P.A.P.I.

Pen And Paper Interface

Companion Application for Windows

Developed by

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Revision 0.0.1

Document History

Version	Date	Summary	Author
0.0.1	14.01.2021	Initial Draft	Jamie Fuchs

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Summary

The P.A.P.I. – Pen and Paper Interface is a companion App for Game Masters and Players of Pen and Paper Games. It allows to create, show, edit, store and delete games, characters (player characters and NPCs), items, vehicles and buildings and should help with the management of all these things, to the purpose of keeping in focus what is the most important part of a pen and paper game – the storytelling.

However, since the Pen and Paper games and some of their settings/genres are trademarks, I do not distribute any assets. These must be made by the player themselves, either from bought books or self-created. I also highly recommend, buying at least the Cole Rule Books of the chosen system, because in this App no rules will be described. It is just an easier-to-use data-storage. This app is not made to replace a copy any book, but to save paperwork and printing.

Essential Parts are:

- Game creator & manager
- Character creator & manager
- Vehicle creator & manager
- Item creator & manager
- Building creator & manager
- Dice pool simulator
- Game session manager
- Translations in English and German
- Different designs for a more fitting look to the genre
- Easy and intuitive to use
- Provides a small API for connecting players to game masters' games and allowing communication between their apps

Target Platform

- Windows PCs and Notebooks
- A mouse or touchscreen is needed for input
- A keyboard is needed for text inputs (like names)

Business Model

- The app, without any assets, will be free to download

Overview

Theme/Setting/Genre

The initial idea was to make some kind of the Pip-Boy [1] for Pen and Paper Players and Game Masters, to manage their characters and other assets. PAPI is applicable to all imaginable settings, here are some of them:

- Fantasy
- Steampunk
- Mutants and Superheroes
- Modern Day
- Science Fiction
- Space Opera
- Mythologies and Monsters
- Post Apocalypse
- Magic World
- Horror

In addition to that PAPI has the following different designs to adapt to the setting better:

- Black on Antique (Papyrus)
- Green on Black (Science)
- Black on White (Simple)

Core Gameplay Mechanics

The player can navigate through the app-pages by clicking buttons, checking checkmarks and typing text into textboxes. Everything the user creates is saved as a json file on their own device, so games are saved only on the game masters' device.

Server / Online Mechanics

There is a (really small) server to connect players to game master's games. This provides the functions to distribute experience points or penalties and send assets from player to player. It also provides the function to share some things like party-owned vehicles or a headquarter.

Things needed for this function:

- Each Game has its own unique id
- Each player has their own unique id
- Only IDs are stored on the server-side
- All data besides the IDs are stored in the distributed apps

Gameplay

Core Gameplay

The user navigates through a list of windows to create, edit, show or delete their assets.

User Interface / Screens / Views

Welcome View

The app starts with this screen and welcomes the player. The first time, the app starts, it asks the Player for their name (the name can be changed in the options menu afterwards)

- Welcome Text with Player Name if not first visit
- Welcome Text with question for player name if first visit
- Quit Button (quits the game)
- Options Button (navigates to the options menu)
- Start Button (navigates to the selection of what the user wants to do)
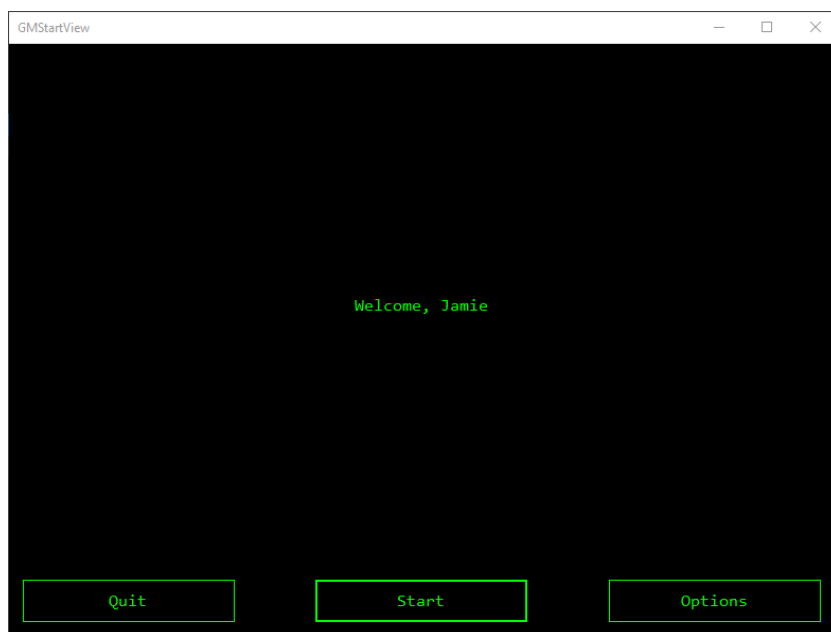
Screenshot 1: Welcome View

