



[Home](#) » [Discussion](#) » [Discussion](#)

[GDC 2013] One-page Designs

Please [login](#) or [register](#) before posting a response

1 article / 0 new



Posted by Yusen Jeng (Administrator) on Monday, 04/22/2013 - 18:52

#1

The game design files have always played the role of the discussion and implementation of the research and development process. The design documents not only help the designers to clarify their own ideas, but also help the team to communicate and develop effectively. In GDC's One-Page Design [session](#) , EA senior designer [Stone Librande](#) , who has worked on such well-known masterpieces as Diablo 3, SimCity, and Spore , shared his design process and insights with [SimCity \(2013\)](#) as an example.

I don't know if everyone has similar experience. Although the design documents that I have written carefully are rich and rich, my colleagues rarely look at it, or they have already heard the content that has already been updated. I heard that this situation is inevitably discouraging. Similarly, if you change your character to the reading party, although you understand that the work content is recorded in the file of a folder, there is always a clear resentment in the process of finding, opening, and reading the file.

The whole situation seems to be more human factors, but if the **expression of the** design document can be more readable, more organized, and more conducive to the material of the discussion, for the team members, it may be possible to transform the labor behavior of reading and writing design documents into Interesting team experience. Librande, who is very experienced in making design documents, takes One-Page Design as his core idea and develops game files.

Taking SimCity as an example is really too much a problem. SimCity is more complicated than other types of games. Not only does the game content have more functions, but the relationship between design elements and elements in the urban economic system is complicated. It is not easy

to show clearly. In the continuous design process, how to develop better designs together with other designers will face communication efficiency challenges. Librande proposes One-Page Design, where each design's Page states only a single game core concept. The following image shows a one-page design example that simulates the city's development process.

