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Transport Tycoon Deluxe

Developer: Chris Sawyer	**Publisher:** Microprose
Release Date: 1995	**Also On:** Palm & PC

Everyone knows Chris Sawyer's creation Rollercoaster Tycoon. It was a huge success and one of the last great 2D games. But RCT was not the first game he developed. Before it there was Transport Tycoon. Does it come close to its younger brother or even surpass it? And is it a game still worth playing today? Read on to find out in this review on my time with Transport Tycoon.

The first thing you notice when you start the game is how close it is to the later RCT. There are no roller coasters but trains instead. There are also no separate people walking around that you have to please but instead there are dynamically growing cities. The art style is pretty much the same. It is a touch more realistic and it uses less pixels but that is not really a disadvantage in my opinion. There are no huge 2D sprites used but instead everything is made from small parts which make for a complete art style seen in few other games.

Your task in Transport Tycoon obviously is to transport stuff. There are different industries and towns already there when you start the game that you cannot build yourself. Instead, you build different transport routes to bring oil to the refinery, livestock, grain and steel to the factory and goods to people in the towns. You can also transport people from town to town or from the suburbs into the city or deliver mail. As you see, there is a lot to do. Transporting is not without effect. If you supply people with the things they need, towns will grow and eventually new industries will be built. The fascinating thing is that you have no influence on this, as it happens all by itself. Even though simple, it successfully creates the impression of a living, breathing world.

Gameplay works with a lot of windows but you get used to that pretty fast. You have to experiment to find out which routes bring in the money, which are worth subsidizing to improve the economy and which are worthless. You have to build railway tracks and roads and buy every vehicle as well as giving it orders. This never gets on your nerves too much since you can run a successful economy with 20 carefully selected vehicles already.

The age of the game shows in a few corners like the difficulty of getting two trains driving the same route without crashing and the AI enemies who are not really intelligent. I found the game to be the most fun playing without enemies and simply experimenting how big I could make the cities in the 100 years a game lasts. There are a lot of options like different difficulty adjustments, map sizes, four different environments and a map editor so everyone should be able to find a combination that is fun.

Transport Tycoon is an awesome economy game that everybody should have played. The engine is open source and the game should now run on pretty much every operating system. The best thing to play it on probably is a PDA with at least 480*320 pixels because the game beautifully works with the touchscreen but on the PC it is also on the same fun level as many of the better modern games. Chris, how about making another awesome one-man-2D-game?

Graphics:	9.5
Sound:	7
Gameplay:	9
Creativity:	9
Replay Value/Game Length:	10
Final:	9.3
Written by Ortwin	Review Guide