



TRANSFORMERS: PRIME—THE GAME

The robots in disguise get primed for action.

MOST PEOPLE recognize the Transformers from the Michael Bay-directed movies or from the original '80s cartoon, but there have been numerous iterations of the popular franchise since its inception. The latest is *Transformers: Prime*, a weekly CG-animated TV show—well into its second season at the time of this writing—wherein Optimus Prime and his small band of Autobots (consisting of Arcee, Bulkhead, Bumblebee, and Ratchet) defend Earth from Megatron and his Decepticon forces. It's a basic premise, sure, but the series is chock-full of action and compelling characters—which makes it an ideal subject for a game.

Certainly, being a brawler based upon the show and having the show's voice actors reprise their roles should be enough to pique fans' interests, but *Transformers: Prime—The Game* goes the extra mile with its story, which is a

collaboration between Activision and Hasbro. Shiva Deonarine, an associate producer at Activision, elaborates: "The story for the game is unique, all-new, and runs parallel to the events happening in season two of the TV show. We begin with the Decepticons intercepting a mysterious meteor approaching the earth and



the Autobots arriving to try and thwart their plans. Due to a massive eruption of power during a battle on the meteor, the Autobots are separated from each other, plunge to Earth, and lose contact with [their young human allies Jack, Miko, and Raf] who are monitoring them at base. Unknown to the Autobots and the kids,



the Decepticons may have uncovered an ancient power that could mean the end of the Autobots and possibly the earth."

The game allows you to play as all five Autobots (the one you control changes depending on the level), each with advantages. For instance, Deonarine tells us, "Arcee is very quick and acrobatic with her attacks while Bulkhead, although a bit slower, hits much harder." Furthermore, "all of the playable characters have power-up abilities. Essentially the player has an upgrade meter, and when it's full they can unleash advanced combos and weapon fire on their enemies. Their entire combat system is upgraded while still maintaining the uniqueness of each character." Of course, playing as giant robots is only half the story; these are Transformers we're talking about, after all. "There is huge emphasis on using both robot and vehicle mode to the player's benefit. The player can change form at will and must use both forms in order to progress. [Different] abilities are available if you are in robot or vehicle mode, and you will need to use both in order to defeat your foes," Deonarine explains.

The primary foes you'll face are the Vehicons, the *Transformers: Prime* equivalent of the battle droids from the *Star Wars* prequels. In the show there are two types of Vehicons—they transform into either a car or a jet—but Activision worked with Hasbro to create three new versions of Vehicons that they plan to reveal sometime closer to the game's release.



There are five playable characters in the story mode, but there are 11 to choose from in the yet-to-be-revealed multiplayer mode.



In addition to these fodder enemies, you will encounter bosses. "We have many boss battles and really tried to make them unique and awesome," says Deonarine. "All the Autobots square off against Decepticons. Old rivalries



definitely come into play here, and some new ones are forged. For example, we have Airchnid and Arcee battle it out. The fights take place in various locations, so the environments play a role. The player must use the environments to their advantage to defeat their enemies."

Based on what we've seen so far, *Transformers: Prime—The Game* seems to be extremely faithful to the source material. As fans of the TV show ourselves, we can't wait to experience the end result. —JUSTIN C.

Wii PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**
DEVELOPER: **NOWPRO**
RELEASE: **OCTOBER 2012**

YOU GOT THE TOUCH!

Transformers: Prime—The Game is being released on the Nintendo 3DS and Nintendo DS systems in addition to the Wii console. Associate producer Shiva Deonarine tells us the Nowpro-developed N3DS version "is supporting full 3D gameplay functionality and touch-screen features. We allow the player to use their upgrade system via the touch screen. Level maps are also shown on the touch screen showing off key areas that may interest the player if they wish to explore and find hidden items." Whereas the N3DS game is similar to the Wii title, the DS version is slightly divergent, according to Deonarine: "We had to devise a control scheme unique to the DS, so we brought on the talent of Altron Corporation for this. Not only have we tailored a control scheme for the DS while maintaining the full functionality of *Prime*, but Altron was also able to design levels exclusively for the DS while still keeping in line with the story for the game."

