

Video Game Review: Big Things Go Boom in ‘Lost Planet 2’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 1, 2010 - 1:29pm

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CHICAGO – As the video marketplace gets more and more crowded, it becomes even harder for some titles to stand above the competition, especially in the incredibly crowded month of May 2010. It takes confidence to challenge highly anticipated titles like “Red Dead Redemption,” “Alan Wake,” “Super Mario Galaxy 2,” and “ModNation Racers” for gamer dollars.

“Lost Planet 2” should have been one of those “most anticipated” titles but early buzz started to hint that something was wrong. While there are enough things that work about the game to warrant a look, the buzz was right in that it’s only worth your time after you’ve played the vastly superior titles also released this month.

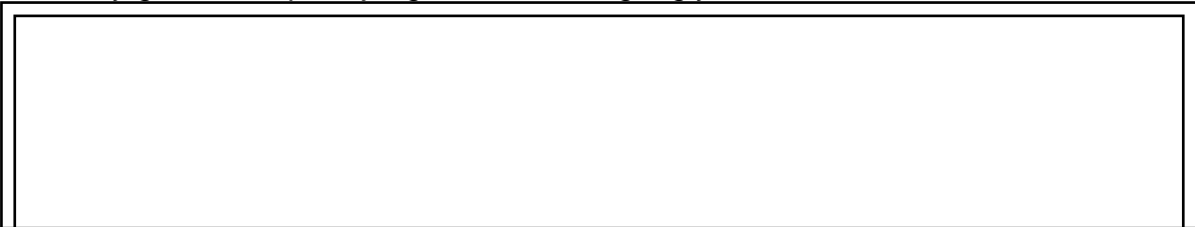


“Lost Planet 2” is all about size — creatures so big that you could be climbing on them before you realize it and weapons so enormous that they not only need two hands but sometimes a friend to help you carry them. And the scope of the game is its biggest asset (no pun intended). There’s a visceral adrenaline rush that comes with taking down something that would make Godzilla flee like a city mouse. It’s not an accident that the back of the case for the game says “KILL BIG” (along with the words “enormous” and “colossal”).



Lost Planet 2
Photo credit: Capcom

“Lost Planet” was a huge hit, selling over 2 million units for the Xbox 360. The sequel picks up ten years after the first game, as the planet of the franchise title has drastically changed. Gone are the snow-covered landscapes (except for the prologue) of planet E.D.N. III, replaced by relatively generic tropical jungles. But the big, ugly monsters are still there.





Lost Planet 2
Photo credit: Capcom

With a plot that becomes increasingly difficult to care about, players take control of a soldier on a squad that is often tasked with getting from point A to point B with gigantic creatures in between. The key word in that sentence is “squad”. “Lost Planet 2” is a game built almost entirely around co-operative play, so much so that the single-player campaign is quite simply broken. When you start the game, either from the beginning or from a save file, you’re partnered with three other players to form a co-op squad.

Now, you can go in and turn the three other players into A.I.-controlled soldiers but be warned that their “A” is not so “I”. If you’re lucky enough to be partnered with three other quality players then “Lost Planet 2” works but Gods help the player who has to deal with some of the worst co-op A.I. that I’ve ever seen. Playing with three other computer-controlled characters is almost impossible. They’re so useless that they might as well not be there, which essentially means that “Lost Planet 2” doesn’t have a single-player campaign, as it’s too frustrating to try and do it on your own.



Lost Planet 2
Photo credit: Capcom

So, if you don’t have a quality team then you’re in trouble and you better have some time to devote as well and be sure of no interruptions. It’s understandable that you can’t pause the game with three other real players who don’t feel like taking a bathroom break with you, but the fact that you can’t do so with three A.I. ones is simply stupid. And the checkpoints and episode endings are few and far between. This is not a “pick up and play” title. You better be prepared.

And be prepared for some frustration even if you have three other quality players. There are gameplay and control issues in “Lost Planet 2” that can be incredibly frustrating. Sometimes the game feels fluid but it just as often features jerky, awkward movements. The environments can be beautiful as often as they are hard to navigate.

If you are prepared, the depth of the title does impress. The deep character customization allows for a lot of character variety and the MT Framework 2.0 graphics engine produces some jaw-dropping moments in the background depth it provides. And the game features multiple multiplayer modes including “Data Post Battle,” “Akrid Egg Battle,” “Fugitive,” “Elimination,” and “Team Elimination”. It’s clearly a game

designed to be played with others.



Lost Planet 2
Photo credit: Capcom

Rarely have I been more torn about a title as “Lost Planet 2”. The fact is that every time I was tempted to write it off as a failure, something about the game would bring me back to its side. As much as I didn’t care about the plot of “Lost Planet 2,” I was often blown away by the sheer scope of the game. As much as co-op gameplay frustrated me, I’ll admit to having some fun customizing my character.

Ultimately, “Lost Planet 2” is a mixed effort, a balanced scale of pros and cons. During off-months of off-years, a title that features as many positive elements as negative ones might be an easy sell, but landing in stores during the busiest month of one of the most impressive years in the history of video games is the worst thing that could have happened to “Lost Planet 2”. Even titles this “big” can be swept under the rug.

‘Lost Planet 2’ was released and developed by Capcom. It is rated T (Teen). The version reviewed was for the PS3, but the title is also available for the Xbox 360 and the PC. It was released on May 11th, 2010.



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