05/10/2015

Hi team (Alaric),

For the sake of posterity here is a rough summary of the meeting we had last week on Wednesday the 30th of September:

We each came to the meeting with the previously agreed upon 3 game idea concepts, and proceeded to present the concepts to each other and discard those which were least appealing. We narrowed down our concepts to the two strongest contenders:

Alien Exodus - a management game concentrating on Serious Fun. The game concept featured a light branching narrative and predominantly relied on strategic thinking.

Skinrender - a stealth/puzzler concentrating on a mix of Hard Fun & Serious Fun. The game concept featured an open environment and a variety of options on how to proceed toward the pre-determined goal in the presented game area.

After some further consideration and a short meeting with one of the tutors we have decided to discard Alien Exodus and will work on presenting a pitch for the Skinrender concept. The concept for Skinrender will also be further fleshed out in the following week. Meeting dates to follow.

Cheers,

Tom.

05/10/2015

Hey team (Tom),

Okay, I've got it! Skinrender certainly seems to be our best option.

~Ricky

14/10/2015

Hey Tom,

I've set up a folder structure for our SVN, in the Assets folder there is now a text document called Asset List, when either of us add assets we create to that folder we should remember to update the list. I have also setup and started this weeks sprint in JIRA.

However I have encountered an odd problem with JIRA, presumably a result of the slightly changed interface; I cannot find any way to add time estimates to sub-tasks of stories despite searching the internet for a solution. As a result the the sub-tasks in the stories currently in the sprint have no "time remaining" attached to them, so I have put the accumulative estimated hours in the story itself.

~Alaric

15/10/2015

Hi Alaric,

Alright, sounds good.

That is odd. I'll just log my hours onto the subtasks as standard and hopefully that'll present an accurate amount of time spent doing work until we can find out what's going on with the new Jira.

tom.

15/10/2015

Here are our notes on your pitch, ed will cover off the presentational aspects when you meet him.

Rob

L6: GROUP 4

Whilst the team presented many appealing ideas, they were unable to present enough evidence of research in order to assuage the stakeholders’ concerns. The team should now identify the problems inherent in their design and devise informed solutions in order to turn the theory into a specific experience for a player. As soon as possible, the team should begin crafting a prototype.

ROB

Not much to say here, nowhere near the 50 +hrs work that would be expected so far 2 emails in total between the team, svn barely alive, no minutes and nothing on JIRA.  Check the assessment criteria for the module, this is all standard, covered by you all 4times over the last 2 years and stuff I should simply not be asking about at your time in the degree.

Group 4 - Skinrender

You have actually thought through some of the mechanics, but the rest of the game was fairly unclear – what constitutes a puzzle? You say you have 20 of them, but is that a room of the inn? Dealing with x number of people? You have to be clear about all of these things before you can really progress.

21/10/2015

Hi Alaric,

The second sprint is up now. Unfortunately with JIRA's estimates issue I have had to create each task separately, rather than adding sub-tasks to a user story. The time estimates for each task are at least visible now.

Additionally, the new JIRA appears to be unable to set finish dates for tasks (perhaps this is a feature usually reserved for sub-tasks?), as a result I have appended the task headings with their submit date.

The meeting today involved going over the work produced so far (early prototypes of tiles and pathfinding code, mostly), and what we can identify already as requiring iteration. Additionally, the story outline & character concepts were discussed and a character design has been chosen. This is reflected in one of the tasks on JIRA, as creation of the character will now be underway.

Additionally we discussed our next meeting date, which will be Tuesday the 27th of October, where we will present the work accomplished during the sprint, and set up a playtest involving someone external to the team (preferably in our target audience demographic, but at this stage we're more concerned with general feedback such as movement control tweaking).

Please reply to this e-mail to confirm whether you can attend the meeting or not.

Tom.

22/10/2015

Hey Tom,

That should all be okay, and I can make that meeting.

I was going to upload the pitch presentation to the SVN, as you asked, but when I went into the presentations folder it was already there; the log shows it was uploaded mid last week – so there’s no new revision of the SVN, but the pitch is in there.

~Alaric

28/10/2015

Hi Alaric,

Just letting you know that Sprint 2 has been closed and is now ready for the next week of tasks. Also, our playtest meeting yesterday produced some feedback, which is now in the SVN under Builds & Patch Notes > Playtest Notes

Tom.

