

MDA Breakdown – Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes



Overview

Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes is a Stealth-Action videogame developed by Kojima Productions and published by Konami in 2014.

The game serves as a prologue of Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain and takes place in the black site Camp Omega where the protagonist, Big Boss, has to rescue two hostages.

In this analysis there is a breakdown of two singular aesthetics of the game:

- Feel like Big Boss (Fantasy)
- Freedom of approach (Sensation)

From these, there will be a breakdown of the dynamics and mechanics involved to let the player feels these kinds of “fun”.

1 Aesthetic: Feel like Big Boss

From the opening cinematic the developers aim to convey the sense of Big Boss as a legendary soldier, uniquely capable of completing the mission. However, the narrative alone is insufficient to fully immerse the player in this fantasy. It is crucial that the gameplay and player choices reinforce this sensation.

1 Dynamic: Mastery of all weapons

As a legendary soldier, Big Boss is capable of utilizing any weapon provided for the mission or found on the battlefield. To achieve this dynamic the player can:

1. Mechanic: Start always with silenced weapons for a stealthy approach;
2. Mechanic: Steal weapons from enemy guards;
3. Mechanic: Operate cannons and tanks present in Camp Omega;
4. Mechanic: Use the environment to distract enemies (e.g., throwing objects, knocking on walls).

2 Dynamic: Having excellent gadgets

On the battlefield, Big Boss requires specialized equipment to accomplish the mission in the most effective manner. This includes:

1. Mechanic: Binoculars for map reconnaissance and enemy tracking;
2. Mechanic: Operate the iDroid, sci-fi device that enable communication with Mother Base, map navigation and helicopter support;
3. Mechanic: Night Vision Goggles for low visibility detection of enemies.

3 Dynamic: Superior strength and abilities

The player must that they are not an ordinary soldier. This is achieved through:

1. Mechanic: Reflex mode, which provides to the player a last chance to defeat enemies with a slow motion when caught;
2. Mechanic: Close Quarter Combat (CQC), allowing Big Boss to knock out enemies with just a short series of punches and kicks;
3. Mechanic: Limited enemy vision, enabling the player to plan actions based on his superior visual range.

2 Aesthetic: Freedom of Approach

Camp Omega, the game's setting, is an open and vast area featuring various buildings, roads, camps and guards. Designed as a playground for players, it offers multiple objectives and numerous ways to achieve them. The aesthetic considered now is the "Freedom of Approach", that allows the player to act as he sees fit in pursuit of their mission goals.

1 Dynamic: Assessing enemy behavior

Each enemy has a specific role and position, encouraging the player to study their behavior in order to act in the best possible way

1. Mechanic: Enemies have fixed starting positions and patrols;
2. Mechanic: Enemies are equipped with different weapons, armors and sometimes vehicles;
3. Mechanic: Enemy radio communication is intercepted by the player.

2 Dynamic: Gathering information from the area

The player is surrounded by a lot of information that stimulates curiosity and enhance his approach.

1. Mechanic: Radio System. The player can request information from Miller (the man that will help Big Boss during the mission) by pointing the binoculars at specific elements or individuals;
2. Mechanic: Guards chat with each other. This feature reveals important information about main and secondary mission objectives (e.g., hostages or ammunition locations)
3. Mechanic: Starting point. The game starts at the highest point on the island, providing an overview of Camp Omega and its features;
4. Mechanic: Interrogating guards. Surprising guards from behind offers several options, including interrogation for mission-critical information.

3 Dynamic: Multiple entry and exit points

Camp omega is vast and offers numerous entry and exit points. The mechanics that support this dynamic include:

1. Mechanic: Unlockable doors. Camp Omega is surrounded by an enclosure with different doors that can be unlocked to gain access. This system is used as well building entry;
2. Mechanic: Climbing actions. Climbing hills, ladders or buildings provides a better view of the area and can reveals new paths.
3. Mechanic: Helicopter support. Morpho, the helicopter pilot, can assist with hostage rescue and extraction upon mission completion.
4. Mechanic: Driving vehicles. Camp omega is full of vehicles that can be used for cover or transportation to specific areas.