

Birth of the Empires (BotE for short)

Birth of the Empires is a turn based strategy game similar to games like 'Master of Orion'™ or 'Birth of the Federation'™. Every turn the player can give the order to build new buildings and ships, move his/her fleet, go into combat, tell his/her diplomats, scientists and agents what to do. The time it takes to build a ship or a building or the discovery of a new technology is calculated in turns. Thus a destroyer may take 4 turns until it is finished while a bigger ship like a cruiser may take 8 turns. This is similar to all actions the player does. A fleet may take several turns to reach its destination, the scientists may need a dozen turns to discover the newest technology and of course the secret agents also need some turns to plan an attack on an enemy empire. All 'time' is defined by the number of turns it takes to 'get there'. This is how a turn based game works.

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about BotE:

BotE is a fan game which means that it was developed by fans of an older, similar game, Birth of the Federation™ in this case. In the course of time however, BotE became more than Birth of the Federation™ had ever been. Although the guiding principles have not been altered, the whole universe has been devised from scratch, a new world to explore!

The project started in January 2004. That was the time when lead programmer, 'Sir Pustekuchen' started work on the game. The project first went public in January 2006.

Getting started:

The game starts in an unknown galaxy, full of live and unexplored star systems. In the course of the game, the player needs to discover new systems, colonize uninhabited ones and choose what to do with those that are inhabited. The player will have to use his/her diplomatic skills after encountering new minor races and deal with other huge empires. But there may come a time when the diplomats have nothing more to say. Now the player will need to talk in the only language every race understands. He/she will have to produce large numbers of combat worthy ships, ranging from fast nimble fighters and destroyers to large and powerful battleships and ultimately dreadnoughts. But beware! A balanced fleet may defeat even the largest battleship fleet. Scouts will discover the position and strength of enemy fleets in war time – hopefully – but in peacetime they will venture out into the galaxy, discovering new live and new cultures never even dreamed of. New threats will be met as ships may simply disappear without any reason. Of course there is a reason for that and it will still be out there...waiting...

Only the right strategy and balance in building structures and ships will protect the player's race. Battles may be won, but diplomacy and secret service will play their part, too. And the minor races will work to reach their own ends.

So if you ever played a 4X (eXplore, eXploit, eXpand, eXterminate) turn based strategy game like Master of Orion™ or Birth of the Federation™ you will feel perfectly at home. If you have not, it is even better, as you are going to experience a complex and addictive gaming experience that lets you take control of the galaxy...or fade to a footnote in history.

Choose your race!

As you may have guessed by its title there are several 'empires' to choose from. The 6 major factions – called 'races' – in the game¹ are:

- the Confederation of Planets
- the Catarian Invaders
- the Heyoun Consortium
- the Khaoron Empire
- the Rotharian Star Network
- the Omega Alliance.

¹ Due to the game being an Alpha version, the number of playable races depends on the version of the game you downloaded. The current version can be found on <http://sirpustekuchen.si.funpic.de/phpBB3/index.php>. Just register and download the up-to-date version. It's all for free.

Moreover, there are more than 140 minor races – ‘minors’ – the player can encounter in the course of the game. Due to the size of the galaxy chosen, only a about third of them will be encountered every other game.

Change log:

Alpha1 (0.41): published 08/28/06

“Changelog” to be found on the projekt’s site

Alpha2 (0.45): published 12/28/06

Changes to Alpha1:

Multiplayer support: LAN/Internet,

Rotharians introduced as 2nd playable race, next to the Confederation of planets.

New buildings and ships available, building costs and statistics of ships added

Alpha3 (0.51): published 04/14/08

Khaoron introduced as 3rd playable race.

New buildings and ships available.

KI implemented.

Alpha4 (0.60): published 10/10/2007

Heyoun introduced as 4th playable race.

New buildings and ships available.

KI refurbished, level of difficulty can be set in .ini file.

Alpha4 Refit (0.62): published 03/24/08

Complete revision of content.

More than 140 minor races included.

“Blockade system” and ‘resource routes’ implemented.

Under development

New features are currently under development that will outclass other 4X games.

Important new features will be the upkeep costs for ships, a galactic senate not unlike those found in other 4X games, new style, making the remaining two major races playable, new sounds and additional features like dynamic tooltips and anomalies.

An important issue is ‘mod-friendliness’. In BotE every user should and will have the option of designing new ships, buildings, minors and so on. Even ‘total-conversion-mods’ will be an option. So there is nothing that stands in the user’s way of creating a whole new universe.

Lead programmer ‘Sir Pustekuchen’ stresses that complicated modding known from other similar games will no longer be a of any concern.

Weblinks

<http://sirpustekuchen.si.funpic.de/phpBB3/index.php> official forum

The empires

The Confederation of Planets

Initially formed by all planets in the Sol system, this empire’s philosophical foundations are liberty, freedom and the dignity of the sentient being. This positive

surrounding makes all members very productive as they work for the sake of the common good. Moreover the emphasis on individualism means that there is much creativity that results in very good research. Other production segments such as food and energy production are good, too. However the high quality products of the Confederation do show in their price concerning production time and resources.

