

Vision Statement

Game Outline

Solenia is a turn-based resource trading game in space for the Android platform.

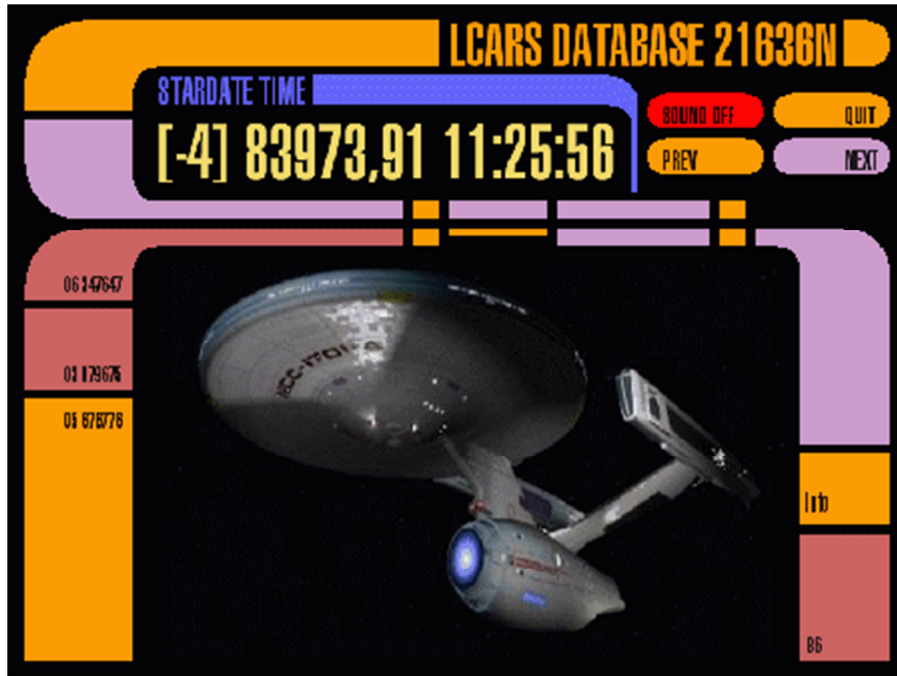
As a young adventurer with just a few credits, you set out upon the galaxy with a small ship eager to build your legacy. Will you make your fortune buying and selling goods within the Alliance? Maybe you'll leave the confines of civilization to smuggle more illicit items? Will the galaxy fear your name as you destroy countless ships? Or will you take sides fighting in a galactic war?

Game Synopsis

The player takes the role of the captain of an old ship with a small gun and a few cargo holds. By traveling between nearby star systems, the player can buy goods and supplies and sell them where the demand (and prices) are higher. After acquiring more credits, the player can upgrade their cargo holds to transport more cargo, or upgrade their weapons to raid weaker traders (or to collect bounties on pirates). At many ports side missions are available, and the player may discover a series of events that lead to a galactic war, where the player can choose a side and alter the galaxy forever.

