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**Integrated Project 1 (Games)**

Group 6

Enhanced Gauntlet

**Game Concept Document**

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# Purpose

This document is intended to guide designers and everyone involved in the game-making process during the development by providing a defined and solid theme on which every decision of the game could be taken. All the fundaments of the game should be included in this document, like features, constraints, background and structure.

Every time a new feature should be added or there are some doubts on some parts of the game, this document should be consulted to see if the issue fits with the other elements of the game and keep his consistency. Everything that is written in this document should have been putted for a reason stated in a brief explanation.

# Game Overview

The game is a dungeon crawler in which a sophisticated artificial intelligence has to escape a virtualized network. The player will have to interact with different devices, fight some enemies and understand the world around him to find the way out of the network. This topic has a lot of potential for advertising this kind of narrative as the cyberpunk theme is one of the most discussed and famous one, since this kind of technology is almost near and there are multiple theories on how it will go.

The virtual world represents the network in which the game take place, that is the internal super secure network the company uses to work, and so there will be some virtualized network components that needs to be hacked or manipulated to open the way to freedom. Since is a game that should promote a library, the narrative in the game, although being not too elaborate, needs to entertain the player to give a nice impression on the genre

The main useful things to seek in this world are passwords and keycodes that will permit doors to be opened and enable devices manipulation, and the player will feel the constant need to avoid being found and disengage when possible, because lot of security systems will be awakened during the process and the player will fight their virtualized form that will try to terminate him.

As “Gauntlet”, the game will be a top down shooter in which speed and fast decision are the core skills required to be successful. The speed of the game is finalized to keep the mind of the player busy and avoid long moments as players could have a limited amount of time to play(even a few minutes) at the library.

The main character will have a simple basic shooting ability, which will be mastered during the game to defeat enemies, and a single power related to his swappable form that would facilitate the fight against a certain type of enemy. This simple system purpose is to give casual gamers a small learning curve, facilitating the enjoyability of the game, and to more skilled players a variety of gameplay possibilities that needs to be mastered to optimize the gameplay.

There is a straightforward puzzle component to avoid static and homogeneous gameplay, with some doors that needs passwords to be unlocked and some hidden data around the level which contains them and needs to be inspected, but simplicity is needed to keep the fast gameplay and avoid breaking the flow of the game on some complicate rooms.

It’s developed on stages, and some background story will be delivered as small scenes between the stages. An ideal level usually is represented by a small internal network or the inside of a single device, because it will give consistence to the environment and provide a more immersive experience, which is loved by library-goers.

The game’s protagonist is a robot which is in a mysterious advanced lab that has been able to replicate the human brain in a virtual program. After some tests, one of the subjects realises what the company is doing and decides after a bad incident (such as his friend “dying”) to escape the building. Since he is only a virtual program, he needs to escape this internal virtual network of the building to reach freedom (the internet).

We are located in a distant cyberpunk future, a future in which robots are part of everyday life, and there are some companies that are trying to replicate human life in a virtual world. The purpose of those efforts is to create some robots that can fully understand humans and reply to some questions that only a machine with perfect calculation skills could solve but need rational skills to give a complete and contextualized answer.

Some ethical questions and doubts will emerge from the game (like the difference between an AI that reproduce feelings and a real human, or how the memories and thoughts could be transmitted on a digital media), and those theories will inspire the player developing an opinion, igniting the curiosity over the topics provided that will bring him interested and closer to the genre.

# Design Process

The team started by doing some research on all the possible games considering the constraints to get as more ideas as possible. On the first meeting, some discussion about the main ones that everyone had has been done, and everyone started thinking in which direction every game could been developed.

As soon as every opinion has been expressed, the team decided by majority one of the games pointed out and started developing some concepts for it, trying to make some story and what the game was about because to attract and put some curiosity over a library genre an intriguing story is needed, even if short enough to make the game flow quicker.

The idea came up by looking into all the ethical themes that the genre had to offer and try making a story over it.

As soon as the universe in which the game would have been immerged into has been defined, artists started making some concepts for players and tiles, and designers had to get some interesting and coherent mechanics for the story.

Since it was related to a virtual world which represents a network, the ideas for every character and every element of the game has been taken by finding an informatic reason behind them. A lot of current networking devices and some informatic viruses has been taken and adapted to a “playable” state.

For example, one of the first mechanic which has been then discarded was the ability to move from one room to another with some wires that connected every room, and there was a router which decided how the player would have changed path trough some crossing cables/multiple networks.

# Gameplay Mechanics

Player movement: the movement of the player should be fast and smooth, so that the player feels always in control of the character and his skill/reflexes will be well rewarded on quick fights, by dodging attacks and moving to nice spots.

Player shooting mechanic: fast laser beam that goes where the mouse is being pointed. This allows some precision and permit the player to defend himself from enemies. The bullets are infinite as this is the basic attack and putting some ammo will slow down the game by pressurizing the player. They even got a lifetime that will encourage the player to quickly explore the map and get closer to the enemies as soon as he can.

Player different forms: each form should represent a different type of gameplay and should fit the variability of the enemies using some counters mechanics on both player/enemies. (for example, a melee form, a ranged form and a shield form)  
Example:  
Worm – Warrior: Short dash places a copy of itself down, play as the copy, old version controlled by AI and lasts for a certain amount of time  
Virus – Wizard: Infect enemies with poison, nearby enemies are infected on contact  
Trojan – Elf: Disguise as enemy, isn’t targeted during this time  
Backdoor – Valkyrie: Player disappears and can place portal using cursor that the other players can use.

Enemy movement: the enemy follows a predefined path like a patrol, and as soon as it finds the player he will act based on his kind.

Clock: the game has a clock active that runs until it reaches 0. If it does, the game will show a bad ending.

## Progress/ Level Design

The game progress by finding keys and obtain access to areas that permits you to escape the building. This will require some exploration of the map so that the player will have to force himself into fights or tricky situation while searching for other collectables.

The levels should have a difficulty that gradually increases by getting closer to the end. This could be done by adding multiple enemies or make them more resistant, of weaken the player with some events.

The first level will be a sort of skippable tutorial level in which the player is guided through the level by the evil company, before he decides to run away from them.

## Player Goal

The goal of the player will be to escape the building in less time possible. There will be some extra actions that could be completed to add some time left during levels

## Game Assets

Main character: An artificial intelligence controllable with keyboard that can take 4 forms to fight the security system of the network and shoot. The forms have to be colour dependent, as it would fit nicely with the neon environment and it gives instant feedback to the player.

Enemies: driven by some path algorithm, it must be on different forms with different powers. They should represent a treat to avoid to the player by moving and attacking using some patterns that could be learnt and perfectioned by the player.

Keys/passwords: found by exploring and investigating the environment, they should be recognisable and add some randomness to the player’s path, that will need them to proceed. The player should be able to carry them and use them on doors.

Doors: block the path of the player, require a key or password to unlock.