

PS3 | PS2

PSW
EXCLUSIVE

Ghostbusters

We called, they answered...

**FORMAT:** PS3 & PS2**PUBLISHER:** Vivendi**DEVELOPER:** Terminal Reality**RELEASE DATE:** 2009**PLAYERS:** 1-4**ONLINE OPTIONS:** Online**OS:** Windows-based PC**ETA:** Multiplay and download content

Back in 1983, Dan Aykroyd had a problem. He'd just been told by director Ivan Reitman that his half-finished screenplay *Ghost Smashers* was going to be too expensive to make. About \$250 million too expensive. Reitman had suggested a change in direction. Instead of setting the movie in the future and basing it on the adventures of two time- and space-travelling ghost hunters, Reitman suggested that Aykroyd replace the science-fiction heroes with a group of down-and-out New York students who decide to set up a ghost-catching business. To put it into context, this would be tantamount to someone telling George Lucas to rewrite *Star Wars* in communist Russia. A pretty big ask.

Underdared, Aykroyd got in touch with respected Hollywood writer Harold Ramis and together, they set about rewriting *Ghost Smashers* in a more contemporary (and less budget-busting) setting. It would be this collaboration and change of direction that would give birth to 1984's second highest-grossing film and one of the most commercially successful movies of the 1980s, *Ghostbusters* – a flick that to this day enjoys an avid following and sends warm jets of emotion coursing through the veins of those old enough to remember the movie's original release all those years ago.

Back from the grave

Fast forward 26 years, one hit-and-miss sequel and two popular cartoon series later. We're sitting in a conference room at Dallas-based developer Terminal Reality, shuffling with nervous, childlike excitement at the prospect of taking the world's first look at the company's forthcoming third-person shooter – a game that's attempting to recapture the old magic of



HEY NESTER! Can I get some Brits over here, please?

MULTIPLYING THE FUN

Coming soon to PS2

PS2 Ghostbusters features were developed, but on PS2 readers will include features to Ghosts, who'll write Busters capturing ghosts and also in driving Busters. There's also a ghost-capturing mode. An eye made for the single-player PS2 campaign may be supported by licensed reality visitors because you feel part of your captured team.



BUNAWAY BIDE! And guests. Well, can you blame them?

Ghostbusters while extending the fiction of the franchise.

"We'd wanted to do this game for a while," begins the game's creative director, Drew Haworth, whose lockjaw grin instantly betrays his passion and exuberance for the subject matter.

"We're working with Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis, who are really contributing to the story. Dan and Harold have always bounced around the idea of doing something else with Ghostbusters. Once the new hardware appeared, we went to Sony Pictures, made a prototype and then took it to Dan and Harold, who coincidentally were at a stage when they were willing to discuss extending the Ghostbusters story.

"It was perfect for them," Haworth goes on. "There may or may not have been a Ghostbusters II script that they'd worked on, but they felt that in the game, they could continue the story. Dan and Harold are already talking about where they could take the next game. They're

like kids at Christmas when it comes to Ghostbusters."

Indeed, the news that the original writers are set to pen the script (ensuring it remains true to the Ghostbusters fiction) and reprise their roles as Ray and Egon, will provide every sci-fi fan with a sense of comfort not felt since they found out Spook was still alive. After all, who else could capture that eclectic mix of paranormal babble, acerbic observational humour and scimitar-sharp one-liners that made the original movie such an unprecedented triumph?

The story continues

Set in 1991, Ghostbusters the game picks up the story two years after the climax of Ghostbusters II. Having saved themselves from the ignominy of becoming novelty act entertainers scoping a living from humiliating children's party appearances in the second film, the Busters once again find themselves with more work than they

can handle, especially when the imminent opening of a Gozerian (Gozer was the supernatural bad guy from the first film for those of you who've not seen it) museum prompts a radical increase in paranormal activity. Stretched to their limits, the Busters decide to employ new recruits to help handle the workload, the first of which is you.

For the first few levels of this eight-to-ten-hour game, Terminal Reality is aiming to reacquaint us with some familiar ghostly faces, including Slimes, the bulbous green blob that slimed Bill Murray in the original flick and provided comic relief in the popular TV cartoon spin-off *The Real Ghostbusters*.