-> Fleet:

The ISF, the InterStellar Fleet, is the organization that is entrusted with exploring the galaxy and protecting the peoples of the CoP. High quality research ensures that the ISF always has very modern ships that can fight on their own or as big fleets, should the occasion call for it.

-> Intelligence

Due to the emphasis on personal freedom, heavy restrictions on the CoP's intelligence services lead to a severe lack of proper intelligence.

-> Philosophy and Politics

The people of the Sol system have been at relative peace for almost a century. In the course of their history they have gone through bloody wars and for more than three thousand years Earth was ravaged by the constant flames of war. But after the 3rd Falklands War some 50 years ago, mankind has finally come to the conclusion that war never is a solution. It will depend on the CoP's diplomatic skills if they can fulfill their dream of "war is never an option" while they venture ever deeper into the unknown darkness of space.

The Catarian Invaders

Nameless soldiers and slaves of the arms industry make up most of the Catarian population. Every system, be it a native Catarian one or the home of a subjugated minor race, is geared towards production of goods necessary to invade and conquer other worlds. Food and energy production is largely neglected and heavy restrictions on personal freedom and liberty result in less creativity and thus weak research. However, all these weaknesses play a subordinate role compared to immense power of mass production and an extraordinary intelligence service .

-> Fleet

The Catarian Fleet is average at best when it comes to single ship combat. Using their mass-producing star systems however, the Catarians throw large numbers of ships into battle in tight-and-rigid formation assaults.

-> Intelligence

The intelligence agency of the Catarian Invaders is perhaps the best of its kind in the galaxy. Not only is it used to suppress any riots, it is also proficient in dealing with other major powers, may it be through espionage or sabotage or both. The Catarian Invades could indeed win a war without firing a single shot in anger.

-> Philosophy and Politics

There is only one philosophy that is heeded by the Catarians: Catar first! Nothing may stand in the way of the Catarian Invaders and total supremacy in the galaxy. And this can only be achieved through violence, not diplomacy. Diplomacy only serves to buy the Catarians enough time for an all out assault by the intelligence agency, the fleet and finally the ground troops.

The Heyoun Consortium

Heyoun society rests solely on profit and the enrichment of the individual. Economic wealth is displayed abundantly. Through the course of history Heyoun economy has reached a peak never thought possible and being the envy of all other peoples of the universe. The foundation of Heyoun economy lies not in its production facilities or

mining complexes but in their most capitalistic trade system. A Heyoun is the ideal profiteer in almost any environment, be it a war zone or a pre-industrial civilization. Their food and energy production is most profitable as is their espionage concerning other empires' economies.

-> Fleet

The Heyoun almost exclusively use fast ships since they are considered the most profitable ones, carrying goods or raiding innocent competitors. Since they usually detest large scale battles as "pure destruction of wealth" their ships are not fitted with heavy armor or other expensive items like high quality beam weapons. However, if the need arises to protect very profitable sources of income, the Heyoun can muster an astounding number of ships.

-> Intelligence

Heyoun intelligence is geared toward internal security mainly, protecting secrets essential to the free market. However, a little espionage concerning other empires' finances can result in profitable situations.

-> Philosophy and Politics

There is one guideline for every Heyoun and one only: personal wealth. Any other considerations are considered secondary at best. The main aim of interstellar travel is accessing new interstellar markets. New peoples are to be traded with. Killing customers is a "no go" strategy in Heyoun society. Interplanetary trade is a great source of income but interstellar trade routes are the way to the future...and to the galaxy wide monopoly of trade by the Heyoun.

The Khaoron Empire

The Khaoron are largely a race of warriors. The true "teachings" of the great Khaoron himself – a prophet of times long gone – urge the Khaoron to carry the torch of the "teachings" to the infidel peopling the galaxy. Even if the book of "teachings" is one way to spread Khaoron's word, the sword and the torpedo achieve almost identical results in less time. Therefore Khaoron society has geared itself to war as the principle activity. Khaoron industrial capacity is unequalled in the galaxy producing goods in quantities never before seen. Food production is equally powerful and all other sectors of production like energy are only secondary features in Khaoron systems.

-> Fleet

The Khaoron fleet is the ultimate tool for the spreading of the true "teachings". If it consists of the right number and right quality of ships there is not much that can withstand a Khaoron fleet assault. Troop transports then deliver hordes of well drilled warriors that can crush any defenses met in a system.

-> Intelligence

The intelligence arm of the Khaoron is strong enough to guarantee internal security and defend the empire against covered attacks. However, neither espionage nor sabotage are justifiable methods of spreading the "teachings". If the spreading of the "teachings" is under attack by cowardly acts of intelligence attacks, the fleet is mobilized for yet another glorious war in the name of Khaoron.

