

# RYG Evaluates Planetary Annihilation

by

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We've been patiently waiting for the day Uber Entertainment implemented an offline option for Planetary Annihilation. Since the 9th of October we've been looking at how the game works in respect to the single-player strain and, for how, here are our thoughts and findings of Planetary Annihilation.

# RYG's Assessment  
58%

Bargain Basement Material  
(64% and Below)

## ## Our Thoughts

Unlike Mind: Path To Thalamus where the game was launched on the efforts of four individuals, Planetary Annihilation had the collective experience of RTS developers, industry clout and backing of its 44,000+ patrons from Kickstarter. Uber Entertainment's first crowd-funded game, however, wasn't made without a number of hitches and obstacles.

Like many crowd-funded games Planetary Annihilation was delayed in its version 1.0 release. Perfection was its impetus, which, for many of its fans and backers, was something to be forgiven. Along the way backers and non-backers alike were treated to regular video sessions of how the game was coming along and, for backers, they had the chance to play Planetary Annihilation as it was being developed for final release.

We had purchased Planetary Annihilation through Steam during the Steam Summer Sales. \$17 for a beta-release of the game was quite cheap in comparison to what backers had paid for at the time of Uber Entertainment's Kickstarter campaign: \$15-\$20 for the full game released in September 2014; \$40 and upwards for an early access beta release to the game. It may have been a slap to the face for some backers who pledged more in return for extra privileges and access into the game development side of things. But it was a bargain and a transnational one at that.

There are some genuine positives to be had with Planetary Annihilation. It's been a while since we've purchased a game through a storefront (Steam) other than Humble that offered cross-platform and universal access through another storefront (Uberent). Knowing this we decided to

look at Planetary Annihilation through the official store as a means to gauge how the vanilla version interacted with our PCs. We knew any results through Steam would skew this.

Their "Offline Play" doesn't quite make the game DRM-Free, but it is a genuine effort by Uber Entertainment to offer something that was close to what they had initially promised through their Kickstarter Campaign. There was a bit of fiddling around the initial startup of the game in its Local Server settings, but once it was set up it played almost akin to the way Starcraft 2 plays in offline mode.

We also found their file and registry systems on our PCs to be the cleanest there is. While a manual removal is required we felt that since all files are contained to the one directory of choice it was an easy task of deleting the game as a whole once we were finished with it.

As for the negatives we found that while the offline play was present it came with some concessions. Players will be connected through to Uberent servers even in offline mode and even to Google as some of their player content goes through to YouTube. Beyond this we don't know what Uberent tracks and receives as their Privacy Policy is quite scant in detailing what they collect and monitor whenever players log in and play Planetary Annihilation.

Finally, a lot of their services, distribution platform and account system(s) are tied to a backend service called PlayFab, a clever and robust platform that ties all versions of Planetary Annihilation to the one multiplayer platform. Making the game DRM-Free, from this perspective, would be somewhat difficult as the games driven on the multiplayer side of things. For one thing we wouldn't be able to look at Planetary Annihilation without Steam without this particular service.

As a game Planetary Annihilation will require a considerable amount of investment from the player in learning how to best play this macro-driven RTS game. Players won't be able to rely upon a set sequence of strategies as the maps generated are randomised and require players to quickly adapt to the surroundings. However, the payoff in learning how to play this game will pay off as it is genuinely fun. It's just a shame that much of the negatives surrounding this game, as valid and genuine as they are, are tied to the development and early-access portion of Planetary Annihilation.

In spite of this we do find Planetary Annihilation slightly below the potential it has and we suggest players to wait for a discount through Steam, Humble or Uberent to obtain a copy if they are curious / interested. Those who were waiting for a DRM-Free copy of Planetary Annihilation should wait until they figure out a way to bypass the Uberent / PlayFab system implemented in the game.

## ## About Planetary Annihilation

**Planetary Annihilation** is a space-themed RTS with a specific edge on randomised maps, alternative gameplay strategies and genuine offline and local LAN play. This is Uber Entertainment's first crowdfunded game and is also one of the highest-funded games funded through Kickstarter. Please refer to each section for our results we've evaluated and our summarised thoughts to gain a better understanding of how Planetary Annihilation affects PCs and plays as a PC Game.

