

## Ten Characteristics of Virtual Environments

		Second Life <sup>1</sup>	World of Warcraft <sup>2</sup>	Wikipedia <sup>3</sup>	Blackboard <sup>4</sup>	Blog <sup>5</sup>	Diner Dash <sup>6</sup>	Halo <sup>7</sup>	MOO/MUD <sup>8</sup>	Zork <sup>9</sup>	Mario Bros. <sup>10</sup>
# of Users	Single					•	•	•		•	•
	Multi	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Dominant Form	Text			•	•	•			•	•	
	Image	•	•				•	•			•
Network	LAN							•	•	•	•
	WAN	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Persistence	Persistent	•	•	•	•	•			•		
	Non-persistent						•	•	•	•	•
Stigmergy	Stigmergic	•	•	•	•	•			•		
	Non-stigmergic		•				•	•	•	•	•
Object Ownership	Private	•	•		•	•			•	•	
	Public		•	•		•	•	•			•
Identity Formation	Static			•	•		•	•	•	•	•
	Custom	•				•			•		
	Conditional		•								
Access	Private				•	•		•	•		
	Public	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•
Relationship with other users	Collaborative	•	•	•	•	•		•	•		•
	Antagonistic		•					•	•		
	Conditional	•	•					•	•		
Relationship with Environment	Collaborative	•	•	•	•	•			•		
	Antagonistic		•				•	•	•	•	•
	Conditional		•						•		

<sup>1</sup> Second Life: [www.secondlife.com](http://www.secondlife.com). As of January 2006, there are two million residents in this virtual environment.

<sup>2</sup> World of Warcraft: [www.worldofwarcraft.com](http://www.worldofwarcraft.com). As of January 2006, there are over five million players in this game.

<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia: [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com). As of January 2006, Wikipedia has over 300,000 registered contributors.

<sup>4</sup> Blackboard: [www.blackboard.com](http://www.blackboard.com). This learning management system (LMS) hosts course management, threaded discussions, synchronous chat, digital dropboxes, and more.

<sup>5</sup> Blogs: Current popular blog sites include MySpace ([www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)), Blogger ([www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)), and LiveJournal ([www.livejournal.com](http://www.livejournal.com)). Blogs can also be hosted on content management systems (CMS) such as Joomla ([www.joomla.com](http://www.joomla.com)), Moodle ([www.moodle.com](http://www.moodle.com)) and Drupal ([www.drupal.com](http://www.drupal.com)).

<sup>6</sup> Diner Dash: A Shockwave game developed by GameLab ([www.gamelab.com](http://www.gamelab.com)) and published by Playfirst ([www.playfirst.com](http://www.playfirst.com)). Diner dash is a single-player game in which the player learns to waitress by seating, serving, and cleaning up after customers in a struggling diner. Multi-tasking and efficiency are rewarded.

<sup>7</sup> Halo: A single and multi-player first-person shooter (FPS) developed by Bungie Studios ([bungie.net](http://bungie.net)) and published by Microsoft. Multi-player (one on one or team vs. team) games are hosted on remote servers.

<sup>8</sup> MOO/MUD: Multi-User Dungeon or MUD Object Oriented. Both are text-based environments in which users explore or communicate using prompt lines. To see a comprehensive, genre-based list of MUDs still in action go to [www.mudconnect.com](http://www.mudconnect.com).

<sup>9</sup> Zork: An interactive, single-player, text-based fiction game developed at MIT in 1977. Zork can still be played today at <http://thcnet.net/error/index.php>.

<sup>10</sup> Mario Brothers: A single (and later multi) player arcade game developed by Nintendo in 1983. Mario Brothers is a side-scroller (player moves from left to right across the screen) with a tightly controlled narrative.

