

## PREFACE

We all know that games work and we all have explanations based on our practical experience as to why they do. In other words, we have ideas about the ‘active substance’ of simulation gaming. The idea was to gather into one book all the knowledge from a great many professionals in the field of simulation gaming.

Our aim was to write a state-of-the-art account on this subject, and to do that in an interactive way. We invited many gamers from the national and international scene to participate in this writing journey. And we created opportunities to exchange ideas and develop the content of the book. We met with many authors in Amersfoort at the end of March and again with most of them at the 38<sup>th</sup> ISAGA conference in Nijmegen in July 2007.

The book’s subtitle is derived from the aspirin metaphor. Aspirin has an active substance that makes it work and effects that are caused by that substance. But it also contains other substances that help to make it look and taste good. It may also work if you believe you have taken an aspirin (as in the case of a placebo). How does that work for simulation games?

This book provides an extended overview of the range of explanations about how simulation games work in practice. You can read it selectively, focusing on certain aspects, or you can follow the maxim: ‘A chapter a day keeps the boredom away’. Twenty two chapters give you almost a month of wisdom and reflection.

A special aspect of the book is that as well as presenting some well-known authors and experts in the field, it also introduces new authors – people we seduced into writing down their insights and experiences, sometimes for the first time. Many practitioners know a lot, but lack the motivation, patience or habit to put it on paper in order to make it accessible to others. We have tried to make some of that valuable tacit knowledge explicit.

PREFACE

We would like to thank everybody who contributed to this book. First of all, we are grateful to all the authors who have contributed a chapter. Dennis Martens assisted us in various ways in the production of the book. And we wish to thank the publishers, Gerri Reimert and Freek Talsma, who were willing to make it accessible to the reading public.

Spring, 2008

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