A lone eagle soars over the recently conquered medieval port city of Acre, where below a Christian knight paces the gallows, preaching to a crowd the sins of the men that hang behind him. As the bird lifts up and over the nearby church bell tower, a figure appears, intent on the scene below – stark and white against the dirty, rubble-strewn city. The bell begins to toll noon as the man drops into the square below. He stalks quietly and steadily through the jeering throng, gently pushing aside those in his path. At the fourth bell, he begins a slow run, now shoving down those that aren’t wise enough to step aside. From atop the raised gallows, he is spotted. The knight’s guards draw their weapons, and the white-cloaked figure drops into a sprint. In a flash, a spinning blade takes down the first soldier. The second swings once before the attacker has dropped him as well. At the sixth bell, the assassin leaps. Time seems to slow. A hidden blade emerges from his arm, and his victim falls as the knife finds his neck. In the stunned silence, the assassin reaches down and reverently closes the dead man’s eyes, and then the chase is on. Guards surge forward and rush after the murderer as he launches into a nearby alley, jumps off a street-side stoop, and pulls himself to the roof. Along the tops of buildings he runs, circling back to the church entrance. He drops to the ground and rushes to the cathedral door. As he calmly turns, he is totally surrounded by his foes. The twelfth bell tolls. The doors open and a sea of white-robed monks emerge from afternoon prayer. Standing completely still, in the bright light of day, the assassin completely disappears.

“Nothing is true. Everything is permitted.”
This first remarkable glimpse of Assassin’s Creed sets itself apart from the rest of the Prince of Persia games. As we enter the huge area devoted to Assassin’s Creed, we meet producer Jade Raymond, the woman who has played so well the Prince of Persia games in her time. There is no doubt that Ubisoft was letting people think about the concept for so long and then develop the idea. Creeds, we meet producer Jade Raymond, the woman who has played so well the Prince of Persia games in her time. There is no doubt that Ubisoft was letting people think about the concept for so long and then develop the idea. Creeds, we meet producer Jade Raymond, the woman who has played so well the Prince of Persia games in her time. There is no doubt that Ubisoft was letting people think about the concept for so long and then develop the idea.

Like all assassins, Altaïr was a master of disguise and combat. After experiencing the challenges of his first mission, he returns to the order, where he is tasked with protecting the legendary hashashin leader, Hassan al-Imam, who is considered one of the greatest assassins in history. In the summer of 1191, after the Battle of Arsuf, the order is faced with a new threat from the Crusaders. The emissary of the Crusaders, a nobleman named John, arrives in the castle of Masyaf, a mountainous Assassin fortress in what is now modern day Syria. Altaïr literally translates as “eagle” from Arabic, and the choice of moniker is fitting, given the qualities of the hero. Like an eagle, Altaïr is agile, mobile, and possesses a keen sense of technique and strategy. Despite the challenges he faces, Altaïr proves himself to be a master of the art of assassination.

The world of Assassin’s Creed is a place where the player can explore the world on horseback, climb mountains, fight with brigands, and even come of the primary associations. The game’s creators, supported by the northern kingdom, are cornered against the rolling desert dunes of the northern region. All of the major cities and each of the two sandstone areas are two square kilometers away, and each one is a piece of three primary districts. To prevent the player’s destruction, the game will periodically allow the player to retrace their steps and get back on track to the next area (and, in all probability, another game level). The use of jumping and running mechanisms allows players to traverse the distance between two places efficiently, much like the distancing trip. Beyond these major environments, the player will find many other smaller environments, including mountains, hidden assassins, and new technologies.

The open-ended structure of the game is evident in the way the player is encouraged to believe that everything they saw was true, and almost nothing they wanted was permitted. In the mythology of the game, this is the idea that the Assassins struggle against. Every conflict needs a hero, and for this new player, they will adopt the role of Altaïr, a young man who is the key to the future of the order. The player will be asked to make a brutal sacrifice, receive his killing blade, and join the order and make a brutal sacrifice. This is the idea that the Assassins struggle against. Every conflict needs a hero, and for this new player, they will adopt the role of Altaïr, a young man who is the key to the future of the order. The player will be asked to make a brutal sacrifice, receive his killing blade, and join the order and make a brutal sacrifice.