-> Philosophy and Politics

The Khaoron think of the galaxy as consisting of two '*clamans*', or houses. The house of light is the territory of the Khaoron Empire. Anything outside the Empire is the house of darkness. The latter is viewed as battleground of the future when Khaoron warriors will carry the torch of light – the true "teachings" of Khaoron – to the distant stars, crushing any opposition that stands between them and fulfillment of their holy oath.

The Rotharian Star Network
Done by Xenox

The Omega Alliance
?

Resources in BotE

System wide resources:

Resources available on the internal level of a system can not be transported by any means to another star system. They are only available locally.

Food:

The population of a system needs food. Food is produced by farms or similar buildings, each of which needs one billion workers. If there is an overproduction of food in a system the surplus food is stored in warehouse. If there is a shortage in food production the population of the system can use the stockpiled food. Only if there is no food left in the warehouses will a famine break out, decreasing morale as well as population turn by turn. As long as there is enough food the population will increase in size until the population limit of the system is reached.

Industry:

Industrial buildings produce a certain amount of 'industry points' (IP) per turn. All buildings or ships being produced in a system have a certain amount of IP. For example if a ship, that requires 200 IP, is to be build in a system and the system has an IP output of 100 the ship will be completed in two turns. If the ship costs 850 IP the same system will need 9 turns to complete the ship. The same applies to buildings. Every industrial building needs "one worker" e.g. one billion people.

Energy:

Energy is an invaluable good in any system. It is used for powering buildings such as space docks, defense mechanisms and other specific structures. The more energy buildings are manned the more energy is available in the system. However surplus energy can not be stored. And not all structure need energy to be online.

System independent resources:

These resources do not necessarily exist in every system. Some systems may have all resources mentioned below while others may lack two or three or even more of them completely. There are several ways however to transport these resources: transport ships, resource routes and the intergalactic warehouse. All of the structures mining the following resources need one worker each.

Titan:

This basic and natural building material is relatively wide spread and is used in many sectors of manufacturing from the construction of buildings and certain structures to the creation of warships. It is an indispensable asset in any star system.

Deuterium:

Heavy hydrogen, as it is alternatively called, was used up to the 21st century for enhanced nuclear activity, in the military as well as the civilian sector. Since then deuterium – which chemically is identical to normal hydrogen – has been used to power continuum and graviton engines and for general energy production.

Duranium:

Duranium is a metal alloy that is used in advanced engineering and construction, ending up as almost anything from deep core mines and advanced industry to stronger hulls and reinforced continuum barriers of warships. Later generation ships are dependent on duranium for their construction, as are some structures.

Crystals:

This resource is primarily used in energy production. It also plays a vital role in energy transformation. This is the main reason crystals are essential to high tech products like advanced ships.

Iridium:

This heavy metal is similar to platinum. It is needed for the most advanced ships and most complex structures. It is much more durable than simple duranium.

Deritium:

This resource is the basic component of any continuum drive as it regulates the matter-anti-matter reaction. It serves as a catalyst that, if need be, has to be transported to systems which are to produce any ships.

Empire wide resources

Credits:

Credits are the only currency accepted in all systems of the galaxy. They are received via taxes depending on the population's morale and the productivity of the industry. Another very profitable source of income are intergalactic trade routes.

Intelligence:

This is the resource used when espionage, sabotage or internal security are used. Every manned intelligence structure adds intelligence points to a pool every turn. Internal Security protects the empire from espionage and sabotage. Espionage is the method for obtaining data about other empires. Sabotage causes direct damage to the enemy as structures or ships are bombed and other illegal deeds are done.

Research:

Every manned research facility raises the level of research points available. The more research points an empire produces the faster it will discover new technologies that in turn increase the efficiency of all other fields of production. New structures and ships will become available with every new tech level reached.

Population:

Morale:

Morale has major influences on star systems. Firstly, the lower system morale gets the more probable riots or even revolutions become. In extreme cases this can even lead to a system's declaration of independence. Secondly the morale heavily

influences the productivity of the population. Average morale means a value of 100. This means that the workforce in any field, be it the mines, the industrial production, food production, intelligence or research (energy production is *not* affected), has an output of 100% of the base value. This means for example, that an industrial building that is described as producing 21 Industry Points (IP) does produce 21 IPs or 100% of the base value. If the morale in a system is better, e.g. 120, this means that this building produces 120% of the base value. In our example the industrial building would not produce 21 but 25 IPs. (20% of 21 = 4,2 or rounded: 4 – 21 IP [base value] + 4 IP = 25 IP.) This may not seem much but take a star system that produces 1000 IP with morale 100. With morale being 120, it would produce 1200 IP. Now if we want to build a very large ship in this system that takes 8000 IP to complete we see that instead of 8 turns ($8000/1000 = 8$ turns) we would complete the ship in only 7 turns. ($8000/1200 = 6.667$; because all IP must be produced, the turn number is always rounded up).