Options View

Provides the functionality of changing the username, the shown design and the shown language

- Return Button (saves changes and navigates back to the welcome view)
- Language Dropdown (Lets the user choose the shown language of the app)
- Design Dropdown (Lets the user choose the shown design of the app)
- Player name input field (Lets the user change their name)
- Player ID Label (Shows the ID of the player)
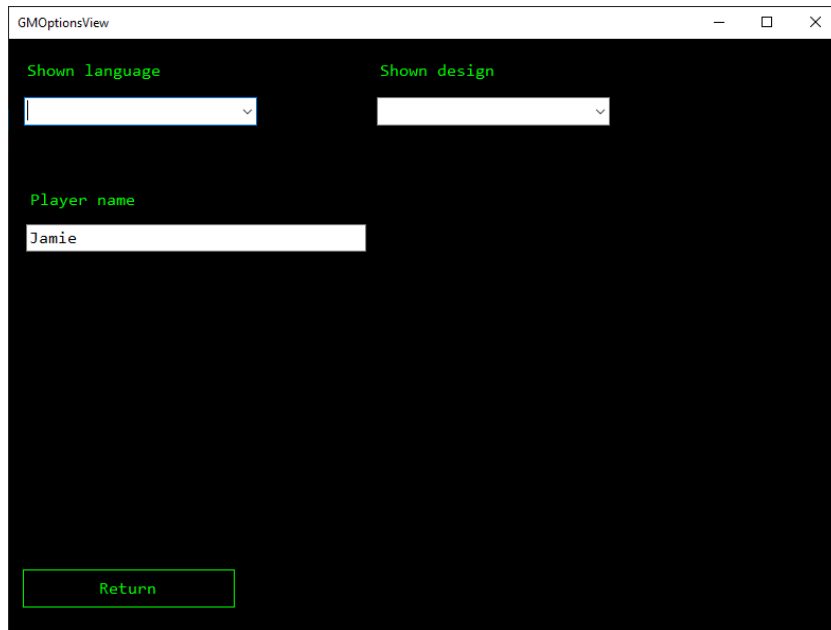
Screenshot 2: Options View

Start View

Shows the different kinds of assets that can be managed.

- Games Button (shows a description and shows a button to open the Games Selection View)
- Characters Button (shows a description and shows a button to open the Character Selection View)
- Items Button (shows a description and shows a button to open the Item Selection View)
- Vehicles Button (shows a description and shows a button to open the Vehicle Selection View)
- Buildings Button (shows a description and shows a button to open the Building Selection View)
- Return Button (navigates back to the Welcome View)
- Open Selected Button (of there is an asset type selected, this button navigates to the chosen Asset Selection View)
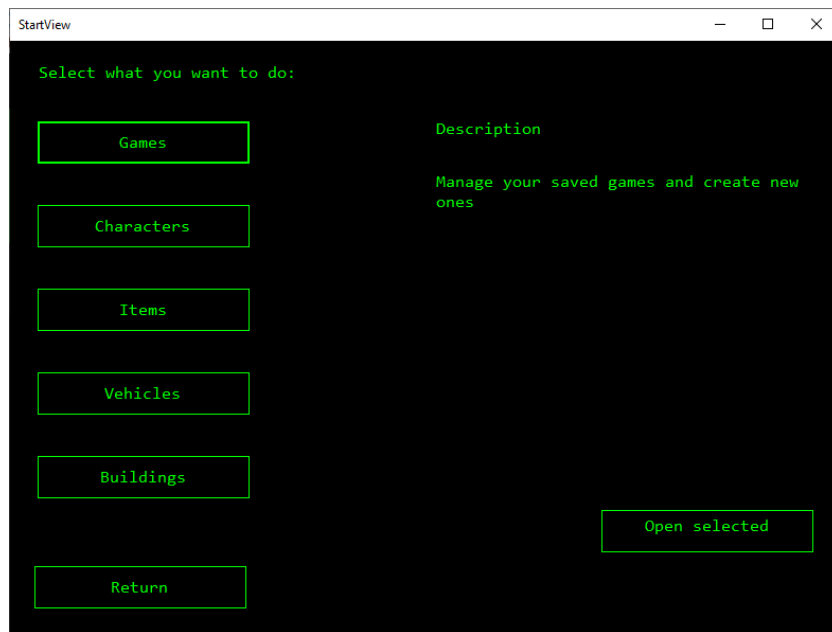
Screenshot 3: Start View

Game Selection View

This shows a list of all saved games and lets the user choose to start/delete them or to create a new game.

