



In Cyberspace, No One Can Hear You Scream



While fans witness an *Alien* resurrection at the box office, Kesmai is giving Fox's acid-blooded beasts a whole new life online.

By Action Grl

Many companies have attempted to translate the creepy, claustrophobic combat of the popular *Alien* film series into a video game—witness *Alien Trilogy* by Acclaim, *Alien³: The Gun* by Sega, and both Atari's and Capcom's versions of *Alien vs. Predator*. Fans, however, are still looking for the ultimate *Aliens* gaming rush—and they may be about to get it. *Aliens Online*, produced by Kesmai Corporation and Fox Interactive, brings the acid-spitting, double-jawed extraterrestrial terrors to the Internet, packing enough tense, real-time action to make Ripley shake in her combat boots.



Aliens have an unrestricted map view of the entire level, but their first-person view is tinted an eerie blood red.



In tight tunnels and air ducts, the Aliens have a distinct advantage.

the game's producer, Jason Bell. Cooperative play is the only way to win, whether that be assembling a fire team to seek out the hidden alien hive on each of the game's five levels, or protecting that hive from human attackers. Next year, Kesmai will add voice support to the game, so Marines and Aliens can give directions, call for help and plan strategies verbally on the fly. A level builder will also be made available so that players can stake out their own territory in the aliens' universe.

This Time, It's War

Most action games work from an "Us vs. Them" mentality: One lone superhero battling the forces of evil. *Aliens Online* takes that concept and skews it—players now decide which side is "us" and which is "them" by choosing to be a Colonial Marine or an Alien. While the first-person Marine perspective remains familiar, looking through the eyes of an Alien is distinctly, well, alien. Both species must quickly adapt to the game's varying environments in order to fully utilize them.

"The point of *Aliens Online* is for people to play each other," states





ALIENS

ONLINE



Kill an alien too close and you'll get hit by a spurt of acidic blood.

It's a Bug Hunt

Both the Aliens and Marines have distinct and impressive capabilities, ensuring that neither side has an advantage. The slow-moving Marines command devastating long-range weaponry, but the speedy Aliens don't remain long-range for long. Aliens can jump three times as high as the Marines and can tear through air ducts at blazing speeds—yet their claw and tail attacks are only effective when they're up-close and personal. The Marines build their character over time, winning medals and keeping campaign records from session to session. The Aliens, meanwhile, move up in rank from Face-Hugger to Worker to the Queen Alien herself (who must be protected at all costs). If she dies, the hive's pretty much toast, and all the other people playing as Aliens will find themselves doomed.



The longer each Marine survives, the more skills and medals they will earn.



As in the movie, Marines can see what their fire team sees through helmet-mounted cameras.



Player names are displayed over each sprite, and both species can chat at will.



The Marines' objective: infiltrate and obliterate the aliens' hive!

Detail-oriented fans of the films will revel in the accurate levels (including a re-creation of colony LV-246) as well as familiar weapons and movie-direct sound effects, such as the distinctive burst of the pulse rifles. "With *Aliens Online*, we've gotten very close to the foreboding, deep, mysterious feel of the movie," says Bell.

Stay Frosty

By the time you read this, *Aliens Online* should be in a public beta stage (which you're welcome to join, so long as you don't mind a few possible bugs here and there). When the final software becomes available in December, fans will be flocking to heat up the hive. **G**

Aliens Online

URL: <http://www.aliensonline.com>

Supported Browsers: Netscape, Internet Explorer, and AOL

Minimum Requirements: Windows 95, Pentium 90, 16 MB RAM, 16-bit 640x480 resolution, 16-bit sound card, DirectX3/Draw

Price: Free

Release Date: Currently in public beta; final product available December

E-mail us your comments through America Online at **Keyword: GamePro** or at this Internet address: comments.gamepro@gamepro.com