

Official announcement of ViewApp GmbH on 06.02.2020



Dear Community,

as you have noticed, all of our threads to the Munich add-on in the official LOTUS forum were removed by the forum operator Oriolus Software GmbH (Janine & Marcel Kuhnt) on 23.12.2019 without prior consultation with us. At that time we were already on our Christmas vacation. When LOTUS users asked in the forum why our threads are no longer found, Janine answered that we (ViewApp) wanted it that way. This is a deliberate customer deception and false statement by Janine, which was only corrected days later. We reject this statement and would like to reiterate at this point that this was neither desired by us nor did it happen in our interest. Unfortunately, there has been no response to a further attempt on our part to contact those responsible in order to resolve any discrepancies.

After the company holidays, we analysed the situation in detail and agreed on a further procedure internally, so that we would like to inform you about it today.

First of all, we want to give you a look behind the scenes and communicate the current situation transparently and openly.

The fact is that ViewApp has been working intensively on the development of the Munich add-on for LOTUS since 2018 and we have been in close coordination and cooperation with the LOTUS developers ever since. We've been in contact with Oriolus since the early stages of LOTUS development and the project was initiated under cooperation to create a comprehensive gaming experience. Together we agreed on the content, approach and development plan and Oriolus Software GmbH (Janine & Marcel Kuhnt) always knew what content we were developing and when we wanted to release our developments and what our development pace was.

We participated in the LOTUS development with a lot of feedback and test runs and helped to initiate essential basic functions. Furthermore, we have been promised that the Rails module with the functions for AI vehicles will be developed and that the first implementation possibilities should be available by October/November 2019. In spring 2019, shortly after the release of the Munich Add-On, we were asked about the priority of performance improvements and later (in September 2019) there was also a user survey in the forum (in which the simple AI received the most votes). A comprehensive revision of the graphics was also planned for summer 2019. But from spring 2019 on, nothing more was done and the LOTUS user community as well as the content developers were pushed to the head and the further development of the tool "MapEditor" as well as the improvement of the performance in favour of the multiplayer mode and the bus module were put behind.

In spite of several inquiries we haven't received any feedback since summer 2019 and had to accept these circumstances. It is a fact that during the creation of line 27, such massive bugs occurred in the tool "MapEditor", which had partially destroyed our existing track sections without any further action and we got back certain identical errors several times in a row, despite having to correct them. In total, only the bug fixing itself took a whole man-month of working time. To all this we have kept silent so far and yet, despite the circumstances, we have published line 27 with a lot of extra work and kept to our early-access schedule. Also performance problems in various forms caused by LOTUS were to be blamed on us, without having investigated the problem with larger maps and details for over 9 months. Unfortunately, Marcel & Janine also stopped the basic communication unilaterally since September 2019 and all contact attempts remained unanswered.

This is not intended to be a whining or even excuses, but to give you an insight into how things actually work. Because we kept our word despite the circumstances and tried to create added value for our community and customers. To achieve this, we have invested much more time and money than budgeted into the development of the Munich Tram with lots of details and realistic routes. Last but not least, with the release of the announced Christkindl-Tram we have delivered the added value we had announced.

As we are still waiting for essential features and improvements in the LOTUS Rails module (registered bug fixes in the MapEditor, complete AI functionality, passengers, lighting, performance optimization and loading times in the MapEditor), we hereby inform you that we have to suspend the further development of the LOTUS Munich Add-On for an indefinite period of time.

In the sense of early access, as it is communicated by Oriolus Software GmbH in LOTUS, we unfortunately cannot provide a concrete time schedule when we will integrate further functions. The product LOTUS-Simulator: Munich Tram is sold - as it is - at the current state and we have adapted this information accordingly on the platform STEAM.

We very much regret that "early access" obviously means that agreed plans will not be kept or announced essential functions for developers and customers will not be delivered and no further information will be published by those responsible.

However, since we are dependent on the LOTUS basic functions for the further development of our add-on, we have no other choice but to wait for an indefinite period of time. At this point in time, we can no longer implement our development to a reasonable extent, so this decision follows.

Our goal is to create the most realistic simulation experiences possible. According to our understanding, this also includes an appealing gameplay and essential functions of a simulator, as mentioned before.

Unfortunately, this was and is not possible with the LOTUS simulator - despite our best efforts. Therefore we will refrain from further projects with the LOTUS-Simulator and wait for a final completion with all promised functions.