Now if an empire is led according to its character morale can get very high, more so when morale enhancing buildings are used. This means that systems can reach morale values even higher than 150. This in turn means that we could build our big 8000 IP ship in 6 turns ($8000/1500 = 5,3 \Rightarrow 6$ turns). If morale gets up to 160 the ship is produced in only 5 turns. This in turn means that a star system with morale 160 takes less time to build three of these ships ($3 * 5$ turns = 15 turns) than a system with morale 100 takes to build two ($2 * 8$ turns = 16 turns).

On the other hand low morale can seriously hamper the ambitions of every empire. Making decisions that do not fit the philosophical or political way of thinking of the player's empire can result in serious morale penalties. For example the Confederation of Planets decides to declare war on two other empires, though the peoples in the CoP detest war. The result will be a loss of about 20 morale points in every single system. The result for the player will be that his morale 80 systems will be no match for e.g. a player playing the Catarian Invaders "correctly" and thus having morale 160 systems, because the Catarian then has twice the output of the CoP player, producing more ships, more intelligence power and much else.

So you do not want to have low morale in any of your systems!!

However, there are times when unpopular decisions might be necessary. It is up to the player to choose his/her course of action. And there *are* ways to decrease the morale of other empires...

Controlling your Empire

The galactic main screen

This is where a player gets what is called "the big picture". Much of the information vital to leading a star empire is displayed here. A geographical map shows the borders and systems of your empire and the space surrounding it, provided you scouted these surrounding sectors. Fleets, star bases and other items are displayed here, too, provided they are yours or spotted by your sensors. It is also the place, where ships and whole fleets receive their orders. Double-clicking on a star system will take you to the system screen of that particular star system. Controlled sectors are shown in the respective color of the respective empire. (E.g. CoP systems are blue, no matter if there are planets in that system or not) Neutral star systems are shown in white. These systems are inhabited by a minor race. Another important information you can get is, by point the mouse cursor over a star system, on the lower left part of the screen the actual (if any) and maximum population is displayed.

Most important: On the upper far left there is a button called “TURN”. This is the button you press when you think you are done for that turn.

The NaviCon

On the left of the main screen there are several buttons. These form the so called NaviCon or “Navigation Console”. It is a valuable asset to every emperor as it allows quick access to all of the following areas:

- Galaxy (shows the galactic map)
- System (shows the buildings, build list, distribution of the workforce in a single system)
- Research (shows the different research fields, and the number and distribution of research points in %)
- Intelligence (shows the number of intelligence points as well as their distribution towards “internal security”, “espionage” and “sabotage”)
- Diplomacy (shows the different races encountered, their attitude toward the player’s empire and the diplomatic options available)
- Trade (shows the trade screen)
- Empire (shows an overview of the player’s empire)

The system screen

This screen might look quite complex. It is. However it includes all information and all options that the player needs to efficiently run the system. (And a proficient player can produce more goods [including research and intel points] by efficiently micromanaging a system). The menu bar at the bottom of the screen consists of the following buttons:

- Building menu
- Production
- Energy
- Overview
- Trade

Building menu

The screen appearing when you press the button “Building Menu” delivers a lot of information. In the upper center is a list of structures that can be build in this system. If you click once on any of the structures information about the structure concerned will be display in the lower left of the screen while a picture of the structure will be displayed in the upper left corner. In the information box you can either choose ‘information’, displaying building costs and the effects this structure will have, or you can choose ‘description’ to receive background information about this structure.

If we return to the upper central part of the screen, where the list of ‘buildable’ items is displayed, we notice that below the list there are three additional buttons: ‘Build list’, ‘Ship yard’, ‘barracks’. In the first you can choose to construct buildings for this system, the second offers you to enlarge your fleet by building vessels of all kinds available in this system’s shipyard, and the third option gives you the opportunity to build ground troops. (Hint: But beware, most peoples do not like soldiers hanging around!)

On the upper right side of the screen all information on production and warehouses of this system are displayed. On the left of this display the points produced every turn are displayed while the contents of the warehouses is displayed on the right.

On the lower right side of the screen all items to be produced are chronologically ordered. The top item is being produced, the bottom one is the last that will be produced. On the right the number of turns is displayed that it will take this system to finish this item. Only after the topmost item is completed, construction of the next item starts. If this lower right display is empty, 'trade goods' are automatically produced. Beginners should heed the following advice:

When a system produces nothing, i.e. trade goods, the player either has a perfect balance in his empire...or he/she simply forgot!!! Trade goods raise the amount of credits in a very modest way only. It is almost always better to produce *something* else.

