



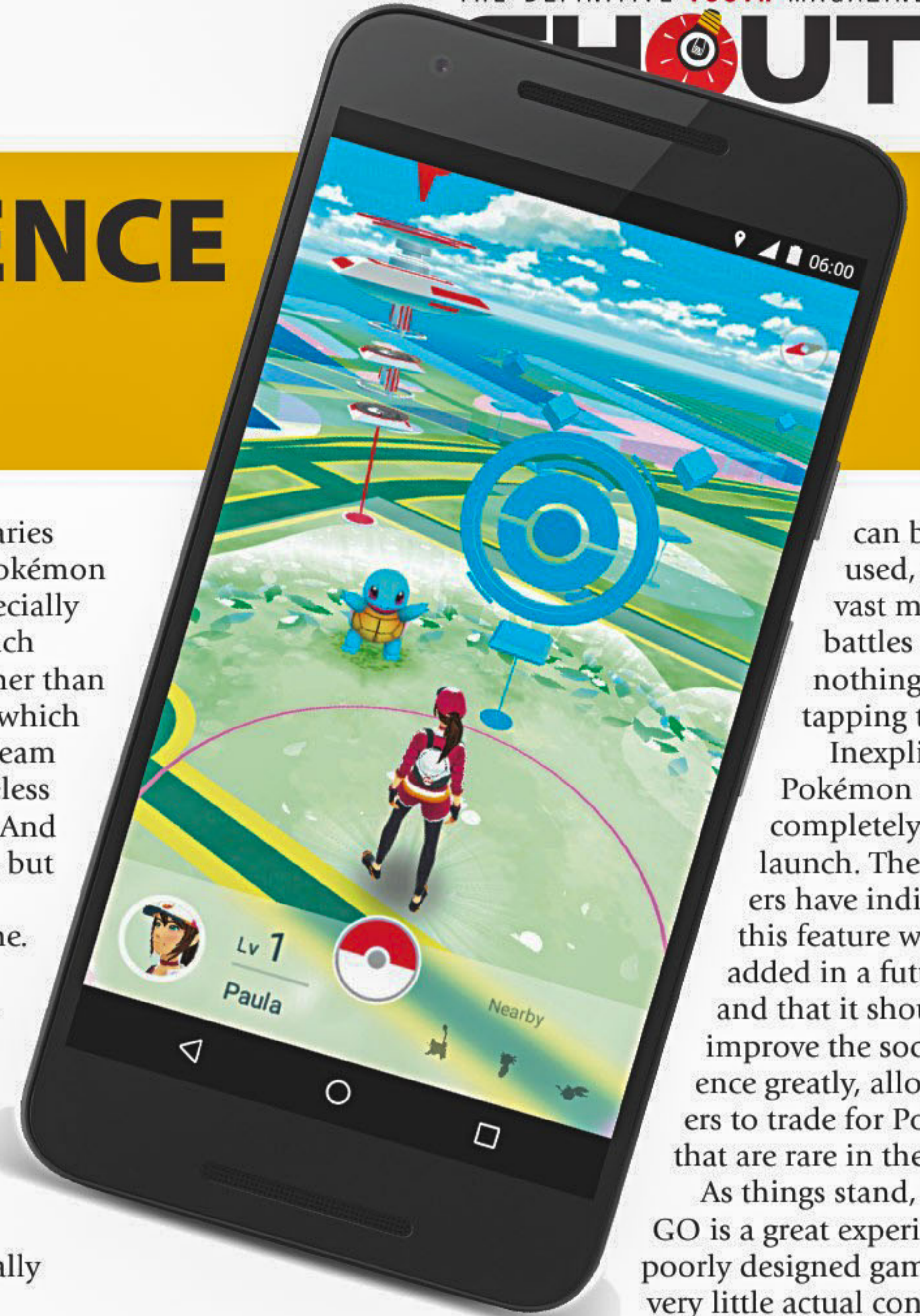
TERRIFIC EXPERIENCE TERRIBLE GAME

FIRST REACTION

AADIYAT AHMAD

With the release of Pokémon GO, the Pokémon world has been brought to ours and our childhood dreams seem to have been brought to reality. Now we can finally find and capture Pokémon in our own backyards. The game itself however might not actually be any good. Going outside and collecting Pokémon is of course the star attraction of Pokémon GO. There is a very real thrill in scouring real locations in search of fantastic creatures. There is excitement when you find them, and there is heart wrenching suspense as you throw the Pokéball and watch it rock back and forth, wondering if that Charizard you've been tracking might slip from your grasp after all. Throwing Pokéballs, though it seems very simple initially, does take just enough skill to keep the repetitive action engaging over numerous encounters, even when catching Rattata. The Pokémon species are distributed in environments that make sense for them, and since the Pokédex doesn't have any location data for the Pokémon, players must use their intuition and explore in order to catch them all. Pokéstops, where players replenish their supplies of Pokéballs and other items are placed at points of interest, which enhances this sense of exploration. Players might find interesting things in their own neighbourhoods they had not noticed before. Beyond this, however, Pokémon Go isn't much of a Pokémon game. Training Pokémon is almost completely unviable. Stardust, the currency used to level up one's Pokémon, is hard to accumulate and very quickly spent.

