

MMORPG Creative Scenario 1

Open trading

Interaction

I'm walking through a crowded area. I notice a few people trading off to the side. They sit on the ground, with a mat in front of them, with items for sale arranged on the mat.

I see that one is selling a sword in which I am interested¹. I approach that player and express my interest in that item. He agrees to start the trade.

The trader clears all of the other items from the mat, leaving only the sword, placed on his side, and a set of scales, placed in the center. I can now take a very close look at the item, see how it will affect my stats when equipped, preview how it will look on my character, etc.

I decide that I want to buy the sword. I have a few rings on me that I looted earlier today. I place them, one by one, onto the mat, paying close attention to the set of scales² in the center of the mat. With each ring I place on the mat, the scales swing closer to being equal.

Finally balance is achieved. We could continue haggling, but usually when the scales are balanced both parties are getting a fair trade, so we both accept the trade.

I take my sword, and the trader takes his rings.

Almost immediately, another character approaches the trader and inquires about one of his new rings. My trade took place in the open, and any nearby characters could see the sword, the rings, and even observe the balance of the scales. This new character saw the ring being exchanged and wants to buy it.

A nearby thief also saw the exchange, and knows that I am carrying an expensive sword, and that the trader has just acquired some valuable and easily concealable rings.

Important Mechanics

- (1) Finding items that are of interest to your character. The items on a trader's mat could be color-coded, based on its level, relative to yours. Closer inspection of an item could show you its full stats.
- (2) Item value, denoted by scales. Each item could have a value, probably the average auction price of the item. This value could be updated only

every 24 hours, to cut down on server load. A trader's special ability could calculate the exact average auction price of an item, up to the minute.

Reading the scales could return the monetary value required to reach equality. A trader could loan out his mat, and his very accurate scales, for a set fee or percentage.

Extended Mechanics

Since trading takes place in the open, a number of trading-related abilities can be included.

A thief could steal from the trading mat, canceling the trade as both parties run after the thief. A knight could stand nearby, ensuring that no thief could steal in the area—unless the thief was more skilled than the knight. Stealing in town would have repercussions; characters could shout for the guards, who would arrest the thief.

Importance

This trade interaction model would cut down on trade channel spam. An auction system is still required, and vendors of various goods would simply be hooked directly into the auction system.

This trade system would also mesh well with voice communication, which will be the subject of another scenario. The open quality, and possibility of being observed, would make trading more realistic, and fuel demand for trading houses with private areas, and other trader-specific abilities.