A.k.a. “**Serious Games**”
- Serious Games are games where the main goal is not to entertain, but to **teach a lesson or a skill in an entertaining way.**
- There are many categories, including Games for Change, Games for Health, Simulations, etc.

A Little History

- “Serious Games” are not a new idea. The concept was first used in 1970 by Clark Abt in his book, very appropriately titled: *Serious Games*. Since then, the old definition has changed very little:
 - “We are concerned with serious games in the sense that these games have an explicit and carefully thought-out educational purpose and are not intended to be played primarily for amusement.”
- In 2002, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars launched the **Serious Games Initiative**, which has spawned diverse, specialized games like those listed in the previous slide (Games for Change/Health, etc)

Case In Point: “Re-Mission”

- Re-Mission is a game that was designed by the HopeLab organization in 2006. It’s goal was not to entertain, but to help teach “players” how to deal with and combat certain cancers and severe diseases.
- Re-Mission utilizes a third-person-shooter perspective and uses each of its levels to showcase a different treatment for various diseases.
- For a better explanation than I can provide, a short trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjLdu7SEMNs&feature=channel>

Why “Re-Mission”?



- Re-Mission is a fantastic example of one area of Serious Games. By the end of 2008, more than 126,000 copies had been distributed to 81 countries. Why so popular?
- The game was designed in such a way as to get a player’s attention and – more importantly – to keep it, all the while teaching important lessons for those living with cancer or other problems.
- A study of 375 patients with cancer revealed that those who were given Re-Mission to play had a higher blood levels of chemotherapy and higher antibiotic utilization.

So, what’s the point?

Re-Mission actually **helped** people to obey their daily schedules.



From the Reading

- Ironically, the hardest thing to do with this topic is what not to take from the reading. A large part of **Marc Prensky's** article refers directly to **“learning through playing”**, essentially the definition of Serious Games. Games like Re-Mission (and others) give testament to the idea that **learning need not be a painful experience.**
- The concept of **“hard fun”** relates directly to Serious Games – what results from a game that challenges you to learn if not “hard fun”?

I Think This Is The Part Where I Take
Questions...

No. Seriously. I Look Stupid Standing
Here Talking To Myself.

Thank You!

Sources:

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- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Re-Mission> (Various misc. facts such as copies sold and date of release)
- “Serious Games – Google Books Result”
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