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Ants inspire military strategy software

By [Gizmag Team](#)

17:45 November 9, 2009 PST



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Ant colonies aren't called superorganisms for nothing. In some species, millions of individuals can act as a single entity to protect and feed the colony. This behavior has led to over 200 different species being called "Army Ants", so in a way it's no surprise that these mechanisms have been used for the basis of new software that helps troops to define the best path within a battle field.

Antonio Miguel Mora García of the [University of Granada](#) designed the "ant colony optimization algorithm (ACO)" to allow army troops to choose the optimum path path within a military battle field taking into account speed and minimum casualties.

And what better way to prepare and test the system than using a strategy videogame - Panzer General™ in this case.

Peace: A World History

By Antony Adolf (Polity Press, 2009)

Antony Adolf

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The resulting mini-simulator enables the researchers to define the battlefield scenario and analyze the initial map and the results of the movement.

So how useful is such an approach in modern military strategy? That question seems debatable, but thankfully the research has applications beyond the field of battle. The UGR scientists see the simulator as being useful for streamlining a range of logistical challenges on civvy street such as optimizing fuel consumption and time when distributing goods from a central warehouse.

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