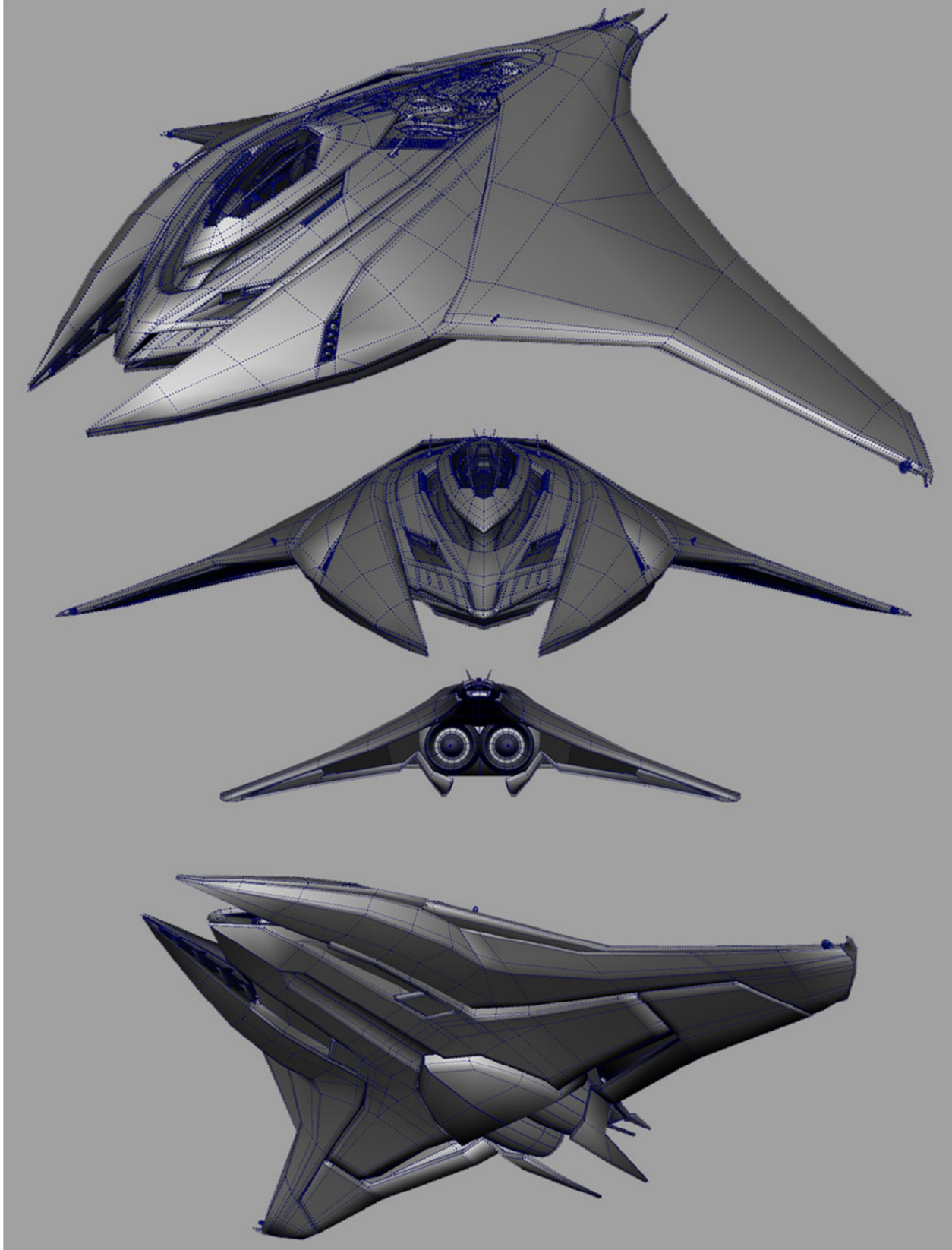
Style & Theme

As Solenia takes place in a futuristic space setting, all artwork, menus, and gameplay is themed around a sci-fi ideal. As a turn based game, menus must be able to convey large amounts of data efficiently while maintaining this theme. A classic example of this traditional gaming UI can be seen in the terminals from "Star Trek: The Next Generation" (See Below)



All screens must be scalable to a variety of mobile resolutions in both vertical and horizontal aspect ratios. Buttons must be large enough and spaced far enough away from each other that they can be easily selectable with a human finger.

Ships and planets are the other major art concern, as these are paramount to player immersiveness. While planets serve as a backdrop for gameplay, ships must be able to convey their role and strength to the player by sight alone. Without looking at statistics, the player should know if they need to run, or if it's better to fight. Thematically, ships should appear somewhere between realistic and overly simple, such as in the following examples.



As a mobile application designed for short periods of gameplay “on-the-go”, Solenia will have very little or no audio beyond the standard Android effect for button presses.

Key Features

- Short “60 second” turns, allows the player to play the game “on-the-go”.
- Gameplay suited towards multiple styles of play – Causal trading or more in-depth play offer appeal to more players.
- Emphasis on simple input to navigate complex statistics

Target Audience

The target audience for the game are “tech-savvy” males between the ages of 15 and 35.

The target platform is primarily for high-tech mobile phones. The Motorola Droid, for example, [has been marketed](#) as a high-tech device for the male demographic.

From a gameplay perspective, much of the game’s core focus is around statistics and numbers, which may not appeal to younger audiences. The focus on combat may dissuade many female audiences. As a core element of the game is combat, it is possible for the player to take losses upon defeat, or to be killed (though they are given many opportunities to avoid this outcome). The traditional “hardcore” demographic is more able to accept this system of risk for more dangerous choices.

Story

Synopsis

Below is an outline of the story progression of the game.