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The world that Altaïr finds himself in is embroiled in the chaos of the Third Crusade. Christian soldiers, under the leadership of Richard the Lionhearted, have swept into the Holy Land on another quest to retake it from Saladin and the largely Muslim populace. Dozens of religious war have left white cities as melting pots of different peoples and faiths. Under the tutelage of the Assassin chief Sinan, Altaïr is taught with help to bring an end to the Crusade with as little loss of innocent life as possible. Every one of Altaïr's precision strikes is designed to hold back the tide of conquest and violence that threatens the people. “You have to understand that there are other things going on in the Holy Land that most everyone else is unaware of,” sophomore Corey May reveals. “You’re not just out killing people. You’re solving a mystery.”

To complete this task, the player will guide Altaïr through dozens of planned missions. While every assassination will be unique in place, style, and challenge, there are three steps to each mission that will remain the same. First, players must locate the target in one of the sprawling cities or wilderness areas of the open game world. Getting close to the target often necessitates carefully negotiating through hordes of city populaces, or alternately scaling buildings and slipping from roof to roof to reach the enemy. The second step is the lethal attack—players will reconnoiter the area around a target and discern any number of paths to get close, neutralize any protection, and finally kill the enemy person. The moment of the kill, as the center point of an Assassin’s job, are meticulously designed to offer a wealth of emotional experiences for players. In the brief seconds that it lasts, time will slow, and the action will stem close. Each movement with the pax and honor of taking a human life, as you often feel nestled to the feel and pain exhibited on the victim’s face. Finally, every major assassination will have the damn man relay a piece of information to Altaïr about the large conspiracy that is at the heart of the game, pushing the story forward with the last words of a fallen foe. As the longer dies, and even once he is gone, Altaïr will always try to make a point of offering respect and honor to him. “Our reverence for the score of the assassination is from Sonny Bono, when the German kills the American with the knife, and he says, ‘Shhh…Shhh’,” Desilets explains.

The most exciting feature that manages to create the illusion of life without any obvious animations in comparison to last year's Liver of Lambs or Tunic, is the incredible innovations that fill the classes of the game that will bring the world to life. The most exciting feature that manages the feel is the crowd. “The Unreal game engine allowed us to have over 60 NPCs with friends and enemies, and behavior engines,” Desilets tells us. Even in some of the most exciting open world games on the market, unseen characters are all playing it safe with paths always at tightly scripted paths that take them from one place to another. Furthermore, if you encounter that path with something like a hidden action, a given NPC usually triggers into a single response, usually either fight or flight. When it comes to the Assassin’s Creed, every NPC has a wealth of needs, each with a relative value. High social need might send a person to find someone to talk with. NPCs can develop three or hungry, and be drawn to a market stand or restaurant. Those that desire rest might look for a place to sit and stare at their usual desired behaviors.

Whether completing a mission or not, it is easy for players to lose themselves in the moral dilemma of killing for a greater good. Often when a task is done, the feel at it a moment of triumph that can vary with any combination of combat with guards, rotten roof running, or finding a way to hide or blend in with the surroundings and slip away, depending on player preference. All told, the full cast of over 60 NPCs can take anywhere from 10 minutes to a full hour entirely based on player choice and decisions.

About that all-important instant, “There is a moment between two human beings. And that’s important to me,” the developer reveals. “We want the moment of death to carry emotional weight, and for players to lose themselves in the moral dilemma of killing for a greater good. Often when a task is done, the feel at it a moment of triumph that can vary with any combination of combat with guards, rotten roof running, or finding a way to hide or blend in with the surroundings and slip away, depending on player preference. All told, the full cast of over 60 NPCs can take anywhere from 10 minutes to a full hour entirely based on player choice and decisions.”

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One thing that’s important to us is establishing a connection between the predator and his prey – between the assassin and the person being assassinated.

Jade Raymond
Producer

Beyond the random NPCs that follow their own personal desires through the world, every environment will also be filled with what the designers have dubbed ‘NPC traps’.

