

CM4114: Games Development

Testing

Apart from actively testing throughout development on my own, I opted for peer qualitative testing. I would observe players without aid and then direct them to perform specific tasks or let them continue exploring independently. In the cases where not everything was covered, a short verbal evaluation followed. I tried to get test runs of newly implemented features soon throughout development to allow me to test different solutions recursively.

Case 1: S. (*active new gamer, 25*)

S. ignored the hint screen and got killed immediately after running into enemies, pressing only one key at a time. After three deaths, he started feeling more comfortable with the controls and cleared the first level. Here, he needed to be directed to the upgrades menu, which he used somewhat effectively throughout the rest of the gameplay. However, despite hinting, he still did not use the dash action but reflected that he wanted but could not remember the keys. Additionally, the audio queues have proven less effective than hoped, as there is no indication that the player still needs to perform a task. In addition, he expressed a wish for the environment to be more interactable or expressive.

Case 2: Tony (*male, active rogue-like player, 23*)

Tony took on the mechanics and controls quickly, although did not use the upgrade menu until the end of the level. He noted more visual feedback, dynamicity in the environment, and more types of enemies. While he struggled to understand the exact function of the fire at first, he quickly adapted. Additionally, he suggested increasing the speed of enemies and the loot magnet's strength to help the gameplay's fluidity, as well as additional drops and level-ups.

Case 3: Ryan (*male, active player, 24*)

Ryan was the only subject that had the chance to test the games at multiple points throughout development. While his learning curve was very smooth, he had trouble adjusting to the initial difficulty and actively using all the mechanics. With the experience across multiple runs, the impact of the audio was much better, as killing the last enemy is immediately translated into a music change. Based on his selections, the level system was balanced to reward early investment into damage.

Case 4: Lilli (*female, active player, 26*)

While Lilli struggled to grasp the controls, rebinding the dash to shift the gameplay made it easier to control. Here, a bug was also discovered, where the enemies would still play sounds after death, which made it into the submission. She felt a bit frustrated by the hints at some points but still thought they were helpful, just as the dynamic hints that she actively used and reflected on. Lilli suggested expanding on the map, move set, and some other features.