Introduction

The game starts in the space dock of the Sol system (Earth); a clean, sterile place at the heart of Alliance territory. A drawing of an old man appears on the screen. He speaks to the player with a bubble text:

“So, you think you’re finally ready to take command of your own ship, eh?”

“I’m getting too old to be running about the galaxy. It’s about time I settled down. But I see a lot of potential in you. I want to give you an opportunity to make your mark on the galaxy.”

“Old Bessie here can’t go very far, and she’s certainly seen better days, but she’s served me well over the years, and she’ll treat you right too.”

“Payment? No, you keep your credits. I’ve made enough trading in the core systems to retire very comfortably. I’d suggest you do the same – trading in the core systems isn’t the most profitable enterprise, but it’s nice and safe, and until you get your feet wet you don’t want to venture far out; pirates and rebels are just looking to pick on a small ship like ‘ol Bessie.”

The player is then set free to begin trading goods between the local systems, until they’ve earned enough to buy a bigger and better ship. “Training” is then completed, and they can venture farther out through the galaxy.

In-game Synopsis

The player may continue a life of trading goods, playing it safe like the old man, or they may take a chance by venturing into pirate territory. The prices for goods are higher on the frontier, and may be worth the risks in traveling out away from the protection of Alliance ships. Alternatively, they may also transport illicit items like weapons and drugs into the heart of Alliance territory, at the risk of becoming a wanted criminal. The player may also choose a life of combat, either by becoming a bounty hunter and hunting pirate ships, or by raiding/destroying cargo ships.

The player’s decisions influence how other ships interact with them. Obviously performing illegal acts will cause Alliance ships to become hostile, but pirates may offer special rates or missions to colleagues.

Factions & Characters

Major Factions

The Alliance

The majority of the galaxy is ruled by a single human empire known simply as “The Alliance”. Citizens of the “core systems” (the heart of Alliance territory) enjoy access to a wealth of medical and other technologies. Crime is almost non-existent, and hunger has been eliminated. Thanks to the resources gathered from the “outer worlds”, most needs of citizens are fulfilled.

These starting systems act as a training grounds for the player, where they may learn basic mechanics of the game without risk of attack from pirates. However, the significantly low profit margins encourage the player to leave the confines of these safe zones when they are ready.

Rebels

Though the core worlds enjoy great benefits, the outer worlds are considerably less pleasant. Often Alliance ships strip systems of their resources for the benefit of the core worlds. This unfair treatment has caused many colonists to take up arms against the Alliance. Depending on the player's favor with the Alliance, these ships may either avoid the player or flat out attack them.

At first the Rebels are little more than a few scattered ships along the outer worlds. However, depending on the actions of the player, they may organize into a fully-armed fighting force in an active war against the Alliance.

Pirates

Pirates are the criminals of the galaxy, and take any opportunity to attack cargo transports. They are opportunists, and usually avoid fights with superior ships... Unless they're carrying very valuable cargo. Pirates are rare in the core systems, but become increasingly populous farther out in the galaxy.

While usually solitary, some pirates may offer the player special missions if they've proven themselves as a fellow pirate.

Aliens

While the dominant species in the galaxy, humanity is not alone. Several small races of aliens occupy some systems beyond the outer worlds. Some are openly hostile against humans, while some are eager to trade with such an advanced species.

It may be possible to give these aliens goods that completely alter their culture, and create a steady client for goods. For example, a race that's never had firearms might break out into all-out civil war with the right conditions.

Characters

The Player

The player is the most important character in the game, but never actually appears on-screen. In order to allow the player to better assume their role, the actual appearance of the player is left to the player's imagination.

Merchants

Merchants can be found at any space port. They buy and sell goods, ships, and upgrades. Rarely do they play any greater roll, and are essentially a human face on an otherwise mundane menu.

Alliance Officers

Alliance officers act as the police of the galaxy. They often perform random inspections of ships to check for illegal cargo. Much like the Alliance itself, however, officers are often corrupt, and can sometimes be bribed to look the other way.

Cargo Captains

The lifeblood of interstellar commerce is run by cargo ships. Sometimes captains will trade between themselves, and they will often make offers to the player if they've earned a reputation as a peaceful trader. However, if the player has a reputation of being a pirate, captains are the face seen when a ship surrenders.

Citizens

In the core systems are several individuals with special missions for the player to perform. These citizens of the Alliance are often bored of the sheltered and mundane life they live, and will sometimes request a taste of the outer worlds – be it legal or not.

