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iOS support  
is key for us.”  
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# Dropping in on Hansoft

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# One For All

**Will Freeman** catches up with Hansoft CEO Patric Palm to find out why the 6.7 update to the company's popular project management tool will help studios of all sizes

HAVING SEEN a soft release immediately before the all too distant memory that was the Christmas 2011 holidays, Hansoft 6.7 is now making its way to developers worldwide.

Despite being just a dot release, it has set out to make vast improvements to teams large and small. Patric Palm, Hansoft CEO, tells us more.

**Is there a theme or particular direction that drove the development of the 6.7 version of Hansoft?**

Yes, the main theme was enhancing the SDK functionality to make Hansoft more tightly integrated to other systems studios use.

**And what are the most significant feature updates to Hansoft 6.7?**

There's the ability to make SDK functionality available through the Hansoft GUI, and the readymade full two-way real-time synchronisation with Jira.

**How will those features impact the day-to-day work of studios using Hansoft?**

They can, for example, connect features and tasks to unit tests. Then, when the unit tests are run, they update Hansoft workflows and set status based on unit test results.

**Why is the new Jira integration in particular so significant?**

Many of our customers have previously used Jira with Greenhopper. Jira is cheap and a common first step for many developers. Our readymade integration makes it very easy to migrate from Jira to Hansoft without losing any data, including attachments.

It also makes it possible to run Jira side by side with Hansoft, and then it doesn't matter which system the developer updates a task or bug in. This enables a smooth gradual transition to Hansoft to step-by-step implement the more powerful and efficient processes and practices Hansoft enables.

**What kind of studio and level of game design is 6.7 primarily built for? Are you targeting the full spectrum from indie and microstudio up to triple-A teams?**

Hansoft is used across the whole spectrum, from studios like Bioware to indies like Playdead – the makers of *Limbo* – to leaders in outsourcing like Virtuos. Our free educational license is becoming more and more popular among students. The SDK is

primarily used by the larger studios, but I have seen really cool examples of smaller companies integrating Hansoft with their art production pipelines.

**How is Hansoft having to adapt its offering to cater for the huge rise in the number of smaller and indie studios? Is that really a relevant market for Hansoft?**

Absolutely, many of those smaller teams are starting to become quite significant companies. In order not to let their success slow them down, they need to think about the efficiency and management of their productions. Hansoft has the tools for them to do that; and we can also make a better job at showing how to set it up to suit their specific needs.

With 6.7 we are introducing a free 'Start-up License' for up to nine users that indies can benefit from. If they contact us now they will get the full Hansoft solution for free. Those interested can e-mail: [solutions@hansoft.se](mailto:solutions@hansoft.se).

**“It is not only about avoiding crunch; it is a realisation that good tools and leadership help the creative work instead of hindering it.”**

Patric Palm, Hansoft

**How else are the updates to Hansoft's offerings a reflection of a changing industry?**

The popularity of Hansoft is itself a sign of this. Teams now tend to put more importance on, not only the quality of the game, but also the process and management in making it. It is not only about avoiding crunch; it is a realisation that good tools and leadership practices help the creative work instead of hindering it.

**How in general do you see games development project managing and QA evolving in the future?**

There are some best practices that we see spreading more and more. For example outsourcing is becoming more



professionalised: to really be successful, effort needs to be put into communication and collaboration with the outsourcer, and this is where Hansoft comes in.

Another example is the practice of using the Scrum method for feature development in combination with Lean practices like Kanban for the art asset development.

We are also starting to see Hansoft being used for integrating development, QA and making operations tighter. I believe this is something we will see more of in the future.

*Hansoft's latest 6.7 update allows users to more easily integrate the tool with other systems studios already use*

**What challenges defined the creation of Hansoft 6.7?**

We didn't want the Jira integration to be a checkbox-feature. We wanted it to be something that really works in real production in all various environments. The robustness of this integration is unique in the market, but it was also quite a challenge getting it there, which in turn delayed the release date.

**Finally, were there any other improvements to Hansoft in 6.7 that you feel are of particular use to your customers?**

There are improvements that will make many users happy like support for multi-drop list columns, ghost resources in agile, and critical path for Gantt schedules.

[www.hansoft.se](http://www.hansoft.se)

**JUST CAUSE FOR OPTIMISM**

The latest high profile dev studio to adopt Hansoft's project management toolbox is fellow Swedish outfit Avalanche.

Most famous for creating the *Just Cause* franchise, Avalanche recently opened the doors of its New York studio, and currently has a trio of triple-A projects underway, including the Sega published original IP *Renegade Ops*. In short, right now it is a very busy operation.

"Together with a fresh road map, Hansoft helped us structure and get an overview of our work, which has been immensely helpful. The more we use it, the more we want to use it," says Avalanche senior

producer Dan Thronström of the integrated solution for project management.

"No studio wants to end up doing a death march," adds Hansoft CEO Patric Palm.

"Where other tools fall short providing only flat lists of things to fix, Hansoft helps teams achieve a more proactive and structured approach. It's no silver bullet, but certainly gives the team a better shot managing their production successfully.

A silver bullet it may not be, but the latest release of Hansoft – version 6.7 – could be set to become something of a stalwart solution at ambitious, multi-project studios like Avalanche.

