Project Post-mortem

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| Student Name | Andreea-Cristina Mazarianu |
| Client | Cyclosion Games (Danny Colclough) |
| Project Name | Mark\_2 |
| Project Length | 8 weeks |

Overview

Over the course of 8 weeks, I have been working under the guidance of Danny Colclough, founder of Cyclosion Games and producer at Cloud Imperium Games UK Studio, in order to produce a visualization of the assets and characters that will be featured in Mark\_2 , a 2D indie adventure game.   
During the project, my tasks varied and consisted in the creation of moodboards, concept art sheets, iterations based on client feedback, creation of promotional art that includes game logo and thumbnails. While my work has been mainly creating concept art, some of the conceptualized assets, such as pick-ups, were intended to be exported after feedback and iterations as 2D sprites that would be later included in the game.

Positive Aspects

Most of the completed work reached the desired standard set by the client in terms of requirements, visual references provided, style, quality, and presentation. From the beginning of the project, the client provided very specific requirements for what the assets would look like, sometimes even providing visual references to aid visualizing the intended designs.

At times, the client’s references would not comply with audience acceptance and shape language and that is when I have expressed my concerns and provided alternative ideas in order to adapt the designs in such way that they would be intuitive and readable for the audience while satisfying the client’s wishes. For example, the client wished for the health pick-up to imitate the shape of ferrofluid which has spikes. At first glance, a player would not understand that something with a spiky form is actuality a good item to interact with as it may look threatening or dangerous. Fortunately, the client was open to suggestions and understanding of the design problems that some of the desired references may cause.

The production of assets was rather fast, allowing enough time to be reviewed and iterated on based on feedback within the same week’s sprint. The client’s feedback was always constructive and allowed me to get a better understanding of what the final designs should be like.

Throughout the project, the client helped with organizing the priority list (which changed from the original given brief) by compiling a read-only shared Google Spreadsheet of all the deliverables, their description and their current status (“to be done” or “done”).

Negative Aspects

One of the negative aspects about the project was the lack of consistency in communication. This was often caused by the client’s busy schedule and by the changes brought by Covid-19. With the start of the pandemic, the waiting period to get replies and feedback on the produced work from the client extended, therefore creating stagnant periods of time where no progress would be made as a result of no feedback being given and no updates on the prioritized deliverables requirements section in the Google Spreadsheet being completed.

Another negative aspect was the failure of completing all the work that the initial brief required. Even so, this was not regarded as a negative aspect by the client since the prioritized deliverables changed throughout the project and since the project was re-scoped to a more manageable work amount.

Reflection on Personal Contribution

Overall, I consider my contribution to the project very good. This statement could be back-up by a series of reasons that include the following:

1. Communication was always kept at a professional level with the client, was always fast and efficient from my end. Negotiations on the changes to the designs were always dealt with carefully in an attempt of improving the overall experience of the game.
2. Updates of the completed work were sent regularly to the client throughout the project timeline.
3. Feedback was always welcomed and followed thoroughly when iterating on the produced concept/assets.
4. Moodboards and concept art sheets were carefully constructed with attention to detail so that the presentation alone could “sell” the designs to the client. The concept art presentation sheets were highly appreciated by the client and later used to advertise the game on the Cyclosion Game’s website.
5. Throughout the project I have demonstrated self- discipline and management by always delivering the promised work at a good standard without taking advantage of the client’s inability of reviewing the work on a weekly basis. For each task, I would give myself a week to complete, including research for visual references, creating the concepts, iterations and refining the 2D sprites for export, recoding meeting minutes.
6. Demonstrated perseverance to continue the collaboration with the client by reaching out to him whenever the pauses in replies would occur. At the same time, I have shown patience and understanding of the situation when work, personal life and recent events (Covid-19) have impacted the client’s ability to keep the project continuous.

What I Have Learned from This Project

Through this project, I have gained more experience working individually in collaboration with a real client. Although I am usually used to being part of a team, I have found it easier to manage my own tasks and produce work without depending on other team members. By doing this, I have consolidated skills such as self-management and discipline, communication, working with minimal feedback input (other than the client’s suggestions).

Additionally, I have learned how to be perseverant with a client in order to keep the project on track, yet, in an equal amount, I have learned to be patient and understanding of the client’s allocated time for the project.

Another aspect that this project has taught me is that sometimes, a designer’s role is to also show the client why certain requested ideas would not work and provide viable solutions. Moreover, in creating concept art, providing variations (be it about shape, colour etc.) gives the client a wider variety to chose from and lock down the design that is closer to their vision. As experienced through this project, sometimes, the client’s choice would not be the expected visual solution that I thought to work best for the game.

Asset List

**Concepts created**

* Upgrade Kit
* Energy Vials
* Charger Weapon
* Health Pick-up (Capsule)
* Information Date Core
* Audio Data Core
* Key Card
* Transceiver (Radio Pick-up)
* Shield (Barrier Pick-up)
* Player Character Ideation Sketches
* Player Character Concept

**2D Sprites**

* Upgrade Kit
* Energy Vials
* Charger Weapon
* Health Pick-up (Capsule)
* Information Date Core
* Audio Data Core
* Key Card

**Moodboards**

* Moodboard #1 – Energy Vials and Upgrade Kit
* Moodboard #2 – Charger Weapon
* Moodboard #3 – Capsule (Health Pick-up)
* Moodboard #4 – Data Core
* Moodboard #5 – Key Card

**Promotional Art**

* Game Logo
* Square Thumbnail