

University of Derby
School of Computing
In-course Assignment Specification

Module Code and Title: 4CC047 Game Design	
Assignment No. and Title: 1. Game Design and Prototype Portfolio	
Assessment Tutor: John Sear	Weighting Towards Module Grade: 70%
Date Set: 3 rd March 2010	Hand-In Deadline Date: 7 th May 2010

Penalty for Late Submission

After the Deadline, work accepted as 'Late Submission' will be marked but the maximum grade that can be awarded is D-. Work submitted more than one week after the deadline will be given a Nil response (NR), i.e. a 0 grade. The only exceptions to this rule are when the Module Leader, or nominee, has given permission for the work to be handed in late or you have been ill and produce appropriate certification. In both cases an Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF) (available from the Student Information Centre) should be signed by the Module Leader and Year Tutor (or nominees) concerned normally before the Deadline Date. The ECF will be treated in line with the University's policies and procedures.

Level of Collaboration:
Nil

Learning Outcomes covered in this Assignment:

1. Create a complete game design

Criteria for Assessment:

Standard University of Derby Grading Scheme

XBox Live Arcade Game

Introduction

Your Indie game company, Baditude Studios, has recently returned from the world-famous international Game Developers Conference (GDC).

During your trip you met with a number of publishers and pitched the prototypes you've been working on. While none of the publishers were interested in your prototype demos (Arcade Pool, Battleships and Game of Life) you have definitely made some great industry contacts and are hopeful of future work.

Back in the UK a few days later Ubisoft get in contact: they've managed to secure a 'slot' on Xbox Live Arcade and are looking for developers to work on a few ideas.

All they have at the moment is their target audience in mind so they're leaving the creative side of things completely up to you.

Brief

To develop a new, original game using XNA that will run on Xbox 360 and be completely controllable by 360 gamepads. The game must be a two-player co-operative. It is likely that it will be in 2D game, however this is not a hard limitation.

Innovation

Your contact at Ubisoft is Lance Saunders, the Director of Innovation. His role is to work with development teams within the Ubisoft 'family' to bring real innovation to their titles. At your recent contact signing, his parting words were:

"Skilled players are always complaining that there aren't games they can play with their non-gaming friends and partners. Or parents complain that they can't get the hang of games their kids play.

So I've had this fantastic idea. It'll allow us to introduce non-gamers to the world of gaming. I call it 'Non-Gamer Grooming'. We can design games to be played by two players – one experienced and one relatively new. The brilliance is that the inexperienced player is one who is central to the game. So the skilled player is the support player. The skilled player will be helping us to increase the size of our target market.

So it's all about ensuring that the non-gamer has the best possible gaming experience at all times, even at the expense of our experienced player.

There aren't enough co-op games out there with asymmetric play – this game will be completely different from everything we've seen before."

Business Development Manager

To:	Game Design Team
From:	Victor Goodcode (Business Development Manager)
Date:	1 st March 2010
Subject:	Initial Thoughts



This is a fantastic opportunity here. Lance is one of the top guys at Ubisoft. If we can prove ourselves on this XBLA game then we'll be in a great position to get funding for one of our own larger titles.

We've only got a few weeks to get something up and running. They're going to want to see the prototype and a copy of our Game Design Document. Let's focus on the playable prototype first. We can write the GDD based on we've learned.

It's all about fun, playability and pick up and play nature. We also need compelling co-operative gameplay mechanics. Time to get your creative juices going!

Clearly, it's key we address this issue of the non-gamer in this co-operative game. We should start by finding a persona – a real person who reflects this target market. We can use their input throughout development.

If we can we should set up some focus group testing asap.

This were some notes that I found from a previous project...

