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Report on the Atari Star Wars Arcade Game

Games Department

Lucasfilm Ltd.

December 15, 1982

Overall, it sounds like this could be an exciting and involving game. There are, however, a number of inconsistencies with the Star Wars universe which should be changed:

1. There is no "gunner" in an X-Wing - they are piloted by a single person with the help of an R2 unit (droid). The player should assume the role of Luke.
2. Even though it might look dramatic to have the ship move through a star field with the stars getting larger as they approach the player, this would not happen! If the Death Star can be seen in the distance, it must not be very far away. There would not be any stars between the X-Wings and the Death Star. It would be nice to have a star field *background* which "moved" as the player made a turn, but the only things passing his ship should be other fighters, or possibly debris. Also, the idea that "a random number of stars will impact the ship and the program will key with a slight jostle..." is ludicrous.
3. The shields in the Star Wars universe are made of *energy*, not metal. The Rebels would very quickly lose their fight for freedom if the view out the window was obstructed every time they were fired upon. Eliminate the metal shields and replace them with energy shields which are always activated. When enemy fire impacts with the shield, a brilliant electrical display is seen, and the shield's strength is decreased.
4. "Once the timer is depleted...the pilot shifts into warp speed toward the death star surface." Can "warp speed" be applied so close to an object? Isn't it reserved only for long interstellar jumps? Isn't "warp drive" a term from Star Trek?
5. The method of charging the deflector shields has no parallel with current reality or the Star Wars universe, although it is not uncommon for video games. Some effort should be spent on providing a good rationalization in the game's instructions for this "technology".
6. Although there is a good reason for the flight path to the Death Star to be under "computer control" (we don't want the pilot to get lost), the control of the X-Wing *within the trench* should be under manual control. This allows the pilot to really experience the thrill of maneuvering around the laser blasts and obstacles while avoiding the sides of the trench.
7. Message 14 says "Death star is X parcels away." We assume they meant *parsecs*, but this too wouldn't be right. A parsec is 3.26 light years, a distance much too great for the Death Star to be visible. Even "light-seconds" might be too great a distance since a light-second (the distance light travels in one second) is about 190,258 miles (our moon is only 238,857 miles from Earth, less than 2 light-seconds). In fact, any unit of measurement which includes Earth terms (miles, kilometers, seconds, etc.) probably wouldn't be appropriate. Does anyone know of any units of measurement used in any of the Star Wars films? One suggestion is to use the unit of "light-tics" (or "light-ticks") which is about 3,000 miles or 5,000 kilometers.