Lessons of Lucasfilm’s Habitat

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Habitat

- Created by LucasFilm Games
- First attempt to create large scale multi-user environment
- Beta Tested @ 1986
Habitat

Hi Cathy.

Hi Terry!

Nice day for a quest!

It's always a nice day for treasure hunting.
Lessons

- A Multi-User Environment is Central to the Idea of Cyberspace
Lessons - Programming

- Communications Bandwidth is a Scarce Resource
  - Carrying capacity of networks is limited
- Object-Oriented Data Representation is Essential
  - World items = code class
- The Implementation of the Platform is Relatively Unimportant
  - Defined by behaviors
- Data Communication Standards are Vital
  - Ability to add information in over time
Lessons - World Planning

• Detailed Central Planning is Impossible, Don’t Even Try
  ▫ Thousands of other users
  ▫ Scaling Problems
  ▫ Need of variation
Lessons

• You Can’t Trust Anyone
  ▫ Keeping the line between what the users see and what code is running clean

• Work Within the System
  ▫ Let players have some system control

• Get Real
  ▫ The users know what they want
  ▫ Users will ‘break’ the system
Promotional Video

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVpuhlO3jyc