## ## RYG Disclaimer

This Windows version of Planetary Annihilation (Build: 73823) was obtained through Uber Entertainment's Digital Storefront via the purchase through Steam independently with RYG funds for the purposes of evaluation and product testing. Planetary Annihilation was evaluated on the following system specs: Windows 7, Intel i5-4460, 16Gb RAM, AMD Radeon R9 290 as well as an i7-3517U, 8Gb RAM and Intel HD Graphics 4000.

## ## Availability

**Uber Entertainment Storefront:** <http://store.uberent.com>

**Humble:** [https://www.humblebundle.com/store/p...ion\\_storefront](https://www.humblebundle.com/store/p...ion_storefront)

**Steam:** <http://store.steampowered.com/app/233250/>

**EA Origin:** <https://www.origin.com/en-us/store/b...ition-ANW.html>

## ## Recommended System Specs

**OS:** Windows Vista Service Pack 2 or above (*Windows Version Tested*)

**CPU:** Intel i5 or AMD Six Core or above (*Chipsets released in 2012 and 2010 respectively*)

**GPU:** NVIDIA GeForce GTX 560 or AMD HD 7790 and above (*GPUs released in 2011*)

**RAM:** 8Gb

**HDD:** 2Gb (~2.2Gb was used in this evaluation)

**Source:** [Uberent Support](#)

## ## Section 1 - Content Strategy and Product Marketing

- + Was released globally on 05.09.2014
- + Is available through Windows, MacOS and Linux
- + Is available through Uber Entertainment, Steam, Humble and EA Origin
- + All DLCs sold as a singular and/or unified package
- + Minimum / Recommended specs provided through [www.uberent.com/pa/faq/](http://www.uberent.com/pa/faq/)
- + [www.uberent.com/pa/faq/](http://www.uberent.com/pa/faq/) advises how Uberent DRM is used in Planetary Annihilation
- + In-game documentation and/or tutorials provided
- + EULA, Privacy Policy and Terms of Service accessible through [www.uberent.com](http://www.uberent.com)
- + All game-related info is conveniently found on [www.uberent.com/pa/](http://www.uberent.com/pa/)
  
- No known DRM-Free version
- Complete download size not provided through [www.uberent.com/pa/](http://www.uberent.com/pa/)
- Early access purchase required to access demo through [www.uberent.com/pa/](http://www.uberent.com/pa/)

**Our Thoughts:** Players should be able to glean as much information as they can about Planetary Annihilation, its specs, price points, gameplay, legal documentation and other titbits of information before making a genuine purchase. While the download size of Planetary Annihilation isn't shown the game is quite small for first-time players to download (~1.2Gb).

## ## Section 2 - Digital Distribution

- + Is sold at one, global price through Uberent
- + Is available worldwide through Uberent
- + Minimum / Recommended specs provided through Uberent
- + Uberent advises how Uberent DRM is used in Planetary Annihilation
- + Only Username, Email and Password are required to create a Uberent account
- + Alternative payment options provided by Discover, AMEX, Mastercard, Visa and Paypal
- + US Currency Notification provided prior, during and after purchase
- + Confirmation of purchase and receipt provided
- + Free and unlimited access and downloads after purchase
- + Can play Planetary Annihilation without Download / Client Manager
- + Can backup purchased games 'offline' (e.g. external or optical drives)
- + Can access personal data
- + Can terminate account with relative ease
- + Can review and dispute and validate breaches in [Terms of Service](#)
  
- Download / Client Manager is required for download of Planetary Annihilation
- Complete download size not provided
- No refunds or exchanges for purchased games
- All players warranties waived whenever they use Uberent
- Cover waived against any unforeseeable damage and/or service disruptions within Uberent
- Account termination voids past purchases and licenses to play Planetary Annihilation
- Can't review and question changes made in Terms of Service
- Past purchases voided after refusing to accept Terms of Service

**Our Thoughts:** This may be a better alternative to Steam or Origin for those who want to support Uber Entertainment 100% as their distribution platform is quite simple to use, install and update. Players can play the game without the client / download manager, especially in offline mode. The launcher, of course, can be used to determine if updates are required.

