Submission Worksheet

IT265-002-S2024 - [IT265] Game Case Study 2

Submissions:

Submission Selection
1 Submission [active] 4/13/2024 5:42:59 PM

Instructions

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Step 1:
From this spreadsheet pick a game you plan to analyze (selection must be unique) and put your UCID to the left of it. https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1MQpOF4Sfas-PANB-d5s9iGH4l4a6zknyW4cYepzPxAs/view
Do not edit anyone else's content/selection and be mindful if multiple people are working on this sheet at the same time.

Step 2:
Playtest your game choice (or review streamers playing the game)

Step 3:
Analyze, research, and review your chosen game. Collect resources (website links, etc that you used during the exploration) include these with the responses in the related sections. Fill in the responses of the below prompts/checklist/etc.

Step 4:
Save the worksheet. Export the PDF. Upload it to the mentioned branch name (below) on GitHub. Create a pull request and merge it to main. Upload the PDF to Canvas.

Branch name: M2-Case-Study-2

Tasks: 16 Points: 10.00

●   Game Overview (1.25 pts.)
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^COLLAPSE ^   **Task #1** - Points: 1

Text: Historical Context and Game Description

#	Points	Details
☐ #1	1	Game's title, developer, publisher, platform, and release date.
☐ #2	1	Historical context of the game's release and its place in the industry.
☐ #3	1	Game's genre and how it compares to similar games of the time.

Response:

Genshin Impact, developed and published by miHoYo (globally known as HoYoverse) was released on September 28, 2020 (on PC, mobile, and PS4, and was later released for PS5 on April 28, 2021).

Genshin Impact was incredibly well received upon its launch, drawing in a multitude of people from various different backgrounds. It's anime art style attracted people who were already in anime/manga-related circles; its heavy inspiration from *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild* game attracted gamers who were fans of the exploration gameplay; and its incredible character designs — fueled by its gacha system — brought in both gacha players and people who rarely consumed Japanese media, much less heard of the word "gacha"! Like, it's figures are absolutely astounding, honestly.. 10 million pre-registrations before the game even launched. $60 million USD in it's first WEEK — ON MOBILE ALONE. Like, dude, I knew the game made money but DAYUM. 23 million players within the first week (I was one of them); and if we're talking longer then perhaps you'd be interested to know that it generated at least $2 billion USD after its first year. So. suffice to say, it's pretty generation-defining :) precedent-setting, earth-shattering, timeless! even. (these are subjective, but to me they are no exaggeration 😤)

It is an anime-style, open-world RPG gacha, with amazing voice acting, breathtaking graphics and scenery, an incredibly immersive world, banger music, and captivating character designs to boot. And, being a gacha game, Genshin serves as... simultaneously, a pinnacle example and yet outstanding outlier of the genre. Because of... literally any other one of its defining facets, the majority of the people who play/try the game have never been exposed to the genre before, making Genshin their introduction to the genre. Which — a topic of much conversation within such communities — is known to be a double-edged sword because Genshin's gacha system, a.k.a, how often you can get new characters and weapons, is known to be a lot more forgiving than most (due largely in part to Chinese gambling laws and regulations).

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Task #2 - Points: 1

Text: Gameplay Mechanics

#	Points	Details
☐ #1	1	Discuss the core gameplay mechanics and how they shape the player's experience.
☐ #2	1	Explain how players control the game and interact with it.
☐ #3	1	Identify and describe any unique aspects or creative elements in the game's gameplay.

Response:

Genshin Impact, being an open-world exploration and story-driven game, has relatively simple mechanics that can be divided into movement and combat (and sometimes both simultaneously!).

For movement: there's the basic camera and directional character movement; sprinting; jumping; the ability to climb

walls & buildings (and jump off of them); as well as a gliding system - where you glide along with the wind to fall slower and cross gaps.

   As for the combat: Each and every character, generally, is equipped with a Basic Attack sequence, a Charged attack, 2 abilities: their Elemental Skill and Elemental Burst, and one or more passive talents that span a variety of functions - from movement to combat to exploration & survival, etc. A player's party can consist of 4 characters (and as such, in multiplayer, there can be up to 4 players) and the player can freely switch which character they have on the field at any moment, with a small [**INSERT SECONDS HERE**] cooldown. This allows for a variety of strategic combinations of the game's Elemental magic system and characters' abilities.

