Game Pitch Document

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Title: Transformation shop

Genre: Simulator, tycoon, idle, character creation

Style: 2D, cartoon, cel-shaded

Platform: HTML5

Market: Furry fandom

Elevator Pitch: Gather ingredients and mix up special potions to transform your customers according to their wishes

The Pitch

Introduction

The player runs a shop where they transform their customers with potions or medicine that they mix (and consume) themselves. The player also makes long-term plans and ventures out to collect ingredients, leaving the shop in care of employee NPCs in the meantime.

Background

The game is partly inspired by Rimworld, with its deep simulation aspects of its characters' biology influenced by the environment; The Right Mix, a Flash game where the player plays as a bartender mixing together various drinks; the classic Alchemy genre of games where the player combines a pair of elements to make new ones and build up a huge collection of recipes; the simpler cooking minigames from games such as The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild; as well as various action games where the player has to fulfill customer orders while the queue gets longer. Take all of these inspirations and put them in the context of a character creation screen, or perhaps dress-up games, managing your business' growth and resources in the meantime, and you get the basic gameplay loop.

There are already plenty of games out there with a similar premise, but without the transformation element, such as Alchemy Garden and Potion Craft. This game wants to shift the focus away from the potion aspect, and focus more on the potion's result, letting the player have fun in the times where there are no customers, as they experiment with transformations of their own.

Setting

This concept is rather flexible, and could work in many settings. In a more fantasy-oriented one, the player would brew potions in a cozy workshop, gathering ingredients outside in fields and woods. For the sake of simplicity, I'll be referring to the method of transformation as potions regardless of the setting.

In a more modern setting, it would be about producing bespoke medicine, maybe in a backroom laboratory or inside their actual storefront, while managing suppliers and trying to grow their medicine store, taking notes and inspiration from real-world pharmaceutics. Perhaps before settling in a permanent location, the player would start their business in a food truck, pop-up store or bartending at a party, saving up for an actual shop. Another fun aspect would be having to change the player's office location depending on their current form, whatever would be fitting.

Circumventing the tycoon aspect entirely, it'd also be possible to simplify the game by having the player work as an emergency responder in the field, whether it be for medical emergencies, being lost in the wild, or to help with encountering enemies. On the other end, it's possible to focus more on the tycoon aspect and go into population tracking of the player's town or area, with stats on what percentage of the residents are human, giving a possible end goal of reaching a 100% transformed rate.

The plot wouldn't be as complicated, it would just follow the player as they grow their business, occasionally hiring new employees to automate some tasks and help the player turn back if they end up as something that can't move. There's a big potential for a comedy aspect to the game, getting unique dialogue when the player discovers how to turn into a certain species, or possibly even messing the potion up and ending up as something unexpected. The game would also explore the intricacies and consequences of transforming, as seen in the next chapter.

Features

The player could have a lot of things to think about when fulfilling each order. However, the minimum viable product of the game would be just the potion mixing system. It needs to say what the player made, and its effects, maybe lettering the player try it themselves to see the effect. Here are the possible systems the game could have, roughly organized in level of importance:

Potion making

Possible ingredient or cooking/delivery methods to influence the final transformation. Different ingredients will reach peak potency after different amounts of cooking, or have variable effects based on how long or with what method they were prepared. This will lead to needing to add ingredients at different points in the process. There's a possible interesting side aspect where the player contaminates ingredients with each other due to poor lab safety.

Balancing and isolating DNA essences for species influence; the transformation substances that trigger any bodily changes (and might already be naturally present in some unlucky customers); microplastics, binders, etc. as impurities that have side effects but can be used intentionally for special transformations; using ingredients that are derived from or stereotypical to the desired species and so on.

The player might also choose which method to use for preparing the ingredients based on their characteristics – mortar and pestle, blender and other food processors, boiling them which might have some other side effects and so on. Certain active ingredients may work best with certain conditions. Some delivery methods become permanent over time, instantly, or not at all. Also important, how quick-acting is each method? How might they spread through the body?

