

MetaTraveller Space Sims

I like to think about a SciFi computer game, that allows the experience of Traveller gaming behind the keyboard. I don't think I could do it but I come up with thoughts and ideas in that regard every now and then. This is another such occasion, fueled by recent achievements in Elite Dangerous and Star Citizen development.

So it seems once a year I should review my desire based on the development progress of available FOSS (Free Open Source Software) projects. This is the 2016 roundup.

vsTraveller based on Vega Strike

No recent development. The game has huge potential, but lacks a code guru for Ogre porting and artists. Thus much of the engine is very good but visuals are from yesteryears. Seamless planetary flight alpha implementation are stuck too it seems. Multiplayer available. Vega Strike allows for ships acting as bases which enables a screen based (2D) interior representation as a structured menu. This is somewhat similar to old Privateer or Wing Commander or Schleichfahrt (a submarine sim). Of course one can create nice interior based on this using prerendered graphics. But all bases are to be hand scripted, so it's tedious work. Your ship is your avatar. No separate character like in EvE Online. No Roleplaying.

Traveller Pioneer based on Pioneer

Pioneer is under active development. It allows for modding and total conversion. This game features Elite Frontier gameplay. So planetary landing is well implemented. It lacks a procedural location generator that would allow to build bases procedurally. All implementations are hand built and thus scarce and looking alike. This is a promising project. But it is single player only. Your ship is your avatar. No separate character like in EvE Online. No Roleplaying.

TravMerge based on Simerge

This is like Pioneer with character based avatars, potentially detailed interiors, walking in ships, stations on planets. Original text from homepage:

Simerge is a space simulation project of mixed genre. I'm going to create a space game which should be a combination of elements from "X3 Reunion" and "EOD: Independance War 2". In a few words, the gameplay will be mainly oriented on tactical, economy and combat elements. Additionally there is 1st/3rd person walking inside and outside.

This could be the best of all worlds but modding documentation is very scarce. I have yet to dive deeper i to it.

In comparison Vega Strike has the best trade and faction system, Pioneer is the modding friendliest and Simerge features 2the most interesting features. None is complete and ready to compete with an AAA game (and none thrives to compete). A generic 3D figure is your avatar. No roleplaying.

State of the Art

EvE Online

Star Citizen

Elite Dangerous – Horizons