● Software Architecture and Technology (1.25 pts.)
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Task #1 - Points: 1

Text: Technical Framework

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Task #2 - Points: 1

Text: Innovations and Challenges

● Gameplay Mechanics and Level Design (1.25 pts.)
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Task #1 - Points: 1

Text: Mechanics Analysis

Checklist		*The checkboxes are for your own tracking

#	Points	Details
☐ #1	1	Explore and describe the main rules and actions that players use in the game. Explain how these core mechanics define the game's playstyle.
☐ #2	1	Discuss how the game's core mechanics keep players interested and involved. Describe the ways these mechanics make the game fun or challenging.

Response:

   Each character in Genshin Impact possesses their own unique abilities and passive Talents that are the crux of the variety present in the game's combat system. Sprinting is the only dodge mechanic, so there are characters who can produce shields, as well as characters that can heal the party (passively and/or actively); combined with various damage characters of different elemental types, and character who can buff the party, there is a component of strategy in Genshin's combat that grows and shifts endlessly with constant release of new characters.

   And even outside the combat, every one of Genshin's patch updates will include a limited time event that incorporates some brand-new form of gameplay. Various minigames building off of the game's base mechanics - both movement-based parkour events, and combat-based timed challenge events - as well as minigames that either introduce brand new mechanics (numerous beat-games), or expand lesser-used mechanics (city-builder game

mechanics, creating parkour maps for other players to play), some of them even becoming permenent! (THERE IS AN IN GAME CARD GAME. THERE'S A CARD GAME WITHIN THE GAME. LIKE IN UNIVERSE- CHARACTERS WILL CANONICALLY CHALLENGE EACH OTHER TO DUELS IN THE CARD GAME AND PLAYERS PLAY IT). There's always something fresh and new for players in Genshin, and many events are even brought back on rotation for players to enjoy again, or for the first time if they missed it!

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Task #2 - Points: 1
Text: Level Design

Checklist
*The checkboxes are for your own tracking

#	Points	Details
☐ #1	1	Describe the design of the game's levels or environments. Focus on the layout, obstacles, and visual elements, and how they contribute to the game's setting.
☐ #2	1	Explain how the level or environment design affects the way players play the game. Discuss how these design choices impact the overall experience, such as creating challenges, guiding the player, or setting the mood.

Response:

Genshin is an open-world game, so the design of its base world is of course front-and-center, and it is absolutely breathtaking. It's expansive, filled with life (and puzzles and quests to further engage), and at some times even a little intimidating, but that's not even all there is. The game also feature various domains - dungeons separate from the overworld main map that are all amazingly and intricately designed, even if players will only ever be in the space once during their entire playthrough. There are also other maps separated from the main overworld of Teyvat - whether they be underground, or some other magical realm detached from the main continent of Teyvat. They each have their own unique look, feel, sound, and overall vibe.

The sheer variety of environments in the game and the way every aspect of the game does well to immerse you in the land you're exploring (sound effects, soundtrack, color, wildlife, monsters, and surrounding story beats, hell- even the puzzles) makes the world of Teyvat continuously feel new and magical, always offering something more for the player to learn, explore, and uncover. Each of the landscapes also introduce their own little mechanics to challenge the player in combat and/or exploration, like a temperature mechanic in the snowy mountain area causing players to seek warmth, or implementing a different way to attack enemies when players are diving underwater.

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Graphic and Audio Design (1.25 pts.)

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Task #1 - Points: 1
Text: Visual Design

Checklist
*The checkboxes are for your own tracking

#	Points	Details
☐ #1	1	Describe the game's visual appearance and the artistic choices made. Discuss elements like color, art style, and thematic consistency, and how they contribute to the game's

overall look and feel.

| | #2 | 1 | Discuss the design of the game's characters and environments. Focus on aspects such as realism, creativity, and how they fit within the game's world. Explain how these designs enhance the player's immersion in the game. |

Response:

good lord this game is beautiful. Like it's actually so pretty. The art style is colorful and vibrant and appealing, and even then, changes to fit the mood of the environment. It excels in bringing a sense of magical fantasy and wonderous intrigue to anyone who opens up the game for the first, or 1478th time (literally me). It's genuinely magical, like ask anyone who's played it and you'll most likely never hear a bad word about how this game works or how interesting the first 10 minutes of the game is. Everything in the world feels like it interacts, and most everything you do feels like you're interacting with the world. The locations tell stories, there's history buried in those ruins, landscapes wilted away by the sands or by the floods; there's joy in the cities, there's laughter in the towns; there's weight to the emotions in the character's eyes when a cutscene plays.

