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I've seen Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 - and it's exactly the sequel I want

We visited Prague as a world exclusive to ask the devs of Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 questions. Goodness, the studio is planning big things! And that means both enthusiasm and concern.

Hero Heinrich is now more mature and experienced - but he has to be, because great things await him in Kingdom Come 2.

Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 is important . I'm currently standing in an old barracks in Prague. From the outside, the gigantic building complex including the inner courtyard looks like a mix of a Soviet office and a weathered fire station.

A few decades ago, Czech military vehicles were probably parked here, but the city of Prague has now turned it into an iconic party mile full of bars and event locations. The crumbling barracks facade turns into postmodern, ironic pomp.

Inside, the tanks had to make way for almost two dozen bar tables. I lean against a small stage and watch over a hundred Warhorse developers enter the converted event hall, stock up on delicacies at the buffet, chat with each other in Czech, English, here and there also German.

Guests came, including the compatriots and developers of Last Train Home, but also a delegation from publisher Plaion. The party setting may have been chosen deliberately. Because I can literally feel how much tension is hidden behind the small talk and the cheerful atmosphere.

The staff is about to see the 15-minute Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 reveal video for the first time. For the first time, all the individual parts that the 250 people at Warhorse have been working on for six years are presented as a big whole: the sequel to one of the best medieval role-playing games of all time.

Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 is important . The lights go out, before the video is projected onto the wall via a projector, the top bosses address the workforce: Plaion's CEO Klemens Kundratitz and Embracer's CEO Kicki Wallje-Lund - both only via recorded video message. Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 is "Plaion's most important game of 2024," it is said. May it be a product that "will please the players, but also the shareholders," says Embracer. Ah, the shareholders.

Warhorse has not been independent for years and now belongs to the Swedish parent company Embracer - the same Embracer that has been making negative headlines for months. Since a billion-dollar deal with Saudi Arabia fell through, the company has been in crisis mode, with the guillotine hitting one studio after another. Over 1,300 jobs were cut in 2023 and 29 games were discontinued, including the entire workforce of Gothic developer Piranha Bytes.

Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 is important because everyone in this room needs a win. Embracer for the shareholders, Warhorse for your own survival and me because, like thousands and thousands of other people, I have been looking forward to this sequel for six years! Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 is a sinfully expensive mega-project, twice as extensive as its already enormous open-world predecessor, developed by a workforce that is twice as large.

And as the trailer plays in front of everyone in the room, I'm a little embarrassed because I've already seen the clip. It's Tuesday evening, ten hours ago Warhorse presented me with Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 - and I was even able to play it myself as a world exclusive! After countless conversations with the devs, my first impression is confirmed: this sequel will make fans' legs shake with joy. But goodness, is Warhorse up to something.

Dimitry Halley

Oh, how time flies. It only feels like yesterday when GameStar editorial director Dimi flew to Prague as a regular editor to take a closer look at Kingdom Come 1. But 2017 was actually seven years ago - and the advantage of getting older: you get broader perspectives. The reveal of Kingdom Come 2 was exciting for him, especially compared to its predecessor: Warhorse has grown drastically as a studio, there are completely different budgets behind the game and the ambition of Kingdom Come 2 can be put into perspective much better if you already was there when it all started. Maybe Dimi just wants to gloss over getting older.

The most important information about the story, world and role-playing game

Before we get into the nitty-gritty with lots of information about the game, I have to disappoint you first: I played Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2, but I'm not allowed to talk about what I actually played. Warhorse would like to save detailed gameplay impressions for the future; I was primarily allowed to take part in preparing for my interviews.

But look at it positively: When I make predictions here now, you know that they are based on very concrete experiences. And there's still plenty to discuss, so let's first clarify the facts on what are probably the most important points for you:

Story & Mission

Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 will be a direct sequel to the first part. Fans finally find out how the whole revenge story about blacksmith's offspring Heinrich and his father's sword ends. However, Heinrich no longer boxed in the district class of local lords. Because Kingdom Come 2 revolves around royal disputes that affect the entire Holy Roman Empire. This greater relevance and drama of events naturally impacts quest design. The main missions in particular shift up a gear: Where the first part sent Heinrich on quite a few unspectacular errands, you can now expect sieges, battles and generally more spectacle.

