**Chronomancer Design Document**

*Section 1. High Concept*

As a Chronomancer, you have learned how to manipulate time, giving others fractions of your life for them to return back in time to do whatever they wish. You’ve learned of the collapse of the cosmos, unless it can be held together within one hundred days. Give time to the right people, and you can prevent this disaster, as long as you don’t succumb to old age.

*Section 2. Player Role*

The player is the hero, a novice Chronomancer. They can give time to various people, some of which may be able to help prevent disaster. Give too much time, however, and the Chronomancer will reach the end of their life before resolving the collapse.

The player has four total actions they can take; open requests from clients for the day, accept a client request and give them time, deny a client’s request for time, and close requests from clients for the day. If the Chronomancer is out of clients for a day, closing requests will happen automatically.

*Section 3. Primary Gameplay Mode*

The camera model is a 2D side view. The entire play field is in view, with no side scrolling or movement.

The main challenge for the player is to resolve the cosmic collapse. Various different clients will approach the Chronomancer, and ask for time to do various things with the extra time in their life. Some clients may be able to prevent the collapse, while others are mere bystanders asking for more time.

Giving time to a client will lead to the Chronomancer gaining reputation from the community, leading to more clients and more chances for meeting one of the right clients. This comes with the drawback of spending more time, potentially leading to a premature death.

Turning away a client will lead to the Chronomancer losing reputation from the community, leading to less clients in a given day. The minimum number of clients per day will always be one, so the game is not lost even when at the lowest reputation.

*Section 4. Genre*

The game contains a mix of role playing, resource management, and interactive fiction genres.

*Section 5. Target Audience*

The target audience is gamers that like narrative and resource management games, as through the narrative they will be able to learn about the people in the world the player is in, while trying to manage various resources to achieve a victory.

*Section 6. Platforms*

Windows is the target platform, as that is the only platform I’m experienced in. With the simple design and layout of the game, it can easily be ported to Mobile in the future.

*Section 7. Licenses*

No game materials need to acquire licenses to use.

*Section 8. Competition Modes*

As this is a single player game, the competition is the player attempting to beat the game.

*Section 9. Progression*

The player progresses through the game by giving or refusing time, in an attempt to have the “correct” people show up.

The events in the game are pulled randomly from a list, and through the player’s actions some events will become “locked” for that playthrough. Due to the random nature, it is very unlikely that two playthroughs will be the same.

*Section 10. Game World*

The game world for the player is simple, it’s a marketplace stand. The implied game world is the people showing up to the stand from different areas of the city, with differing viewpoints based on events that may happen in game.

*Section 11. Features*

This game has three main features:

Simplicity

The player only has two buttons they can hit during gameplay; accept client and give time, or decline client and lose reputation. Any relevant data is displayed to the player, being the current day, the player’s age, the player’s reputation, and (only when relevant) the player’s threat. The game being revolved around two buttons leaves it simple in design, therefore easier to use.

Replayability

The game pulls events randomly from a list. Only the early game will be similar in multiple playthroughs, as potential solutions to the player’s main goal can only potentially start after a few in-game days. With some events being mutually exclusive, players may not even have a specific story arc until they’ve played the game multiple times.

Resource Management

The player has to keep the day, their age, their reputation, and their threat in mind to win the game.

The day serves as a timer for the game; on day 100, the game auto ends with a loss.

The age serves as the main resource the player pulls from, but depleting it will also end the game.

The reputation serves as a way for the player to control how many people come to the marketstand each day (minimum 1). This resource makes sure the player gives time to more people than just people who can win the game for the player, as the chances for those people to show up are based on chance; with higher reputation comes more chances.

Threat is a unique resource in that it takes multiple forms, which can be different each game. Threat comes in the form of a scale, a meter, or a combined scale and meter. Reaching either end of the scale or filling the meter by the start of the next day will lead to a game over, whether the player is prematurely killed or imprisoned depends on the event that takes place. A combined scale and meter doesn’t end the game early with a loss if it’s failed, it merely ends in a “waste of time.” Each different threat type can only have 1 active at once, creating unique gameplay.

*Section 12. Competitive Analysis*

The main competition comes from other games with a similar concept, the most popular one being *Papers, Please*. This game also has a similar accept/deny function, and has a story happening around the player that may influence the player’s actions. Some other notable examples of games are *60 Seconds!* and *Sort the Court*. *60 Seconds!* runs very similar to this game, as you must manage your resources and do events at the end of each day, in hopes that you can have the right events show up to survive. *Sort the Court* also runs similarly to this game, as you can accept or deny various people’s requests to gain money and other resources to use in other events.

To compete with these other games, the major features listed above provide a unique experience to gamers who enjoy these similar games.

*Section 13. Risk Analysis*

The main risk for this game is getting gamers to play it after its completion; with a heavily saturated market on Steam, it can be difficult for a game to break out into the public eye. I also don’t have much experience in marketing a game myself, but I have various connections to people around the country that may be able to spread the game via word of mouth.

Another risk is the scope of the game. Since the game will be narratively driven, I must create a lot of narrative to add into the game, and potentially change how events are called so they can interact with each other more smoothly, and I will need to find a way to implement an easy way to add new events into the list of events.

The last risk is the art assets; my art is “subpar” at best, and is very time consuming for me to do. I have one person who wants to do art for me, but drawing lots of unique people will take a lot of time to complete.