Colonists

Colonists live on the very edge of Alliance territory. Their harsh living conditions are made worse by constant attacks from pirates, and the "taxes" imposed on them by the Alliance. They're usually in need of supplies from the core worlds, and they remember their friends well.

Coming to the aid of colonists just might open up new missions that open the way for the Rebels to become more organized...

Crew

Often times there are people looking for work on starships, who will help the player maintain their ship, or man extra guns... for a fee. They can be found at the ports of various systems, or they may offer their services after completing certain missions.

Gameplay

Overview

The game takes place in a series of turns in 2-D menus, where the player makes various decisions before moving on to the next destination.

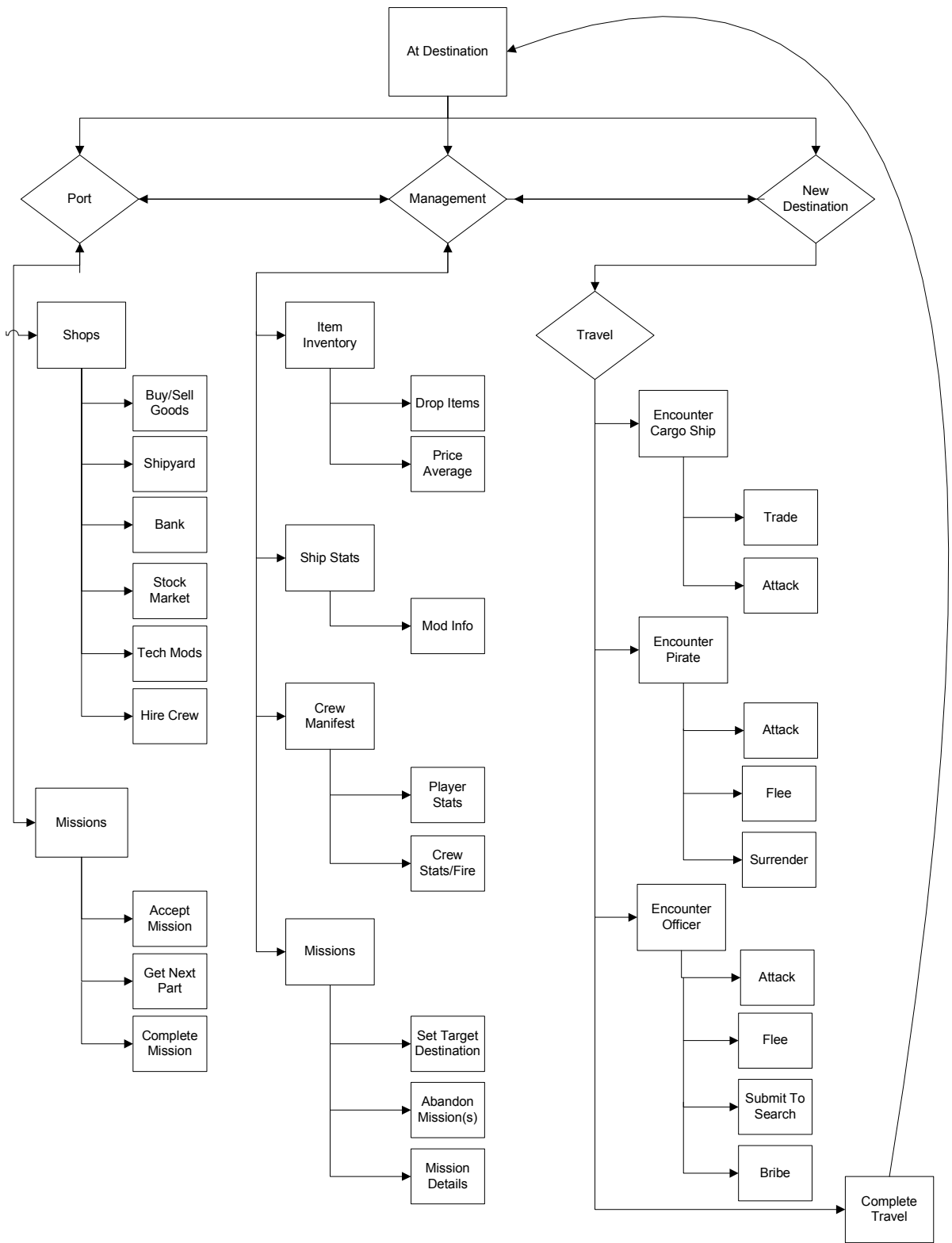
Each turn begins at the space port of a solar system. From here the player can perform ship maintenance, or buy/sell items in shops. After the player has conducted their business, they're ready to head off to another system.

