Dragon’s Reign(Demo)

Post Mortem

Symbiotic Games

This was a difficult project on all levels and definitely a learning experience for us all. It went through all the ups and downs each step of the way from planning to implementation and testing. A few things that we believe went well through this project were the team learning Java, our blended Methodologies, and our use of subversion control. A few things that didn’t work were our large initial scope and the deadlines we set. The few things that we believe went well at times and could have improved at different times were our communication, schedules, and our time management.

Through our coursework we have only been taught C++ and going into this project a few of us had already worked a little in Java as a programming language. The rest of the team had never worked with it before so the rest of the team successfully brought them up to speed. With what was known and as a team we moved forward broadening our understanding of the language.

The planning phase of our project was a blend of both waterfall and agile design methodologies. We started with a waterfall method laying out everything and planning a schedule for the tasks. When it came to the implementation and testing of the tasks we used the agile method. We would create some small part, test it and receive feedback from the team and would refine it until it worked and was polished with the unified vision of the team.

We believe our use of the sub-versioning system, in this case GitHub, has greatly improved. We used the .gitignore feature to ignore specific files and properties that were dependent on each computer so that we could seamlessly upload different files from the project without conflicting with anyone else. With this repository we had managed all our code and documentation between the entire team without losing anything.

Our large initial scope was considered a pitfall for our team because we simply didn’t have enough time to implement all the “cool” features we wanted to add. We had to make some cutbacks so that we could finish the different tasks we already started and could have a working demo. We were not able to successfully measure our work output but now we have a better understanding of how long our team will take to complete certain tasks.

On a management level we were not very strict with deadlines. Some tasks would get finished late but the only penalty we had in place was a team hindrance because we could only push back tasks making crunch time that much more intense.

Communication on our team changed on a weekly basis. There were some members who were in constant communication and then some who could be difficult to reach at times. As a team we might have meetings where everyone was contributing and then other meetings were some people might of just not showed up to.

Trying to plan a project around six different schedules was quite a challenge. Scheduling different tasks for people was easy but we had no way of knowing what their schedule would look like three or even 12 weeks down the road so there were times when people just didn’t have time in their normal schedules to work on the project. Other times people were completely free and the project moved along successfully.

As a team the time management varied daily. Some days would be extremely productive and then there would be other times when we’d have half the team trying to fix a bug and it was a simple logical mistake that should have never occurred to begin with. There was also the procrastination and lazy factors to contribute because everyone has those days where work productivity is an all time low.

If we were given another 16 weeks to redo this project, or something similar, it would go much smoother. We don’t have the challenge of going at such a steep learning curve and we have better foresight of how the project will play out. We believe we can break down the project into smaller tasks much better now and can more accurately judge the time that should be spent on those tasks as well. The major difference we would make would be to recruit more artists and possibly some musicians or sound designers. This would make acquiring assets simpler because we can communicate to them what we are looking for instead of searching the internet for something that is close enough.

As a team this was a good experience. We have a foundation of working on a team with different perspectives and work styles. There was cohesion amongst the members and when it was there communication was very strong. We currently plan on continuing this project to a full release hopefully by the end of the year.