FIT5057 Project Management Assignment Three

Echoes of Seraphis

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Deliverable 1. Agile Project Foundations

Task 1.1: Project Vision and Initial Requirements

The Echoes of Seraphis project seeks to address the demand in the adventure RPG market by delivering a high-quality and immersive game that aligns with NexaForge Studios' strategic goals of increasing market share and revenue growth. Adventure games are one of the highest revenue-generating genres with 17.1% of console revenues and projected growth of 6.9% (Newzoo, 2024; Rocket Brush, 2024), highlighting the demand for rich, replay-able experiences. This project addresses NexaForge's goal to grow revenue by enhancing player retention, with specific targets for Day 1 (45%), Day 7 (30%), and Three-Month (16%) retention rates, ensuring long-term engagement and profitability.

Echoes of Seraphis is designed to meet the demanding needs of players who value personalized experiences and community engagement (CacheFly Team, 2024; Lark, 2024). Through features like adaptive storytelling, dynamic AI, and challenging combat mechanics, the game creates value by offering a compelling, customizable experience that keeps players invested. Players benefit from a memorable, immersive experience tailored to their play style. Meanwhile, NexaForge gains a committed player base, increased revenue, and strengthened brand recognition in the competitive RPG market.

Requirements	User Benefits
The game must offer **smooth, responsive gameplay** across combat and exploration to maintain player engagement.	Intuitive mechanics, allowing **casual players** to start and enjoy the game quickly without an extensive learning curve.
Implementing **adaptable AI** for non-playable characters (**NPCs**) that respond to player actions for engaging and varied gameplay experiences.	**Strategy-Focused Players** appreciate adaptive NPC behavior, making encounters feel more challenging and rewarding.
Developing **hand-painted** character and environmental **art** that supports immersive storytelling.	**Aesthetically Oriented Gamers** gain an immersive experience through high-quality art and character design.
Ensuring the game runs smoothly on **both PC and consoles.**	A seamless experience across PC and console allows **Multi-Device Gamers** to pick up their game on any platform.
Incorporating progression systems, social features, and regular content updates.	Social features and progression systems provide community interaction and a rewarding sense of accomplishment.
Creating an in-app purchase model that is fair and non-exploitative.	A fair monetization approach allows **Value-Conscious Gamers** to enjoy the game fully without needing excessive in-app purchases.

Task 1.2: Scrum Persona Development

Persona 1

	Name
	Riley
	Age and Gender
	25, Female
	Occupation
	Marketing Coordinator
	Background
	Gaming Frequency: 2-3 times per week **Preferred Gaming Platforms**: PC, sometimes console **Game Style Preferences:** Action-adventure, open-world exploration, puzzle elements

Specific Needs	Pain Points	Motivations
• Simple mechanics for easy pick-up-and-play without relearning controls. • High-quality graphics and environments to enhance the storytelling. • Optional purchases that don't disrupt the core experience. • A non-linear world with hidden areas and items to discover at their own pace.	Riley often quits games with overly complex mechanics or demanding skill curves. They dislike games that are difficult to navigate or lack clear goals. Additionally, while they're open to occasional in-app purchases, they find aggressive monetization annoying and off-putting.	Riley plays games to relax and escape into new worlds, finding fulfillment in exploring and uncovering hidden secrets. They are drawn to deep narratives that add meaning and depth to the gaming experience.

Interaction with the game
1. Riley will take their time to explore environments, enjoy the visuals, and engage with story elements. 2. Riley may occasionally engage with light social features if they're unobtrusive and add value, like cooperative exploration or sharing discoveries with other players. 3. Riley will enjoy completing quests and challenges at their own pace, focusing more on the journey than the endpoint.

Feature-Persona Connection:
1. Riley needs gameplay that's smooth and responsive and allows them to enjoy exploration and combat without complicated controls.
2. The hand-painted visuals and immersive environments captivate Riley, making the experience feel more enriching.
3. Riley appreciates the option to make purchases without feeling pressured, allowing them to fully enjoy the game at their own pace.

