

Project Lazy God - Postmortem

Name of Project: Project Lazy God

Time Spent: May 2021 – November 2021

Status: Incomplete/Prototype

My Role: Lead Programmer, Game Designer, Co-Founder

Credits: (Sneezing Panda Studios), including myself.

Written 5/18/2022 by Terrell Terry

What was the project?

Project Lazy God was a 2D tower defense game where you play as the dungeon master and must kill the heroes that enter the dungeon. This game had ambitious ideas and goals. For example, we wanted to implement a feature where you can create your own boss as your controllable character and use it to defeat your enemies alongside your towers. The project was meant to have multiple levels and towers that the player could play and use. We also wanted to allow the player to be able to destroy blocks and create the layout for how they wanted their dungeon to look.

This project was meant to also be a fully complete game, aside from adding any additional features, by the summer of 2022, since we started creating the game in May of 2021. This proved to be very difficult for us as I discuss that further below. What we started to work on was a prototype to conceptualize the idea further and understand the systems we would be working with. We knew what features we would need in our game, so we set out to create those features in this prototype.

We started this game after graduating from college with 2 of my other colleagues. This proved to be quite challenging because most of our programming experience came from our previous projects. There was a lot we didn't know how to do. So, I assigned myself to the most complex tasks as I felt most confident in my ability to code and research anything as needed. In

total, we started with 6 game developers, 5 story writers and 5 artists. By the time production started and as time went on, we ended up with 4 game developers, 4 story writers and 3 artists working on the game. My main tasks were to work on the game's core systems and programming the essentials of gameplay.

What did I work on?

For this project, I worked on the **boss creation menu**, the **inventory system**, the **mining mechanics**, the **boss moving mechanics** and **oversaw the coding practices** used in all other systems to be sure that they were efficient and optimized and advised accordingly. I didn't try to change anyone's work, but I did want to give as much advice as I could to be sure that we could implement systems effectively with other features to be added later.

I also worked on the **game manager**, and **some of the UI** as well. There were many features within the game that I was able to help with and implement code for.

I discuss and showcase what I have worked on further in *this* video.

What did I find most challenging about this project?

There were quite a few things that were new to me, and to the team involved in working on this project. For myself, working with the **2D graphics**, working with the **a* pathfinding**, working with so many different people and some features proved to be challenging, but I believe I've learned a lot from all of this. Since I was one of the co-founders of Sneezing Panda Studios, I also

needed to **organize documents**, meetings and provide updates to all our team members. Another challenge we all faced was completing things in a timely matter. I talk more about this below.

Did the project meet its goals?

The initial goals were to create a fully designed game and keep updating it as needed with a release on PC. There was a lot of uncertainty when moving into this project and we left a lot of bases uncovered, which wasn't the best plan in hindsight. We decided to document anything and everything we could, including all the features we wanted to include in the base game. We made sure to adapt and adjust our goals as needed as we figured out how things worked within our team.

Overall, I believe that this project met some of the goals we set out to complete. Of course, we needed to adjust our expectations when it came to setting those goals, but we knew we at least wanted to create a prototype for this project. And we came out with a relatively well-designed prototype that the studio eventually used to move it forward into a different concept after I departed. We all learned about what worked within this game and what didn't and that is invaluable knowledge.

What could have gone better?

I believe a lot more could have gotten done in the months working on the game. By the time I completed a lot of what I was assigned to, there were still things that were incomplete by others which made it very difficult to progress the project and left me with very low morale. This was understandable, as we all had full-time jobs and weren't making any money from this project yet. Another thing would be that a lot of the coding practices used, especially by me, could have been optimized further instead of rushing the code to have a complete project. When reviewing my code, there are a lot of optimization issues that I was able to learn from.

What did I learn?

This project was challenging, very challenging, but that's what made it fun and worthwhile to work on. I learned a lot from working on this game and there was so much that I appreciated when doing this. Below is a list of what I have learned from this project:

- Creating an **inventory system** and adjusting it as needed.
- **Working with a larger team** with 8+ members and updating and documenting as needed.
- Furthered my ability to properly **research** and find what's needed to complete a task.
- How to look through **documentation of systems** that had no other sources available to me.
- How to adapt and adjust from research to work with my own tools.
- How to document and update tasks through **Trello**, **Perforce** and

create documents that showcased our milestones and what we wanted to complete.