## ## Section 3 - Privacy Policy

- + Privacy Policy found on [www.uberent.com/privacy/](http://www.uberent.com/privacy/)
- + Applies to Planetary Annihilation and/or Uberent only
- + Formatted for easy reading online
- + Written for easy comprehension
- + Players can access, modify and validate their Uberent Account

- Players not visibly notified of any changes made to the Policy
- Players not consulted on future revisions to the Privacy Policy
- 'Personally-identifiable' & 'non-personally identifiable' info aren't easily defined
- Policy's vague on what information are collected at specific areas of the platform
- Not advised where the info is specifically stored
- Assurances of safety and security of information not provided
- Policy not clearly defined how info is used
- Third parties not identified
- Opt in / Opt out process not provided
- Players provided with little no options to access all game and player data
- Players cannot export their information tied to their Uberent account
- Player data is retained by Uber Entertainment for an extended period of time
- Can't review and query (legal) changes made to the Policy
- No specific information on how info will be used in the event of a sale/merger
- Players must accept ALL changes made to the Policy before using Planetary Annihilation

**Our Thoughts:** Planetary Annihilation, even in offline mode, will connect back through to Uber Entertainment's servers. And with a Privacy Policy that provides little details on how they handle data through the game it's hard to determine how safe / secure the data transfers are. A lot of where the game has failed has come through their current Privacy Policy in spite of its connection to its Terms of Service.

## ## Section 4 - EULA and Uberent's TOS

- + EULA / **TOS** covers Planetary Annihilation and UberNet Platform
  - + Drafted to coincide with relevant copyright and consumer laws at the point of purchase
  - + Refunds and/or exchanges offered for purchased games
  - + DRM terms and conditions are defined in their "About Us" page
  - + Can back-up copies of Planetary Annihilation
  - + Permitted to create free "mods" of Planetary Annihilation
  - + Can create user content for the purposes of **monetisation for Planetary Annihilation**
  - + 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 itself
  - Uberent EULA and TOS was not formatted for easy reading
  - Uberent EULA and TOS was not written for easy reading
  - Users not visibly notified of any changes made to the EULA / TOS
  - Players not consulted on future revisions to Uberent EULA and TOS
  - Can't review and query changes made to the EULA / TOS
  - License to play the game only provided
  - Planetary Annihilation'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 failures
- Termination process dictated by Uber Entertainment

**Our Thoughts:** While Uberent's EULA and TOS are short and straight to the point, we did find that these binding agreements keep players contained to specifically playing Planetary Annihilation with little warranties and provisions outside of the cooling off period and/or restricted refunds / exchanges offer. Please bear in mind that most of the wordings found in the EULA and TOS are similarly-worded in comparison to other EULAs and TOSes found in other games and distribution platforms.

## ## Section 5 - Installation

- + Custom installation options are provided
  - + All game files are installed within folders designated by users
  - + Currently-executing background services won't interfere with installation
  - + Error-free installation
  - + Installation completed within 30 minutes (2Gb was required to install and play Planetary Annihilation)
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- No installation logs of files and registry keys

**Our Thoughts:** A lack of a comprehensive installation log to document what/where files and registry keys are installed is the only blemish found in this evaluation.

However, the installation of Planetary Annihilation are quite self-contained to where players want to install their games and will not install any rogue or foreign files outside of their intended destination. Players can also delete their copies of Planetary Annihilation in the same way they had installed it.

## ## Section 6 - Automatic and/or Manual Patching

- + Patch free from any other third-party DRMs
  - + Patch free from any other third-party apps
  - + Detailed list of changes provided prior to installation
  - + Alternate notifications provided for existence of new patches via. PA Launcher (if launched)
  - + Planetary Annihilation is playable with latest patches
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- Automatic updates are mandatory
  - All patches are required to play Planetary Annihilation
  - Download / Client Manager required to download and install patches
  - Changes / Amendments to Privacy Policy, EULA and/or TOS not provided prior to installation of patches
  - No installation logs of files and registry keys

- Rollback option not provided
- No plans for a sunset patch to remove Uberent Account

**Our Thoughts:** The latest version of Planetary Annihilation (Build 73823) is their most stable release yet and allows players to play the game in offline mode (Single Play and Local Multiplay only).

