



Compassion or Cruelty? The Race for the Crown of Albion Begins in "Fable III" Exclusively on Xbox 360

Microsoft and Lionhead Studios unveil a thrilling new adventure in the multimillion-selling "Fable" franchise, while introducing episodic distribution of "Fable II" only on Xbox LIVE.

HELSINKI — Aug 19, 2009 — Alexander the Great. Genghis Khan. Queen Elizabeth I. Che Guevara. Throughout history, revolutionary leaders have taken very different paths to power, bringing about prosperity and poverty, peace and sometimes anarchy to their people. Now Microsoft Corp. and Lionhead Studios will explore the journey to rule, with you in pursuit of a kingdom, in "Fable III," the exciting new game in the critically acclaimed "Fable" franchise. The title's debut was confirmed today at gamescom in Germany by Peter Molyneux, Lionhead's creative director, and will be available exclusively on Xbox 360 in the 2010 holiday season.

"Be not deceived. Revolutions do not go backward." — Abraham Lincoln

Since its inception, the blockbuster "Fable" franchise has offered players the opportunity to choose their own destinies as a hero, villain or someone between, where the possibilities are limitless and the consequences can weigh heavily on the path to greatness. In this new adventure, players will witness tyranny, poverty and injustice plague their land. They will see a people divided, and they will be compelled to stand up for change. They will also be forced to answer a question: What would you sacrifice to secure the crown of Albion? Will you uphold the values and principles that led to your ascension, or will you be corrupted by the station you've strived to acquire? Will you be a monarch of the people, or bring the entirety of Albion to the brink of collapse?

"We've spent a lot of time at Lionhead thinking about how we can innovate the gameplay and progress the world of the 'Fable' games for its third chapter, and we're confident that players won't second-guess what we have planned for 'Fable III,'" said Molyneux, who also serves as creative director of Europe, the Middle East and Africa for Microsoft Game Studios.

"Though I can't give too much away right now, players should expect to have to make much tougher choices with far wider consequences than ever before in Albion — and with many more interactive adventure elements."

In the epic story of "Fable III," the journey to rule the throne of Albion begins five decades after the events of the last chapter, and you play as the child of your hero from "Fable II." As you rule your kingdom as king or queen, you will be called upon to make choices and sacrifices that will test your morality and can affect your entire kingdom. Themes of heroism, leadership and consequence are taken to a grand scale as you fight to unite a divided people.

"Fable II" in Single-Serving Sizes

While "Fable II" has become the best-selling role-playing game of all time on Xbox 360, there are some who still have not experienced the magic and adventures that await them in Albion. For those who have watched from the outside, unsure if they were hero material, a surprise awaits. Microsoft and Lionhead Studios are about to embark on a new journey with the episodic release of "Fable II" on Xbox LIVE. The launch of "Fable II: Game Episodes" will debut Sept. 29 with the release of the first episode for free download exclusively on Xbox LIVE.

In the first episode, players will experience childhood and the trials of being a young adult in the world of Albion. After completing the chapter, players have the choice to then purchase the next installment or the entire game (in select regions). "Fable II: Game Episodes" delivers the entire "Fable II" experience in five consecutive installments, with all the Achievements, challenges and excitement of the disk-based game, as well as full compatibility with the previously released Game Add-ons, "Knothole Island" and "See the Future." The episodes are also fully compatible with the disk-based, retail version of "Fable II," allowing players to enter Albion and continue their story should they purchase "Fable II" at retail. All editions of the game offer cooperative play with friends on the same couch as well as on Xbox LIVE.*

"With the launch of Games on Demand on Xbox LIVE, we have a great tool in place to deliver classic titles in an incredibly convenient fashion," said Phil Spencer, general manager of Microsoft Game Studios. "With the 'Fable II' episodic model, we're encouraging people to experience the first chapter of the game for free, then move onto other chapters when they are ready. It's a unique model and one that will appeal to gamers who've been hesitant to dive full into the original retail release."

"Fable III" will deliver a sweeping, powerful story and new innovations in gameplay and Xbox LIVE functionality when it is made available in the 2010 holiday season, only on Xbox 360. More information about "Fable III" and the episodic release of "Fable II" will be made available at a later date at <http://www.lionhead.com>.

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About Lionhead Studios

Acquired by Microsoft Game Studios in 2006, the U.K.-based Lionhead Studios has developed a unique formula for creating original and innovative games such as the extremely successful "Black & White" for Windows in 2001, "Fable" for Xbox in 2004, "Fable: The Lost Chapters" for Windows in 2005, "Black & White 2," "The Movies" in 2005, and "Fable II" in 2008, the best selling role-playing game of all time on Xbox 360.

About Xbox 360

Xbox 360 is a premier video game and entertainment system. It is home to the best and broadest games as well as the largest on-demand library of standard- and high-definition movies and TV shows connected to the television — with music coming this fall. The digital center of the living room, Xbox 360 blends unbeatable content with the largest online social network of 20 million members on Xbox LIVE to create a limitless entertainment experience that can be shared at home or across the globe. With the addition of currently code-named "Project Natal," Xbox 360 will forever transform social gaming and entertainment with a whole new way to play — no controller required. More information about "Project Natal" and Xbox 360 can be found online at <http://www.xbox.com/projectnatal> and <http://www.xbox.com>.

About Xbox LIVE

Xbox LIVE is the largest gaming and entertainment network and delivers more entertainment than any device connected to the television, including movies, TV and games, with music coming this fall. This fall, Xbox LIVE also will be the only entertainment service to provide instant-on 1080p streaming high-definition video from Zune in supported countries. With an active community of more than 20 million people across 26 countries, Xbox LIVE lets you play the best games, enjoy the largest on-demand library and, coming soon, listen to millions of songs — all while connecting to friends anytime. An Xbox LIVE Gold Membership provides you with exclusive benefits and premium access to entertainment from the top studios and services, all in one place. More information about Xbox LIVE can be found online at <http://www.xbox.com/live>.

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

* Xbox LIVE Gold membership required for online multiplayer.

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To download the "Fable III" trailer and other gamescom press materials: <http://www.xbox.com/en-US/press>

Note to editors: If you are interested in viewing additional information on Microsoft, please visit the Microsoft Web page at <http://www.microsoft.com/presspass> on Microsoft's corporate information pages. Web links, telephone numbers and titles were correct at time of publication, but may since have changed. For additional assistance, journalists and analysts may contact Microsoft's Rapid Response Team or other appropriate contacts listed at <http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/contactpr.msp>.