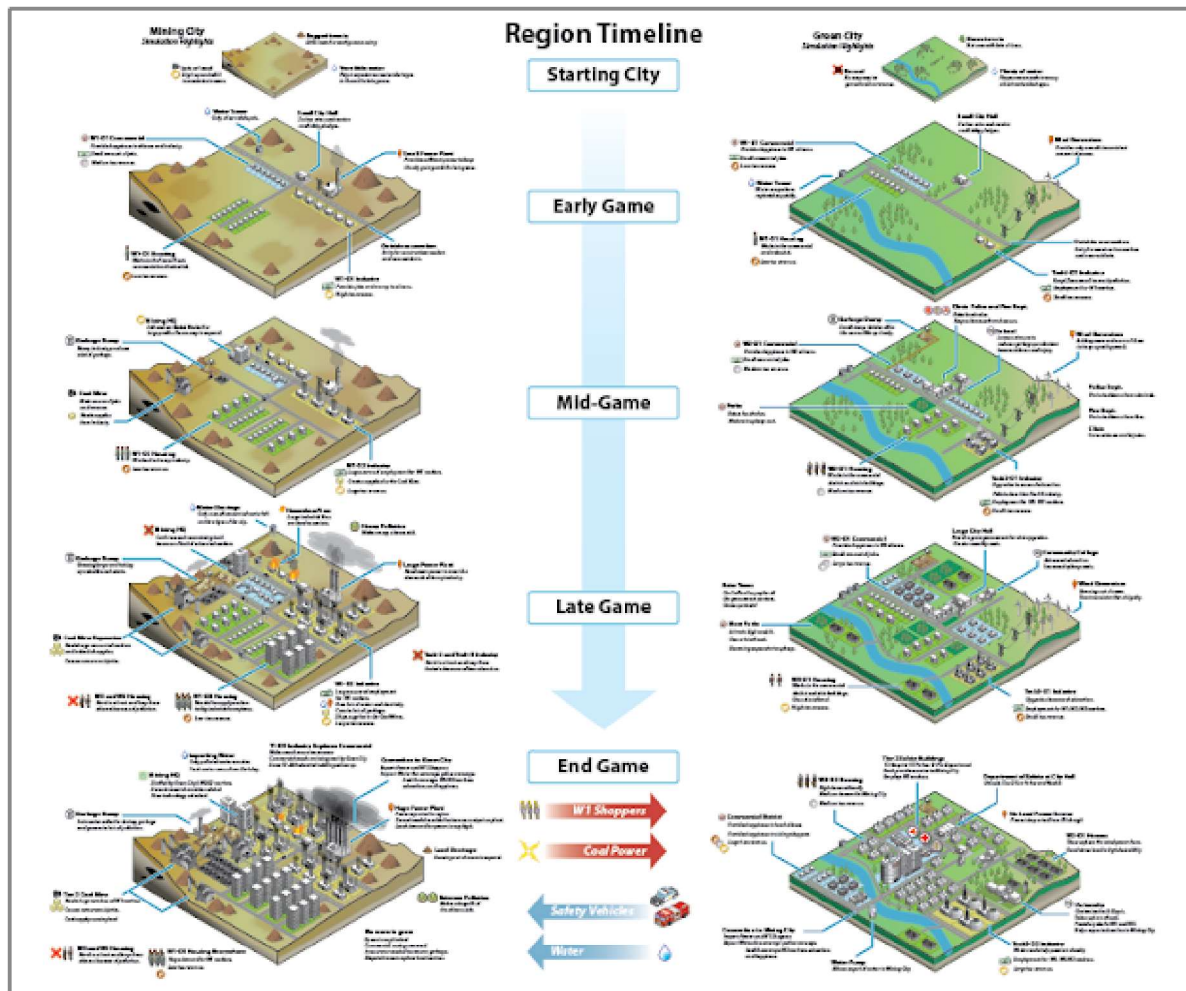


Figure 1: The appearance of the city in different development periods

This city development Timeline is used to explain the whole game in the blueprint of the designer's mind, divided into several stages of play, and describes the game elements and status that the player should have at each stage. This picture does not explain how to build a city. There may be thousands of kinds of game Play hidden in it, but by this figure they have established several important gameplay stages in the early stage of development, and in this framework, the details are developed. It is recommended that everyone create a timeline for their game, because most games have a linear mode based on play time.

The second way to do One-Page design is to print the Page to someone else and stick it on the wall.



Figure 2: Sticking to a personal seat



Figure 3: Sticking the wall



Figure 4: Sticking the corridor

Printed pages can be attached to your own seat, covered with the entire wall, or even the entire house! In this way, no matter where the team members go to the office, take a walk or drink, they have the opportunity to see the core concept of a game at a glance and think about this core

concept. Two people in the corridor can naturally point to a core concept and discuss it. Sticking to an open space, any team role can also help to think about better design, which implies that mature teamwork has mutual assistance and inspiration, rather than in the name of professional division of labor, the barriers are clearly defined, One- Page's specific approach is to help Teamwork work, rather than simply acting as a beautiful, commanding person to do things.

However, the speaker does not standardize how big a page is printed. It may be a small one or a large one. It may be more appropriate to use a poster to describe Page. Anyway, the focus is on a core concept.



Figure 5: Comparison of game world time and real world time



Figure 6: The big poster of the entire game overview

Then go back to the content of the design file itself. Figure 6 is an overview of the simulated city. It is also a document that was established at the beginning of the game design. It is like the book outline to illustrate the important mechanism contained in the game. The timing table in Figure 1 above uses the Gameplay timeline to understand the game phase. In

Figure 6, the game is divided into groups according to the game mechanism, and the intersection between the subsystems is connected by the light line. Both images have a consistent effect.

Overview The general map represents the big Idea of SimCity. Naturally, each theme can also open more Ideas (Page)! For example, the player has to choose the base of the development city. What is the idea here? Land types can lead to different gameplay flaws. From the standpoint of the designer, it is said that the land type **should be** matched with different styles of play.

Selecting a Region

The player selects a box from an existing region or starts a new region. **Regions** come in hundreds of different configurations. Pick the one that suits your play style!

