

Astral Profit

Game Design Document

Game Design Document: Core Loop Overview

Game Title: Astral Profit

Art Direction: Synty Studios' Sci-Fi Asset Packs

Platform: PC (potential for console expansion)

Genre: Resource Management, Factory Building, Real-Time Strategy, Survival

Core Loop Overview:

1. Resource Gathering

Players begin by landing on a procedurally generated planet, equipped with basic tools and a landing pod that serves as a temporary base. The planet contains various resources like minerals, ores, and energy sources scattered around. To gather these, automated *resource trucks* are deployed from gathering hubs, transporting resources back to the main base. These trucks are a critical part of the supply chain but vulnerable to enemy attacks and must be protected by the player's defensive units.

2. Base Building and Automation

After gathering initial resources, players start constructing a temporary base using modular structures provided by the Sci-Fi assets. Instead of conveyor belts, resource trucks handle material transport, requiring efficient base layout to minimize truck travel time. Players build manufacturing facilities to refine resources and assemble goods for profit, balancing expansion with defensive structures. The base operates with increasing automation, but as it expands, both the base and the resource trucks become more vulnerable, especially during night cycles.

3. Combat, Defense, and Controllable Units

The game includes RTS-style unit control, allowing players to command defensive units directly. As enemy waves approach, particularly aggressive at night, players deploy and control units to fend off attackers and ensure the safety of both their base and resource trucks. Players can choose from a

variety of units specialized for different tasks, from base defense to escorting resource trucks. This RTS element adds tactical depth as players strategically position and command units based on evolving threats.

4. **Day-Night Cycle**

- **Day:** During daylight, resource gathering and production are at peak efficiency, and enemy encounters are more sporadic, allowing players to expand their base and focus on manufacturing.
- **Night:** At night, enemy waves increase significantly in number and intensity. Players must protect their resource trucks on their routes and bolster base defenses. Surviving the night cycle yields valuable resources dropped by defeated enemies, rewarding players who endure the challenge with additional materials and potential upgrades.

5. **Profit and Evacuation**

The game's objective is to maximize profit through efficient production and resource management before the planet becomes too hostile to continue operations. Players must decide when to initiate the evacuation phase, dismantling critical structures and shipping them back to space. Resource trucks play a key role in this phase, as they transport packed materials to the evacuation site under heavy enemy pressure. Timing the evacuation is crucial: staying longer yields more profit but increases the risk of being overrun.

6. **Escalation and Progression**

- The difficulty scales with time, with enemies growing stronger and more organized in their attacks. This escalation keeps players balancing between profit-driven expansion and defensive strategies.
 - Players can access technology upgrades by gathering special resources or surviving particularly challenging enemy waves. These upgrades improve their defenses, increase production speed, and enhance the abilities of controllable units.
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Key Features:

- **Synty Sci-Fi Art Direction:** Low-poly, modular sci-fi assets are used for clear readability of different structures, units, and environments. This art style contributes to a clean, futuristic visual appeal while making tactical elements easy to recognize.
 - **Day-Night Cycle:** A dynamic cycle affecting gameplay and visual tone. Day cycles encourage base expansion and production, while night cycles ramp up enemy attacks, requiring heightened defense and careful unit management.
 - **Procedural Generation:** Planets are procedurally generated, creating varied terrains, resource locations, and enemy spawn points. This ensures each playthrough requires unique strategies.
 - **Resource Trucks:** These automated trucks transport resources between the gathering hubs and base facilities. Although uncontrollable, they are critical assets that must be protected on their journeys, creating high-stakes moments as players defend them from enemy attacks.
 - **RTS-Style Unit Control:** Players can command units to defend the base and resource trucks. Units range from defensive towers to mobile squads that can be strategically deployed to counter evolving threats.
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Core Gameplay Loop Summary:

- **Gather resources** (using trucks) → **Build production facilities and defenses** → **Defend against enemies with RTS unit control** (especially at night) → **Generate profit** → **Initiate evacuation before being overrun.**
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Design Pillars

1. **Strategic Resource Management**
 - Emphasize efficient use and protection of limited resources. The game should require players to balance gathering and producing resources while defending vulnerable supply chains, especially through resource trucks, creating constant tactical decision-making.
2. **Dynamic Challenge with Time Pressure**
 - Enemies increase in frequency and strength over time, with night cycles introducing even greater risks. This creates escalating tension, pushing players to adapt or retreat. The day-night cycle and real-time enemy scaling create natural waves of intensity.
3. **Modular Base Building and Defense**
 - Encourage creative base layouts where defense and efficiency are balanced. Players need to build and expand with defensive strategies,

especially around paths for resource trucks, which adds depth and spatial planning to the gameplay.

4. RTS-Style Unit Control for Defense

- Players have direct control over defensive units, allowing for tactical responses to incoming threats. The ability to strategically deploy units introduces depth, giving players an interactive layer to overcome challenging enemy waves.

5. High-Stakes Evacuation and Progression

- The decision to evacuate adds a strategic layer: stay longer for more profit or evacuate early for safety. Progression should feel rewarding, giving players enhanced technology, defenses, and abilities as they master the game.