Strategy

- Find persona
- Brain storm ideas targeted to our persona (lots of routes to be explored)
- Expand on these ideas
- Create Game Concept document
- Implement Prototype
 - Rapidly prototype the best of these concepts
 - Iterative cycle: play-test, make improvements / fixes
- Create Game Design Document
- Implement Final Game Version
 - Continue to play-test and refine (input from target audience)
 - Polish

Lead Designer



To:	Game Design Team
From:	Alica Demauri (Lead Designer)
Date:	1 st March 2010
Subject:	XBLA Extreme Pool
<p>I'm not going to be able to devote time to this project – but here are a few of my initial thoughts. I know you'll produce something brilliant without my input.</p> <p>We can play around with the mechanics and/or aesthetics, and should prioritise the question of co-op gameplay. I'm afraid I haven't got any ideas in terms of a story mode or characters, although I know we can't afford any licensed IP for this.</p> <p>I have read those concept documents that were floating around the office last week. I think you've got some good starting points.</p> <p>I think the best advice is to be methodical in our creativity - make changes in each of the different game element categories and see the effect it has on the game:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Players• Goals• Rules & Procedures• Resources• Conflict• Boundaries• Outcome <p>I've no preference for 2D or 3D but it needs to be fun and simple to pick up and play. Remember, that its not our usual target audience so they haven't got the usual gaming background. We want it to be clear and obvious to the users at all times. While this isn't vital for our alpha build, our final version will need to be polished. Make sure we put in a menu interface when the game starts –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instructions (keys / joypad)• Game Mode Selection• Configuration mode <p>I'm sure I don't need to remind you that it's needs to be a complete game – i.e. the player should be able to play through from beginning to end, have an idea of their objectives and be able to tell how well they've performed.</p> <p>Remember, my Golden Game Design Rule: Think about the feedback we're giving to the players at all times – keep them informed as to how they're progressing.</p> <p>We should be more focused on the gameplay aspect (at least in the first instance) – we'll get our art team to replace the art resources later on.</p>	

Milestones

Alpha Deadline : 40% Weighting

You need to give a short (e.g. 5-minute) presentation in front of a PC to one member of the Publishing team.

Be able to:

- Discuss the prototype
- Talk about your target audience
- Demonstrate the prototype working
 - Publisher will play the prototype

The focus should be on illustrating the game mechanics of the prototype. A polished presentation (i.e. final assets) is not required, however the game should be playable and enjoyable. While this is a prototype deliverable, every effort should be made to ensure there are no major bugs.

Just concentrate on the core game mechanic, at this stage you do not need full menu screens. You can describe the game and drop the two-players straight into the gameplay.

Note: **All code must be your own.** Assets (audio samples, 2D art, 3D models etc) may be sourced and manipulated from the public domain. Full credit must be given to the original author.

Handin:

During the presentation, the publisher should be delivered a print out of the following:

- Evidence of ideas gathering
- Persona
- Concepts
- Game Design Document (8-12 pages)

These documents will be marked after the presentation. These documents must be provided in a clear plastic folder.

Hand-in Date: Week 9 (Meeting slot agreed in the Game Design session)

Gold Master Deadline : 60% Weighting

Note: The majority of your grade is calculated based on your final Xbox 360 game. If your idea is not well realised in your game then expect a low mark!

The final version must run on Xbox 360 and be entirely controllable from attached Xbox 360 Game Pad controllers.

The period between the Alpha and Gold Master milestone should be spent refining and polishing your game. This will be an iterative cycle of making improvements to the game and then re-testing with your target market audience.

The final version should contain assets (audio samples, 2D art, 3D models) more representative of final look and feel, but they do *not* have to be release-quality.

Game-Pod Mode (A Grade)

If you wish to aim for an A Grade – then the level of polish that is expected includes the additional of a Game-Pod Mode.

The game must run entirely unassisted (the publishing team is considering setting this game up in a DemoPod). This means that the game must include a start-up screen and clear instructions. You may also wish to consider incorporating an automatic demo mode, high score table, replays etc. You may wish to source inspiration from the tricks that classic arcade game used to entice passing trade. For example, if a player walks away from the DemoPod and no input is detected for a specific period then it should reset to the start-up or replay screen.

Assignment Hand-in

There are two phases to the assignment hand-in:

1. Game running on an XBox 360 console (Hand-in during GD Session W12)
2. A backup CD/DVD and associated report printout (Hand-in at Student Support Centre – before assignment deadline)

1. XBox 360 hand-in

Your final game deliverable must be on an XBox 360 console. The demo must be installed on a specified X-Box 360 in the games lab (B212 / B213) by the end of your designated Game Design session in week 12.