In a throwback to the original confrontation with this floating love handle, you'll once again find yourself chasing Slimer around an ostentatious dining hall. Better still, thanks to Terminal Reality's refined Infernal engine - which has been ramped up to fully utilise next-gen tech in all its glory - you'll be able to



Tools of the Trade

All the bits a real Ghostbuster needs to earn a buck and save the world



ZZZT! "Don't shoot me, I'm just misunderstood. You bastards!"



BURNING REPAIRS: Destroy the scenery with your proton beam



SPRIT SHELVES: The haunted Library from the first movie



TAKING THE BAIT! Catch those pesky ghosts in your traps



TECHIT WITH YOU! The PKE Meter will lead you towards ghosts



THE EYE BEAM

A room may seem empty, until you pop on the goggles and register electric sights. Though uncertainty leads to a lot of your modes of view will be on hand to see different ghost classes.



PROTON PACK

A handy gadget to track the whereabouts of ghosts and, more importantly, a great gimmick to spice up tension in a scene - those beep, beep, beeps always get the heart pumping.



PROTON BEAM

Your general-purpose, futuristic blaster. The game takes some of the best of the technology from the film, enabling you to combine it with other tools to bust ghosts on new levels - such as those rats.



PROTON TRAP

Real physics are being used to ensure you have to tug and tangle with the ghosts. Like a fishing game you'll need to wear it down, latching it into scenery until, first and foremost, it's sucked into the trap.



Casting Couch

With most of the original cast in talks, we speculate who'll be back and who won't

Stay Puft

AKA The Marshmallow Man

You'll have to defeat him from the top of a tower, but only after you've designed custom-less cars that he throws at you during a three-hour mad game.

Chances of involvement: **Definite**

Rick Moranis

AKA Louis Tully
Having moved away from acting after the death of his wife, Moranis now spends more time on his music. Will Louis return? He can only hope.

Chances of involvement: **Unclear**

Moderate

Ernie Hudson

AKA Winston Zeddemore

With *Ghostbusters* one of the highlights of Hudson's career, he'll be hard to love to get involved. But will Winston ever be in the game?

Chances of involvement: **High** (if Weston features)

Dan Aykroyd

AKA Dr. Raymond Stantz
Not only is Aykroyd headlining, but he'll also be writing the script. Chances of involvement: **Dead cert**

Sigourney Weaver

AKA: Dana Barrett
Clara has been written out of the game and will be replaced by an all-new female character to provide a romantic twist.

Chances of involvement: **Zero**

Bill Murray

AKA Dr. Peter Venkman
One of the most successful actors from the original cast, we'd like to see the designer funny man involved—but will he have a window in his heart to schedule?

Chances of involvement: **Unclear**

On par, yes, yes

Harold Ramis

AKA Dr. Egon Spengler
He'll be writing the script with Aykroyd and will be leading his company scenario team but isn't his voice, definitely.

Chances of involvement: **Already on board**

break the kind of destruction that five insurance companies reading terms and conditions.

Helping you on your ghost-catching quest will be an array of new and upgradeable weaponry, including proton torpedoes and shotguns, as well as a short-range electron beam and a Tether gun that will allow you to join objects together with strands of goo, in order to solve physics-based puzzles. "Every ghost you trap you'll be given money for," says Haworth as he loads up the baroque hall level. But the way you trap your prey will also play a part. "We're looking into the possibility of letting you earn more cash if you manage to capture ghosts in impressive ways, like bouncing them off a wall and straight into a trap."

After a crash course in Ghostbuster combat training from Haworth, he leads us to strap on a proton pack (a 23-year fantasy fulfilled) and enter the level's lavish dining area. With Slimer circling the chandelier and rip, only to be kicked back by the force of the proton pulse, which seared through the chandelier and brought it crashing down, dropping the room into darkness as our pack (which also acted as our HUD) lit out through heat exhaustion.

Reloading, we tried again, this time, working in conjunction with our AI teammates—the sarcastic, bespectacled Egon and the over-zealous Ray—to snare the bobbing apparition in our beam. With Slimer screaming in fear, we smashed him against the scenery a couple of times to soften him up, then pulled him over a

"Some ghosts will have stories, others will be a lot simpler"

ghost trap and sucked him into his new home, while tables, chairs and paintings burned and billowed smoke around us.

"Our emphasis is on lots of physics, lots of action and environmental manipulation. We're trying to deliver a cinematic experience in which you get to be a part of a *Ghostbusters* story," explains Drew as he fires up a level set in the Library from the start of the original movie. "All the significant ghosts will be making a return, such as the two brothers who were prisoners," adds executive producer, John Melchior. "Some ghosts"

Feature Ghostbusters

DEEP MAN: Some books take place in a different dimension.



