

Q: What is the concept and storyline behind Tonic Trouble?

A: Tonic Trouble is a fun 3D-action adventure that features Ed, an unlikely hero who must save the world after accidentally pouring toxic goo all over it. His entire fault, Ed takes it upon himself to right every wrong the best he knows how!

He may be purple with big eyes and bigger teeth but Ed is resourceful and brave. In the face of danger Ed turns a stick into a sword, a peashooter, and even pogo stick. With Ed bow ties become wings, and popcorn has special powers to make him big and super-strong. Ed will need all his unique powers to survive the snow slopes, lava canyons, cliffs, pyramids, and whatever comes his way.

Q : What sort of gameplay features can we expect to see that will set this game apart from previous 3D platform games?

A : In terms of gameplay the game really evolves throughout the adventure. At the beginning of the game Ed can walk, run and jump like any other character, but as the game develops players will acquire special abilities. These include a flying bow-tie, a pogo stick to jump on dangerous grounds, a blow-pipe to shoot enemies, a chameleon powder to transform himself into other characters, and popcorn that will turn him into Super Ed, a hulk like alter ego. This evolution in Ed's powers creates real variety in the gameplay and is complemented by the constant barrage of puzzles to solve. This mix of humor, action and problem solving makes the gameplay of *Tonic Trouble* rich and challenging.

In terms of gameplay, *Tonic Trouble* is an evolutionary adventure and brain-teasing puzzler. At the beginning of the game, Ed can walk, run and jump like any other character, and as the game progresses players acquire new powers. These include a flying bow-tie, a pogo stick to jump on dangerous grounds, a blow-pipe to shoot enemies, a chameleon powder to transform himself into other characters, and popcorn will turn him into Super Ed, his hulk-like alter ego. This evolution creates real gameplay variety. Each level in *Tonic Trouble* is littered with puzzles & brain teasers which must be solved to find all the games hidden items. This mix of action and problem solving makes the gameplay of *Tonic Trouble* rich and challenging.

The game also makes a series of advances in the area of game music. Typically, games have several tracks that play in a continuous loop. In *Tonic Trouble* the musical changes are based on the player's place in the game. *Tonic Trouble* offers 10 long tracks, and the music changes reflect the character's responses to the action. During fighting scenes, the music is intense and nerve-wracking compared to slow and melancholy music when the player is frightened and alone. The *Tonic Trouble* music is the product of one musician, five in-house sound editors, and six months of work. In addition to these features, the PC version of *Tonic Trouble* utilizes Dolby sound to push the game's "total immersion" process for players.

Does the above paragraph even answer the above question? I think we should cut it.

Q: Tonic Trouble was already presented at E3 last year, what improvements have you made on both the PC and the N64 versions.

A: Last year we presented the bundle version of *Tonic Trouble* that was released in June 1998. This year we are presenting the retail version which takes the bundle version to the next level.

The storyline remains the same, but the gameplay is completely different. We have improved the game design by redesigning all the maps and embellished the scenario by creating many more interesting characters to interact with the player. There are also more clues, puzzles to solve and more enemies to defeat.

We have improved the number of gameplay options Ed has. For example, Ed can now attack enemies with his stick while running or walking. We have also implemented a series of new animations to make Ed more lively and likeable. For example, Ed now shivers when he is in a cold place and looks bored while he is waiting for the player to move.

Two new maps were added at the end of the game: fast paced and full of action, they increase the intensity of the game for players.

Q: Who created *Tonic Trouble*? How many people were on the team?

A: *Tonic Trouble* was co-conceived by Michel Ancel, the creator of Ubi Soft's blockbuster game *Rayman*. The *Tonic Trouble* team is composed of approximately 120 people including the team that developed Ubi Soft's latest 3D-integration tool – Architecture Commune Programmation (ACP).

As Ancel demonstrated in *Rayman*, he prefers fairytale worlds and fantastic Tolkein-like adventures to the metal and concrete cyberworld of many other 3D games. For *Tonic Trouble*, he was particularly inspired by the storyline of LucasArts' *Day of the Tentacle*. *Zelda* with its interface and travel-through-another-world feel for Super Nintendo was another inspiring title for Ancel. The story concept for *Tonic Trouble* revolves around two central themes: an anti-hero that makes a huge mistake and a world turned upside down!

Q: What innovations did Ubi Soft's ACP bring to *Tonic Trouble*?