Body interactions

Simulate the body and let the potion take effect that way. Different ways of applying the potion will spread differently and with different rates. The player could take advantage of slow spread and ingredients degrading to only achieve one desired effect, or affect only a specific area of the body.

This system could also keep track of pain, nausea, dizziness, and other possible unwanted side effects. Doing a transformation too quickly could lead to rejection by the customer's body, injury, vomiting, broken bones or mental effects. All body parts will connect with blood vessels, nerves, muscle, bones, skin and hair/fur, where appropriate. These are all vectors to spread the body changes, with the brain being an entry point for accessing the nervous system.

We could let this apply to the player's body too, letting them become their own test subject (and in fact, the only customer in the prototype). The game would visualize the resulting changes either as text, or with a much bigger scope, even 2D art.

Prescription planning

Will the player prescribe a customer a slow burn transformation via a months-long 2-pills-a-day regimen, or rather give them a one-time injection that changes the customer almost instantly? Something in-between? This might also depend on their physical and mental strength.

The player would have to think about possible overdose risks, unplanned permanence, unwanted instincts, maybe even insanity! On the other hand, customers may develop a tolerance to their prescription or become extra sensitive to transformative stimulus. There might also be a need to think about the new dietary needs.

Packaging

The player would also choose how to package up the finished potion – liquid, pill, gel capsule, injection, spray, cream, foods and drinks for common over-the-counter cases.

Pills would be intended for both recreational purposes: a big dose in a pill that dissolves over the course of an evening, maybe with a gel core that'll release a reversion formula to help it wear off after

some time; and also permanent long-term changes: a gentle and gradual transformation that's easy on the mind and body, and gives plenty of time to get affairs in order as well.

Gas-based delivery – not usually intentional. Effects could be hard to predict. The player could accidentally achieve this with irresponsible lab techniques. Really irresponsible behavior might affect the whole neighborhood.

Injections are likely very advanced tech and difficult or expensive to get right, promising near-instant possibly-permanent changes as a reward for unlocking them.

Other areas

- Shop management – shelf space for ingredients, staff rooms, storage, pharmacy equipment

- Staff hiring and management – from ingredient gathering to delivery, as well as idle helping out with simpler orders

- Upgrades, research and development to unlock more techniques and recipes

- Extra scenarios, levels and overall story progression where the available techniques might get restricted to spice things up

Genre

The game would feature some simple buttons to move between different sections – serving customers, preparing potions (cooking genre), packaging them (possibly a minigame based on the selected packing method), previewing their effects (character creation screen with a hint of micromanaging the side effects), managing ingredients, staff and the shop location. Each section would house a slightly different game style.

The customers would be patient enough to not warrant an action game rating at first. They'd come in a few small waves per day, and the player would have time for themselves to gather ingredients and experiment with new recipes at the start and end of each day, before opening and after closing the shop respectively. The story elements could take hints from visual novels, but it wouldn't be the main focus, just to serve as a short break or a change of pace.

Platform

Since the game wouldn't be as visually demanding, only using 2D images, it could be developed in HTML5, opting for a strategy to make the game as easy and accessible to play as possible with a free web release. After gauging the player interest, there could be a possible paid release of a greatly expanded version of the game. Even at that point, shifting to a different technology wouldn't be needed, as it's very easy to package any web-based game for a big variety of other platforms.
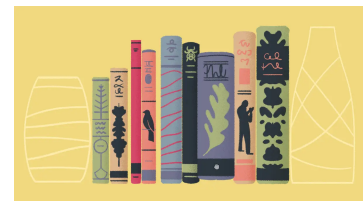
Style

The game would take a visual cue from these sorts of cozy, easy-going games.

(a) Pokémon Café Mix

(b) Inbento

(c) A Little To The Left