This Way Home

Game Design Document
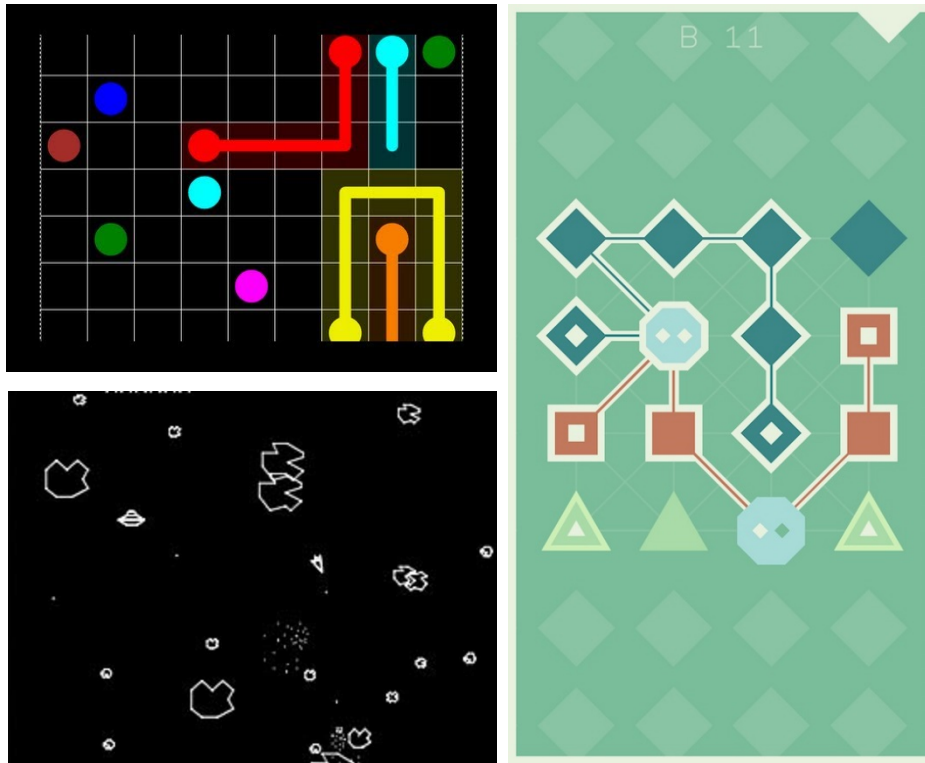
High Concept

This Way Home is a casual puzzle game that uses a system of directionally-aligned tiles to navigate a spaceship through an asteroid field.

Aesthetic

This Way Home uses a minimalist space theme to keep puzzle elements easy to understand. Since the game is intended for mobile audiences, the graphics should reflect a sleek and informative design.

Sound effects and music should be equally simple, with tranquil melodies and bright tones giving the player positive feedback for their actions.

Borrtex - Changing – *Peaceful music that doesn't distract.*
Bedroom - The Inner Pattern – *Relaxing simplistic tones that give an otherworldly vibe*

Gameplay

This Way Home is a puzzle game. Each level will show the player a layout featuring <u>one</u> spaceship, <u>one</u> goal, and <u>any number</u> of obstacle tiles. At the bottom of the screen, the players have access to tiles that point in the cardinal directions. Each level has a specific assortment of tiles that are available. The player can place these tiles in the level to change the direction of the spaceship when it passes over them. The goal of each level is to successfully navigate the spaceship to the goal using the tiles.

Obstacle Tiles

This Way Home has a great number of obstacles that add complexity to the levels. Since each level can only hold a maximum of 64 different tiles, the obstacles need to be impactful and yet simplistic.

Key

This tile will unlock the goal, allowing the player to complete the level.

Fixed Arrow

This tile will act as a one-time-use directional arrow that cannot be moved.

Switch

This tile will toggle activation of tiles with the matching number.

Fire

This tile will cause the ship to fire a bullet, which destroys the first tile it hits.

These four tile types are planned for the initial launch of the game. If the game proves successful, more tile types can be introduced to add further variation into the game.

Lives

Since **This Way Home** is a puzzle game, some effort must be made in order to prevent players from fully completing the game through trial and error. To combat this, the lives system is introduced. A player has <u>three</u> lives upon first launching the game. Each time a level is failed, one life is taken away from the player. Lives are fully replenished every two hours, incentivizing players to take small breaks and then return to the game.

Analytics

This Way Home's levels will be gated in ascending order. Players must complete all levels in order in order to unlock more content in the game. In order to properly gauge level difficulty, the time taken to beat a level will be gathered and stored. With this data, we will be able to see which levels are proving to be too frustrating or difficult for players, and can be adjusted accordingly. This data will also allow us to easily balance the game post-launch, effectively turning all players into testers.

Monetization

This Way Home will use a reward-based monetization method with pop-up ads every 10 minutes a player spends playing. Pop-up ads should only appear when a level is completed, and never in the middle of gameplay. In addition, players who have run out of lives will have the opportunity to gain a single extra life by watching a short ad. The opportunity to gain this extra life will refresh after two hours. With advertisements comes the ability to also offer a premium version of the game, which is stripped of pop-up adds altogether.