Production menu

Most structures in a system have to be 'manned' in order to produce anything. Every building that must be manned, must be manned by exactly 1 billion people, or one "worker". In the 'normal' menu there are 5 categories of buildings:

- Food (buildings producing food)
- Industry (buildings producing IP, defines how fast items are constructed)
- Energy (sets the amount of energy available)[energy cannot be stored!]
- Intelligence
- Research

On the bottom of the screen the number of free workers(not used = always useless) to actual population in the form of X/Y. So if you have free workers, use them by assigning them to more productive tasks than just sitting around eating your food and watching your holo-movies! The ideal arrangement is always 0/X, so no free workers. You can either assign them to one of the 5 categories above, or you click on the button "resources" to the right of the 'free worker' display. Now you have entered the resource production display. The 5 categories have vanished and now the display in the upper center displays all resource that can be mined. To mine these you, of course, need mines. And these mines must be manned, too. The importance of mines will grow as new resources are discovered with raising tech level. (Just as a hint, you will need a lot of duranium when upgrading your factories in tech level 5!)

Energy menu:

As has been mentioned earlier some structures do not need workers but energy. A typical example of this are scanners. The energy available, i.e. still free at the moment, can be seen in the info display on the upper right. Special structures that for example raise moral or increase research efficiency, as well as all defensive buildings need to be powered by energy.

(Hint: Home systems, i.e. the starting system of a race, usually get quite a few special buildings that can be very energy demanding!)

Overview menu:

All structures created can be viewed in this menu. But not only can you see what structures your system possess, you can also scrap, i.e. destroy, structures. To do that just left click on the picture of the structure you want to scrap. This gives the scrap order and in the following turn, that structure will be gone. If there are several structures of the same type, such as farms, left click as often as is the number of structures you want scrapped. So if you want to scrap 4 farms, left click on the farm symbol 4 times.

If you gave a scrap order by accident, simply right click on the structure to erase the scrap order. If you gave several scrap orders, like in the farm example above, click as often as you want to remove as many scrap orders as you want.

Trade menu:

Here there are several possibilities to trade resources or gain credits. On the left hand side, you can set trade routes to systems of other empires and minors, you have at least a trade agreement with. Trade is a powerful source of income and the lifeline of the Heyoun Consortium.

Or you can set a resource route from this system to another of your empire's system. Below the 'resource route' button there is a button you can press to switch between the different resources such as titanium, deuterium etc. The idea behind resource routes is that some systems do not have all resources. For example if system A lacks deuterium to upgrade its energy producing buildings the player can go to a system B, go to the trade screen, choose 'deuterium' below the resource route button, then press the resource route button. Now he is drawn to the galaxy map and clicks onto the system that needs the deuterium. During system A's construction (which needs deuterium) this resource route can not be deleted. Moreover due to the difficulty of the transport, 10% of the IP points needed to construct the chosen item (e.g. energy upgrade) are added to the total IP costs of the item *for every single sector* the resource route traverses. So if system B is two sectors away from system A, the construction costs of the item in system A are raised by 20% ($2 * 10\%$).

On the right hand side of the screen, you can put resources into an 'interstellar storage' [inS]. This will only take effect next turn. In the next turn the chosen resources are in the inS, although 15% of the resources are gone for good, as this is a 'turnly' penalty for using the inS. Now the player can access another system, go to 'trade' and draw the resources in the inS to that system. Again, this will only take effect the following turn. The following turn will find the resources located in the allocated system, again minus 15%. (Hint: The inS can be a powerful tool, however the costs of 15% per turn of the actual amount is pretty heavy. Do not forget resources in the inS!!) The inS can take no more than 20.000 units of any given resource at a time, though if this is a hindrance to you, your empire is NOT streamlined!

The research screen

In this screen you receive all information concerning research and technological advancement. The principle information can be found on the upper right side of the screen: research points in total and respective bonuses for the 6 different fields of research in %.

On the left hand side, the 6 research fields are shown. Below every picture you can see how far research has progressed in this field until it hits the next tech level, and further below, how many % of your research points are invested in this area every single round. (Hint: As you get to know your chosen races better, you can use this system to push research in certain fields e.g. to receive the technology for the newest warship as soon as possible.)

In the lower right corner you can see three buttons:

- 'normal', i.e. the screen with the 6 research fields
- 'special', i.e. the screen concerning the special technology field
- 'ship design', here you can modify available ships in terms of protection and firepower

Intelligence screen

In this screen the potentially powerful intelligence agency can be set to either 'internal security', 'espionage' or 'sabotage' or the whole continuum in-between. While the first one should protect your empire from foreign intelligence actions, the second is for information gathering about other empires and the third one for hurting them. On the left side is all information displayed concerning internal security and the more offensive sectors of intelligence. Note the 'depots' that show your intelligence's potential in dealing with other empires. The menu bar at the bottom:

- 1) In the 'Assignment' display, you can assign a certain percentage of your intel points to either espionage, sabotage or both in varying degrees such as 10% espionage/ 8% sabotage. You can therefore choose any of the other known major powers.
- 2) Going to either the 'espionage' or 'sabotage' displays, you will have several options to choose from. Firstly, you can set the 'aggressiveness' of your intelligence agency in that field. Secondly, you can draw power from the 'intel reserve' and reallocate it to espionage/sabotage in 4 different sectors of the targeted empire: economy, science, military and diplomacy. (Hint: no special explanation will be provided here concerning the results of intelligence actions. Why don't you just try and see for yourself?!)
- 3) The 'information' displays offers a relatively detailed analysis of other empires, depending on your knowledge of the other empires by diplomatic contact or espionage.
- 4) The 'report' display offers short intel reports about foreign and own intelligence activity.
- 5) In the 'attempts' window the emperor can organize an attempt to sabotage a target discovered by espionage earlier on. This could be called the 'command center' of intelligence warfare.

