Storyline

The player assumes the role of an employee at the <u>VR Research Labs</u>, a company dedicated to the development of Virtual Reality entertainment devices. Security is strict at VR Labs due to the current feeding frenzy occurring in the hi-tech entertainment industry, and the fact that VR Labs is within a few months of revealing the first working model of a *Multi-Universe Personal Transporter (MUPT)*.

Nicknamed the "*Hot Seat*", this $14 million dollar machine could graphically simulate any environment imaginable by man and provide all the possible physical, as well as psychological, sensations associated with that environment. Of course, no one could actually *prove* that there were psychological effects resulting from use of the *Hot Seat*, other than unanimous reports of sheer exhilaration. The news media, hungry for doomsday tidbits to feed the public's sensationalistic appetite, probed and focused on the possible negative repercussions of such a device on the human mind. But reliable inside information on the *Hot Seat* was scarce, and the statements occasionally released through VR Labs' PR department consistently echoed the company's belief that only positive side effects could be experienced from the device's use. The media, however, treated these reports of psychological benefits as typical hi-tech hype - exaggerations of its inventor and programmer, <u>Charles "Chip" Reddin</u>.

Chip was a technological genius and, according to others who worked with him, a certifiable lunatic. In the world of technological research and development, as is sometimes said of the art world, this is a totally acceptable and harmless combination. In Chip's case....it was to prove deadly.

One of Chip's hobbies was horror films. There wasn't a horror film ever made that he didn't know all the details about, even as far back as silent films. But the one series of films he favored the most was the *Hellraiser* series. He knew how many nails protruded from Pinhead, the speed in miles-per-hour at which the Chatterer Beast traveled along walls and ceilings, the calculated distance from the Catacombs exit to the base of Leviathan, and how many chains hit or missed in each film.

And he realized the potential power of the Lament Box.

The exact configuration of the Lament Box could not be determined from the movies, but with the computer equipment and knowledge at Chip's disposal, it was possible to calculate its structure and reproduce it in a 3D program. It took him approximately ten months to complete the 3D Box and this was using one of the most powerful computer system in existence. The same computer system that was used to develop the *Hot Seat*.

No one at VR Labs knew about the Box. No one even suspected that Chip had programmed the Lament Configuration into the engine that powered the VR device. He had been careful enough to prevent its accidental access by including special coding that

required a *trigger key* to be pressed at a precise moment in the running of the MUPT program. As a secondary precaution, a series of *passwords* were required in order to access his personal journal, which did not mention the trigger key, but did record the progress he made on the Lament Configuration and this information would certainly reveal the MUPT computer system as the hiding place. A capable hacker would find the possible existence of a trigger key in the *Hot Seat* far too tempting to dismiss.

Janet Perkins was just such a hacker. In fact, it was for that very reason that she was hired by VR Labs: to put the *Hot Seat* through the most critical tests possible and expose any programming *bugs* that might exist in Chip's coding. Janet was the senior *code tester* for VR Labs.

Janet worked closely with Chip on the project, perhaps closer than anyone else. They were the *Odd Couple* of VR Labs. Chip rarely spoke, spending every available moment tapping away on his keyboard, even during lunch breaks. Janet's lunch breaks were spent slamming the sides of the cafeteria's pinball machines and cussing up a storm whenever she failed to beat her previous scores. Her extreme behavior associated with an imperfect pinball score discouraged anyone from playing along with her. Which was fine with Janet, since she considered everyone else to be far inferior to her anyway and their turn at play would only be regarded as an annoying waste of time.

Both Chip and Janet enjoyed full security clearance at VR Labs and spent many late hours working on *their* baby. As soon as Chip updated the code, Janet would strap herself into the egg-shaped chair, attaching all the necessary nerve nodes, set the control panel to *Full Run* and put the new program through a rigorous test. No major bugs ever showed up during the tests. Until that one fateful morning.

 It was in the middle of August and both Chip and Janet preferred working after dark, when it was cooler and quieter. The thick, metal doors of the VR Test Room separated them, allowing Chip to tap away in silence and Janet to shriek and holler as she sailed through the *Hot Seat's* virtual reality worlds. Time passed quickly during these hours and 3:15 am would have gone unnoticed had it not been for the strange signal that appeared on Chip's computer screen.

Something was wrong. Chip had the computer at his desk hooked directly into the *Hot Seat* and he had installed an alarm system to warn him of unusual behavior in the program. What was Janet doing to trigger the alarm? Had she found a bug in the new code? Had she reached the limits of the *Hot Seat's* abilities and crashed the program? No. Impossible. The *Hot Seat's* virtual worlds and complex linkage into the Internet were so extensive that it would take years to explore them all. Which left only one other possibility: Janet had discovered the trigger key!

Immediately, Chip switched his system to monitor mode. His computer screen filled with the image that Janet was currently experiencing. Janet had indeed broken into Chip's secret area of the system! Displayed on the screen were 3D images of Janet's hands holding a perfectly rendered virtual Lament Configuration Box.

Chip instinctively reached for the shutdown switch. His fingers hovered over the switch. Did he truly believe the 3D Box was dangerous? Or was he just afraid Janet *would* solve the puzzle of the Box....a feat Chip himself had not yet accomplished?

