

Final Fantasy 14 Preview

Written by Miklotov

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Is it fall/winter 2010 yet? I only ask because with the deluge (okay, maybe more like slight trickle here and there and not even at a consistent rate) of information coming out for Final Fantasy 14, I'm looking to find a way to hibernate until it releases.

Thanks mostly to the fact that the game is in alpha, information on some of the very basic aspects of Square Enix's new MMO have been brought to light. We already knew that levels that characters earn in the traditional sense have been taken out in favor of earning ranks for specific disciplines based on the weapon you equip. However, you still earn points to customize your character's permanent stats that carry over to whatever discipline you decide to play as at any given time. Since it's in the alpha stages, who knows if these points you distribute are permanent or if there will be an option to redistribute for a fee or something similar (my bet is on the latter given the random information that has been leaked). The possibilities of this extra level of customization are amazing. I could be a Conjurer with an insane amount of HP - probably to the point where my magic abilities would suffer greatly, but I could take tons of hits and survive. Impractical? Yup. But it's my character and this system allows me to play however (messed up) I want to.

It also seems that they've come up with a way to incorporate a form of Final Fantasy 11's

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subjob system into the game. Reports state that some of the abilities you learn under one discipline become available to you as another discipline once you hit certain ranks. An example I've read is learning a taunt from the Pugilist class called "Whistle" and equipping it to a more tank-suitable discipline. I've also heard of learning "Fire" as a Conjurer and using it on one of the Disciples of War disciplines.

Being that, again, the game is only in the alpha stages, all of this could change. I don't want it to, though. These gameplay aspects make Final Fantasy 14 quite different than anything on the market. Gamers seem to constantly be clamoring for something new and exciting that can change up the MMO formula, and this game looks like that's what it's trying to do. If this changes are just what they've got going in the alpha, I can't wait to see what they can do for the beta and beyond. Here's hoping they pick me to help with the beta so I won't have to play vicariously until it releases. And if they don't pick me, it's back to finding a way to hibernate.

~Shane Leonard