

[Game Design Document]

Game series: The Crime Tracer.

Episode title: The suspect passer-by.

Version: 1.00



"The most fascinating crime-related adventure game".



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1. Design History.

This part of the document is the change log and is related to the most important changes that are done. The changes are categorised according to the version of the document.

Version 1.00

Monday, November 17, 2008.

- * Added the scenario of the first scene.

2. Game Overview.

A. Philosophical points.

1. The goal of this game is to help the gamers get familiar with the way that detectives think and act, by solving several crime-related high risky cases. After the gamers have gained some basic skills and experience, they will be able to figure out how to solve many important and unsolved crime cases. The cases used in The Crime Tracer, as well as the puzzles that the gamers are asked to piece are unique. Our intention is not to change the world, but to expose the real daily life of a detective.
2. The main goal of TV series such as CSI and X-FILES is the exposure of a detective's life, whose daily interests are trying to solve unsolved and risky crime cases. Nevertheless, there are many differences between watching TV and playing a computer game. The main difference is that while watching TV is a passive process (that is, the watcher cannot participate in the scenario of the film), playing a computer game is an active process (the gamer affects the game's scenario).

3. Common Questions.

1. What is the game?

It is an adventure crime game. The main character of the game is a detective who is investigating several crime cases while trying to arrest a professional serial killer.

2. Why create this game?

To put it simply, we want to develop this game because we love playing adventure games (eg. Monkey Island, Broken Sword, etc.), but we are not aware of any "free" (as in freedom) relevant. Therefore, we want to contribute to the Free Software community by adding it to the Free Software Directory.

3. Where does the game take place?

The Crime Tracer takes place in different places around the world, depending on the crime scene and the current state of the case. Some cases take place in particular countries (eg. in Spain, in Great Britain, etc.), and some in well known places (eg. the Eiffel Tower, the Egyptian Pyramids, etc.) and in specific locations (eg. hotels, stores, school, public places, etc.).

4. What do I control?

The main character in The Crime Tracer is `Jonathan Wally'. Jonathan is an young, single and highly skilled detective. He is very conservative, elegant, smart, with a good sense of humour, social, and expert in solving crime cases. His greatest fears are spiders and insects. Conversely, he enjoys drinking hot tee and writing down his thoughts on his personal notebook.

5. How many characters do I control?

The main character is `Jonathan Wally'. However, depending on the current state of the game, other characters may need to replace him for some time. For example, if Jonathan is hold as prisoner or is in jail, another character must take over to help him.

6. What is the main focus?

The Crime Tracer focuses on the arrest of a professional serial killer. However, by trying to solve this case, Jonathan Wally is facing a number of different crime cases, and each case is related to a number of puzzles. The game flow changes dynamically depending on the gamer's choices.

7. What's different?

The main difference between The Crime Tracer and the rest crime related adventure games is that the puzzles which the gamer must piece require a "high IQ", (you don't need to be a genius to be able to solve them, however you will be challenged while trying to do so). People who like piecing hard puzzles will love this game.

Moreover, besides the good and realistic graphics, The Crime Tracer enables the gamer to participate in the case as more as possible. The gamer has a personal notebook, which can use to note interesting thoughts, numbers, and words which has seen while investigating the crime scene (in this way the gamer becomes an active participant), etc.

4. Feature Set.

A. General Features.

- The world is real, but the game play is similar to those of games like 'Broken Sword II: The Smoking Mirror' and 'The Curse of Monkey Island'.
- The graphics are two dimensional (2D) and the colour depth is 32 bits.
- The characters have no "life", but they have strength and mood.
- Maximum supported resolution: 1024x768 (full screen is supported).
- The state of the game can be saved at any time.
- The gamers can set their favourite key bindings; that is, a different map character is supported for every user.

B. Multiplayer Features.

Only one player is supported (classic adventure game).

C. Editor.

We might need to create a case editor. By using the editor, it will be easier for us to create new cases and extend the game's story.

D. Gameplay.

Character controlled by using the mouse and the keyboard; camera which can be set according to the gamer's preferences; discussions between characters; room changes; interaction with objects.

5. The Game World.

A. Overview.

The character can move in limited places within a space. The piece of the screen in which the game world exists is called a frame.

B. World Features.

Pending.

C. The Physical World.

i. Overview.

The natural world is consisted of people, objects, and places. Some of these characteristics support motion, and some are static. Some of them can also follow a particular way within a place. Time is important and can affect the game. For example, during the night a vehicle might cross a square; or during the morning, the bell of the church might ring in a village.

D. Key Locations.

For the 1st scene of the scenario.

1. Jonathan Wally's working office.

E. Travel.

The character is moving by walking. Of course there are places that the character cannot reach because of existing obstacles (eg. walls, crags, etc.). When the character wants to move from one location to another one, it can do it by using a virtual map (the whole world is not implemented).

F. Scale.

The world scale of The Crime Tracer is smaller than the real world (1:1). It is similar to the scale of many popular adventure games ('Broken Sword II: The Smoking Mirror', 'The Curse of Monkey Island', etc.).

G. Objects.

In the game there are static as well as dynamic objects. The objects which the character cannot interact with are considered static. On the other hand, the objects which

the character can interact with are considered dynamic. The way of interacting is dependent on whether an object has or has not life. The character can contact with the objects that have life. Conversely, the user can identify, use, and keep in the inventory the objects that have no life. The objects saved in the inventory can also be combined to create new objects.