Persona 2

Name	
Alex	
Age and Gender	
34, Female	
Occupation	
Software Engineer	
Background	
Gaming Frequency: Almost daily **Preferred Gaming Platforms:** Console and PC **Game Style Preferences**: Strategy, RPGs, complex AI-driven games	

Specific Needs	Pain Points	Motivations
• Challenging NPCs that respond to their strategies, keeping gameplay dynamic. • A seamless experience on both PC and console for flexibility. • Clear advancement and competitive features to measure progress. • Tactical challenges that reward thoughtful planning.	Alex often feels underwhelmed by games with predictable NPC behavior or repetitive challenges. They also avoid games that lack depth in AI or strategic elements. Additionally, they dislike games that limit access to content through excessive in-app purchases.	Alex enjoys games that offer strategic, problem-solving challenges, finding satisfaction in overcoming difficult obstacles and refining their skills. They are motivated by rankings, achievements, and opportunities to demonstrate their expertise.

Interaction with the game
1. Alex will focus on strategically engaging with adaptive AI, testing different approaches.
2. Switching between devices regularly, utilizing the game's multi-platform compatibility.
3. Engages with leaderboards and achievements, replaying difficult content to perfect strategies.
Feature-Persona Connection:
1. Alex values NPCs that can adapt to their tactics, providing a challenging experience that keeps them engaged and coming back.
2. The ability to switch between console and PC suits Alex's setup, enhancing their convenience and flexibility.
3. Alex enjoys progression systems and social elements that allow them to engage with other players and see tangible achievements in the game.

Task 1.3 Journey Mapping

Persona 2: Alex

Current Scenario:
Alex, an experienced gamer, encounters a challenging boss fight in an action RPG. They see this as an opportunity to test their skills and strategies but need the game to provide clear, dynamic feedback to adapt effectively.

Expectation:
1. Enemy behaviors should be clear, with cues on weaknesses and patterns.
2. Feedback on combat actions should be immediate and understandable.
3. Adaptive AI should respond intelligently to Alex's strategies.
4. Rewarding achievements or unlocks should be provided after successfully overcoming challenges.
5. Encounters should offer varied difficulty levels to keep gameplay engaging and prevent predictability.

Stages	Steps	Touchpoints	Pain Points	Ideal Journey Improvements
Stage 1: Awareness & Consideration	Alex faces a challenging boss or formidable enemy group, viewing this encounter as an exciting opportunity to push their skills and strategies to the limit.	In-game prompts, visual cues, initial enemy actions	Frustration if the enemy mechanics are not clearly conveyed, leading to trial and error.	Provide clear visual cues that highlight enemy behavior and reveal potential vulnerabilities, helping Alex quickly recognize patterns and plan strategies without relying solely on trial and error.
Stage 2: First Interaction	With focus and determination, Alex carefully observes the enemy's patterns and thoughtfully crafts a strategy, weighing different tactics and abilities to maximize their chances of success.	Game UI, ability menu, in-game hints	Unhappy if information on enemy weaknesses or AI behavior is too limited or obscure.	Offer optional hints on enemy weaknesses in the game UI, helping Alex craft a well-informed strategy without reducing the challenge. This guidance supports Alex in evaluating tactics for greater success.
Stage 3: Engagement & Problem Solving	Alex confidently applies their strategy, adjusting in real-time as the adaptive AI responds. After each attempt, Alex assesses their performance, learning from successes and mistakes. Upon victory, Alex feels a strong sense of accomplishment and skill progression.	Combat interface, NPC behavior, adaptive AI, end-of-combat feedback, health/power indicators, victory screen, progress tracker, achievements.	Annoyed if AI is repetitive or feedback is unclear, limiting improvement and diminishing the victory experience.	Enhance Alex's experience with adaptive AI that keeps encounters engaging. Provide clear combat feedback to highlight effective strategies, and reward victories with achievements and exclusive unlocks, boosting satisfaction and reinforcing skill progression.
Stage 4: Decision Point	Alex reflects on the excitement and challenge of the encounter, feeling inspired and eager to continue progressing through the game.	In-game progression menu, new level unlock prompt	Feeling that challenges are too easy or predictable may reduce engagement.	Offer progressively challenging encounters to keep Alex engaged and motivated. Include milestone rewards or unlocks to celebrate progress, reinforcing accomplishment and encouraging exploration.