PROTON PACK? No, your proton pack - it will also act as your HUD.

WRAP IT UP NOW! Well, that's one way of keeping warm.



SLIPPERY LITTLE BUGGERS: Boo! It's ghosts in one easy feat.

ROCKY MOMENTS: We have never experienced this down the library.



TEAM SPIRIT: Work with the other Busters to make some noise.

NEVER JUDGE A BOOK (GHOST) BY ITS COVER

When good ghosts go bad

Book Worms

In a special anniversary of the first movie you'll use a book keeping ghost minding his business and getting on with it dropping his book collection.

Slippery Twist

Get his Devil Mind, and he'll go nuts, he'll be back and he'll not who can get out. It'll be a dark moment as the only moment of ghost turned out.

Proton Turn

First in the proton pack and set up with the system. Control the ghost in the stream as you prepare the trap, and makes the sucker in place.





SPIRITUAL AWARENESS

Who are the ghosts and where are they? Tracking down the whereabouts of ghosts will be made easy thanks to the return of the PKE meter, a device that will not only help you track down the locations of ghosts, but also inform you of their background. Every time you scan a ghost, you'll be able to access information on them in *Tobin's Spirit Guide*, a one-stop solution for all your ghoulish queries.

1. Mallow Men

Many of the classic villains from *Ghostbusters* will return and they don't get much bigger than Stay Puft. He's out for revenge and Ray is on his list of people to smudge.

2. The Hangover

To battle the Puft you'll need to hang over the edge of the skyscraper, from a grappling line and swing from left to right blasting the big gallop of marshmallows.

3. Mini-Mallows

If shot just Puft you need to worry about. In classic garing lore you must survive waves of mini-mallow attacks before Puft's weak spot is revealed.

4. Dead Again

In true cinematic form, Puft leaps from the mallow inferno for one more shocking death throes, before exploding in a plume of white stuff.

5. End of Puft

When you do finally defeat Puft he'll wail and plummet to the ground below in a ball of fire and roasted sugary confection. Game over, Puft...

Some will have stories, others will be simpler. A lot of ghosts, like the Librarian, will have a lot of background information about them."

Paranormal readouts

Back inside the Library, Haworth is schlepping down a winding staircase in pursuit of the shushing female book reader. Subtle use of understated sound effects and eerie glistening violins raise the tension as the darkness envelops him, though the hair-pricking unease is soon dispelled by a sizzly acoustic one-liner from Egon stating that the Library's off-the-chart paranormal readings are going to force him to make new charts. It's the same type of unsettling yet goofy tension that made the movies so accessible to all age groups, and a mood that *Terminal Reality* is keen to emulate here. "We're trying to rely on tension rather than gore," claims lead *TR* designer Andy Dambroski as Haworth continues to scan the shadows for movement. "There are



"Our scares are usually kind of goofy, just like in the movies"

sections in which you'll jump and be genuinely scared, but we don't use gore unless it's funny gore. Our scares are usually kind of goofy, just

like in the movies themselves.

Haworth pushes on to the Library's lower recesses, where books suddenly fly off shelves and form into lumbering ghost warriors, protected by hardback shields. After dispatching them, the level ends with a final, climactic battle with the female Librarian that gives the term 'book burning' a whole new definition.

I ain't 'fraid of no ghost

Clearly, this frenetic shooting formula, interspersed with moments of heightening tension, will provide the backbone of the game, though *Terminal Reality* promises there'll be several other fun moments to help raise the pulse and add variety -

including a music box in a dark Times Square in *TR*, the team's decrepit car, during which you'll have to fend off hordes of ghosts and catch them in a giant rear-mounted trap. *TR*'s hope never'll be enough of these segments to break up the tension; mark, action formula that we witnessed during our visit, as despite the undoubted quality of the shootouts and the creepy gothic elements, it's more than possible that the game's excitement could wane if it becomes over-reliant on this formula.

This aside, it's looking as though our reverending wait for a genuinely adept *Ghostbusters* game could be about to come to an end. With Raines and Haworth on board and with several other original cast members currently in negotiations to reprise their parts, *Ghostbusters* has a chance to be the franchise that never was, a game that's giving Akroyd and co an incredible opportunity to bring one of the most loved movie licences of all time, back from the dead. **B**

Martin Korda