Jumps directly to other system are impossible. Rather, the jump will take the player just outside the system, and from there the player must travel at sub-light speeds to reach the port. It is during this time that the player may encounter other ships near the system: Cargo ships, pirates, and officers may all interact with the player.

Once the player finally makes it to the port the turn is complete and a new turn begins.

Turn Details

Below is a flowchart of the basic elements of a turn. Details about each item can be found below the chart. This is not a layout of game menus, but does accurately explain what occurs in all game menus.



Loop Explained

The beginning of the game loop places the player at a planet's central space station or docking bay. From here the player can get information about current events, make plans for traveling to the next destination, or perform a variety of management tasks.

Port

The port is the major reason why the player travels to a system. From here the player is given access to the wide variety of shops and missions that a particular system has to offer.

Shops

Most systems offer the same basic variety of shops, though the items for sale or travel can vary widely. The central shops are:

- **Buy/Sell Goods**
Each system has a central shipping port that directly handles all inter-solar commerce. From here the player is able to buy all kinds of goods (sometimes even illegal goods) and sell those acquired elsewhere.
- **Shipyards**
The shipyard is one part dealership and one part repair garage. From here the player can buy new ships, or have special repairs done to their existing ship.
- **Bank**
Run by the single largest corporate entity in The Alliance, banks provide an assortment of financial services. From here players can take out a loan, or protect their earnings by depositing them here.
- **Stock Market**
A potentially lucrative alternative to shipping goods, the stock market allows the player to invest in the economies of various systems and smaller corporations.
- **Tech Mods**
For captains looking to get the most out of their ship, there's no better place to seek upgrades than a Tech Mod shop.
- **Hire Crew**
Often various individuals will seek out employment for adventure or profit. The player can hire these people here.

Missions

From the mission screen the player is able to begin new missions or progress an existing mission. The mission menu is broken into three distinct parts:

- **Accept Mission**
Special missions might be found other ways, but the most basic missions can easily be found here.

- **Get Next Part**
Some missions may require the player to travel to multiple systems. If a mission requires additional activities, the next steps can be taken here.
- **Complete Mission**
After a mission has been completed, the player can pick up the rewards at their leisure. Often special rewards like permanent stat bonuses are best left until later.

Management

Management options are non-vital statistics and settings the player may wish to review or modify. Generally these items can be left alone, but are left for advanced players to manage if they so desire. Additionally, some special tools to help assist the player may be found in these menus.

Item Inventory

From here the player can check their cargo holds to see their current inventory. Much of the information displayed here is also found when selling in a shop, but these menus have a more data-oriented approach.

- **Drop Items**
Sometimes a system might not be interested in buying a particular item, or the player might not want to risk carrying an illegal good anymore. In either case, the player can dump items here.
- **Price Average**
As a way to assess the bigger picture, this screen shows the average price paid for all of a particular item in the player's holds. Information like this can be useful when figuring out if selling something at this system is a good idea.

Ship Stats

As the single most important piece of equipment the player owns, it's often important to check on the condition and statistics of the ship. This screen provides exactly that information.

- **Mod Info**
Mods can be extensive, and as such require their own screens to detail exactly what they can do.

Crew Manifest

The people inhabiting a ship are just as important as the ship itself. From here the player can review the specific numerical stats for every member of the crew, and perform specific related functions where needed.

- **Player Stats**
The player's own stats are significantly more detailed than those of the rest of the crew, though there are never any special functions that can be performed here. Thus, the player's stats are different from the rest of the crew.

- **Crew Stats/Fire**

The statistics of the rest of the crew can be found here. Additionally, if the player wants to remove a person from the crew, they can do so here.

Missions

The player can collect a variety of missions across the galaxy. From here they can keep track of these missions, and perform a few special functions.

- **Set Target Destination**

The galaxy is a big place, and manually navigating it can be tiresome. From here the player can place a marker on a specific destination, making it far easier to keep track of where to go next.

- **Abandon Mission(s)**

Sometimes the player might want to give up on a particular mission for a variety of reasons. If that's the case, they can do so here.