- List of saved Games, each with
    - Start Session Button (navigates to Start Session View)
    - Delete Game Button (deletes the game and refreshes the view)
- Create New Game Button (navigates to Game Creator Start View)
- Return Button (navigates back to the Start View)

Game Creator Start View

Lets the player create a new game and choose basic settings for it. The player who starts a game is automatically set as the game master for that game. Changing the game master after the game has started needs some temping with the save files for now (explained later).

- Genre Dropdown (Lets the user choose a genre for the new game)
- Display Game ID (Needed so that players can connect to the game)
- Create & Return Button (saves the game and navigates back to Game Selection View)
- Return Button (discards the changes and navigates back to Game Selection View)
- Create & Start Button (saves the game and navigates to Start Session View)

Character Selection View

This shows a list of all saved characters and lets the user choose to edit/play (if player character)/delete them or to create a new character.

- List of saved Characters, each with
    - If Player Character: Start Session Button (navigates to Join Session View)

- o   Edit Button (navigates to Character Creator Start View)
- o   Copy Button (Creates a copy of the selected Character and navigates to Character Creator Start View)
- o   Delete Button (deletes the character and refreshes the view)
- Create New Character Button (navigates to Character Creator Start View)
- Return Button (navigates back to the Start View)

Character Creator Start View

Lets the player create a new character and choose basic settings for it.

- Character Type Dropdown (Lets the user choose the type of the Character)
    - o   Player Character
    - o   Minion
    - o   General NPC
    - o   Unique NPC
    - o   Nemesis
- Genre Checkmarks (Lets the user mark in which genres this character should be available)
- Accept Button (saves the changes and navigates Character Creator Basics View
- Return Button (discards the changes and navigates back to Character Selection View)

Item Selection View

This shows a list of all saved items and lets the user choose to edit/delete them or to create a new item.

- List of saved Items, each with
    - o   Edit Button (navigates to Item Creator Start View)
    - o   Delete Button (deletes the item and refreshes the view)
- Create New Item Button (navigates to Item Creator Start View)
- Return Button (navigates back to the Start View)

Item Creator Start View

Lets the player create a new item and choose basic settings for it.

- Item Type Dropdown (Lets the user choose the type of the item)
    - o   Weapon
    - o   Wearable
    - o   General Item
- Genre Checkmarks (Lets the user mark in which genres this item should be available)
- Accept Button (saves the changes and navigates Item Creator Basics View
- Return Button (discards the changes and navigates back to Item Selection View)

Vehicle Selection View

This shows a list of all saved vehicles and lets the user choose to edit/delete them or to create a new vehicle.

- List of saved vehicles, each with
    - Edit Button (navigates to Vehicle Creator Start View)
    - Delete Button (deletes the vehicle and refreshes the view)
- Create New Vehicle Button (navigates to Vehicle Creator Start View)
- Return Button (navigates back to the Start View)

Vehicle Creator Start View

Lets the player create a new vehicle and choose basic settings for it.

- Genre Checkmarks (Lets the user mark in which genres this vehicle should be available)
- Accept Button (saves the changes and navigates Vehicle Creator Basics View
- Return Button (discards the changes and navigates back to Vehicle Selection View)

Building Selection View

This shows a list of all saved buildings and lets the user choose to edit/delete them or to create a new building.

- List of saved buildings, each with
    - Edit Button (navigates to Building Creator Start View)
    - Delete Button (deletes the building and refreshes the view)
- Create New Building Button (navigates to Building Creator Start View)
- Return Button (navigates back to the Start View)

Building Creator Start View

Lets the player create a new building and choose basic settings for it.

- Genre Checkmarks (Lets the user mark in which genres this building should be available)
- Accept Button (saves the changes and navigates Building Creator Basics View
- Return Button (discards the changes and navigates back to Building Selection View)

Step-by-step guides

Change Game Master of an already created game

In order to change game master after a game is already created, and maybe also some sessions have been played by now, following steps must be done:

Former Game Master:

- Open the file "\PenAndPaperInterface\SaveFiles\games.json" in a text editor (like notepad++)
- Search for the line, where you find the game, of which you want to change the game master
- Copy this line and send it to the new Game Master
- Delete this line in your file (otherwise the server gets confused), but watch out for opening and closing {}

New Game Master

- Change the value of the pairs, _name: to your username (case sensitive!) and the _id to the value you find in the options of your game
  `_gameMaster":{"_name":"FormerGameMaster","_id":"123456789"}`
- Copy the line into your file "\PenAndPaperInterface\SaveFiles\games.json"
- Restart the app

Literature and Sources

[1] Interplay Productions, "Fallout: A Post Nuclear Role Playing Game," Interplay Productions, USA, 1997.