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## Journal Menu

- [Abstracting and Indexing](#)
- [Aims and Scope](#)
- [Article Processing Charges](#)
- [Articles in Press](#)
- [Author Guidelines](#)
- [Bibliographic Information](#)
- [Contact Information](#)
- [Editorial Board](#)
- [Editorial Workflow](#)
- [Reviewers Acknowledgment](#)
- [Subscription Information](#)

- [Open Special Issues](#)
- [Published Special Issues](#)
- [Special Issue Guidelines](#)

[Call for Proposals for Special Issues](#)

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Research Article

## A Study of Interaction Patterns and Awareness Design Elements in a Massively Multiplayer Online Game

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[Abstract](#)

[Full-Text PDF](#)

[Full-Text HTML](#)

[Linked References](#)

[How to Cite this Article](#)

[Complete Special Issue](#)

### Abstract

Massively multiplayer online games (MMOGs) have been known to create rich and versatile social worlds for thousands of millions of players to participate. As such, various game elements and advance technologies such as artificial intelligence have been applied to encourage and facilitate social interactions in these online communities, the key to the success of MMOGs. However, there is a lack of studies addressing the usability of these elements in games. In this paper, we look into interaction patterns and awareness design elements that support the awareness in *LastWorld* and *FairyLand*. Experimental results obtained through both in-game experiences and player interviews reveal that not all awareness tools (e.g., an in-game map) have been fully exploited by players. In addition, those players who are *aware* of these tools are not satisfied with them. Our findings suggest that awareness-oriented tools/channels should be easy to interpret and rich in conveying "knowledge" so as to reduce players-cognitive overload. These findings of this research recommend considerations of early stage MMOG design.