The diplomacy screen

This is the place to get into diplomatic contact with other races, be it other empires or minors. On the left hand side of the screen all races known to your empire are displayed. Left clicking on any of these a race picture and information on the race will be displayed. To the left of the picture there is a scale that shows the relationship of that race with your empire. The higher the colored area goes on the scale the more they like you! This is especially important with minor races as they might join you if your influence is big enough. (Hint: Besides their resources minors also offer special structures that give bonuses like increased research.) On the bottom and to the left of the screen there are three buttons:

- Information (displays information on the selected race)
- Offers (displays your empire's options for negotiation)
- Received (displays offers your empire received from other races, you can choose to accept or decline)

Trade screen

There are three buttons that are called: 'stock exchange', 'monopoly' and 'transfers'

Stock exchange display

Here you can buy or sell resources. First choose a system by a double left click in the galaxy screen, then go to the trade screen and press the button 'stock exchange'. Resources are sold or bought in units of at least 100. Like the real stock exchange the BotE stock exchange is organized by the law of supply and demand. This means

every time you buy 100 units of a resource the price will rise for the next 100 units of this resource. Selling resources works the same way. An important feature is the 'multiplier' button. This gives you the opportunity to buy or sell resources not in 100-unit-steps but in 1000s or more. The idea behind this is, that you could for example buy 200 units of a resource, and then sell 1000 units at once, profiting from the law of supply and demand.

The info display at the bottom of the screen can display the price development of a resource over a given time.

Transfer display

Transactions concerning the target system will be displayed here. These transactions are done after the turn button has been pressed so that it is always a good idea to check them before hitting the turn button. The loss or gain of credits by transfers is part of the 'change' in the upper left corner of the screen right below the 'turn' button.

Monopoly display

As soon as all empires i.e. major races, have been discovered monopolies can be acquired here.

The empire screen

This is an information screen that gives a concise summary of all information needed to rule your empire and later on the galaxy...hopefully ;-). The menu bar at the bottom:

- Events (here all events that took place between the last and the present turn are displayed, you can toggle through different areas such as military or research)
- System (displays all the empire's systems, the items being produced, food storage and optionally the resources)
- Ships (displays all the ships of your empire, their names, locations and other important information, and you can even view a list of ships lost)

The empire screen is a great asset for the organization of the empire and should be consulted often, especially in later phases of the game when the number of star systems goes into the dozens and the number of ships into the hundreds.

THE REAL THING: commanding ships

In most conflict scenarios in BotE fleets of different ships will decide the fate of empires and ultimately that of the galaxy. Now, after having built quite a number of ships you may want to actually move them. This is done on the *galaxy screen*. The map is divided into sectors that are either empty or contain a star system. In every sector that contains one or more ships a small version of the parent empire's logo is displayed in the upper right of the sector, informing the player about the presence of ships of that empire in that sector. If such a mini icon is displayed in the bottom left of a sector this means that an outpost or star base of the empire concerned is in that sector. Clicking on one of the mini icons will display the relevant ships in the info display at the bottom of your screen. If the chosen icon is that of your empire three buttons will appear on the right of the info display. These are 'Tactics', 'Order' and 'Action'.

Tactics:

Here you can mainly do two things. Firstly you can set the respective ship or fleet to 'Avoid' or 'Attack'. The first tactic will make the ship/fleet try to avoid confrontations with other ships/fleets. The other one of course means the exact opposite.

Another option of the Tactics menu is that you can create a fleet. This is simply done by clicking on 'Create Fleet' and then adding other ships in the info display to the fleet by left clicking on the respective ships you want to add. To drop ships from fleets just open the fleet menu as mentioned and left click a ship in the fleet.

Moreover this menu is the place to cloak your ships if your empire has 'cloakable' ships.

Order:

Here you can choose which ship should be the flagship of a fleet. Flagships increase the efficiency of the fleet but result in serious consequences when destroyed during battle. [not implemented yet] You can also raid enemy systems, stealing a lot of credits...hopefully. Another option is the 'follow' order. This makes the selected ship/fleet follow an enemy or 'friendly' fleet.

