

# TRANSPORT TYCOON

<b>Developer</b>	Microprose	<b>Options</b>	
<b>Distributor</b>	Ocean		1 Player
<b>Game Type</b>	Strategy		Mem. Card
<b>Review Date</b>	July 1997		

## Setting the Scene

Transport Tycoon is a business management game that has been extremely popular on PC format for over a year. We have already seen this type of game on PSX with Sim City 2000 and Theme Park, so will Transport Tycoon make a profit or end up redundant in the second hand shops? Let's see.

## Genre

Transport Tycoon involves strategy, planning and a fair amount of thought if you are to successfully fend off your business rivals and remain 'top dog' in the cut throat world of transportation. Rather than build thriving metropolises as seen in Sim City or ever expanding amusement parks, the subject of Theme Park, your aim is to create and then manage a transport company that dominates road, rail, sea and air. This involves building the road and rail networks then purchasing the vehicles that run on them, while harbors and airports must be carefully positioned to utilize their maximum potential. All of this to develop while your competitors are breathing right down your neck.

## Graphics

The main difference between the PC version and the Microprose PlayStation conversion is the use of a fully rotational 3D viewpoint, SVGA high resolution graphics and a larger generated world.

The game begins in a 2D isometric view which looks a little boring but thankfully this can be changed to the 3D mode which offers the facility to rotate the viewing angle and then zoom in up close and then back out again.

The graphics are fine with each type of building constructed having

an individual appearance to avoid confusion. Because of the nature of the game you do not end up with a single city that is clustered with buildings, rather a number of smaller towns that are inter-linked by your network of thoroughfares.

## *Sounds and Effects*

How about someone coming up with a business management sim that is backed by some dynamic music that would keep you alert and your wits sharp, rather than the usual sleepy dirge that accompanies these 'games'. Once again it's the 'hotel reception and shopping malls Greatest Hit's' that grinds on your nerves after a couple of hours playing.

The sound effects have never stretched the imagination in these types of games either, although the sudden blast from a ship entering the harbor counteracts the deep trance that the music has gradually put you in.

## *Playability*

The game begins in the year 1930. With 100,000 units in your bank account, you must compete against your ruthless rivals to achieve the successful business status of being the Transport Tycoon of the century.

You begin on a small island that is littered with small unconnected towns. It is here where you must start building routes between the towns, beginning with linking the road system. This will involve levelling out the contours of the landscape or digging tunnels through hillsides. Once two towns are connected you will need to provide bus terminals, mail depots and livestock holdings. It is now time to purchase vehicles to run your route as the collection of passengers and delivery of goods will provide your income.

The laying of road and rail is fairly straightforward. On screen is a main menu and the highlighting of a service transfers you to a sub menu. Once again an item is selected and carried onto the area of land that you are working on. A click of a button lays your first section, while holding down the button drags the item across the landscape. Current costs are displayed on screen. The game is workable using the joystick to control the cursor but a mouse is definitely more user friendly.

The same method is used for other services, including stations, airports, docks and the necessary roads that will eventually link them all together. Finding the best routes to move passengers, mail and goods is essential to stay ahead of your rivals. As the years pass by, you should invest in technological advancements which will bring more efficient vehicles and vessels into your business. Failing to invest carefully, will see your competition move ahead of you and this could be disastrous.

There are three modes of difficulty. An easy setting offers you a high loan at a low interest rate, low construction costs, and only one competitor who works at medium pace and allows you 6 months head start. The most difficult setting will see three rival companies rapidly expanding their business while you are faced with high construction costs and interest rates that go through the roof.

To succeed, you will have to overcome obstructive town councils who will block your planning applications, vehicle malfunctions and the odd natural disaster, in this heavy and resource management simulation.

## Value for Money

Transport Tycoon offers you an insight into the cut-throat world of business management. The game can become quite complex but IF you stick with it you will gain much pleasure from seeing your company grow into a huge conglomerate.

However, this is a big 'if' as the game can quite often border on sheer frustration. The loading times between menus seems very slow while constant on-screen messages will see you dropping the project you are presently working on to begin a more profitable venture. Also you should be warned that this game uses an entire memory card for a single game save.

## Opinion

### MARTIN

GRAPHICS: Average

SOUND: Poor

PLAYABILITY: Average

VALUE: Average

OVERALL

6.5/10

I must first say that I loved Sim City on the PSX and was eagerly awaiting the arrival of this transportation sim from Microprose. However, Transport Tycoon left me feeling a little bored at my demotion to a mere transport manager, after sampling the delights and pressures involved with running every aspect of a bustling metropolis. Not enough variation in gameplay.

### JIM

GRAPHICS: Good

SOUND: Average

PLAYABILITY: Good

VALUE: Good

OVERALL

7/10

The game was a little too shallow for my liking.