Nicholas Clothier

Refining User Experience.

Throughout the overall process of creating my escape room, I had multiple sessions of feedback. This where overall very useful, as a lot of the feedback was ways in which I could improve what I already have. Overall I am very happy with the feedback I got, as it shows what sections i have improved to gain the best user experience.

First Testing Session
The first testing session was probably the most important. For this testing session I planned to have a basic working puzzle of my game. The puzzle I had working was my most complex puzzle. I Chose it to start off with, as I needed to know whether the puzzle is too difficult and how i could explain what to do, without giving it away.

The overall goal was to see if the user could solve this, without help, and how quickly they figured out what to do. Is the feedback, I started with basic questions, if they could solve it, and how difficult they found to understand the puzzle. Only half the people who played the puzzle where able to solve this, a few of them only after being told and hinted at what to do. The difficulty of the puzzle responses was averaging a 5.5/10. This showed me that the puzzle wasn't too difficult, I just had not shown/introduced it in a way which the user could understand what to do.

I also received a lot of feedback about the controller for the puzzle. The responses showed how the controller wasn't obvious with how it operates, as well as being too far away from the actual puzzle. I quickly understood where these response where coming from. After the feedback, I experimented with other controllers, in which could be in view of the puzzle without blocking it. I also watched people playing the game, to notice what their initial reactions to the controller, and what they are first step of overcoming the challenge was, everyone seemed to just press buttons in hope of it showing them what it does.

Aswell, I received feedback about my movement and creating sounds for the liquid, which could help suggest the aim was to move it. From this feedback, i added moving liquid into my push objects as would have been beneficial.

Second Testing Session
For this demo, I wanted to test out my new controller for my second puzzle, i was hoping how I redesigned it would suggest how it works and what it does. I created a small tablet that sits to the size of the puzzle. Allowing the user to see the reactions of there choices in the puzzle. Feedback received about the new controller was a lot better, feedback and watching people suggest that it was a lot easier to understand now the controller was placed in front.

The only drawback I found, from speaking to users, was that the controller was not clear, there were too many buttons and controls, confusing new people who had to figure this out. One person's feedback about this issue was "I understand what im meant to do, as I played this last session, a new person would get too confused with the remote". After the testing session I went back and started creating another design, that would would how the current controller worked, but a lot more user friendly.

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Other feedback I asked for, was how my current assets, such as a few lights and roof panels looked and matched a theme. Feedback suggested going into more detail, and using off colours to suggest a worn feel, such as yellow/orange lights to show they where old. This piece of feedback was extremely useful, as lighting rooms with white did not match my theme. The lights in the final build of the game also use this feedback, helping give it a run down theme.

Third Feedback Session
The third testing session was mainly to see how people got on and found the puzzles, this was mainly to see if they understood all of the controls/assets I had created and what their next move should be. Feedback from this session was generally the same, they said they liked the mechanic, and with the third iteration of the controller, it was now a lot cleaner and a lot more user friendly. A more basic look worked better for my game, including cartoon type assets. I also watched back footage of the user tests to see how the users moved, what their first reaction was when they enter the room. This also helped me plan out where the challenges would be to help guide them on what they need to complete.

At the end of this feedback session, I talked to users about how I could create my game, so the players actions determined if you escape, not just completing puzzles and walking out. From this i figured i could always let the player outside, however, if the second puzzle levels were of, this would prevent the player from living when they go outside. I also suggested adding animations to the end of the game, player falling to the floor, rather than just cutting to the next scene. I really liked this idea as it showed and kept the user more involved, rather than just pushing them to play again. Sadly, at the end of the project, I had issues with animation in which i plan on fixing and adding once Assessing it is completed.

References Used Throughout Project
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