Its character designs are varied and incredibly intricate (almost to the gripe of artists, cosplayers, and other designers), and despite there only being 5 or so model archetypes, each character has a distinct silhouette and shape to them. The effects are gorgeous, textured, multifarious, and honestly in some cases iconic. Animations are befitting of the character's personalities.

And if you tell me to speak about this game's cutscenes I will literally explode into a ball of fire with power that outweighs that of the brightest neutron star in the largest galaxy.

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Task #2 - Points: 1

Text: Audio Design

Checklist   *The checkboxes are for your own tracking

#	Points	Details
#1	1	Examine the game's sound design, focusing on the music and sound effects. Describe how they are used and their quality. Discuss any memorable or unique audio elements in the game.
#2	1	Explain how the game's audio contributes to its overall mood and setting. Discuss how sound and music influence the player's emotional response and enhance the gaming experience.

Response:

OH MY SWEET GODS ABOVE DO NOT GET ME STARTED ON THIS COMPANY'S MUSIC.

ahem.... In other words,,, Genshin's sound design does an amazing job of helping to integrate and immerse the player in the game's fantastical environment. With ambient sounds that match the environment you're in, accurately textured footsteps depending on the terrain you're traveling on (soft and gravely for sand; thick and crunchy for snow; solid for stone pathways; hollow for wood. So on and so forth), and incredibly creative sound design for each character's various abilities, the world feels real, believable, and *lived in*. Which is something that an open-world exploration game **MUST** have. And - if I may say so myself - Genshin achieves this to a greater than average degree; there isn't a moment in the game, idle or otherwise, where a player (with sound on... of course,) DOESN'T feel, on some

there isn't a moment in the game, idle or otherwise, where a player (with sound on... of course.) DOESN'T feel, on some subconscious level, that the world is still moving. I can't even tell you the amount of times I've tabbed out of Genshin and found myself zoning out while doing something else because of how present and peaceful the game's sound design can be.

And some of its sounds even add specifically to the fantasy aspect! With "*whish*'es and "*fwooshes*" to accompany your weapon fading into magical particles once your idle long enough for it to 'sheathe'; light and melodic button noises and other menu triggers that are distinct and aid the player in knowing exactly what function they're using.

Okay. so, I'm just.. gonna apologize for this right now. Because„ YOU started this (not you, grader, I'm referring to sir Matthew Toegel).

—! Actually.. changed my mind :) I'm gonna do smth a little silly, I'm just gonna link a doc here and if you're at all interested in me rambling about the unmatched mfin creative genius that is HOYO-MiX, then feel free to check it out. Otherwise, just take the above paragraph :) –
> https://docs.google.com/document/d/1b5OLPBPhhu9MMPBsi_jpb1rSscKUa6fjmsF5BqNfgCg/edit?usp=sharing
(it's the same link; just in case the hyperlink doesn't work for some reason)

●   **User Interface and User Experience** (1.25 pts.)
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Text: UI Design

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∨ EXPAND ∨   **Task #2 - Points: 1**

Text: UX Analysis

●   **Narrative and Storytelling** (1.25 pts.)
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∧COLLAPSE ∧   **Task #1 - Points: 1**

Text: Narrative Structure

Checklist   *The checkboxes are for your own tracking

#	Points	Details
☐ #1	1	Describe the game's story, including its narrative structure, main plot points, and the setting in which it takes place. Discuss how these elements come together to create a cohesive and engaging story.
☐ #2	1	Analyze the storytelling techniques used in the game, such as dialogue, cutscenes, or environmental storytelling. Evaluate how effectively these techniques convey the story and engage the player.

Response:

Genshin Impact's main story is divided into main story chapters, taking place across the game's 7 (8) regions. It's story is currently in progress, with each update introducing an absolute plethora of quests attributed to either the main

storyline or other side quests baked into the game's world and characters or quests that go along with the storylines of limited time events.

The main story follows the Traveler - one of two siblings (you pick one at the start of the game) who lost their sibling after encountering a god that blocked them from leaving one of the numerous worlds they traveled to. Having been stripped of their power and cast down into the world of Teyvat, the Traveler meets Paimon - a little fairy creature who has become our close companion and travel guide in this new and unfamiliar world - and sets off on a journey to find the god that took their sibling so they can be reunited.