A: ACP is a proprietary 3D-integration tool and a modular, scaleable engine developed by 50 Ubi Soft developers over an 18-month period at a cost of \$4 million.. The result is more complex characters, diverse graphical environments and problem-solving challenges. Characters change behavior and expressions, game settings have an improved richness and the gameplay becomes more interactive.

Q: How many worlds and characters does *Tonic Trouble* have?

A: *Tonic Trouble* has 12 levels each split into several maps. Each map has a very dynamic atmosphere built around a specific item: these include an Egyptian pyramid, a ski slope, a factory in a giant cooking pot, a glacier full of giant fruits and a deep

canyon. On top of that, each map requires special skills and introduces new gameplay elements. On the Ski Slope, Ed must slide on a Frisbee, in the Canyon, Ed must learn to fly using his bow tie and on the Glacier Cocktail, Ed must skate. However, one common element you will find on all these maps is that they are all completely crazy!

Q: What secrets and tricks are built into the game?

A: As in the original *Rayman*, players are rewarded not only with bonus points and access to secret levels but with the gradual acquisition of tricks and powers that will be required later in the game. For example, Ed's main weapon is a stick that initially can only be used to hit enemies. Through the course of the game, the stick transforms itself into various objects or weapons. This allows Ed to lift heavy objects, use it as a blow-pipe to fire bees, jump on it like a pogo stick or use it as a magic stick to transform himself into other characters or objects. This evolution in Ed's powers makes rich gameplay. You can return to a map you've already played, but the experience is not the same as you are able to use the different skills you have acquired.

Q: Why is *Tonic Trouble* more of an adventure game than an action game?

A: An action game centers on a player's dexterity in surviving, jumping, killing and so on. You don't need to know the plot in order to play. A dynamic plot and the player's skills in finding information drive *Tonic Trouble*. For example, the different mind-blowing characters in the story have the clues Ed needs to find the tonic can, and one fellow named The Doc has the magic stick Ed needs to survive. Ed must interact with these characters to move forward. The player also needs strong reflexes and tight control, but this is not as important as being curious and suspicious of why the designers placed certain elements in certain places, etc.

Q: Was *Tonic Trouble* designed for PC and then shoehorned into the N64? Or have both games taken their own course?

A: We made an initial PC version for the bundle market in March 1998. We then created a new version of the game (new levels, more characters) for the N64 and PC retail version. So the N64 version has been absolutely designed for the N64, by a separate team: we just kept the twisted spirit of the game and pushed it to the limits of the console.

One of our main objectives for *Tonic Trouble* was to have extremely rich textures. The game engineers for the N64 version have managed to achieve textures that are richer than other N64 game to date as is obvious in the brightness of the colors.

The N64 version of *Tonic Trouble* was designed to utilize more abstract shapes, versus the typical geometrical, flat polygons seen in other N64 titles. All characters, backgrounds, etc. have been manipulated to maintain the graphical integrity of the game.

The PC retail version will have exactly the same gameplay as the N64 version, but a specific team has reworked all the graphics to create environments that are as rich as possible. The textures are bigger and more colorful, objects have more faces that make them more realistic and there are a lot of detailed textures in the background.

Q: How will the DVD version of *Tonic Trouble* take advantage of the DVD format?

A: DVD's extra space permits the game's longer introduction and additional music tracks. In addition, the DVD version will be encoded with 5.1 channel 3D Dolby digital (AC-3) sound. John Loose, Multimedia Production Technician for Dolby Laboratories Licensing Division says, "Ubi Soft showed the world the immersive nature of Dolby Surround in ground breaking products like POD and now have gone one step further with Tonic Trouble. The cinematic sequences in Tonic Trouble, mixed in 5.1 channel Dolby Digital surround sound, are as good as anything coming out of Hollywood today. The soundtrack to Tonic Trouble is an excellent example of the convergence of the interactivity of the computer gaming industry with the production values and emotion of Hollywood films."

Q: What are the minimum system requirements?

A: For PC CD-ROM and DVD-ROM, a Pentium® 166 with a 3D accelerator card. The game will also be available for the Nintendo 64.

Q: What is the target age ranges?

A: Like *Rayman*, *Tonic Trouble* is designed to offer cross-generational appeal offering enjoyment for players between the ages of 9 and 97! Younger players will have fun with the game and experienced gamers will have complex and sophisticated elements to ensure they really enjoy the game.

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