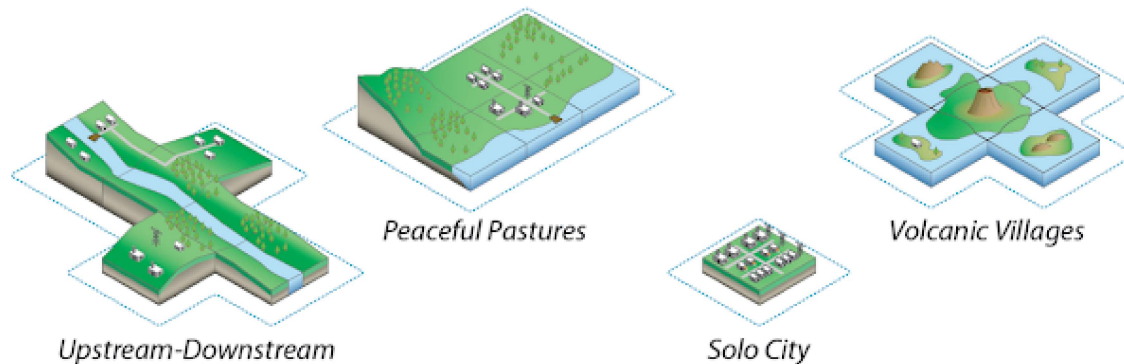


Figure 7: Choosing to develop the foundation is one of the core concepts of the game

This generation of simulated cities can also use vehicles to exchange resources with resource units in neighboring cities. In the figure, transportation units such as boat houses and railway stations can exchange goods with other cities across the border.

Trading with Neighbors

A regional **Truck Stop** (or train station, boat dock or airport) allows players to trade resources within the same region.

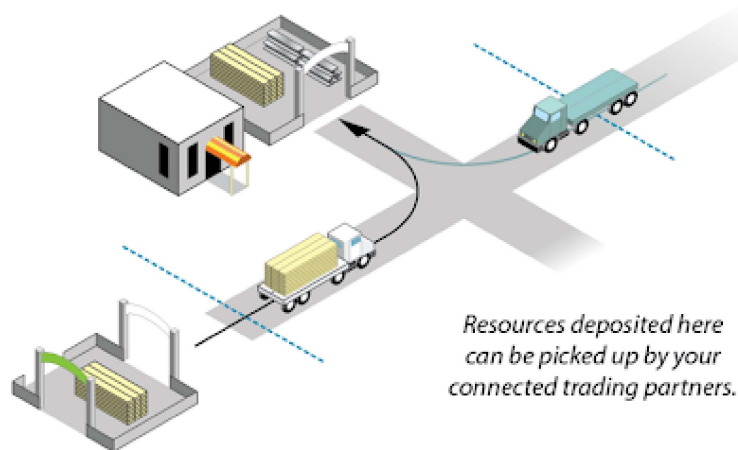


Figure 8: Exchange of resources with neighboring cities is also one of the core concepts of the game.

Don't think that the concept poster can tell some vague ideas, don't forget that its Page can be very big!

Transferring Citizens and Utilities

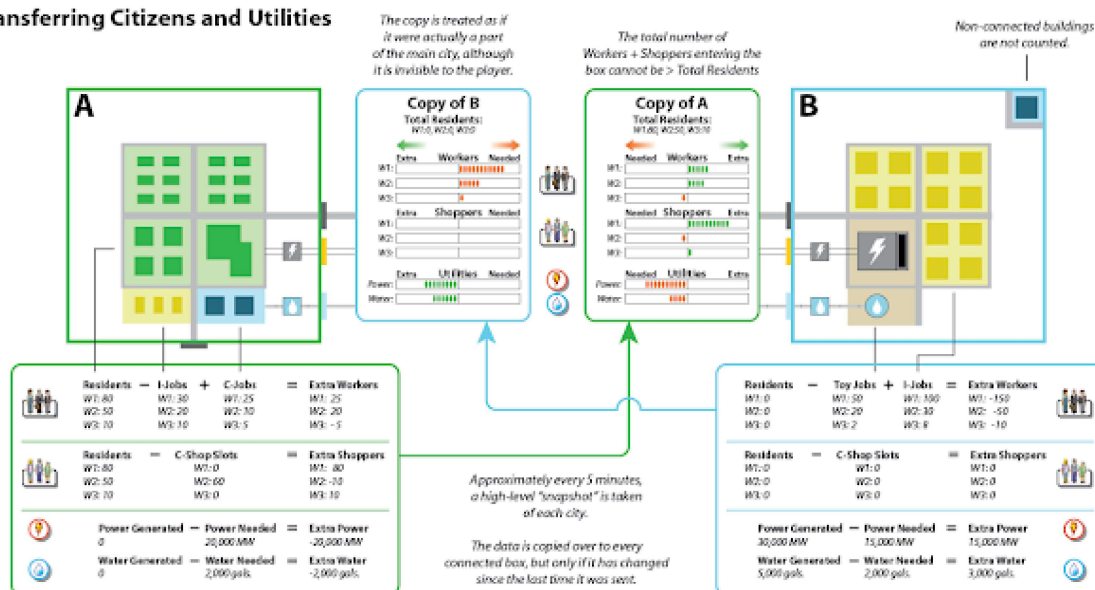


Figure 9: The system calculation rules for the transaction with the copy city, the player can't see the ring.