Kingdom Come 2 will have over five hours of cutscenes, almost twice as long as its predecessor.

Open world & scope of play

You travel through two huge open world areas, each about the same size as the entire game world of its predecessor. The big highlight of the open world is the new city of Kutná Hora, a medieval metropolis recreated in every detail.

Kingdom Come remains true to itself when it comes to the design of the open world, so don't expect 300 floating icons and 400 bandit caves. Kingdom Come 2 relies on immersion instead of trying to be a theme park. However, there will be new activities, such as expanded tournaments.

Prokop Jirsa, Design Lead at Warhorse

“We really wanted to improve everything that was a little rough. And there were a lot of things that were a little rough in Kingdom Come 1. So we really tried to refine the gaming experience. We definitely didn't want to sacrifice our origins. It's still a really deep, old-school RPG with a lot of things to do and explore and a lot of systems working under the hood, but we want to introduce these things little by little and in a way that doesn't feel intimidating feels.”

“A lot of these systems, let's say the combat system... that's obviously a big part of a medieval RPG or any RPG these days, but in the second game it's still... you know, the depth is still there. But now the complicated systems are introduced much more gradually and people are thrown more into them. We have done the same thing with many other systems. A little more polish, a little more usability, but definitely maintaining the depth. This is something that sets us apart from other similar games.”

Combat & Character System

The combat system has been revised and should now reward offensive behavior more. At its core, the demanding basic concept remains the same. So you still choose the direction of attack yourself, parry, block and dance around your opponents. Armor and weapons have a massive impact on your movement repertoire. The historical arsenal of the predecessor is supplemented by crossbows and rudimentary firearms.

The devs already tell us that there are three classes of crossbows. You can even reload the lightest of them on horseback, but you need special devices for the heavier versions. Realism is still very important.

But Kingdom Come 2 won't be a pure fighting game: you can still solve many quests using your wits and conversations; The game is primarily a story experience. Warhorse has completely replaced and revised the controversial perks from its predecessor. Back then they were very situational and often useless characteristics, for example Heinrich fought better during the day than at night. Like I want to take a nap before every fight.

At first glance, Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 sounds like a safe bet: it takes the strengths of its predecessor and makes them bigger and better, while eliminating the weaknesses of the past.

So why my worriedly enthusiastic Lord? Because when you take a closer look, Kingdom Come 2 is not satisfied with the safe successor number, but rather takes its game concept a lot further in three crucial areas.

Tom McKay, actor of Heinrich

“The equipment and the way we do motion capture is much better and more advanced [than the first part]. We have facial shots, live facial shots, which we didn't have in the first game. [...]. And I think in terms of character development and his journey, there's a lot more scope for the player to build the Heinrich that they want to build, which wasn't so much the case in the first game. I mean, it was possible, but not to the same extent.”

“And what's really exciting for me as an actor is that you get to play all of these versions somewhere. He really goes to the dark side and you can really push the limits here. Or you stick more with the Heinrich who has a moral compass, more like Heinrich from the first game and then all the versions in between.”

1. The Holy Roman Empire strikes back

I now roll my eyes when someone uses “Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back” as an example of a perfect sequel, but a) the film *is* a perfect sequel and b) (unfortunately) more people have

it these days seen as “The Godfather 2”, so: A really good sequel doesn't just polish the strengths of the first part, but turns them around and does something new with them.

In the case of Star Wars, all of Luke Skywalker's strengths suddenly work against him: his self-confidence, his friendships, his activism. Star Wars 4 ends with a space battle, Star Wars 5 begins with a ground battle. And Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 seems to have understood exactly that.

The trailer already suggests it, but in conversations with the developers it becomes even clearer: Kingdom Come 2 doesn't just throw Heinrich into a new open world, but gives the story a completely new scope.