29/10/2015

Hey Tom,

I’ve set up and started sprint 3. As we did last week; I have added the desired completion date of each task to its name. It’s particularly important this week that the player’s actions and abilities document is done early on, as It will be necessary for tasks later in the sprint.

Our meeting earlier today allowed us to go over what we produced in sprint 2 and in particular look over the feedback we collected during the playtesting. We talked about solutions to the extremely jarring and unforgiving consequences of being spotted by the AI that were pointed out by testers, and ways to improve that experience for the player - a task directed at tackling this problem is included in this week’s sprint.

The rest of the tasks for the week focus on getting initial character art into the game to replace the current placeholders, removing various bugs, and iterating on the design of further puzzles to be implemented and tested next week. As we discussed in the meeting, I have a slightly reduced workload this week as I am out of town and away from any computer from Friday to Sunday.

Let me know if there are any problems or queries with the tasks for this week, I may have access to my email over the weekend at certain times.

~Alaric

29/10/2015

Hi Alaric,

Good stuff, have looked over the JIRA stuff and know what I have to do and by what dates. If all goes to plan we'll have a more visually accurate representation of our game by next week, just in time to plan our next presentation and give a good impression of what we're trying to do with this thing.

Tom.

05/11/2015

Hi Alaric,

The new Sprint is up on Jira. You'll find descriptions for most of the tasks as usual, please let me know if you have any questions regarding any of them. The due dates for the dates are in the titles.

The only blockers this week are the submission of the 3 puzzle designs which each of us will be creating. These will need to be designed & ready by Friday. Hand-written/drawn is fine, but a photo should be taken and uploaded to SVN for future reference.

Also, as discussed in our meeting last night, we will be logging our e-mails into the SVN now for easy reference. Other issues discussed in the meeting last night involved deciding what we should try to have ready for the presentation next week, and also discussing some of the things we'd like for the game by the Christmas vacation as a milestone. These will be outlined properly after our presentation next Wednesday.

Please reply so that I know you've received this e-mail.

Cheers,

Tom.

13/11/2015

Hey Tom,

The new sprint is setup and started on JIRA, as before the due dates for each task are added in the title. The only blocker this week is my tasks of coding the alternate camera control and adding in the more complicated puzzles so that we can test both of these elements with the playtesting task.

In our meeting we discussed how we should move forward tackling the potential issue of uninteresting waiting for the player. We decided to implement and test out previously-discussed camera controls that would allow the player to view a puzzle in its entirety and follow what the AIs are doing rather than just viewing their immediate area; as well as testing the more complicated designed puzzles to see if they have a better ratio of observing AI/carrying out actions. After we have gathered more feedback on our current gameplay experience and researched more closely into exactly how other stealth-puzzler games approach this problem, we shall focus on iterating to improve this area.

Please let me know if you have any issues with your tasks this week!

~Alaric

19/11/2015

Hi Alaric,

The new sprint is up. Dates are in place and indicate their rough hierarchy of importance (puzzles must be designed before they are implemented for example).

In our meeting yesterday we discussed the feedback that we gathered from last week's sprint, and tried to work out which elements were most important to implement/remedy for this sprint. The most commented suggestion was of a 'kill range' indicator so that the player can tell when they are in range of their target (and also what target this will be), as a result we will be implementing a simple targeting system that will indicate that you are able to kill this NPC when the indicator appears under their feet.

We also decided upon the importance of getting the core disguise mechanic into the game, so this will be coded in, and we will both be designing puzzles utilising (or at least considering) this mechanic.

We will also be making a start on the UI graphics and implementing the code for some of its functionality.

If there are any issues with the times or dates set then please let me know. We won't be conducting any playtests this week, but with the addition of these new puzzles we can get a fresh set of player experiences next week.

Tom.

26/11/2015

Hey Tom,

Sorry for the lateness of this email – but I setup and began the sprint this morning.

In our meeting for this sprint we talked about implementing the first ‘skin ability’ mechanic so that we can begin testing the more intricate and challenging ideas we have for puzzles. We also discussed how best to iterate on various aspects of the game, such as controls, based on feedback that we have received from playtesting. Finally we identified a number of bugs or systems that require further work, and decided which are the most important to tackle first.

The tasks for this week are focussed on dealing with these things, as well as producing and doing more testing on our puzzle designs utilising the basic disguise mechanic. Let me know if you have any problems with your tasks!

~Alaric

03/12/2015

Hi Alaric,

Just letting you know that Sprint 8 is up, and that the tasks are labelled in the standard format with the due date appended to the title. If you have any questions about this let me know.