Deliverable 2. Agile Planning and Sprint Allocation

Task 2.1: Develop a Comprehensive Product Backlog

Epic	Feature	User Story	Priority	Story Points
Epic 1: Smooth and Intuitive Gameplay Experience *Description*: This epic ensures players can easily learn controls, creating a seamless and enjoyable experience.	[E1-U1] Simple, responsive controls	As a **casual player**, I want intuitive and responsive controls that are easy to learn so that I can start playing without needing an extensive tutorial.	Must Have	8
	[E1-U2] Consistent in-game feedback	As a **new player**, I want consistent feedback when I perform actions so that I can better understand the game mechanics.	Should Have	6
[E2] Adaptive and Strategic AI Encounters *Description*: Dynamic AI responds to player strategies, keeping gameplay challenging and engaging for all skill levels.	[E2-U1] NPCs with adaptive AI	As a **strategy-focused player**, I want NPCs to adapt to my combat style so that I face unique challenges.	Must Have	13
	[E2-U2] Varied enemy tactics	As an **experienced player**, I want enemies with varied tactics based on my actions so that the gameplay feels dynamic and engaging.	Should Have	5
	[E2-U3] Increasing Difficulty Levels with AI Learning	As a **competitive player**, I want the AI difficulty to increase gradually based on my performance, so that the game stays challenging as I improve.	Could Have	4
[E3] Immersive Visual Storytelling *Description*: Enhances player immersion with rich visuals that support the narrative, deepening	[E3-U1] High-quality character and environment design	As an **aesthetically oriented gamer**, I want beautifully designed characters and environments to feel immersed in the game world.	Must Have	7
	[E3-U2] Visual storytelling elements	As a **narrative-driven player**, I want visuals that support the story so that I connect better with the plot and characters.	Could Have	4
	[E3-U3]	As an **immersion-seeking** player, I want	Should Have	5

emotional connection.	Dynamic Lighting and Weather Effects	dynamic lighting and weather effects to enhance the atmosphere and realism of the game world.		
[E4] Cross-Platform Flexibility *Description*: Allows seamless gameplay across devices, letting players enjoy a consistent experience anywhere.	[E4-U1] Seamless progress sync across platforms	As a **multi-device gamer**, I want my progress to sync between PC and console so that I can continue playing on any platform.	Must Have	10
	[E4-U2] Optimized console gameplay	As a **console player**, I want the game to run smoothly on my device so that I enjoy consistent gameplay quality.	Should Have	5
[E5] Engaging Progression and Community Features *Description*: Encourages long-term play with achievements, leaderboards, and community features, fostering engagement and competition.	[E5-U1] Achievements and leaderboards	As a **social player**, I want in-game achievements and leaderboards so I can compare my progress with others.	Should Have	5
	[E5-U2] Regular content updates	As a **progression-driven playe**r, I want regular updates so that I have new challenges to keep me returning to the game.	Must Have	8

Justification:

Story points for each user story are based on complexity, time, effort, and risk (Vige, 2024; Sienkiewicz, 2022; Schwaber & Sutherland, 1991; Zahraoui & Idrissi, 2015). For example, [E2-U1] NPCs with adaptive AI has 13 story points due to the substantial development required for AI to adapt to player strategies. This feature is resource-intensive and high in risk, needing extensive testing to ensure unique, dynamic gameplay. In contrast, [E3-U2] Visual storytelling elements has 4 story points as it is a much simpler, lower-risk task, which is adding visuals to support the narrative. Story points therefore reflect the demands of each task, ensuring effective resource allocation.