The above picture further explains that the player actually only deals with the copy of the neighboring city, and does not really move to the city of

other players. Because the speaker does not want to have the player interrupt the transaction offline, nor does it want the player to find out how resources are being taken away by the neighbors the next day. This picture has more implementation details to illustrate how the system interacts with other players' replicas, including the technical considerations that the system updates town data every five minutes.

and many more! Posters can also be changed! If the company's wall area is small, ask the boss to pay for the big office. All this is for product development efficiency! !

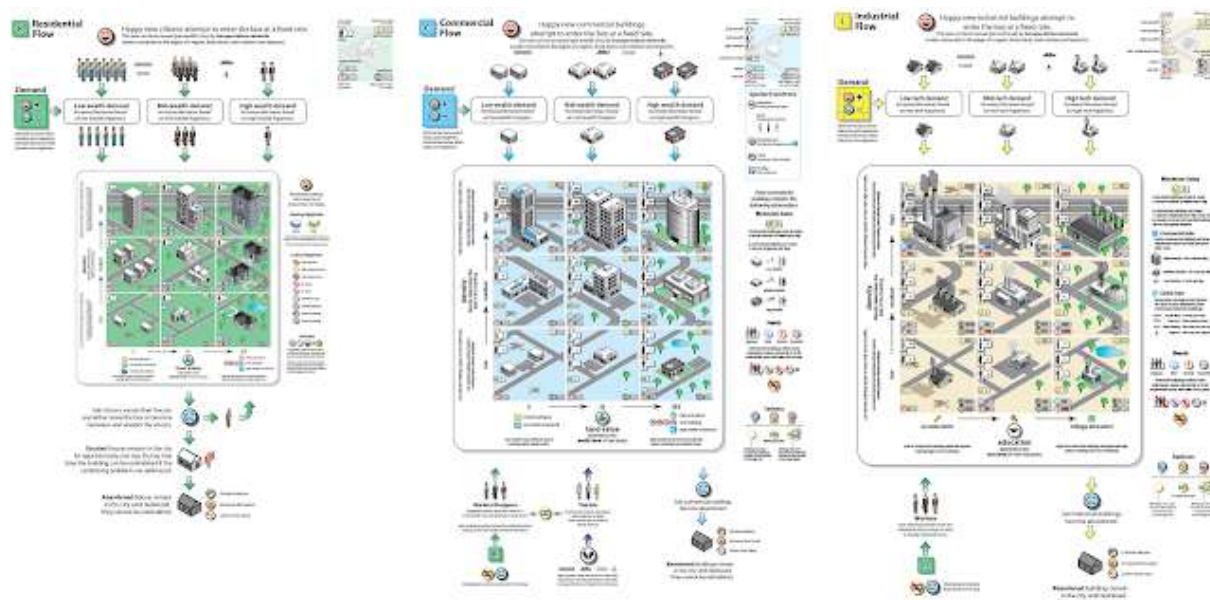


Figure 10: The mechanism for showing the city's depression and glory is also the indicator of player development.

When it comes to how the system simulates urban dynamics, this picture is just one of many thoughts. It talks about whether the development of residential areas, commercial areas, and industrial areas is prosperous, mainly depending on the "happiness" of residents or basic units. Or the unit is not happy in the economic system, the town scene will fall under the style of the nine squares. If you have time, try to use Word to write a typical planning document to explain the SimCity page. I believe that you can understand the features that are easy to understand and visual.