These groups of life-minded individuals act as a force to either impede you or your enemies, depending on their opinion of you. Thugs, prostitutes, mobs, and gangsters – groups of these will all start genuinely hostile to a person like the player who disrupts the natural order of the city. However, beyond the scenes of assassination, missions that players will undertake, they can also choose to attempt helping missions for the struggling populace. Add the medals, and the next time you’re being pursued they will help you avoid their evil red, rather than breaking apart and pinpointing where you step, with the rough plan that every 10 meters should offer at least one chance to interact meaningfully with the environment.

The ground may demand quick dodges and blind turns into dark alleys. Players might have to jump between interconnected rooftops along a patchwork of thick planks. And while ascending and platforming along a suspended line may give the illusion of freedom, the designer has to be careful not to undermine the idea of a massive, immersive world.

Many modern action games include particular buttons for specific actions like jumping and attacking, as well as a common context sensitive ‘do’ button that interacts with the world. Instead of this, Assassin’s Creed will employ an intuitive new idea that can best be compared to playing marionette or puppeteer to Altaïr’s actions. ‘What I really liked about this concept is that once you understand the concept of the controls, you know how to play the game’, Raymond asserts. ‘You don’t ever have to look at what the button combinations are. You can invent them as you go.’

On the PC controls, the left analog will still control movement and the right analog will control the right arm. With that philosophy, lead programmer Matt Blaisdell tells us, in a way, the uncertainty that developers get in level design where they design a level path has been passed on to the player, offering a higher degree of freedom of movement than has ever been offered before.

Unwilling to settle for a mundane control solution to fix anything but mundane gameplay, the development team has crafted a remarkable new approach to action controls that further broadens the options a player has in front of him. Most modern action games include particular buttons for specific actions like jumping and attacking, as well as a common context sensitive ‘do’ button that interacts with the world. Instead of this, Assassin’s Creed will employ an intuitive new idea that can best be compared to playing marionette or puppeteer to Altaïr’s actions. ‘What I really liked about this concept is that once you understand the concept of the controls, you know how to play the game’, Raymond asserts. ‘You don’t ever have to look at what the button combinations are. You can invent them as you go.’

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**Truth & Fiction**

Prior to even beginning the game, the team completed a wide body of research into the politics, economics, secrets, symbols, and geography of the period to avoidเดิมสี and violent culture interests you. You should have a wealth of resources to explore all these facets of history. In fact, you can even help to get you into the game for the recent movie Kingdom of Heaven serves as a fantastic companion piece to the game. In addition, the Canter collection consists of more than 6000 artifacts from Across the ages, the history channel has produced a number of documentaries on the period, featuring the Crusader's Crossbow & The Crossbowman, which traces the full story of the wars between Christian and Muslim forces of the time. Popular author Dan Brown (The Da Vinci Code) deals directly with the historical setting of the Assassin's Creed. The history channel has produced a television series called Crusaders: The Crescent and The Cross, which brings another period of history to light. We were so used to doing something different to challenge ourselves.

*Patrice Desilets*
Creative Director

Finally, those of a more cynical bent might be interested in Bernard Leatier’s The Assassin in Rome, a book that pulls together the real historical data on the slasher genre in the history of the Middle Ages.

### Let’s forget about linear paths.

We were so used to linear stories. It’s a challenge, so that’s why we like doing it. We wanted to make something different—something to challenge ourselves.

*Patrice Desilets*
Creative Director

In the second week of the project, the team graduated from being a small group of people discussing what was possible to a company that is rapidly building a reputation for franchises instead of single games. All of us want to be around, and if Assassin’s Creed isn’t the beginning of something big for a company having to establish itself in the next generation of gaming.

For its part, Assassin’s Creed certainly appears on track to succeed in its mandate to redef ine entire conceptions of what is possible in a game world. The ambition of this story could not quite carry the weight of expectations, but it’s a mighty start. Just wait until you see how much more there is to come. We still have a lot of work to do. We may not have seen Star Wars, but there’s no reason to believe that the remarkable talent of the Crytek team couldn’t recreate a whole new world of gaming. 

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