- A few years after the first part, Heinrich is no longer a beginner, but a trained warrior with a trained view of the world.
- In the first part he went through thick and thin with the aristocratic schlub Hans Capon - and it shows: the two boys look back on an organically grown friendship, which is already highlighted in the trailer.
- The feud within the German royal family was only hinted at in the first part, but plays a major role in the sequel: the Holy Roman Empire was shaken by deep unrest at the beginning of the 15th century, nobles fought for power, and the Hussites rebelled against the Catholic order. Kingdom Come 2 promises to be significantly more Game of Thrones than its predecessor.

In Kingdom Come 1, the siege of Talmberg is the big climax of the story; in Deliverance 2, many of the main quests are said to have such significance; In the trailer you can already see a huge siege battle, I expect significantly more skirmishes than in the predecessor.

Kingdom Come 1 already boasted great character developments - especially Hans Capon's transformation from unpleasant to best friend - but the story always remained just a very classic first act.

Six years ago that was a shortcoming, but now it's becoming a strength: Because Warhorse wasn't structurally capable of building such a gigantic open-world game back then, the studio was just sowing various breadcrumbs for the actual big conflict in history. And Kingdom Come 2 can now build on this wonderfully organically!

According to Warhorse, this game will bring Heinrich's revenge story to a brilliant end and conclude the Deliverance saga.

Speaking of “not being structurally capable yet”...

2. Immersion down to the smallest detail

Prokop Jirsa not only looks a bit like our Peter Bathge, but as Warhorse's design lead he is also one of the most important people behind Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 - and generally a

pleasant person to talk to because he can hardly be tamed, with fire in his eyes to chat about his project.

We have never seen Prokop and Peter in the same room together, but we still believe in purely coincidental similarities.

The last time I was at Warhorse - way back in 2017 - it said: An entire medieval city like Prague in the Cryengine? This is simply technically impossible for us.

Now Warhorse is daring to do exactly this supposedly impossible thing. And what's more: Prokop tells me how interactive the game world should be. An example: Every person in the entire game world is a unique NPC with a specific daily routine, specific place of residence, specific characteristics such as inventory, behavior and so on. That was true for the first part, but in a game world twice as large, including a medieval city? Ugh.

Second example: If I throw my valuable hat on the ground and a resident spots it, after a while he not only pockets the loot, but also puts the hat on himself! Scenes that happen exactly in the real world - especially at Oktoberfest.

Third example: If I pass out drunk, someone might steal from me. And I can then find this person in the city because someone will be wearing my shoes.

These examples illustrate what Prokop also confirms to me again: Kingdom Come 2 wants to go the extra mile to draw people as deeply into the scenario as possible. The world should feel believable, despite its size it sometimes risks being idle, but it offers more than just additional space.

Of course, space is a topic that we should still talk about. After all, there is no longer just one open world.

3. These open world(s)!

According to Prokop Jirsa, Warhorse reworks almost every rather unpolished aspect of its predecessor for Kingdom Come 2, without the game losing any of its depth or old-school charm. Mechanics are introduced more carefully and more comprehensibly, and newcomers are also given enough information at the beginning so that they can understand the story.

Warhorse is optimistic here because there weren't that many important story events in Kingdom Come 1 that are important for understanding the big story about Markvart von Aulitz. But even if all of these revisions really shine in the end, the big star of the show will be the two game worlds. The area around and in Kutná Hora as well as the Bohemian Paradise. Two huge landscapes await you here, both about the same size as the entire open world of its predecessor.

The so-called Bohemian Paradise is an idyllic low mountain landscape in the Czech Republic, or in other words: a sea of wooded hills, rocks, green pastures and other postcard motifs.

The city of Kutná Hora (or Kutná Hora in Czech) was the opposite of a tranquil idyll: as a silver mining town and royal mint, it achieved great national importance, sometimes even surpassing Prague. And of course this should also be properly reflected in the game.

For example, Warhorse's art director Viktor Höschl tells me about tunnel systems under the city that I can explore as a player. Kuttentberg is intended to extend the attention to detail of a Rattay from part one to an entire city. Warhorse says: We are recreating Kutná Hora in such detail that you can walk through the real Kutná Hora and immediately recognize the streets.

