The Rationale behind Prototype 3

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Question

Are movement mechanics in a digital endless runner affected by the content of the game? If so, which movement mechanics are affected, to what extent are they affected, how are they affected and why are they affected?

Process

The process used to investigate the question proposed above was the following. The creation of a simple game which simulated the environment of an endless runner without the need to dodge obstacles, this game served as the control for the games to be prototyped. This allowed for rapid creation of these prototypes as well as the ability to use the original game as a controlled environment, which was used to judge how the games altered with new movement mechanics.

The next step in the process was the creation of these movement mechanics and thus the creation of the prototypes for this assignment, these prototypes were made in quick succession and in a single game for the reasons described above. They feature 3 different kinds of movement mainly being jumping, gravity swapping and teleportation.

After the prototypes were made the above question was used to investigate the game and data was collected which ultimately answered the questions above and can be found in the reflection section bellow.

The game also made use of some visual effects to further enhance the idea of content affecting a game`s mechanics and allowed some intuitive game understanding, such as obstacles being red or orange and the floor is understood to be safe as it is green, while the player is a blue and stands out. These additions were made to lessen the ability for the games mechanics to be miss interpreted and allowed for a more concise collection of data as players focused more solely on the mechanic of movement as they understood where to move intuitively.

Reflection

In conclusion all movement-based mechanics in an endless runner are affected by the games content, the extent to which they vary depends on the extent of content depth in the game.

For example, a game where you can only jump has little meaning but a game where you must dodge obstacles by jumping gains a deeper sense of action. This is because you will lose the game if you don’t jump at the right time and suddenly a simple movement mechanic is now a means to win the game. This shows that these movement mechanics are indeed affected by game content and can become worth more to the game than they were alone.

These mechanics are affected when they become a means to achieve a goal, in the example of jumping to win the game, the action of jumping becomes more because it is the means to achieve a goal. These mechanics are affected because they directly control the way in which a player interacts with the game and thus are often a means to a goal.