- **Mission Details**

A reminder of what needs to be done for each mission can be done here.

New Destination (Travel)

Once the player has done everything they want to do at a destination it's time to move to a new one. After selecting a destination, the player's ship jumps immediately to the next system, where they begin the perilous journey into the safety of the system port.

During the sub-light portion of the journey the player can encounter a variety of different ships, each with their own events. The three major ship types are:

Cargo Ships

Cargo ships are peaceful merchants. They will never attack the player, and may offer to initiate special trades if the player is also peaceful. However, if the player is aggressive they can attack these merchants and raid or destroy their ship.

- **Trade**

Merchants may offer to buy items directly from the player, or they may have something to sell. Often times these offers are better than systems, providing an incentive for the player to remain peaceful.

- **Attack**

Attacking a player begins combat with the ship. Some cargo ships are easy prey, and can be easily raided. Others may put up a fight, and may even chase after a would-be pirate.

Pirates

Pirates make a living off of attacking cargo ships. They are likely to attack the player if they have a reputation for avoiding combat, but at the same time may flee if the player has a reputation for killing pirates. Honor among thieves may also open up new missions.

- **Attack**
Attacking a pirate is similar to combat with a cargo ship, though pirates are unlikely to surrender. They'll often fight to the end, or try to make a getaway.
- **Flee**
Running away from a pirate is often times the best option. Many will pursue, but a fast ship and a good crew can evade them.
- **Surrender**
Rather than risk destruction, the player can yield to the pirate and allow their ship to be boarded. Usually this results in a loss of cargo or ship upgrades.

Officers

Officers of The Alliance exist to protect commerce and prevent the trade of illicit goods. To this end they hunt pirates and conduct searches of ships. If the player has no outstanding crimes on the books, officers will generally only stop their ship to perform an inspection. If the player is a wanted criminal, they will attack.

- **Attack**
Attacking an officer automatically makes the player a wanted criminal, though racking up a number of officer kills certainly earns the player a reputation among certain circles.
- **Flee**
Running away from an officer also marks the player as a criminal, though the punishment is far less severe. This might be a proper course of action if the player's holds are full of illicit goods.
- **Submit To Search**
Submitting to a search allows the officer to inspect their cargo holds. If any illegal cargo is found it will be confiscated and harsh fines will be imposed. If the player builds a reputation for passing inspections searches will become less frequent.
- **Bribe**
Some officers can be convinced to look the other way and not perform an inspection. However, bribes have a way of making themselves larger.

Travel Complete

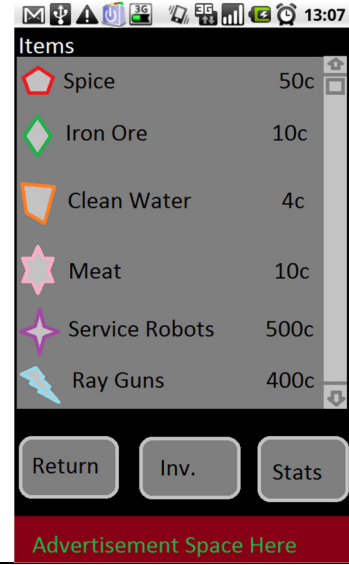
After making it to the next port the turn is complete, and the player starts again from the beginning of the chart.

Interface

Due to the wide variety of different mobile devices with a wide range of resolutions and aspect ratios, multiple layouts must exist, specifically for the extreme difference between portrait and landscape layouts. Depending on the resolution, some interfaces may also require scrolling to view all information.

As an example, here are four of the most common resolutions:

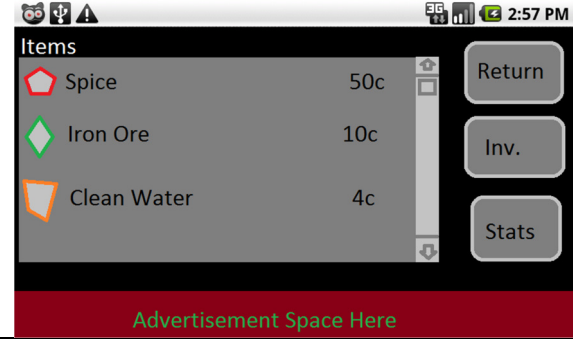
WVGA Portrait (480x800)



HVGA Portrait (320x480)



WVGA Landscape (800x480)



HVGA Portrait (480x320)

