

Disciples 3

An RYG Analysis

Platform: PC (Windows 7 only)
DRM: ProtectDisc
Digital Distributor: PHYSICAL COPY ONLY!

Developer: Akella
Publisher: Kalypso Media

RYG's VERDICT

57% **BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL**
64% and Below

1. Product Info

Note: Demo of Disciples 3 can be found at [Kalypso's Forums](#).

See Also: Information on ProtectDisc can be found on their [official site](#).

Looking at how much information is provided on Disciples 3 on its website prior and on release.

- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Demo provided
- ✓ Manual provided with the game

- ✗ Disciples 3 released with different global dates
- ✗ Available only on Windows
- ✗ No DRM notification
- ✗ No advice on how ProtectDisc would affect users
- ✗ EULA is only found within the game
- ✗ All game-related information on Disciples 3 is difficult to find and navigate

2. Privacy Policy

Looking at Disciples 3's Privacy Policy.

- ✓ Privacy Policy not required

3. EULA TOS

Looking at Disciples 3's End User License Agreement.

- ✓ Permitted to create free "mods" of Disciples 3
- ✓ Can opt-out of any monitoring services / software
- ✓ Won't blacklist specific background services or software
- ✓ Users can initiate legal action if the arbitration process fails
- ✓ Users can criticise or provide criticism about the game without reprisals

- ✗ EULA / TOS is only found within the game.

Note: 1,660 words found in Disciple 3's EULA.

Note: Limited warranties, waivers of liability and indemnity are commonly found within many software EULAs and TOSs

4. Setup / Install

Note: ProtectDisc will install system drives in both the /AppData/Roaming/ and /Windows/System32/Drivers/ folders.

5. Updates / Patching

Note: The game was patched to 1.06 just after installation of Disciples 3.

6. DRM & Activation

- ✗ EULA / TOS only covers Disciples 3 (and not ProtectDisc)
- ✗ Difficult to read, understand and is inconsistently worded
- ✗ Drafted to only abide by the laws of the UK
- ✗ Users not visibly notified of any changes made to the EULA / TOS
- ✗ Can't review and query changes made to the EULA / TOS
- ✗ License to play the game only provided
- ✗ No refunds or exchanges for purchased games
- ✗ Replacement copies provided for a fee
- ✗ Terms and conditions for ProtectDisc DRM aren't clearly defined
- ✗ Circumvention of ProtectDisc DRM prohibited
- ✗ Back-ups aren't permitted as per ProtectDisc DRM's capabilities
- ✗ Disciples 3's source code isn't to be modified or reverse-engineered
- ✗ Warranties waived (excluding physical merchantability warranties)
- ✗ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages, disruptions of service
- ✗ Termination process dictated by Kalypso Media

Looking at how Disciples 3 is installed on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Custom installation options are provided
- ✓ Currently-executing background services won't interfere with installation
- ✓ Error-free installation
- ✓ Installation completed within 20 minutes
- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys
- ✗ Extra ProtectDisc DRM files found in /AppData/Roaming/ folders
- ✗ Extra game and DRM files found in /Windows/System32/Drivers/

Looking at how Disciples 3 is patched prior, during and after gameplay.

- ✓ Can opt-in / opt-out of automatic updates
- ✓ Day-one patch optional
- ✓ Can play the game unpatched
- ✓ No other DRM files or registry keys are installed
- ✓ Can install patches manually
- ✗ Notifications not provided for availability of game patches
- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys
- ✗ Rollback option not provided
- ✗ No plans to sunset ProtectDisc DRM

Looking at ProtectDisc DRM in relation to Disciples 3 and its effects on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Won't interfere with currently-executing background services or software
- ✓ Firewall and AV settings aren't modified

Note: This version of ProtectDisc is implemented as a disc-verification DRM only.

7. Gameplay Experience

Note: Disciples 3 will connect to Verisign only if connected to the Internet.