In our meeting we talked about what's important to get finished before the Christmas period, and what we need to develop in order to properly investigate the player experience at different points in the game. Without the proper puzzle mechanics implemented we're very limited with the range of interactions available for the player, so at the moment it's more of a slow twitch game than a puzzle game with elements of sneaking. Our player feedback has helped with sorting out movement controls and general interface problems, so the game's coming along in terms of basic functionality, although we'll hopefully refine it further still with continued feedback sessions.

I'll e-mail later in the sprint about when we should meet to go over the presentation details, but it's likely to be Monday.

Tom.

11/12/2015

Hey Tom,

Apologies for the late email, the sprint for this week has been setup. Most of the tasks this week are focussed on making sure we have everything we need in the game to make playtesting over the Christmas break as smooth as possible. I need to fix a few bugs and add some extra UI elements to introduce the disguise abilities as we discussed. Your task is mainly to complete the civilian art so that we can replace the current placeholder and more cleanly delineate the civilians from the republican guards.

Any problems with the tasks, let me know.

~Alaric

23/01/2016

Hey Tom,

Now that I’m back on this side of the country; I’ve integrated the code I’ve been working on over Christmas into the project properly. I’ve rewritten the depth sorting code for the most part, vestigial parts of the old system remain that are still in use, I may have to dedicate some time to cleaning that up at some point since it feels quite redundant. Bottom line is that using raycasts in our isometric view now works properly and is no longer causing very strange inconsistency bugs. Additionally the new system prevents those odd depth sorting bugs we got at the meeting point of two adjacent areas.

With that accomplished I am also getting close to finished with rewriting the enemy vision system. Whereas our old one used static conical shapes, this new one uses dynamic polys created using raycasts which will give a far more realistic version of enemy  vision (it will be blocked by obstacles and walls dynamically). This should allow for improved gameplay choices with avoiding detection that will seem more realistic, and give more purpose to our obstacles other than physically blocking. Currently this is implemented as a small circle around an enemy’s feet that will prevent players from being able to stand in what should be that character’s peripheral vision and kill them without detection, I just need to implement a second layer that will provide the usual front-facing cone vision.

The only other outstanding task I will need to do before we can start properly testing the new system is to implement collision detection with the new system.  I intend to have this done before Monday.

~Alaric

23/01/2016

Hey Tom,

I’ve set up the sprint for this week with the tasks we discussed in our meeting. The focus of this week is getting everything set up to let us begin building the game world starting at the discussed intro section.

The most important tasks are to design exactly what the intro area will include so that it can be easily implemented in the next sprint. I also need to figure out the problems with the dynamic enemy vision so that it can be fully implemented. I have reduced hours than in a normal sprintdue to the games jam taking place , and you need to endeavour to get your tasks done before Tuesday as you’re leaving the Country on that date.

~Alaric

04/02/2016

During this sprint Tom is out of the Country and has no access to a computer – therefore only I have tasks to complete.

The focus of this week is to start building the game world, starting with the introduction section wherein the main character is turned into the ‘Skinrender’ monster. I also need to fix a few problems with the collision system for the new dynamic vision, and disable the old one entirely.

~Alaric

12/02/2016

Hi Alaric,

Sorry for the delayed start to the sprint on JIRA, as you know we've been having issues with our Internet. Obviously our meeting was on Wednesday as usual so no time has been lost.

This sprint is focusing on the intro area, and a few of the beginning areas of the game, so we'll be starting to build the Inn itself now, and it should be taking some kind of form and look like a building rather than strange floating levels. We'll also be implementing our first character animation towards the end of the sprint, hopefully this will go a way towards making the levels look somewhat lively, and put an end to all the creepy motionless people floating around.

Please let me know if you have any issues regarding the sprint or the due days allocated.

Tom.

18/02/2016

Hey Tom,

I’ve just started the sprint for this week, as we spoke about the main tasks this week are to complete the exterior area after the main character gets skinned. Most of your tasks are centred around creating assets for the outdoor area. My tasks are to iterate the introduction section in order to speed it up somewhat and improve a few areas; as well as implementing the outdoor puzzles that introduce the player to the stealth mechanics and build up the game world further. In order to properly set the puzzles up I must also fix the bugs with the dynamic view cone collision.

The day for which each task is scheduled is, as usual, appended to the task title. Let me know if you have any problems.

