

Video Game Review: 'Transformers: Dark of the Moon' Disappoints

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on July 4, 2011 - 2:02pm

- [Activision](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [Hasbro](#) [4]
- [High Moon Studios](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [Michael Bay](#) [7]
- [Nintendo DS](#) [8]
- [Nintendo Wii](#) [9]
- [PlayStation 3](#) [10]
- [PS3](#) [11]
- [Transformers](#) [12]
- [Transformers: Dark of the Moon](#) [13]
- [Video Game Review](#) [14]
- [Xbox 360](#) [15]

CHICAGO – Based on the incredible box office returns, a lot of the people reading this have probably already seen Michael Bay's divisive "Transformers: Dark of the Moon." It's understandable that they may want to continue the adrenalin-pumping adventure at home with Activision's latest game based on the legendary Hasbro toy line. Sadly, as much as the movie pops in 3D, the game is disappointingly flat. With unrefined controls, a boring story, and poor level design, the game will be frustrating for both fans of the movie and the surprisingly-strong last game in the series.



Video Game Rating: **2.0/5.0**

First things first — If you haven't played 2010's "Transformers: War For Cybertron" and consider yourself a fan of the franchise then you definitely should pick that title over this one. Last year's movie-free game (there was no film to tie-in with) was a resounding success. When one adds in the fact that the third "Transformers" movie is undeniably an improvement over the second one, everything led one to hope that this year's video game model would find the same level of success or even improve on it. Or at least come close. It doesn't.



Transformers: Dark of the Moon

Photo credit: Activision

From minute one, "Transformers: Dark of the Moon" is just an awkwardly-executed gaming experience. When a player starts a new game, it can take some time to get accustomed to the control scheme but we've all had that sinking feeling that it's not a matter of learning curve but poor design that's simply not going to get better. Such is the case with "Dark of the Moon," in which your character has two modes (of course) — robot and vehicle — but switching between them, employing the right weapon, and even driving successfully never feels organic. It's a game in which you're constantly struggling with not just the strategy required to defeat your enemies but the very mechanics of it.



Transformers: Dark of the Moon

Photo credit: Activision

Once the player becomes as accustomed to the controls as he's going to be, "Dark of the Moon" is at least a bit of action escapism, right? Sort of. There are some battles that are fun but when you share a title with such an explosive movie as the Michael Bay CGI extravaganza, why not build off the actual plot? Why on Earth isn't there a game in which I can battle as Chicago crumbles around me, as it does at the end of the movie? Why aren't the human characters from the movie involved at all? Did Bay want too much money? The story of the game version of "Dark of the Moon" reportedly serves as something of a prequel to the movie but most players won't make the connection. They'll just wonder why they can't play a direct version of the most video game-esque movie of the year.

At its core, "Dark of the Moon" does feel like a relative of "War For Cybertron" in that it blends shooter mechanics with a bit of vehicle play. The latter is one of the most frustrating elements of the gameplay. In vehicle mode, the player now has something called Stealth Force which creates a different type of combat but is just too difficult to manage. You're also much stronger, have more ammunition, and can take more damage in vehicle mode (the opposite of "Cybertron"). Why would the developers of "Moon" make a driving-combat game when they should know that players want to be robots much more than they want to well-armed vehicles?

The level design is completely uninspired with mediocre graphics and some bizarre choices. Why make me drive so often from point A to point B? Why so many by-the-numbers combat arenas in which I merely have to dodge behind cover and fight off waves of generic enemies? "Cybertron" was a complicated game with a much-more-realized world and not just the typical movie tie-in structure of rooms with waves of enemies before you can move on.

"Transformers: Dark of the Moon" does feature a deep multiplayer mode but the problems I have with the single-player campaign are prevalent there as well with unrefined controls and awkward gameplay.

We didn't quite know what we would get with the game version of "Transformers: Dark of the Moon" — Another crappy movie tie-in or a sequel to the best "Transformers" game yet produced? We undeniably got the former. Hardcore fans will find some elements to enjoy as they always do with everything related to their favorite toys but everyone else will be frustrated and disappointed.

'Transformers: Dark of the Moon' was released by Activision and developed by High Moon Studios. It is rated T (Teen). The version reviewed was for the PS3, but the title is also available for the XBox 360, Nintendo DS, and Nintendo Wii. It was released on June 14th, 2011.



[16]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [17]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

brian@hollywoodchicago.com [16]**Source URL (retrieved on Apr 20 2024 - 12:50am):**<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/14790/video-game-review-transformers-dark-of-the-moon-disappoints>**Links:**[1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>[2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/activision>[3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>[4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hasbro>

[5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/high-moon-studios>
[6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
[7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/michael-bay>
[8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ds>
[9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/wii>
[10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/playstation-3>
[11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ps3>
[12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/transformers>
[13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/transformers-dark-of-the-moon>
[14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/video-game-review>
[15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/xbox-360>
[16] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
[17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>