Action:

Here you can make the ship/fleet perform certain actions, depending on the ship and ship class. A colony ship could for example start terraforming a planet or colonize an inhabitable planet. Transport ships can 'transport' ground troops or resources from one system to another and all ships can be scrapped. [Hint: Scrapping a ship in a system with a shipyard will refund the IP that were necessary to build that ship, in the form of credits]

Moving

To move a ship/fleet simply left click on the mini icon, then choose the ship/fleet you want to move in the info display at the bottom of the screen. Then, if you get your mouse cursor over the galaxy map you will see the course the ship/fleet will take. The number displayed shows the amount of turns it will take the ship/fleet to reach its destination. (Hint: some ships in the game can move more than one sector per round. If creating fleets, always be sure that all ships have the same speed. If there are 4 ships with speed 2 and one ship with speed 1, that fleet will only be moving with a speed of 1.)

The movement of ships is not only limited by their speed but also by their range. There are three ranges: short (defined by the green line around your empire), medium (yellow line) and far (red). Mixing ships with different ranges means that the fleet will have the same range as the ship with the *shortest* range. Planetary space docks, outposts and star bases increase the range of ships.

Another restraint to ship movement is the territory of another empire. If there is a non-aggression treaty of any kind in place your ships are not allowed to enter their territory and vice versa. Military cooperation, alliances and such will not only allow you to enter your ally's space and fight alongside him/her in battle but the range of your ships will increase as your ships can draw supplies from his/her space docks.

GIVING IT TO THEM!! Space Battles

3D battles or not implemented in the game...not yet anyway. If a battle occurs, e.g. when a fleet is ordered to fly into a sector in which an enemy fleet is stationed, combat occurs after you have pressed the turn button. The results are calculated automatically. At the start of the following turn a message will show up in the empire screen telling you the results and losses of the battle. If two fleets' movement means

they should have met in space combat will *not* occur. The probability of a battle also depends on the tactics applied by the respective forces i.e. if both fleets are on 'avoid' battle will very probably not take place.

Blockading star systems

If ships with the 'blockade' feature are orbiting an enemy system, that system faces a heavy burden. It is cut off from all extra-system resources, so it has no access to resource routes, transactions, the interstellar Storage [inS], stock market or income from trade routes. To top that you cannot even scrap buildings. But your enemy is besieged, he can't, too.

Terraforming and colonization of star systems

Every star system consists of several planets. While some planets like class M planets support life ('class' letter displayed in gray color) , others like class P planets do not ('class' letter displayed in blue). However, colony ships can *terraform* uninhabitable planets to inhabitable ones, although this might take time. To terraform a planet chose a colony ship in the sector the planet is in and choose 'action' and then 'terraform'. Then select the planet to be terraformed. The more colony ships are terraforming a planet the faster it will become inhabitable. Once at least one planet in a system is inhabitable (gray) a colony ship can be ordered to colonize all planets momentarily inhabitable. If a world has already been colonized by your empire and a new planet in that system becomes available you need *another* colony ship to colonize that planet. Some 'planets' like gas giants are and will forever remain uninhabitable. These planets' class letters are shown in blue.

Max. population shows how many people/insectoids can live in that system at the utmost, including planets still uninhabitable.

General hints

Diplomacy introduction

Many minor races exist throughout the galaxy. How these minor races react to contact with your empire depends on your race and the minor races you encounter. Some may see you and instantaneously despise you and your people and declare war on you. (Hint: Which may not be a bad scenario, depending on your race...) Others may immediately be on friendly terms with you and again some others will want to become members at once.

In BotE there are different treatises. Not only do they differ concerning the intensity of the relationship but also concerning races involved. For example, for minors one of your treaty options is membership, which means that the minor will become one of your systems as if it was a colonized system. Membership, however, would be an inappropriate treaty between to empires who can be allied at the utmost. Diplomatic contact between empires i.e. major races needs other treatises. Most relations between majors start with a trade agreement. The following treatises are organized according to the level of cooperation beginning with least cooperation:

- Trade agreement
 - oTrade routes can be established, producing significant amounts of credits
- Treaty of non-aggression (between major races only)
 - oAn armistice is established
- friendship treaty
 - oA more stable treaty of non-aggression

- Cooperation treaty
 - Military resources (range) are shared
- Alliance
 - An advanced form of the cooperation treaty
- Membership (between a major and a minor race only)
 - The minor races becomes a regular part of the empire (like a colonized world) and moreover all minor ships are integrated into the empire's fleet

Miscellaneous

- Gift
 - Gifts in the form of money or resources make an empire more appealing to the one receiving the gift. (Hint: This may not work concerning human players, depending on the players)
- Demand (between major races only)
 - An empire demands resources, money or the ownership concerning contested sectors.
- Bribe (minors only)
 - A minor that is part of an empire can be bribed by another empire to turn their back on their current 'owners'. (Hint: If an empire loses a minor race through bribery, this not only hurts concerning credits and production (intel, research) but also because of possible special structures (e.g. the CoP loosing a minor that has a special structure increasing 'inner security'.)
- War
 - The empire declares war on an empire or minor
- War pact
 - The two majors involved simultaneously declare war on a third empire
- Defense pact (major powers only)
 - Two empires fight alongside each other but no military resources such as star bases are shared

Managing the workforce effectively

If no special actions are planned, optimizing and upgrading your star system is the top priority. (Hint: NEVER leave your empire unguarded. NEVER! NOOOO! NEEEEVEEEER!)

