Modding Star Trek: Armada

The game *Star Trek: Armada* allows for extensive modding. A few things you should know or start with:

Armada is based on the Storm3D Engine which was introduced with Battlezone. As such it uses basically the same technology. You can see this heritage also in the names of maps. Their extensions are *bzn*, for **B**attle**zon**e. Another hint can be found in the file *misc\misn18.des*:

> You will lead a small force behind enemy lines to destroy the Furies launch pad. You will only have a limited amount of time to hit your target and then you must return to the dust off site before the moon explodes.
>
> MISSION OBJECTIVES
> - Destroy the Fury launch pad.

This clearly references content that was meant for Battlezone.

Folder Structure

- Modding files are to be placed in folder *addon*. This may include *tt*, *odf*, *sod* and graphics files.
- The game as such uses videos in Bink format for the pre-rendered cinematics, which are stored in folder *animations*.
- Graphics of most parts of the GUI are placed in *bitmaps* and are in bmp format.
- The graphics from folder *bmp* are only used by the Launcher.
- The *bzn* contains the actual maps and tech tree files. bmp files are used as map previews, bzn files contain the actual maps and mdf files contain the information about starting positions of players.
- *giddi* contains mapping files for joystick control and are not used by Armada. Here you can also see the heritage from Battlezone.
- *misc* contains different configuration files, e.g. definitions of the different interfaces for the different Factions of the game.
- *missions* contains the scripts and rules for the single-player campaign.
- *save* contains the saved game states. These are actually also bzn files but with an altered *sav* extension and ias files for Instant Action matches.
- *sounds* contains all the sounds, music and voice acting of the game in wav format, 16 bit, mono at 44.1 kHz PCM signed data.
- *Sprites* contains the sprite files, that are used to depict a map object on the tactical map.
- *Textures* contains the textures in TGA format, using extensions *.tga* but also *.1* to *.6*.
- The *wav* folder contains the audio files used by the Launcher.

File Types

Extension	Task
bzn	Map object definition, this defines where and which objects are placed on the map.
bmp	Bitmap graphics, used for different aspects of the game.

Extension	Task
odf	Object Definition File, defines the game mechanic properties (e.g. shields, weapons, scanning rang, etc.) of a unit or station or weapon.
tt	Tech Tree file. Contains the rules which objects are available to the player.
dsl	script file
drl	Rules file
sav	Saved game, actually just another extension for bzns.
ias	Additional information on saved games that were made from an Instant Action match.
sod	Storm3D Object Definition file, information on meshes, hardpoints and sprite markers.
wav	audio file
spr	Sprite, the representation of a map object on the tactical map.
tga	Truevision TGA graphics, used for the textures
1 to 6	Also TGA files, but with a different extension.
zfs	Zone File System, contains data that is not to be presented in plain.

Assets and Overriding with Addons

By default, the odf files and tt files are not available as single files. They are stored in the zfs files. Most of them are password protected. The odf files are stored inside *assets.zfs*. The game loads these into memory first. Afterwards the files from folder *addons* are loaded on top of it, overwriting any already existing ones (effectively overriding them). This allows for extensive modding of already existing objects.

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