

TEAM INFO:

TITLE: Thrifty Thieves

MEMBERS: Kari Green, Dave Vader, Alex Turner, Michael Scheible

CREATIVE PROCESS:

This sprint began on April 3rd with the completion of the Beta. Over the course of this sprint, we focused on fine-tuning our game. We worked on changes to make the game more player-friendly and juicy. We added voice-overs, changed the way some of the objects looked in the level (for example, we reduced brightness on the lights), and added other sound queues. We improved aspects such as the menus. We also introduced a sandbox style tutorial.

The goal of this sprint for us was to make the game more functional for the player. We spent most of this sprint looking for ways to add guidance and improve the function of our UI elements.

DEVELOPMENT AND PLAYTESTING:

In our Beta, we were finally happy with how our game was functioning. In playtests, players were generally happy with the experience. We received many compliments on the different types of strategies players could implement. We also were able to receive feedback from a wider audience as we demonstrated our game at the Umich Design Expo as well as the Spark East Conference.

Through feedback from people at the earlier exposition, as well as friends, classmates, instructors, and family members, we realized that our game was still missing quite a bit of guidance.

The bright explosion of the light bulbs proved to be frustrating for our instructors and some playtesters. People were frustrated that these un-interactable items were more prominent than what you were supposed to be stealing. To combat this, we heavily reduced the sparks coming off the light bulbs.

The visual messages we displayed in the center of the screen did not seem to be effective on their own and we found ourselves having to physically tell people what these messages had said. To combat this, we introduced a voice-over system with quirky announcements that better inform the players of in-game events. In addition, we used this voice-over system to also alert players of their truck being stolen from and when they are falling behind.

In playtesting, one player suggested to us that it would be fun if we could see the scores of others at the end to compare and taunt each other. We have now provided this in the game. When displaying this game at Spark East, we noticed how much people enjoyed looking at the other team's score at the culmination of the game (and occasionally ridiculing the other team). Giving the players the opportunity to review their score at the end is useful because there is so much going on throughout the gameplay that they may not have the opportunity to pay attention to it until after the match is complete.