Noobwerkz report

The past two weeks have been spent refining the terrain system, and researching the Bullet physics engine in order to be able to use it properly. These two aspects are very challenging, and I am pleased to say that (what I believe to be) the trickiest parts of working with them are almost over.

I have defined a file format to easily define terrain shapes. This format is then fed to a program that generates the terrain and then shows the programmer how it looks. Also, I am working on a graphics shader that colours the terrain with a topside and an underside. That is very useful for floating islands, a major part of the upcoming game (discussed later in this report.)

Furthermore, work on the engine is in full swing - I am moving all of the code previously found inside the testing "sandbox" C++ file into dedicated modules. This process is going quite well.

The biggest news, however, is that I have found a feasible game idea that has passed the so-called "Isaac test": The first game will be a non-violent one in which the player controls a juvenile Ostrich that is seeking her abducted family over a series of levels composed of floating islands. I was looking for a game that would require a minimum of processing power and could allow for extensive use of procedural terrain.

I plan to release it for free in order to bring in as large an audience as possible. Ad revenue will subsidize further development, and I intend on bringing in-app purchases soon afterwards. The challenge with regards to in-app purchases is to not break the initial charm and doing so will require a separate period of study and experimentation.

One big reason for choosing this form of game is the reduced processing power required to control a single character that interacts with limited numbers of NPC's: Large strategy games with thousands of units will have to wait because not many mobiles can currently handle such loads at stable framerates. Another reason is that violent games are everywhere and Isaac doesn't seem to like them; a non-violent one seems an ideal way to enter the market.

A presentation of the engine's terrain creation capacities will be shown later tonight after dinner.