Task 2.2: Strategic Sprint Allocation

Sprint	Theme	User Stories	Story Points	Goals	Notes/Risks
1	**Core Gameplay Mechanics**	[E1-U1] Simple, responsive controls	8	Ensure accessible, intuitive controls on all devices.	Inconsistent experience across different input methods.
		[E1-U2] Consistent in-game feedback	6	Introduce feedback gradually to guide players effectively.	Overwhelming players with too much information early on.
		[E2-U2] Varied enemy tactics	5	Keep gameplay engaging with balanced enemy behaviors.	Difficulty spikes that disrupt smooth gameplay flow.
2	**Adaptive AI and Visual Design**	[E2-U1] NPCs with adaptive AI	13	Implement fair adaptive AI that enhances challenge.	AI may become too difficult or unpredictable.
		[E3-U1] High-quality character and environment design	7	Prioritize essential visual assets to avoid production delays.	Resource strain may lead to delayed visual completion.
3	**Advanced AI Difficulty and Immersive Effects**	[E2-U3] Increasing Difficulty Levels with AI Learning	4	Allow AI to adjust difficulty based on player skill.	Potential frustration for players struggling with increased difficulty.
		[E3-U3] Dynamic Lighting and Weather Effects	5	Optimize effects for performance on various devices.	Visuals could impact performance on lower-end devices.
		[E4-U2] Optimized console gameplay	5	Ensure smooth, consistent gameplay on consoles.	Ensure smooth, consistent gameplay on consoles.
4	**Cross-Platform Flexibility and Content Updates**	[E4-U1] Seamless progress sync across platforms	10	Reliable syncing of game progress across multiple devices.	Possible data inconsistencies or sync issues.
		[E5-U2] Regular content updates	8	Deliver consistent, meaningful updates to engage players.	Risk of burnout or reduced quality in rushed updates.
5	**Final Gameplay Enhancements and Community Features**	[E5-U1] Achievements and leaderboards	5	Foster friendly competition and community engagement.	Players may exploit leaderboards or display toxic competitiveness.
		[E3-U2] Visual storytelling elements	4	Deepen narrative immersion through visual elements.	Visuals may disrupt gameplay if overly intrusive.

Justification and Trade-offs: The sprint allocation is packed for the first few sprints to establish core gameplay, with Sprint 1 focused on essential controls and feedback. Sprint 2, at 20 story

points, addresses complex adaptive AI and visuals to enhance early engagement. Later sprints have fewer points, focusing on refinement and lower-risk features like automation and community tools for stability and polish.

Adaptability Plan: Buffer time in each sprint allows for testing, embracing its flexible nature (Liu et al., 2019; Kristiadi et al, 2019). The final sprint's focus on achievements and storytelling enables adjustments for unexpected changes without disrupting core gameplay. Buffer periods and priority adjustments will keep the project on track if requirements shift.

Task 2.3: Sprint 1 Execution Plan

Objective	Establish core gameplay features, focusing on control, feedback, and visual quality to create a basic but functional player experience. This sprint aims to set the foundation with essential mechanics, ensuring players can engage with the game from the start.			
Scope	**User Story**	**Features**	**Priority**	**Acceptance Criteria**
	[E1-U1]: As a casual player, I want intuitive controls that are easy to learn so that I can start playing without needing a tutorial.	Basic control setup, user interface (UI) elements for feedback, onboarding hints.	Must Have	• Players can understand and use basic controls within the first 2 minutes. • Controls respond with a maximum latency of 0.2 seconds. • Onboarding hints appear during initial control interactions.
	[E1-U2]: As a new player, I want consistent feedback when I perform actions so that I can better understand the game mechanics.	Visual indicators, audio cues, haptic feedback, feedback icons, tooltips	Should Have	• Players receive visual/audio feedback within 0.1 seconds of performing an action • Feedback is clear, with a 90% player understanding rate confirmed through testing. • Feedback system responsiveness passes tests with a latency of less than 0.15 seconds (Liu et al., 2019).
	[E2-U2]: As an experienced player, I want enemies with varied tactics based on my actions so that the gameplay feels dynamic and engaging.	Adaptive AI, enemy behavior modules, and dynamic combat reactions.	Should Have	• Players encounter at least three varied enemy tactics tailored to their combat style (The Level Design Book, n.d.). • Enemy behavior is designed to adapt based on player actions, with at least 80% of encounters verified for adaptability. • 70% of players adapt to enemy tactics, as shown through testing (Liu et al., 2019).
Definition of Done	• User story and features meet acceptance criteria. • Control system and feedback approved by Lead Designer and QA. • Code reviewed by two developers for quality.			