Note: Manual settings for Disciples 3 can be found at \Program Files (x86)\Kalypso Media\Disciples 3\Save\

- ✓ User account not required
- ✓ Unlimited online activations to any one PC
- ✓ Can play single-player game offline
- ✓ Only ProtectDisc DRM is implemented
- ✓ Unlimited hardware activations
- ✓ Unlimited installations
- ✓ Activation is simple and hassle-free

- ✗ No instructions provided on the activation process
- ✗ Can't verify the safety and reliability of the activation process
- ✗ Activation pathway isn't explained
- ✗ No support or troubleshooting process

Looking at the gameplay aspects of Disciples 3 and how it interacts with PC Windows.

- ✓ Can play on minimum specs
- ✓ Suitable options to modify video settings
- ✓ Can customise controls
- ✓ Can play in windowed mode
- ✓ Can play offline
- ✓ Won't "phone home"
- ✓ Can play without connectivity issues on an ADSL connection
- ✓ Can play error-free for more than 5hrs
- ✓ Won't interfere with services and background software
- ✓ Will resume at the last checkpoint
- ✓ Can play on more than one PC simultaneously
- ✓ Can modify savegame and/or ini file

- ✗ Requires original copy to play the game
- ✗ Constant disc verification
- ✗ Only playable on mouse and keyboard
- ✗ DRM and monitoring services will operate during and after gameplay

8. PC Checkup

Looking at whether Disciples 3 will modify certain PC settings without users permission / consent.

- ✓ PC clean after scanning for viruses
- ✓ PC clean after scanning for malware and spyware
- ✓ PC clean after scanning for rootkits
- ✓ HOSTS wasn't modified
- ✓ Played Disciples 3 without major errors
- ✓ Start-up settings remain unaltered
- ✓ No DRM / monitoring services running in the background after shutting down
- ✓ System configuration files remain unaltered

9. Removal Uninstall

Looking at how clean, efficient and effective the removal process is for Disciples 3 (How much legacy material is there after the removal of Disciples 3?)

- ✓ Savegames retained
- ✗ Will need to uninstall the game via. Control Panel
- ✗ ProtectDisc DRM files and registry keys will remain.

10. Customer Support

Looking at the customer support side of Disciples 3 through Kalypso Media.

- ✓ Customer service / support found in one place at Kalypso Media
- ✓ Kalypso Media's site is easy to use and navigate
- ✓ Info is easy to read and understand
- ✓ Consumers can initiate legal action if arbitration process fails
- ✗ No option provided for giving feedback on the service of customer support

**RYG's
VERDICT**

57%

**BARGAIN BIN
MATERIAL**

64% and below

**SHOWS PROMISE
& POTENTIAL**

Between 65% and 84%

**WORTH
SUPPORTING**

85% and above

While the DRM implemented in Disciples 3 is less intrusive than most, it's the information provided (or the lack thereof) that hindered what should've been a much higher score. Disciples 3 really underlines the importance of cohesive, relevant and easily-accessible information.



Colophon

This analysis of Disciples 3 was compiled by Lisa and Martin Pham. Typeface used is ITC Stone Sans. RYG thanks Anna Henriksson, **Josh Bush**, **Ethan Lee**, **Adam Ames** and **David Hatch** for their insights and suggestions in the design of this analysis. Disciples 3 was bought with RYG funds through EB Games.

Disclaimer

These analyses are only a guide and represent RYG's perspective into Disciples 3 as a product. We believe everyone should perform their own research and reach their own conclusions. This is one view of many, we hope. Again, we thank you for taking the time to read our analysis of Disciples 3 and hope you continue to support our work.

RYG is a user research and design studio for video game developers and publishers. Our focus is planning and designing games with a gamers'-first mentality through user and product research. RYG is led by a husband-and-wife team of Lisa and Martin Pham. RYG is operated in the heart of Sydney.

RYG Analysis: Disciples 3
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PRYG3-00031-01
16 March 2013