

Video Game Review: ‘Megamind: Ultimate Showdown’ Displays Everything Wrong With Movie Tie-Ins

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on November 18, 2010 - 11:41am

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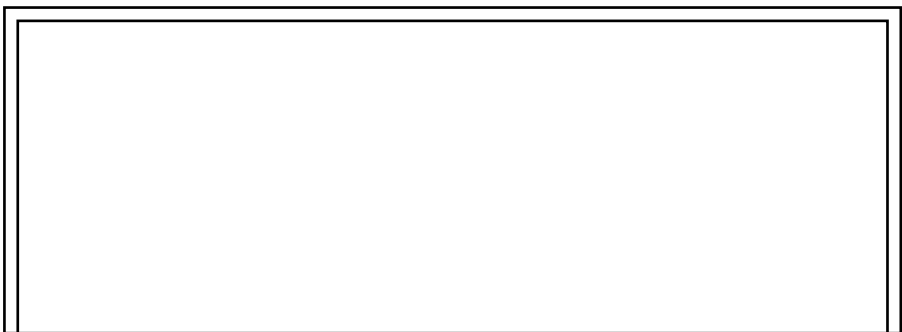
CHICAGO – Both games based on video games and a large majority of children’s games often have issues with creativity and when the two merge it can result in products that are truly bankrupt artistically. Such is the case with “Megamind: Ultimate Showdown,” a massive disappointment that is so clearly designed to pull dollars from parents of kids who love Dreamworks’ #1 movie “Megamind” but offers nothing to entertain them in return.



The most startling thing about “Megamind: Ultimate Showdown” is how loosely-related to the film the game ended up. None of the voice talent showed up (and those that were assigned the duties of mimicking Will Ferrell and David Cross missed the mark) and it feels like the game was developed after seeing drawings of Ferrell’s Megamind and Cross’ Minion but with very few other story details in place. “Ultimate Showdown” plays like what a kid would do with his action figures after watching the movie — coming up with new adventures, villains, and concepts of destruction. Shouldn’t a major company video game feel designed by someone older than ten?



Megamind: Ultimate Showdown
Photo credit: THQ





Megamind: Ultimate Showdown
Photo credit: THQ

The story of "Megamind: Ultimate Showdown" turns the big blue guy into a hero immediately (unlike the movie which features a much more interesting interplay of heroism and villainy) and sends him on a number of missions to find parts for the DNA machine that will kill the enemy Blue Tighen. The game is broken down into about a dozen missions, none of which run very long and many of which are simply variations on the one before. Between missions, the player is bounced back to his lair where he can upgrade weapons, play mini-games, or dive into another level.

Megamind alternates between three weapons — a ray-gun (which also can dehydrate people and objects at times), an electrically-charged glove, and a blower — but "Ultimate Showdown" is one of those titles that simply plants the right weapon in the right situation. In other words, if you need to blow something out of the way, you'll find the blower nearby. Everything in "Ultimate Showdown" is so depressingly linear, like a platform game from 1999. DreamWorks is trying to lead the way in terms of feature animation, why would a game based on that have to feel so last-generation?

It's understandable that a game like "Ultimate Showdown" needs to "play down" a bit to kids but there's a limit even to that developmental philosophy. Nintendo and other developers have proven that you can make a game that's easy enough for children to play but that still offers them variety, creativity, and competent storytelling — "Megamind: Ultimate Showdown" offers none of that.

The levels blend together, the gameplay is dull, and the story is non-existent. Even the humor from the film is missing and that's coming from someone who wasn't a huge fan of the movie. It's a masterpiece compared to the game. Would it have been so hard to make a title based on the film, including the voice talent and jokes from the movie itself?

Is there anything to like about "Megamind: Ultimate Showdown"? It plays without glitches and is brief and easy enough that the youngest members of the family can enjoy it on Christmas morning. I suppose it would have been worse for a title to be too complicated or difficult for the target audience. No one wants little kids crying on the holidays because they can't play with their new toy. But there's a middle ground. You can make a game for kids that doesn't feel so unlike what inspired it. "Megamind" fans and even the big blue guy himself deserved better.

'Megamind: Ultimate Showdown' was developed by Adventure Games and released by THQ. It is rated E (Everyone). The version reviewed was for the PS3, but the title is also available for the XBox 360. It was released on November 2nd, 2010.



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