Chip withdrew his hand from the switch and watched. He watched as Janet's hands manipulated the Box. *Incorrect move, try again*. The Box returned to its original position. A few minutes passed without movement and Chip could almost hear Janet's mind calculating the next move. The hands rotated the Box and her fingers slid into new positions. *Click*. The Box shifted.....bluish sparks escaped from the gaps of the Box. Again, Chip watched as Janet's fingers maneuvered slowly into new positions then stopped.

This was a far as Janet would get, thought Chip. He noted the positions of Janet's fingers and smiled. That move had already been tried. It wouldn't work. Chip knew more about the Box than anyone, certainly more than Janet, and this was as far as Chip had gotten. Janet's fingers moved again into new positions. *What was this?* What could moving the thumb in a circular motion over the center of the Box possibly accomplish?

Click. Beads of sweat began to stream down Chip's face. *My God*, he thought, *what have I allowed to happen?* The Box, responding to the circular motions, suddenly rose above Janet's hands. Part of the Box slid upwards, stopped, then rotated clockwise and stopped again. More sparks shot out from the gaps. Papers suddenly flew off Chip's desk, as though a window had been opened and a strong wind had swept through the office.

Chip was mesmerized. He stared at the screen and watched the strange distortions occurring in the background of the Box. The Box rotated again and the separated section slid back into the other half. All around the still Box blue lightning-like streams shot out and the entire virtual world twisted and morphed into a chaotic mass of colors. Then, just as suddenly, it stopped. The Box tilted toward the screen. The round, gold center of the design began to open, like a flower awakening to a new day, exposing an interior so black...so deep...that it seemed to stretch into Infinity. Chip leaned forward and gazed into the hole. A shape was forming. A face.

Pinhead!

"Welcome to Virtual Hell......now......let's *really* play!"

Plot Summary

Pinhead has indeed been released, but not into the real world. Instead, by creating a replica of the Lament Box in the MUPT software program, Pinhead is loose in the limitless virtual world and connected directly to the Information Superhighway.

Within this virtual environment, Pinhead recreates a Virtual Hell, much like the one depicted in the films. Since the MUPT (*Multi-Universe Personal Transporter*) system is also directly linked into the telephone system, and thus to computer systems all over the world, Pinhead now has a means with which to lure unwary souls. Chip and Janet have been drawn in and Cenobitized into the Virtual Hell environment.

It is the Player's task to discover the secrets that will enable entry into the MUPT virtual environments and defeat Pinhead and his cronies before they find a way out into the real world. The Player must traverse the now dangerous Superhighway and find the location of Pinhead's base of operations: Virtual Hell.

Pinhead, realizing that the irresistible lure of a challenging game is a perfect way to draw in new victims, creates a hellish - and brutally fatal - game environment of his own. He knows, too, that once a connection has been established with an unwary surfer, the means to extend his gruesome world into the real world becomes a possibility. A horrifying game of fast-paced chases, clever opponents, nerve-wrenching puzzles, vast Catacomb mazes, merciless Cenobites, devilish traps and a final confrontation with Pinhead, the Chatterer, Pinball and Leviathan.

Getting into Pinhead's chaotic Virtual Hell is fairly simple.....defeating Pinhead and destroying his hellish environment, getting out alive, and closing the links to the real world, is a whole different story.

Design Summary

The design of *Hellraiser: Virtual Hell* is quite different from other CD-ROM products that have been released. Rather than restrict itself to *one* particular style, *Hellraiser* uses various styles of play and "pace" to enhance and make the most out of a situation or environment.

Occasional reference will be made to other products by name to help in the visualization of an aspect of *Hellraiser*, but by no means will that indicate a "rehash" of methods already used by these other products. *Hellraiser* is intended to be unique, both in scope and execution.

The game uses both 1st Person and 3rd Person perspectives to create tension and exploit certain events. For example, the 3rd Person perspective would be used to dramatize the player suffering setbacks or death.

Sound effects and the changing mood of the background music will play a vital role in the gameplay of *Hellraiser*. There are situations (such as in the Catacombs or Hell's Lobby) where the sound effects, if ignored, will prove the demise of the Player.

To help the Player understand changing environments or the "why" behind certain game progressions, a new method will be used:

Thought Interface.

The *Thought Interface* is simply the careful use of a "Player Voice-Over" (audible Player thoughts) to enhance tension and carry the current action on to the next stage.

Example: When the Player moves from the Office environment to the Programmer's (Chip's) Home a voice will be heard (almost a whisper) that justifies the logic behind the move. In this way, the Player will not feel as though he has been *forced* or *pulled* to a particular location in a linear fashion. It will make perfect sense to the Player to "follow his thoughts".

Another helpful purpose of the *Thought Interface* is to provide subtle hints or help in certain situations that otherwise couldn't be explained without extensive and wasteful graphics, programming, etc.

Special Features

A few of the unique special features to be incorporated into this product are:

- The player may become *Cenobitized* and fall into the ranks of Pinhead's cronies by making too many mistakes throughout the course of the game.

- For the first time, a game of this genre will accommodate multiplayer involvement, both in the form of head-to-head modem play and links via the Internet.

- The game may be played in either PG or R rated versions to allow a wider audience acceptance and participation.

- Players will be able to actually manipulate a 3D replica of the famous Lament Box to enable a multitude of special capabilities.

- No two games will be exactly alike, allowing replay (in all modes) to remain challenging, thus significantly increasing the shelf life of the product.

Formats

This product is designed for all interactive entertainment media, especially the IBM CD-ROM format (largest installed base). Design alterations have also been conceptualized for other formats, such as Nintendo 64, Sega Interactive CD and the Internet.