~Alaric

25/02/2016

Hi Alaric,

Sprint 15 is up on Jira. All the tasks have their due date appended to the title as usual. We're concentrating on updating the outdoor areas and adding some further world-building animations (such as the crows). We're also continuing with our detailing of necessary assets for the game, and will be looking at which sound effects we need for a sense of immersion.

If you have any questions please ask,

Tom.

03/03/2016

Hey Tom,

I’ve started this week’s sprint, it was delayed somewhat by constant timing out of JIRA. This week we are implementing shooting animations that can be used as part of the intro section, puzzles, and when the player is seen as part of the death sequence. We are also creating a number of assets that will be required as we move into working on the first interior puzzles.

Let me know if there are any problems with your tasks, or if JIRA continues to timeout and makes it difficult to update with your progress.

~Alaric

11/03/2016

Hi Alaric,

The sprint is up with appended due days as standard. This week we're adding in some more world-building animations and assets (such as the fireplace flame animating) and also starting on one of the more vital animations, which is the walking cycle for the Skinrender character!

We are also iterating intro and outdoor areas further, to try and make them more believable and interesting, and will be doing the usual progression of building up the game world level by level (now working our way back indoors with the kitchen area). There will also be some external playtesting performed, where hopefully we will get some feedback on the flow of the intro area in general.

Tom.

20/03/2016

Hey Tom, this week’s sprint is only half as long, with reduced hours, as we were both unable to do work through the first part of the sprint week. Our current focus is on adding further important animations such as walking/killing, and altering the outdoor area to add more complicated puzzles earlier in the experience.

I know you may not have access to a computer for a few days still, so let me know when you have received this email, and whether you have any problems with the tasks!

~Alaric

24/03/2016

Hi Alaric,

Sprint 19 is up. It involves me finishing the skinrender walk animation and you starting on the interior puzzles (which will consist of guard shout ability & dodging line of sight mostly).

If you have any questions please ask!

Tom.

31/03/2016

Hey Tom,

I’ve started this week’s sprint! We’re mostly just continuing with the process of creating animations and implementing puzzles. This week we’re focussing on the rest of the Player Character’s animations, namely his kill/death animations and the skinning scene itself. I, meanwhile, need to try and fix the memory leak that was identified last sprint, and continue implementing previously creating animations and puzzles.

Keep me updated with your progress of the tasks!

~Alaric

09/04/2016

Hi Alaric,

Sorry for the lack of communication recently. I have been preparing a game to take to the BGS colloquium in Germany. We spoke about the current sprint over instant messaging and concluded that we need to get all the puzzles in while I still work on various animations. So your tasks are simply to continue adding the planned puzzles into the game whilst I add these unfinished important animations.

Any questions please ask.

Tom.

11/04/2016

Hi Alaric,

Just to remind you that I will be off to Germany tomorrow to go to the BGS Colloquium so I will not be present for much of the sprint next week. I don't think all of the work for this sprint will be completed in time, but I will upload what has been finished. I can finish the rest of the work once I'm back next weekend however.

Tom.

14/04/2016

I have started this week’s sprint, as Tom Is out of the Country I have returned his tasks from last week back into this sprint, as he shall be returning during it. My tasks are centred around various small sections of coding that are required to allow the puzzles to flow smoothly; things like properly disabling and re-enabling AI routines as the player moves between levels, as the game currently lags somewhat if the player doesn’t kill every enemy in each puzzle. I’m also building up the last few rooms that shall contain puzzles as part of the vertical slice we have outlined in our previous presentation.

~Alaric

22/04/2016

Hi Alaric,

Sprint 23 is alive! In this sprint we're adding the final puzzles for final testing, as well as a number of important props for furnishing of rooms and hallways. Also the skinning animation for the intro continues. There are some code bugs which are to be fixed, and some new important features to be implemented (blocking previous levels from being able to be visited by players for example).

Any questions please ask!

Tom.

29/04/2016

Hey Tom,

We have now reached the final sprint of the project, and as such we intend to spend a couple of days ‘jamming’ to make sure we are completely happy with the position of the game by the end of the sprint week. I’ve pulled up the rest of the tasks from the backlog that we believe we have time to complete, and the rest of the hours have been placed into an “Attend Jam” task that we can use to log hours spent finishing off any loose ends we find or extra tasks we get done during the Jam.

Please remember to send emails to describe the tasks that you get done as soon as they’re complete, so that we can keep track of exactly what gets done.

~Alaric