Spring & Steam
an Odyssey

Eshed Shaham
FOSDEM 2020
Spring RTS Engine

• Supplies various services for games
  - Scripting
  - Physics
  - Graphics
  - Pathfinding
  - Networking

• Currently (31.01.2020)
  - 27,963 commits
  - ~100 contributors
  - <2 active core developers
Spring

Spring 1944

Imperial Winter
Spring

Gravitas

Kernel Panic
Spring

Area 17

Parts Needed
Zero-K Steam Launch

• First version released – May 2007
• Reached popularity – ~2009
• Steam Greenlight – April 2014
Zero-K Steam Launch

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Licho [author] 18 May, 2014 @ 3:45am
We have to prepare and double check lots of things now.. so probably a couple of weeks
Zero-K Steam Launch

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- Steam Launch – June 2014
Questions?
EvoRTS Steam Launch

- First version released – Dec. 2007
- Reached popularity – ???
- Steam Greenlight – January 2013
- Steam Launch – 4th April, 2014
Now Available on Steam - Evolution RTS

Evolution RTS is a free Open Source RTS game designed using the Spring Engine. It has been in development for over 5 years and receives updates often. Its gameplay is designed specifically to appeal to gamers of all skill levels. The gameplay is designed around the use of unit groups, and the mixture of your unit group often will determine how successful you are in battle, as opposed to churning out hundreds of the same unit continually.

The economy and teching system is easy to learn and use. The game itself supplies many tools that make managing your economy easier so that you can focus more on crushing your enemy than of playing simcity in your base. Units interact using realistic physics and varied terrain (you can actually micro units in order to dodge projectiles).
The Catastrophe

Now Available on Steam - Evolution RTS

HELP STEAM USERS!
by Forboding Angel » 07 Apr 2014, 20:32

Please help me! I'm at work and steam users are flooding in!

SPringie is spawning spring 91 autohosts!!! It needs to be spring 96!!!
The Catastrophe

Note: This is not a review of the gameplay itself, and you'll find out why in a second.

The download for the game is simply a download for a game lobby.

OH GOD WHY.

I hung around for around 25 minutes trying to figure out how to just start a game. The Terms of Service for the Spring Engine...
The Catastrophe

Note: This is not a review of the gameplay itself, and you'll find out more from our other reviews.

Customer Reviews:

50% of the 385 user reviews for this game are positive.

Overall Reviews:

Mixed (385 reviews)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Host</th>
<th>Source Code</th>
<th>Engine</th>
<th>Game</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>welcome</td>
<td>/Springs/</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>Java v1.1.4</td>
<td>Name: Welcome to the homepage of /Springs/!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>community</td>
<td>/Springs/</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>Java v1.1.4</td>
<td>Name: Community page for /Springs/!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>developer</td>
<td>/Springs/</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>Java v1.1.4</td>
<td>Name: Developer page for /Springs/!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
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<td>tester</td>
<td>/Springs/</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>Java v1.1.4</td>
<td>Name: Tester page for /Springs/!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Server Settings**

- **Build details**: See [build details](http://builddetails.spring.io/).
- **Download URL**: [Download URL](http://download.spring.io/).
- **Server Version**: 94.1

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**Battle List**

- **Battle #1**: Spring MT 94.1
- **Battle #2**: Spring MT 94.2
- **Battle #3**: Spring MT 94.3

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**Gameplay Tips**

- **Saber**: Always useMake sure to have an effective strategy for each type of battle.
- **Jester**: Practice complex moves to increase your chances of winning.
- **Debock**: Focus on defense to avoid taking hits.

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**Developer Notes**

- **Build System**: Use Maven for dependency management.
- **Server Configuration**: Configure settings in `conf/server.xml`.
This is a description for test purposes only. Testing testing testing.
Why d’you need all that crap?
Why d’you need all that crap?
The UI Problem

“There's a closely related issue, however that I don't know how to solve yet without a big player with a lot of money, which is doing systematic user interface end user testing. We're not very good at that yet, we need to find a way to be good at it.”
The UI Problem

“There’s a closely related issue, however that I don’t know how to solve yet without a big player with a lot of money, which is doing systematic user interface end user testing. We’re not very good at that yet, we need to find a way to be good at it.”

Everybody has a testing environment. Some people are lucky enough enough to have a totally separate environment to run production in.

3:07 PM - 21 Aug 2015
The UI Problem – Why?

- Users’ time is a limited resource
- Devs’ time is an even more limited resource
- Users’ good will is the most limited resource
The UI Problem – Why?

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- Free games have it worse
The UI Problem – Why?

- Users’ time is a limited resource.
- Devs’ time is an even more limited resource.
- Users’ good will is the most limited resource.
- Free games have it worse.

![Comic by XKCD showing user feedback and admin response to UI changes.](https://xkcd.com/1172/)
The UI Problem – Inertia

- Teachers are there to get you
- Develobsters want to ruin your game.
The UI Solution

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Launch Blockers

- Server
- Lobby
- GUI
- Singleplayer
- Trailer
Launch Unblockers

- Server migration and new Backend
- Ingame Lobby
- GUI revamp
- Compromises
- Luck
Ingame Lobby
Ingame Lobby
PLAY
Forum Post
Train Lobby

Play!
Report Firepluk
"zk has bestest lobby
"feature map maybe??"
"lob lob"
"zk is best game all other games bad"
"because spring is a engine"
"steam release will bring the many players in:
days (use the slider)"

repost a random funny gif/video: yes no
use dropdown list to select OP or UP unit:
 Leveler
Ingame Lobby
GUI Revamp
GUI Revamp
Compromises
Luck
Itch.io

- Smaller platform
- Smaller exposure – smaller risk
- Great opportunity for feedback
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• Steam Launch – June 2014
Was it a Success?
Was it a Success?
Was it a Success?

92% of the 1,402 user reviews for this game are positive.

Overall Reviews:

Very Positive (1,402 reviews)
What is Success?

• Donations covered servers cost
• Getting maximum players?
• Getting maximum devs?
The Aftermath

• Burned out devs
• What’s more important, stability or stability?
Lessons Learnt

- Minimise MTTF
- Compromise!
Lessons Learnt

• Minimise MTTF (Mean Time to Fun)
• Compromise!
Questions?

This time for real :-)