Viktor Höschl, concept artist at Warhorse

“We chose Kutná Hora because the city historically fits our story better. King Wenceslas established his coinage and treasury there. Sigismund, the antagonist of our game, also besieged the city in real life. The city is also linked in some ways to the story of the first part. Although Kutná Hora was the second largest city after Prague, in some aspects it was even more important to the kingdom.”

There are secrets hidden throughout the metropolis, Prokop Jirsa confirms to me, but I'm not expecting a Ubisoft formula: question marks don't hover over any of the residents, not every secret is connected to any quest, immersion is the absolute guiding principle of Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2.

The unanswered questions of Kingdom Come 2

Despite all the discussions, so many questions still remain. How do the revised battles play now? Am I still knocking enemy knights on the head for ten minutes without making a dent? Do the new weapons, crossbows and firearms, play sensibly and fun? Do the quests have the same charm and attention to detail as in the first part? Which skills does Heinrich take over from the first part, is there any import, and do the perks and skills work better than in 2018? Above all: Can this game, with all its ambition, be successful by the end of 2024? Kingdom Come: Deliverance 1 started with various technical problems. Yes, the studio is now twice as big and experienced, but the game is also twice as extensive.

Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 is a game of fate, a mammoth project that has to sell tens of millions of copies after release in order to finance itself. On the other hand, the signs are more favorable than in 2018: Ambitious open-world games have become rarer, and the market is all the more ripe for creative, unpolished idiosyncrasies of the Helldivers 2 brand. In a world after Baldur's Gate 3, people will have understood more than ever, how great old-fashioned role-playing games can be.

At least on paper, Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2 promises exactly the right thing. Now it just has to keep that promise.

Editorial conclusion



Dimitry Halley

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I so wish I could talk about my gameplay impressions of Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2, but at least you can get one thing: What I played was awesome! Okay, enough whistleblowing now.

Although, I can go on and on about my personal life: I needed a game like Kingdom Come: Deliverance 2! I begrudge everyone their fun with Helldivers 2 and Palworld and Enshrouded, but here I finally have a game that pushes all the right buttons for me personally.

The history fan in me is already basking in all the details that Warhorse promises me for Kingdom Come 2 - from the historically plausible Kuttenberg as a whole to the smallest escutcheon of any knight. Warhorse even broke into ancient private homes (supposedly with permission) because they needed photographs there for their research.

The role-playing game fan in me loves gritty, old-school role-playing games where I really need my own brain power to solve quests. Kingdom Come 2 inherits all the survival strengths of its predecessor. I'm not being fooled, at least that's what the developers say. Additionally, the improvements in the open world design sound like a very exciting sandbox where I can interact with people in completely new ways.

Even the skeptic in me is cautiously optimistic because Warhorse also clearly addresses the weaknesses of its predecessor. The combat system including perks should be revised and new mechanics should be introduced in a more understandable way.

And the story fan? He is looking forward to seeing Heinrich again, to a serious story full of twists and turns and historical events, but above all: to the culmination of a story that Warhorse has been working on for 13 years now.

Now I just need to convince the pessimist in me that everything will be pushed onto the launch pad bug-free by launch.

Editorial conclusion



Maurice Weber

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Kingdom Come is probably the blackest stain on my pile of shame. But I have an excuse! When it was released with its initial problems, I thought to myself: Okay, this is exactly your thing, but now you wait until Dimi gives the green light that all the bugs have been fixed and then play it in its perfect form! So I put it off... and then never played. How to do it like that. You know it.

But now! Now that part 2 is once again telling me with all its might what I missed and how scientifically this series is actually tailored to me! With its lovingly designed medieval city, its claim to tell a really nice medieval story, its old school role-playing mechanics... Now I have a deadline to catch up on it.

Of course I hope I don't have to have another Halley for the release "Better wait"-Read the test when part 2 comes. Then again... maybe that wouldn't be the worst thing in the world. Do I have more time to catch up on part 1? Ahem.