Why reviving the shuttered Anthem is turning out tougher than expected

“I feel like with *Anthem*, it heavily relies on online data that was stored in Bioware’s server,” Andersson added. “In my initial testing, the game couldn’t load into the level without that data.”

[embedded content]

Anthem‘s Fort Tarsis area loads its data from local files, rather than EA’s servers.

There’s some hope that this crucial level data is still available and recoverable, though. Ness points out that Fort Tarsis, the game’s lobby area, already runs using offline data piped through a local “server” thread, meaning the rest of the game could theoretically be coerced to run similarly.

Just as important, he says, “as far as we have been able to discern, all the logic for the other levels, which when the game was live ran on a remote server, also exists in the client,” Ness said. “By patching the game we can most likely enable the ability to host these in process as well. That’s what we’re exploring.”

“To be honest we’re not entirely sure…”

While all that local level data should be usable in theory, seemingly random differences between *Anthem* and other

Frostbite games are getting in the way of loading the data in practice. *Anthem* acts like a standard Frostbite game “for the most part,” Ness said, but at times will show unusual behaviors that are hard to pin down.

“For example, when we try to load most maps, no NPCs spawn, but in some maps they do,” he said. “And we have yet to determine why. Ness has some suspicion that the odd behavior is connected to the “fairly extensive amount of player data the game keeps as part of its online RPG nature,” but adds that “to be honest we’re not entirely sure how deep the differences go, other than that the engine didn’t behave how we expected it to.”

Ness said he’s about 75 percent confident that the team will be able to figure out how to fully leverage the Frostbite engine to power a version of the game that runs without EA’s centralized servers. If that effort succeeds, he says a playable version of *Anthem* could be back up and running in “months, or less even, depending on motivation.” But if the efforts to pick apart *Anthem*’s take on Frostbite hits a brick wall, Ness says “the amount of work increases fairly exponentially and I’m a lot less confident that we have the motivation for that.”

https://arstechnica.com/gaming/2026/01/why-reviving-the-shuttered-anthem-is-turning-out-tougher-than-expected/