## ## Section 7 - DRM and Activation

- + Instructions provided on activating Planetary Annihilation
  - + Currently-executing background services won't interfere with activation process
  - + Firewall and AV settings not modified
  - + Unlimited online activations
  - + Can play Planetary Annihilation offline
  - + Can transfer activation or game to another user account
  - + Only Uberent is implemented
  - + Unlimited hardware activations
  - + Unlimited Installations
  - + Troubleshooting process provided for failed activations
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- Can't verify safety and reliability of the activation process
  - A non-transferrable user account is required

**Our Thoughts:** Players will need to activate the game by logging into their Uberent account after launching Planetary Annihilation. After that they are free to play the game offline or even online if they wish to do so.

## ## Section 8 - Gameplay

- + Can play on minimum specs (tested on Intel HD 4000)
- + Can play a backup copy of the game
- + Can play in borderless full screen mode
- + Can play in windowed mode
- + Can play in multiple resolutions from 1280x720 (720p) to 3840x2160 (4K)
- + Textures, Headlights, Shadows, HDR, Anti-Aliasing and Resolution Scaling are provided in-game
- + Complete options in remapping keyboard and/or mouse controls
- + Separate volume controls provided for Music, Voice, Sound Effects and Master Control
- + Full subtitles and/or captions provided
- + Can play Planetary Annihilation in offline mode
- + No known connectivity issues during gameplay
- + Can play Planetary Annihilation error-free
- + Planetary Annihilation won't blacklist specific background services or software
- + Uberent isn't running after gameplay of Planetary Annihilation

- No options in remapping console controls
- Only English Audio is supported
- No option for players to provide custom subtitles and/or localisation
- Planetary Annihilation requires a constant and tethered Internet connection to access some DLCs
- Won't play at last save checkpoint
- Saves operate under a checkpoint and/or timing system
- Can only play on one PC at a time
- Can't modify savegame and/or configuration file

**Our Thoughts:** Planetary Annihilation is an RTS game and, as such, there are some features that won't be supported due to the nature of the game (e.g. Console Controllers). This is also a multiplayer-driven game and so some of the savegame features won't be there. There is, of course, an unlocking level option in the single player component of the game. Finally, there are sufficient in-game settings for players to tweak and modify their game even though a configuration file outside of the game is difficult and limited in modifying.

## ## Section 9 - General PC Maintenance

- + PC clean of viruses, malware, spyware and rootkits after installation and gameplay of Planetary Annihilation
- + HOSTS was clean
- + Windows Startup was clean
- + Ubertent isn't running after gameplay of Planetary Annihilation
- + No other PC settings were modified after gameplay of Planetary Annihilation

**Our Thoughts:** Planetary Annihilation is a clean game and won't impact on players PCs nor alter its settings outside of its gameplay.

## ## Section 10 - Uninstallation

- + Clean uninstallation

**Our Thoughts:** While there are no options in removing Planetary Annihilation from Control Panel we did find that deleting the file folders are sufficient in performing a clean removal of Planetary Annihilation. The game won't leave any registry keys behind either.

## ## Section 11 - Customer and Technical Support

- + From The Official Website: <http://support.uberent.com/>
- + From the Forums: <https://forums.uberent.com/forums/support.71/>
- + FAQ Site: <http://www.uberent.com/pa/faq/>
  
- + From Steam: <http://steamcommunity.com/app/233250/discussions/>
  
- + From SteamDB: <https://steamdb.info/app/233250/>
- + From PCGamingWiki: [http://pcgamingwiki.com/wiki/Planetary\\_Annihilation](http://pcgamingwiki.com/wiki/Planetary_Annihilation)

If you would like to discuss this report, you can do so here on our [forum](#) (membership is required), or via our [Twitter](#) page.

## ## Changelog

15.10.2014 – Report published on RYG