(DoD)	• Control and feedback pass unit and integration tests. • Stakeholder feedback confirms intuitive and responsive gameplay.
Capacity Alignment	With a 20-point capacity, the 19 points allocated for Sprint 1 provide a small buffer for unforeseen tasks. [E1-U1] Simple, responsive controls: 8 points [E1-U2] Consistent in-game feedback: 6 points [E2-U2] Varied enemy tactics: 5 points Total: **19 points** (1-point buffer)

Sprint Review & Retrospective:

Sprint 1: Core Gameplay Mechanics
How to Present:
- Demonstrate the core controls, showcasing their intuitiveness and responsiveness.
- Illustrate in-game feedback mechanisms that reinforce player actions.
- Show enemy tactics reacting dynamically to player choices, creating varied challenges.

Gathering Feedback:
- Ask stakeholders for input on control intuitiveness, responsiveness, and feedback clarity.
- Gather opinions on the effectiveness of enemy behaviors and whether they enhance engagement.

If stakeholders suggest refinements, such as additional feedback cues or more varied enemy reactions, add these items to the backlog and prioritize as needed for future sprints.

Deliverable 3: Agile Reflection and Professional Development

Task 3.1: Reflection on Agile LEGO Game

The Lego Game provided me with a valuable, hands-on experience in understanding Agile methodology. Taking on the role of Scrum Master, I facilitated standup meetings each sprint, focused on clear communication and task coordination within the team. My responsibilities included brainstorming requirements for our Lego town, managing the Kanban board to allocate tasks, and presenting our progress to tutors at the end of each sprint.

Initially, our team struggled to meet all the requirements; we missed some of the tutors' expectations during the first sprint. This feedback really showed me the Agile's iterative nature, which emphasizes the need to continuously adapt to evolving requirements. For instance, as we received the feedback from the tutor of wanting more Hello Kitty theme in our town, I coordinated with teammates to creatively maximize our limited resources of Lego bricks, which allowed us to build a Hello Kitty statue that pleased the tutors by the third sprint.

Throughout the sprint cycles, the feedback loops also emphasized the value of collaboration and continuous improvement. Each sprint review is an opportunity for us to refine our designs to better align with the project goals. This shows me how Agile principles help prevent wasted effort and maintain alignment with client expectations. As Scrum Master, I recognized my role in resolving conflicts, tracking progress, and ensuring team cohesion.

In conclusion, the Lego Game taught me that Agile is rooted in flexibility, collaboration, and continuous improvement. As Scrum Master, I learned the importance of adapting to feedback, managing team dynamics, and creatively using resources to meet evolving goals. From this Lego Agile game, I feel better equipped to manage real-world projects with an Agile mindset, confident in my ability to foster teamwork, respond to change, and keep projects aligned with client expectations.

Task 3.2: Personal Reflection and Career Development in Agile Roles

My experience in the Project Management course helped me find my preference for the Product Owner role, where defining the product vision, prioritizing tasks, and aligning with stakeholder needs are essential. I enjoyed setting priorities and coordinating members between different tasks, which helped the team stay focused on delivering value to users. Throughout the Agile activities, I developed skills in strategic thinking, communication, and stakeholder management, which are key competencies for a Product Owner. Working closely with team members as the Scrum Master taught me the importance of finding the balance between user needs and technical feasibility, and I learned how clear communication ensures alignment and motivation within the team.