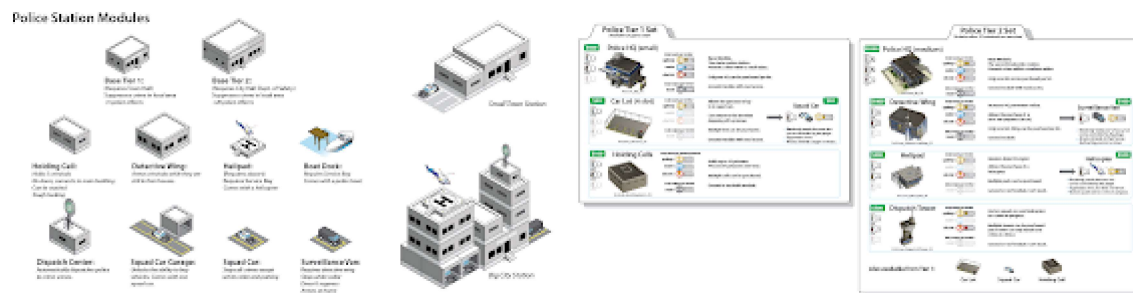


Figure 11: Housing components and object details

Simultaneously, the city is indispensable to build a house. Architecture is also the core feature of the game. This generation can assemble important buildings by small modules. The above picture discusses the parts of the police station.

Since there are so many elements in the simulation city, there is no end to enumerating them. You should be able to imagine that every step of the SimCity Overview can open more single pages (game core concepts), and a single Page can open more singles. Page, which constitutes a large number of core concept trees that are expanded in a hierarchical tree. Each branch node in the tree has a very explanatory poster. When interpreting the object attributes at the end, it can also make a small card.



Figure 12: The number of view files is extremely large

So the super-complex urban system overview, this way was explained in a reasonable way in the venue, team members can follow the scope of their work, print the relevant reference page back to the seat reference, we also have a great game designer, how Work together to build a complete set of works in collaboration with others.

The speaker also mentioned that the One-Page approach is mainly used to communicate and study the core concepts with the team. As for the most detailed game design content, it will still be written in words. They use the wiki system to write this part, and even when the core concepts are not yet mature, everyone uses the wiki to write drafts, discuss them, and then visualize them into one-page posters.

In addition, I believe that everyone has noticed that the speaker's design posters are very delicate, although not specifically mentioned, it actually contains the skills of the Info information view. When we have a large amount of data at hand, if we want to convey information or knowledge to others, rather than the whole package of information to the other party, we need to use the ability to create visual charts. That is part of the designer's strength. In addition, taking Figure 12 as an example, the line graph is mainly drawn to the technicians, because the pure market supply and demand formula and data sheet are meaningless to people other than the author, but it is easy to let others draw a few lines. Interpreting its meaning, this kind of intimate move is the designer's attention to the careful operation of the team.

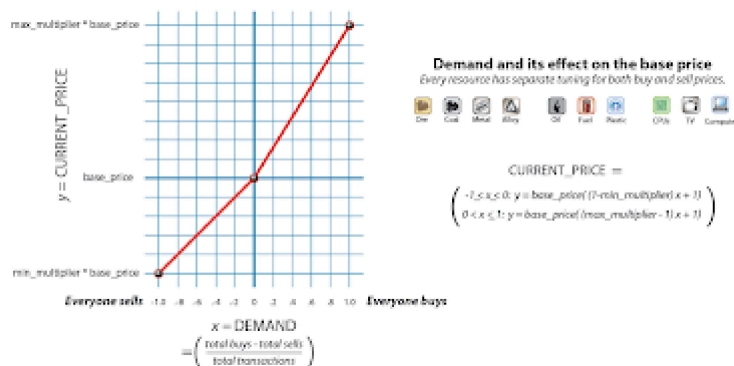


Figure 13: There are also types of line graphs, for technical staff

The design with both strength and dedication showed a few sighs and whispers on the scene when the big screen was changed. I guess the audience thought at the time: "It's beautiful!" or "I want to help." He is making games!". As for the personal experience of the scene, it is quite admirable for professionals to develop the team's construction methods in their professional roles, focusing on the team's operation to make the game. If we can make good use of wikis and Infographics, as well as a team-oriented attitude to design game files, it is necessary to help the

game development far better than the era when the long Word file was lost.

PS. This photo is from the speaker's [speech slide](#).

Tag:

[game design](#)

[Back to top](#)



Tweet

Share 167

Please [login](#) or [register](#) before posting a response