

# Can you fix your story?

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I remember the good days of the early PlayStation where there was no internet connection to my video game console. Yes you heard me right, I wish we could go back to the days where when you bought a game you knew you were getting a complete. Now that console games have finally caught up with PC gaming for patching in content, it would seem that this concept has gone out of hand. Possibly even power hungry or rather should I say money hungry. The game industry seems to be picking up this habit of patching in content, and while most of the times its to improve the game. I can't help to wonder if this is the game industry way of "extending gamer experience," because they can't finish their game in time of release.

Recently Hajime Tabata, director of Final Fantasy XV announced future plans for the game. These plans include previous announcements as well free updates throughout the coming year. Most of these updates are long term to enhance the game: playstyles such as having low-level runs and god mode, increase in text size for better readability, new bosses, achievements and limited-time hunts. I started to raise my eyebrow when I noticed the announcement mentioned it wanted to add gameplay enhancements for Chapter 13, which seems to be universally recognized by gamers as the worse chapter in the game. Tabata also wants to delve deeper into the story by adding scene that will give new insight into character motivations, characters like Ravus. Tabata made it clear that those will take time since these will need to be localized and voiced in other languages.

I am all for games being patched if they have bugs that need to be fixed or additional content that adds to the story -- whether paid or provided free of charge -- but to patch a story? Final Fantasy XV isn't the first game that has done this either. Remember Destiny? They released multiple expansions: The Dark Below, House of Wolves, The Taken King and Rise of Iron. Sean Murray from Hello Games who released No Man's Sky in August 9, 2016 alluded to the idea that there will be additional content, possibly even paid DLC. Although they did release a patch they could not charge for it considering how poorly it was received by so many fans who were disappointed in its empty promises.

While I appreciate any game developer wanting to improve the quality of their game I wonder one thing. Is it possible to fix a story through patches or expansions? Some game developers have done well by adding expansions. The most recent example is The Witcher 3: Blood and Wine which received RPG of the Year Award 2016, (another debate we will leave for another time). Dragon Age: Inquisition also had a few expansions that offer new lore, quest and adventures. The Witcher 3 and Dragon Age ever attempted to fix their story (not that they needed to), but only add more lore. This should go without saying, a story is like a house you need a solid foundation. Destiny came out with four expansions and while it did fix a lot of gameplay issues they never really could fix the storyline. In fact to this day there are still plot holes and some characters still remain a mystery.

Then you have Final Fantasy XV a game which has already started with a rocky foundation. I knew something was afoot when you were able to watch the animated series Brotherhood and the 3-D animation Kingsglaive before the release of the game. Brotherhood offered insightful character development of the main characters, while Kingsglaive offered some of the stories backbone. Creating the movie and show before the game is like creating the movie before the book; its rarely done. Sure enough that's what Final Fantasy XV have done and we can already see the problems with that -- as a result there are plot holes and characters who are underdeveloped. Just after one week of the game being released already there is talk of fixing chapters, adding more scenes and character motivations. Many players were elated that there are going to be new changes, but others were very upset with the news; especially for those who haven't made it to chapter 13 are left wondering if they should stop playing until all changes are made. Although I can't speak for others when I say this but, I could of waited another year. I would of rather waited another year if it meant that they fixed their story,

because I'm sure most people know you can't patch a story once its already out. I understand that deadlines need to be made, that fans have been waiting for ten years for this game to come to fruition, but honestly I could of waited another year if that's what it took.

I studied animation and because of that I truly believe when people say "Story is King." And just like the film industry video games have been hung up on more visual effects and realism and have left story on the backburner. However, unlike films once its released on the big screen you can't go back in and patch the story. Video game developers shouldn't try to take advantage of their unique ability to patch things up once they have been released. Chances are the damage have been done whether you pay or free of charge.

Reference:

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