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IGME 671

Interactive & Game Audio

**Game Audio Design Documentation**

**Game Overview:**

Descendate is a mixture of the rpg and visual novel/dating sim genres that takes place in a fantasy world with magic and orcs. Players control a traveler who arrives in a town that thrives around a mysterious dungeon that’s been around for as long as anyone can remember. They come for the prospect of riches that could be found inside the dungeon, despite dangerous creatures also dwelling inside, and take up residence at the local inn. Throughout this game, players will forge relationships with the townsfolk in efforts to recruit them into their adventuring party, or possibly to romance them. However, just as you can get these npcs to love you, you can also get them to hate you, so your every dialog choice matters.

**Requirements Analysis:**

* Players are walking around in a 2D environment on various surfaces, so there was a need for walking sound effects for at least dirt, gravel, and wood. On top of this, jumping and door sound effects were needed for jumping and opening doors, respectively.
* Since the player spends a majority of their time interacting with NPCs through dialog trees it seemed fitting to give at least a few of these characters some voices. While full lines of dialog reading was out of scope, we figured some vocal barks corresponding to certain actions would suffice for our purposes.
* Currently we have menus for inventory & party management, as well as some built-in noises that accompany our dialog tree system. These all could use some extra interface sounds for when the players interact with them in specific ways, such as opening and closing the menus and adding/removing stuff from them.
* Each major area planned out for our game has had a song made for it by one of our more musically talented friends, so implementing them effectively is all that’s left to be done.
* To accompany each of these major areas and their music tracks there will be ambient noises as well. There’s our riverside overworld, a tavern, an inn, a blacksmith, and possibly a battle scene in the dungeon that will need noises associated with them.

**Sound Assets:**

* Walking: Got these all from Freesound. The dirt walk was probably the one that needed the most work done on it, as originally it was just a guy kicking some dirt sporadically. Speeding up the noises and raising the middle bands in ReaEQ did the trick well enough. The gravel steps I found needed no modification at all, just had to split them up so they could be sent off as individual steps. The steps on wood also weren’t too much work, just had to raise the low shelf more to they had more impact.
* Door: Straightforward effects found ready to use from Freesound.
* Jumping: Straightforward effects found ready to use from Freesound.
* Dialog: A teammate and I did multiple takes for greetings, exclamations, and goodbyes in various tones to reflect the NPCs attitudes toward the player and mood of the day. These were compiled and singular takes were chosen to be used in FMOD.
* PlayerInventory: Most of these were straightforward “bag” sound effects found ready to use from Freesound, but the bag removal sound caused me some issues due to a slightly metallic buzzing that permeated in its background. Otherwise it was perfect though, and after some fiddling in ReaEQ I managed to buff out that noise to a satisfactory degree.
* PartyManager: This one took me the longest to sort out because it has the least connection to any realy noises. For a while I thought using the character barks for each character’s UI counterpart could work but I just couldn’t figure out a straightforward way of implementing that in the game, so I settled on some more unconventional noises. In particular, I used some whooshing sounds for opening and closing the menu, and for adding/removing NPCs from the party I actually used the popping and clasping of a plastic container to fill those shoes. These all needed some modifications to sound less like plain noises and fit more into the fantasy setting they were being dropped into, but after some ReaEQ and speed adjustments they were satisfactory for my needs
* RelationshipStatusChange: Since the dialog textboxes have little flowers that bloom or wilt based on the good or bad decisions made with them, I wanted to get some noises that would reflect that imagery. The harp adjacent bell sounds were an obvious choice for a positive change, but the negative change was a little harder to pin down. Eventually I settled on the bass drums as they sounded like they conveyed what I was trying to get across while not feeling too out of place.
* Music: Like I mentioned above, these tracks were already put together by a friend of ours, so really I just needed to adjust their volumes so they’d be in line with the LUFS level I was aiming for.
* Ambiance: These were the most fun to look for as they covered a wide range of real world noises. The overworld needed a running river, the smithy needed some metal smacking and fire burning, the tavern needed some casual chatter, the inn needed some creaking wood, the caves needed some crumbling rocks, and all of these needed to have the option of having some quiet or loud chatter, just in case. Out of these, the rock crumbling needed the most modification in Reaper to work as it was simply much too overbearing in its original form.

**Mastering**

For the purpose of mastering all my assets before moving them into FMOD I used the Youlean Loudness Meter to compare my audio against some other popular dating sim & role playing games, specifically Monster Prom & The Letter. Below are my findings for those games

* Letter: -26 LUFS bgm, -16 for sound effects
* Monster Prom: -23 LUFS bgm, -22 LUFS for sound effects

Based on these, I settled on having -24 LUFS for all my music, and then -21 LUFS for everything else. I don’t personally think The Letter should’ve had its sound effects that loud, which is why I’m leaning more towards Monster Prom’s levels for those.