Moreover, the power of wild Pokémon varies greatly and it's not uncommon to find Pokémon many times stronger than your own, especially early in the game. As such, it's always much better to look for powerful Pokémon rather than to train them up. Your starter Pokémon, which would likely play a starring role in your team in the main series, is rendered utterly useless some thirty seconds into Pokémon GO. And in order to evolve, Pokémon need candy, but they can only use candy dropped by Pokémon from the same evolutionary line. Progressing one Pokémon through its evolutionary stages then requires capturing dozens of the same species. All this means that players are left to constantly replace and discard their Pokémon. In a series that has always emphasised the bond between a trainer and their Pokémon and had the game mechanics reflect that, these are really strange design choices indeed. In Pokémon GO players can join one of three teams and compete for control of gyms. An MMO style turf war seems a fine idea, but this is let down by the lacklustre gym battles. The turn based tactics of the main series have been replaced by real time button mashing. Pokémon type weaknesses and resistances still apply, but even so the battles have the scope and depth of a teaspoon. Each Pokémon only knows two moves and only one of them



can be reliably used, and so the vast majority of battles consists of nothing more than tapping the screen. Inexplicably, Pokémon trading is completely absent at launch. The developers have indicated that this feature will be added in a future update and that it should improve the social experience greatly, allowing players to trade for Pokémon that are rare in their area. As things stand, Pokémon GO is a great experience and a poorly designed game. There is very little actual content and thus far it fails to deliver on training, battling and trading - three of Pokémon's four core elements. The one element it does deliver on though, it delivers brilliantly. *Aadiyat is an aspiring biologist and is consequently terrified of social interaction in every form. Please don't contact him at aadiyat.ahmad@gmail.com*

BLURRING THE LINE BETWEEN GAMING PLATFORMS

TAMIM BIN ZAKIR

Microsoft wants to fuse Xbox One and Windows 10 into one super gaming platform capable of playing games anywhere. With the release of Windows 10's Anniversary update, the Windows and Xbox app stores will be combined into one, creating a single unified store across devices. What it essentially implies that you won't need an Xbox One to play Microsoft's next generation of games. **PROS** Titles like the space-age shooter Halo have become some of the most sought-after games in the industry. Some people buy an Xbox One just so they can play certain games. Making them available on PC might bolster computer sales among consumers and that's a win for Microsoft whose software powers those computers. It's an interesting time to be an Xbox owner and a PC player; Microsoft doesn't look like it's backing down from its platform-agnostic promise any time soon. When you buy a game made by Microsoft or one of its close partners, you will be able to play it on either device.

One and Windows 10 will also serve as a key catalyst to persuade the tech industry to support its Windows 10 Operating System during a crucial time as the company has gone through underwhelming PC sales and still has a detrimental issue to work out. Bringing in some of the

ture of reducing the prominence of hardware in favor of software by bridging the gap between Xbox One and Windows 10. While this may sound simple on the surface, one problem is that Microsoft has to make sure gamers who prefer one platform over the other, or play both at

soles providing various ranges of performance. In theory, there's no need to buy a console if new games work on old hardware, be it the genuine Xbox One or PC. Developers who couldn't previously find satisfaction to utilize the graphical fidelity of their games for the console will now gain extra privilege due to prowess of the latest GPUs in PCs and the upgraded console. This, in turn, is sure to alienate gamers as many nit-pick mercilessly the three most important aspects of gaming - resolution, detail & frame rate. People would get enraged with the superior graphics in PC over time as developers fine tune the graphics of the games in order to ensure optimal playability in the consoles and PCs alike. Lastly, next time a Microsoft game has caught your divine attention, you don't require Xbox to try it out. Microsoft has spent the better part of the last three years rebuilding its brand as a gamer-centric, consumer-friendly company willing to do whatever it takes to win back its lost loyalty. Now the console's future is tied to a bold vision that enables players to play games wherever they please, whether it is on a couch in the living room or with a mouse and keyboard.



industry's most distinguished games to Windows is bound to make a difference. **CONS**

The company thrives to make itself as significant to gamers as it was in the age of the Xbox 360, however at the expendi-

the same time, feel like they aren't receiving the short end of the stick.

In spite of the Project Scorpio announcement, another problem is Xbox would end up resembling something closer to PC, with slower and faster con-

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