The Agile game also helped me refine my facilitation, time management, and collaboration skills. Facilitating discussions and resolving misunderstandings reinforced the importance of listening to all team members to foster a collaborative environment. Time management was crucial, as I learned to break tasks into manageable parts and prioritize realistically to meet sprint goals. Collaboration across diverse perspectives was essential for achieving successful outcomes.

This experience really reinforced my interest in the Product Owner path. To further develop, I plan to deepen my knowledge in business strategy, stakeholder management, and user-centered decision-making. I also aim to learn more about Agile product management and seek mentorship from experienced Product Owners. This hands-on Agile experience really gave me the clarity on my career path, highlighting both strengths and areas for growth as I work towards becoming a good Product Owner.

Team Presentation and Agile Artefacts
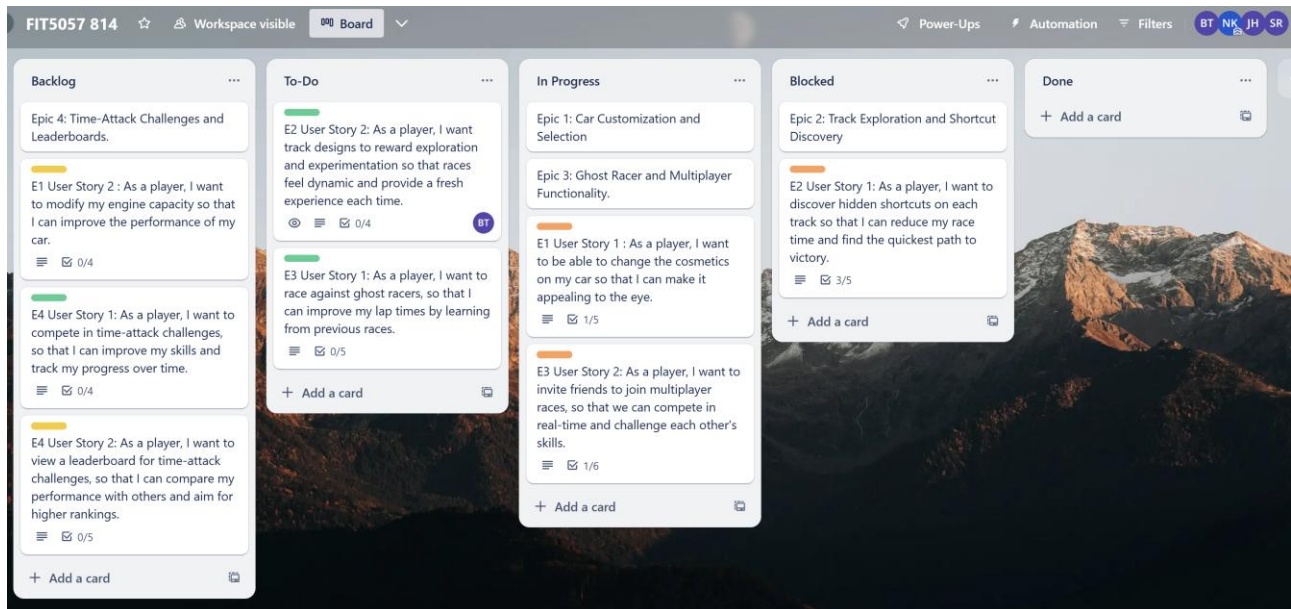
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GENERATIVE AI: Acknowledgement of Use

I used Canva (https://www.canva.com/dream-lab) to generate the photos of the personas [2 iterations]. The tool was used to create the photo for each persona in Task 2.1, one for Alex and one for Riley. I further reformatted the photos into round frame to make it look nicer.