

Hunter Stout

Game Design, Final Report

10/7/2024

Hunter Crossing

My final project for game design has been an amazing experience. I had lots of fun with AftBurner and was able to create a project that I am very proud of. Overall, I had a smooth experience with the game engine, and it provided lots of opportunity for me to create in many ways. It allowed me to be creative and produce my own version of animal crossing.

Starting Your Adventure

When running the application, upon initialization, the game will be loaded up for a new player. This includes the plot of lands placed, core parts of the map, the player bounds, and even harvestable resources like trees and rocks. The game will also check for a “saves” database file, located in the local multimedia folder. If any saves are found the user will be prompted to either load a previous game save or continue as a new player. Let’s say you are a new player, loading into the world of Hunter Crossing, where do you begin? To start, you’re going to notice a few things. Nook’s Cranny, the town hall, and lots of trees and rocks. Upon investigation you will realize that Nook’s Cranny is the local market, you will be able to buy and sell items here. Next will you notice the town hall with Tom Nook standing out front. This is important, as Tom Nook will be able to sell you a home and allow you to add villagers to your island. The last thing you will notice is the trees & rocks. These are very useful, as you will be able to harvest these by holding “E” when in range. The game will visibly notify you of being in range by hovering an Axe above any harvestable item.

What to do?

So, you’ve started harvesting resources and selling them to Nook’s Cranny awesome! Let’s try to take some of this earned cash and talk to Tom Nook. He will be able to help you build your first house. This is important, as this house will allow you to save your game and re-load your progress in the future! Next, let’s head back over to Nook’s Cranny and get some decorations. These decorations will help increase your island score, which is an important indication of how far you’ve come on this survival journey.

You may start to notice at this point, that things are starting to become expensive along your journey. Although, talking to Tom Nook once again will help this block you’ve ran into. The first NPC that will attempt to join your island is an established black smith that can upgrade your tools. He will help upgrade your mining speed, mining range, and the number of resources you are able to harvest per attempt. This will allow you to upgrade your island even more!

Now that you've gotten the new and improved tools, you will be able to build the third and final house on your island. This house will be for a new villager that happens to be an elaborate designer. She will offer you limited time items that can tremendously help your island score compared to the usual Nook's Cranny inventory. Although, they will come at a great price. This will help solidify your position in the Hunter Crossing Hall of fame.

Failure in Scope

Unfortunately, there were a few shortcomings with Hunter Crossing, as I underestimated the work it takes to create a working video game. Specifically, a lot of core mechanics like player movement, bounds, the map, cool downs, health bars, NPCs, GUIs, and plenty of other fun stuff took a quite a bit of time.

Some of the things I could not implement, which were previously stated in the midterm report were NPC quests, and usage of PhysX. I would have loved the tree leaves to shake when the player walked through them, or the NPCs to offer you scavenger hunts for cool rewards. Although, it just did not seem achievable in the amount of time I had to create this project. Maybe with a year of time, and a graphic designer I could create a sweet Nintendo switch game through AfterBurner. Although, with a month of time I was still very happy with the results.

Even with shortcomings I'm glad I got to implement things like the upgradeable tools, and the usage of sqlite to save game files. I initially did not think these were obtainable in the project scope, although they ended being very big parts of Hunter Crossing's functionality, and I'm very glad they were added.