

SOUND

The sound in Dark Omen serves two main purposes:

- To involve the player in the game fantasy environment, setting an "historical time" and place for the game, while creating ambience along with other art such as the visual environment (2/3D) and the UI.
- It is the driving force in the storytelling: conversations between characters which speak in real time are one of the main ways to inform the player of the characters intentions, missions, and whereabouts, and informing them before campaign decision-taking. Without these interludes, single player Dark Omen would be a collection of maps instead of a Campaign that depicts the struggle of mercenary troops against the evil.
- During the gameplay, it is used for informing the player about what is happening and to direct his attention, working closely to the unit leader's portrait and the UI. It is also employed as a feedback measure, informing the player that his commands were received, if they were carried and specify why in some cases.

The audio is mostly encoded and compressed in .MAD (probably, EA Madcow with only audio), and .SAD. However, a tool is available in dark-omen.org, it is able to convert these files into .WAV files in full quality. Most FX is in just plain .WAV.

Sounds are played by the Sound Engine in several different channels, and the game its able to make some edits to the audio files in order to provide a more complete experience with few base files.

SOUND CHANNELS AND SYSTEM

The user front-end of the sound system reports two audio channels: **MUSIC** and **OTHER**. The "Other" channel represents everything that isn't the dynamic background music including and not limiting to: FX; UI sounds, etc.

However, the internal workings of the game are different and the "**OTHER**" channel has more internal channels:

- Environment: Sounds of waterfall, chirping of birds, blowing of the wind. These are present and fixed to scenario locations, and most of the times, play in a determinate position variable to the player's camera location.
- Speech: This sound channel plays the audio of the character portraits (Charge, Open fire, etc.), and the audio of the "narrator" of the game (Stop, Threat Dispelled, Aye Sir, etc.). It is a very important channel, because depending on the information given the player must take action or redirect his attention to another place. This channel

works with a queue and avoids audio layering while not varying with the player's camera location.

- FX: This channel plays the special effects: the troops "fighting sound" and ranged fire hits for example. This channel plays a lot of audio files simultaneously, and the sound engine has the ability to make some pitch and duration changes in real time when some conditions met, such as a sound being played a lot of times in a short span of time.
- UI: This channel plays the UI sounds, such as the magic item bar toggle, the "Deploy your troops" arrow, the Winds of Magic meter, and Reload Indicator. These sounds are vital, because they give feedback to the player that the UI is responding to the commands. These sounds don't vary with the player's camera location.

SOUND TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

The audio files for character speech, and Ambience, FX & UI report the following characteristics:

Channels	Bitrate	Codec
1 channel	22050Hz 353 kb/s	PCM Audio

The audio files for the game music report the following characteristics:

Channels	Bitrate	Codec
2 channels	22050Hz 706 kb/s	PCM Audio

The base .MAD and .SAD audio files are decompressed by the game prior to the playing; and the game engine can render the game in 11025 or 22050 kbps (low and high quality sound options).

MUSIC

The game uses dynamic music to add tension and ambience during the gameplay and briefings. Music files are sampled and sequenced by the game engine, meshing up the 6-second long segmented .WAV files that together make the OST composed by Mark Knight. Several of these tracks are unused.

The dynamic music uses pre-established patterns that depend on an output by the game engine status, the known ones are:

sNormal	sEnd	sDeploy	sGood	sBad	sEnd
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The music script is handled by .FSM files that invoke the patterns of music relative to the game engine status to be played. 4 of them are to be found in Dark Omen:

File	Description/used in
EERIE9.FSM	Main Menu theme. Used in the main menu after intro videos.
EERIE11.FSM	Briefing theme. Used in mission briefings and troop roster.
BATTLE1.FSM	Battle theme. Used in some battles.
BATTLE2.FSM	Second Battle theme. Used in the other battles.

EERIE9&11:

WIP

BATTLE 1&2:

Both FSMs are programmed to start when the state reported by the game engine is sDeploy, as they are loaded during the “PREPARING FOR BATTLE” screen, the music starts along with the gameplay.

After that, they invoke a music pattern.

ENVIRONMENT

WIP

SPEECH

One of the game’s principal ways of giving information is given by the sound and specifically by the leaders of the troops, principally in the Character portrait.

There are different troop voice sets depending on the race the player is using.

(LIST OF QUOTES AND FILES FROM CHARACTERS)- WIP

Another important source of information and feedback for the player is the narrator: it does work along the UI buttons, but it’s not necessarily associated to the pressing of the buttons, and are associated to different trigger events which depend on the conditions of the battlefield and the state of the troop clicked. The Narrator only speaks about conditions of the regiment that is currently selected, so, the global information that this tools gives is easy to miss. There are different narrator sets depending on the race the player is using.

For “ALLIED” race:

File	Quote	Trigger
A_AYESIR	Aye, Sir	Steady state troop that isn’t in combat given movement command or ranged target enemy banner or terrain.
A_FORWARD	Forward	Steady state troop that isn’t in combat given movement command targeting

A_YESMLD	Yes my lord!	terrain.
A_ENGAGE	Engage	Steady state troop that isn't in combat clicks enemy banner.
A_ATTACK	Attack!	
A_TOARMS	To arms!	
A_CRUSH	Crush them!	Steady state troop that is in combat or touches enemy during charge detects enemy troop fails combat test or hits rout.
A_HALT	Stop!	Steady state troop moving stops movement due to UI stop button pressed. OR Steady state troop that isn't in combat given movement command upon near allied troops with no space for wheel or reform.*
A_HDFIRE	Hold fire	Steady state ranged troop stops ranged routine due to UI Stop button pressed.
A_NMERCY	No Mercy!	Steady state troop in combat hates enemy combatant.#
A_PROTES	I protest my lord!	Steady state troop that isn't in combat given movement command and can't find a path to clicked terrain due to pathway blocking.
A_RGROUP	Regroup!	Fleeing state troop passes LD test and rallies, returning to Steady state.
A_STAND	Stand firm men!	Steady state troop that is in combat fails LD test or receives retreat UI button order; can't get in Fleeing state due to item or trait.
A_THREAT	Threat dispelled!	Dispel Magic on Troop successfully cancels spell damage.

FX
WIP
UI
WIP