Big star systems:

It is important to use every "worker" as efficiently as possible. Defense buildings only need to be powered in case of impending attack. If the system is not threatened it is better to turn them off in the energy screen and reallocate the energy workers to e.g. intel or research so that there is only enough energy produced to maintain the non-martial buildings. In a case of immediate threat and impending attack on the other hand the workers are best used to create enough energy to power all defensive structures. In this situation everything else is secondary. More over big systems should rather be used for industry production. A great deal of food is required of course.

Small star systems:

These are best used as intel or research powerhouses and will only have a comparatively weak industry. Food production is not that important, too.

Planet classes

There are quite some resources and products in BotE. Every planet contains some of these resources:

M class planets are the most beneficial ones. They have a high max. population and abundant resources. There can even be the case that a planet has an abundance of a mining resource, mining there can be extraordinarily efficient. However some planets have few or even no resources. Below is a list of the planet classes (according to max. pop, M being the greatest) and their respective resources:

Class:

M – All resources

O – Deuterium

L – Titan, deuterium

P – Titan, crystals, iridium

H – Iridium

Q – Crystals

K – Titan, duranium

G – Titan, duranium

R – Duranium

F – Titan, Duranium, crystals

C – Titan, iridium

N – Deuterium

A,B,E,Y,I,J,S,T are all permanently uninhabitable

But class is not the only property of a planet that is important. Its size can vary between small, medium and big. Here the best way of thinking is: the bigger the better.

Except for class M planets all inhabitable planets will have to be terraformed.

Deritium

Extractor, mine, refinery

Extractors are 'home-system only' structures.

Mines are limited to the Khaoron.

Refineries are available for all races.

Of course, deritium must exist in the respective system!

Technical advice

Online Gaming

To play BotE online you can use vLAN or the VPN tool Hamachi. In most cases it enables players using routers to play online without problems. Go to the official site (<http://hamachi.cc>) and download the basic version of Hamachi. Download and use are for free. There is forum, too, in which problems can be discussed.

hAmachi

This vLAN tool (**virtual LocalAreaNetwork**) establishes a LAN environment that can be used to create some kind of tunnel on the internet, linking two or more computers. Once established the computers are part of a LAN network. (This simply means they should be able to communicate without problems). The only thing a client wanting to join needs is the name of the network and the keyword. The keyword can be set by

the host to prevent third parties to enter the network. Moreover participants can kicked.

This tool should work even with the most problematic routers. Handling is simple and user-friendly. Some tips for a good start:

Installation

All unsteady/questionable MS-services should be disabled. In principle this is all that needs to be taken care of. A hamachi adapter will be added to the network environment which as to be active to use hamachi. Make sure that private data is not accessible by other participants of the network. So check the data and printer clearance.

Using hamachi

After starting hamachi press the 'Power' Button. Hamachi connects to the internet and an IP address is generated. The '5' at the beginning of the IP address signifies a hamachi network. Now simply create a network, think about a name and keyword and it's done! A green light shows that the network or user is online. A gray light indicates inactivity. All elements like 'network' or the participants can be administered by right clicking on them. The 'profile' should be saved as reinstalling will produce a new IP if there is now profile to draw the data from.

? [Edit: Wie heißt die Zeile Dokumente und
Einstellungen\Administrator\Anwendungsdaten\Hamachi auf Englisch??]

Ports & Co

Changing router settings:

!!! IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!!

Proceed with the changes below ONLY if you know what you are doing concerning your router! Else your router may (temporarily) be put out of service. Proceed at your own risk.

[Edit: ist das auch für die englischsprachigen Bereiche der Welt richtig??]

Possible future online options

In future Alpha versions of BotE uPnP or other 'tunnel' options may be supported that make portmapping obsolete. However this is a lot of work and thus doubtful.

Problems

Problem:

Starting or loading a game

[Edit: WTF? Das technische Zeug weiß ich nicht, wie man das richtig übersetzt!]

Legal

Credits

Idea & Producer:	Sir Pustekuchen
Programming:	Sir Pustekuchen
	Cbot
Design:	Sir Pustekuchen
	Malle
	Zunder
	silvercliff
Graphics:	Zunder
	Malle
	Sir Pustekuchen
	YOT-Project
Text:	Topper
	Homeros
	Sir Pustekuchen
	Luther Sloan
	Data
	Master130686
Data:	Sir Pustekuchen
	Scav
	Malle
	Alamar
Balancing:	Mentat
	Scav
	Sir Pustekuchen
Musik:	Eric 'Fu-Wah' James
	Terak Rall
English translation:	Malle
	Matress of Evil
Tester:	Alabor
	Master130686
	Rautzebautze
German Manual:	Gottesanbeter
	Xenox
English Manual:	Lord111 ;-)

With kind support and a lot of patience from the Birth of the Empires – community.

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