Game Development Practice: From Game Concepts to Prototyping and Commercial Enterprise

Introduction

This worksheet, which forms part of your supervised studio practice, will emphasise the need to consider the commercial aspects of your game development practice. Specifically, the need to identify a clear target market which will assure the commercial viability of your efforts. In this session, you will complete four activities: ideate a game concept; research the market for that concept; refine the concept into a design; and prepare an investment pitch.

Organise into **FOUR** groups of approximately equal size:

1. Arrange yourselves into a line in order of your height
2. Your tutor will count down the line
3. Remember your number --- this is your group for today

Your first task is to **introduce** yourselves and **decide** a name for your new studio.

Activity #1: Ideation

A publisher has released a call for funding for a new top-down 2D adventure game. As individuals and/or small sub-teams, **ideate** a suitable high-concept **and**, within your teams, **conduct** 30-second elevator pitches to each other, according to the following themes:

- The group wearing the **most red**: "*Iron Bull*"

- Of the remaining groups, the group wearing the **most green**: "*Ghostly Spymaster*"

- Of the remaining groups, the group wearing the **most blue**: "*Atoning Monk*"

- The remaining group: "*Forgetful Spirit*"

As a team, select **ONE** concept to take forward to the market research stage.

Activity #2: Market Research

The publisher will be targeting the PC platform, using Steam and Itch.io for digital distribution. **Review** these markets **and identify** the opportunities within them. **Conduct** desk-research and make use of the data publicly available on SteamSpy and other sale analytics websites to conduct your survey.

Carefully **define** the target player for your game.

Propose at least **THREE** unique selling points for your game that will appeal to this target.

Identify and describe at least **FOUR** similar games that you could be competing with and **clearly state** their sales figures. **Normalise** these with respect to release date.

Activity #3: Design

Design ONE _short_ part of the top-down 2D adventure game that you have proposed. Ensure that the part that you design will be feasible to prototype within 10 weeks. You will present the prototype in a potential future pitch.

Write up your proposal as a short excerpt of a design document.

Review the following example:

https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/130127/design_document_play_with_fire.php

Use a suitable approach version control (e.g., Google Drive) so multiple members of the group can work concurrently on the document. Ensure that you communicate with your team throughout the exercise to assure a common and consistent vision.

Activity #4: Pitching to Investors

Review the pitching materials **and** example pitch handout on:

https://www.crowdcube.com/pg/creating-a-successful-pitch-1373
http://pixelatto.com/1xgdd/

Prepare a 5-minute pitch of your game to a potential audience of investors---they are the publishers that released the call for funding! You must condense your game design into a form that can be easily understood by these investors.

You must include:

- A slideshow
- A single A4 sheet (double-sided) handout

Again, please make use of a suitable approach to version control (e.g., Google Drive) so multiple members of the studio can work concurrently on these documents. Ensure that you communicate with your team throughout the exercise to assure a common and consistent vision. Developing your teamwork is critically important.

In your pitch, ensure that you cover:

1. Introduction to Your Studio
2. High Concept of the Game
3. Target Audience
4. Core Game Mechanics
5. Unique Selling Points
6. Platform
7. Competition
8. Development Costs --- _how much funding are you asking for? How is it spent?_
9. Business Model --- _how are you bringing money in?_
10. Preliminary Income Projection
11. An estimate of the break-even point
12. Estimate of the Return-on-Investment (RoI) at 1-year after release

By next week's session, you should be able to show to your tutor the: design document; handout; and slideshow.