Note: under no circumstances will updates be allowed to these games after this session.

You must adhere to the naming convention for this is:

surname_firstname_gametitle

There will be a lot of demand for these consoles during this session, so you should be prepared to upload with plenty of time to spare. Work received after the deliverable (but within a week) will be capped at a D-.

2. Backup and Report Handin:

- CD / DVD back-up containing the following:
 - Prototype source-code
 - Video capture(s) of the prototype showing its key features in action
 - Electronic copy of printed documents
- Print-out of your final report (see below for details)

CD / DVD

In the root directory of the CD it should contain a directory named:

YourSurname_YourFirstName

Within this directory you should have a source directory, report directory, video directory and a ReadyToRun directory (containing the .exe and all necessary resource files)

Example directory layout:

```
D:\
  Sear_John/
    Source/
      (all source code / Visual studio files)
    Report/
      Report.doc
    Video/
      (illustrative captured footage of prototype)
      (footage of earlier playtest sessions)
```

A separate document will be published with guidelines on the video capture.

Final Report (Printed-out)

The Final Report should contain:

- Evidence of analysis
- Discussion of development process
- Evidence of play-testing
 - Record testing sessions
- Evidence of iterative improvement
 - Changes made as a result of testing
- Future development
 - Changes given more time

Hand-in Date: 4pm Friday 7th May 2010

You are reminded of the strict rules of plagiarism. Please refer to the Academic Offences section of the 3Rs document:

www.derby.ac.uk/qed/3Rs/S20%20Academic%20Offences%20UG.PG.C.FE.pdf

Marking Scheme (Alpha Deliverable): 40% Weighting

Description	Grade
(Excellent in most respects) Highly original idea presented in a fully playable prototype that clearly illustrates the key gameplay mechanics. Clear evidence of idea generation, filtering, selection and development toward final concept. Game Design Document (GDD) provided in a complete and well-structured draft version containing provisional answers to most key design issues.	A
(Very good in most respects) Interesting original idea presented in a playable form that demonstrates most of the key mechanics. Some evidence of brainstorming, and several well-developed concept drafts preceding final selection. GDD in well-structured draft form answering many key issues.	B
(Good in most respects) Somewhat original idea presented in a mostly playable form demonstrating some key mechanics. Little evidence of idea generation but more than one concept presented. GDD structure needs work but draft version answers several key issues.	C
(Satisfactory in most respects) Mostly derivative idea presented in a buggy prototype that only partly communicates key mechanics. Narrow evidence of idea generation, and draft GDD is confusing / not well structured.	D
(Unsatisfactory; some significant shortcomings) Highly unoriginal idea presented in significantly broken form, with little to no evidence of idea generation and documentation.	Fm

Marking Scheme (Gold Master Deliverable): 60% Weighting

Description	Grade
(Excellent in most respects) Highly original idea developed into very polished playable form which is genuinely fun to play. Implementation is robust and bug-free. Excellent evidence of testing and design iteration, and reflection on where to go next. Game-Pod mode works flawlessly. Deliverables completely follow the specification.	A
(Very good in most respects) Interesting original idea developed into well-presented playable prototype which is somewhat entertaining. Minor bugs but no major issues. Good evidence of testing and design iteration work, with some reflection on the future. Final deliverables complete.	B
(Good in most respects) Somewhat original idea developed into reasonable presentation of a playable prototype. Occasional major bugs in implementation. Some evidence of testing / design iteration work. Final deliverables lacking key elements of specification.	C
(Satisfactory in most respects) Mostly derivative idea developed into highly buggy prototype that lacks any real polish and still fails to demonstrate key mechanics. Little evidence of testing or design iteration. Final deliverables lacking many key elements of specification.	D
(Unsatisfactory; some significant shortcomings) Highly unoriginal idea developed into some kind of working code, but suffers from extensive major bugs and is incomplete and highly unpolished. No real evidence of testing or design iteration. Final deliverables lacking / barely follow the specification	Fm