In game this story manifests as the player traveling to each of the world's 7 regions ruled by the 7 most well-known gods (Archons) to gather information and make some new friends and memories along the way. And while its main plotline may seem like the driving narrative factor, since Genshin is a game that has a *10 year* road map in terms of its story's completion, the game instead takes time to breathe life into every aspect of the world players are exploring. It has hundreds upon hundreds of other quests - specific character quests; random NPC quests; long, multiple-part, non-voiced World Quests that take place in a specific nation to help flesh out an aspect of that nation's history and/or culture, and which may unlock a brand new part of the map; quests for the limited time events that are introduced every single patch; and so much more. And these quests are just as well-written and thought out and entertaining as the main story quests are.

The characters feel real, their motivations are relatable, and even though sometimes the circumstances may seem outlandish, it's all built up in such a way that it feels natural in this land of magic, gods, and fantasy.

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Task #2 - Points: 1

Text: Character and Integration

Checklist

*The checkboxes are for your own tracking

#	Points	Details
☐ #1	1	Discuss the development of the game's characters. Describe their roles within the story, their personalities, and how they evolve throughout the game. Consider how the characters contribute to the overall narrative.
☐ #2	1	Examine how the game's narrative and characters are integrated into the gameplay. Discuss how story elements are woven into the game mechanics and how this integration affects the player's experience.

Response:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GAME'S CHARACTERS????? OOHHHHOHO!! BOY. Okay so how much time do you have? Want me to go through the entire roster of *checks notes* 80 playable characters - all with distinct personalities, character stories, backgrounds, motivations, allegiances, and role in the story - plus 1 more playable character (arguably one of the most long-awaited ones) releasing the 23rd of April in this wonderful year 2024, as well as the numerous *non-playable* characters who can have significance ranging from: an absolutely integral role in the story, to: appearing in a non-voiced yet wonderfully created side quest, all of whom help further integrate, immerse, and connect players to the highly detailed lovingly crafted and expansive world? Or... would you rather me sum it up in as little words as my silly gay brain can possibly whittle it down to? :) Your pick

Just kidding, I'll pick for you, I'll try to make this quick for your sake (and mine, it is 11:00 pm as I write this: estimated grade 7.5/10, based solely on how many boxes I've typed anything in at all).

So. Genshin, being a gacha game, has a *l o t* of characters. And they're all very cool, very good, very awesome, very epic, very incredible, and some DO - in fact - show signs of character growth that ties in either with the main over-arching narrative, or with their own personal character journey isolated from the over-arching narrative. Being a gacha

game also means that all the playable characters you meet are the characters that can join your party !! And contrary to past popular belief, not all of these characters are righteous good guys !!!! One of them even lost their memories for a second and regained them after developing a new outlook on life, so they joined our party as someone who can't really be classified as a villain anymore, per se, but is instead now just a jerk !! :D

● **Impact and Reception** (1.25 pts.)

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● **Task #1 - Points: 1**

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Text: Reception and Impact

● **Task #2 - Points: 1**

∨ EXPAND ∨

Text: Cultural Significance

● **Reflection** (1.25 pts.)

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● **Task #1 - Points: 1**

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Text: Describe your personal experience playing the chosen game

Checklist		*The checkboxes are for your own tracking
#	**Points**	**Details**
☐ #1	1	Was it "fun"? What made it fun or not fun?
☐ #2	1	Is this genre/game-type aligned with personal interests?
☐ #3	1	What made you pick this game? Was it a good choice?

Response:

Oh. I've played this game every single day since release (minus like. idk 5 single days). I am completely normal about this game and it's publishing company .   Yes 100% normal, completely sane, and absolutely not crazy about it. Not at all, not in the slightest. 1000% sane and normal, not crazy what-so-ever.

To answer your question: Yes, yes, yes, and yes good choice. I love this game.

● **Task #2 - Points: 1**

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Text: Assignment Reflection

Checklist	*The checkboxes are for your own tracking

#	Points	Details
☐ #1	1	What interesting or new "thing(s)" did you learn during your research and analysis?
☐ #2	1	Did you find it was easy to come across the information you were looking for? What was your primary means of research/analysis?

Response:

I realized just how big the revenue numbers were and just how fast they got there. Like I heard news about its fast growing profit all over the place but ofc I was never surprised, I mean look at it. the game is gorgeous.   But wow,,,, that's a lot of money...

  I would say it was fairly easy to come across the information I looked for, but most of the information came from my own personal experience *being here* for the past 3.5 years, so the only thing I had to truly research and DIG to find info on was accurate revenue numbers and ANYTHING about how the game was made, which I've looked into a tiny bit in the past, and I was unpleasantly met with the realization that the little amounts of information that I found back then did not increase much at all.

End of Assignment