H. Weather.

Since the world is real, it has seasons. And because there are seasons, the weather changes with the change of a season. If, for example, the character is visiting Egypt, the weather will be extremely hot, whilst if he/she is in United Kingdom it will be mostly rainy.

I. Day and Night.

Time affects the flow of the game, since some cases take place during the day, and some during the night. Nevertheless, such changes are transparent to the gamer (that is, they do not take place in real time).

J. Time.

The clock time is used only when necessary. It is not used throughout the whole duration of the game.

6. Rendering System.

A. Overview.

Pygame will be used for the graphics of the game.

B. 2D Rendering.

Pygame will be used for the graphics of the game.

7. Camera.

A. Overview.

The camera view is similar to watching the world from a balcony which has a small height. It is neither panoramic (like an aeroplane view), nor in the same line with the character (like walking close to the character). The character is always within a specific frame space.

B. Camera Details.

Pending.

8. Game Engine.

A. Overview.

Pending.

B. Game Engine Detail.

Pending.

C. Water.

There might be water in the game, but not like a whole sea or a river. A good example can be a glass of water, or a watering can.

D. Collision Detection.

The game engine will take into consideration occasions where two or more objects interact with each other. There will also be limitations and constraints related to the range within a character is able to move. In the same manner, the character will be able to use some objects, change their state, etc.

9. Lighting Models.

A. Overview.

Pending.

B. Lighting Models.

We might need to develop a lighting model, eg. perhaps the character will have to use a light while being in a dark place. The model will be based in methods that we are going to develop and integrate into the game machine.

10. The World Layout.

A. Overview.

Pending.

B. World Layout Details.

Pending.

11. Game Characters.

A. Overview.

The main character in The Crime Tracer is Jonathan Wally (a detective). Jonathan's friend and co-worker is Mariah Looney (historian, librarian, etc.). The popular actor is Maxuel Johnson and his wife is Jessica Johnson (who is murdered).

B. Creating a Character.

The gamer can modify the character. For example, the clothing of the character can be selected. Also, his personality will be affected by the gamer's choices. Sometimes the name of the character will need to be changed (eg. to pretend that he is someone else). By having all this functionality the gamer becomes an active participant.

C. Enemies and Monsters.

The main enemy in The Crime Tracer is Jessica's Johnson murderer, who must be arrested and jailed. However, there are also other enemies, some of them alive and some not (typical obstacles).

12. User Interface.

A. Overview.

The gamer can see either a part of a location, all the whole place inside the screen's frame. On the top of the screen there is information about the game's character. For example: mood, strength, etc. By pressing a key the gamer can see the character's inventory, which may contain several items: Money, clothes, etc. Also, there is interaction between the character and the rest objects (to get them, to identify them, etc.).

B. User Interface Details.

Before the start of the game a menu is available, that the gamer can use to customise the key map, access the saved states of the game, change the sound and screen resolution settings, etc.

13. Weapons/Tools.

A. Overview.

Several tools that the gamer can use while playing The Crime Tracer are available, like: keys, chain, matches, clips (to open doors), cards, money, etc.

14. Musical Scores and Sound Effects.

A. Overview.

Pygame's sound subsystem will be used for sound support. No background sound themes will be used while playing, to keep the game world as real as possible. Nevertheless, we might need to use some small background sounds when the adrenaline gets high.

The game characters communicate with each other. Thus, their dialogues must be heard. Moreover, various sounds can be heard while playing, like a clock, a dog's bark, a gunshot, etc.

The sounds will probably be recorded and edited by us or by contributors who want to help in the multimedia section. Speech programs might also be used.

15. Game Story.

A. 1st scene.

It is Thursday evening. Jonathan is in his personal office, which is located in London, United Kingdom. It is Winter and the weather is extremely cold. Jonathan is enjoying his tea near the fireplace.

Even though he is tired, he is reading about older unsolved cases. It is almost 10. Suddenly, the telephone rings. "Who is calling so late?", John is wondering. It is a man with scared voice who is desperately asking for help.

The man is the very popular and famous actor Maxuel Johnson. Maxuel, asks from Jonathan to investigate the murder of his wife, Jessica Johnson. Maxuel promises to give a great reward to Jonathan if he succeeds to arrest her killer.

Jonathan is trying to calm him down and asks to meet him in a public place to have a discussion about the case; in this way, Jonathan will have the chance to collect as much information about the case as possible. They make an agreement to meet in "St Jame's Park" the day after.

Although Jonathan was interrupted, he continues his work. Suddenly, the telephone rings for a second time; a male with a strange voice threatens Jonathan, telling him to drop the case, otherwise his life will be in danger.

Jonathan realises that his personal office is tracked. He finds a tracer in his phone. He is very surprised and terrified. He stops reading about the old cases and starts to collect information about the case. He is in a magical way both fascinated and scared about this case. He is not worried about risking his life. He wants to investigate the case, because he thinks that it is a case of great importance.

And the game starts...

16. Single-Player Game.

A. Overview.

Pending.

B. Single Player Game Details.

Pending.

C. Story.

Pending.

D. Hours of Gameplay.

Pending.

E. Victory Conditions.

The game ends when Jonathan solves all the puzzles and arrests the serial killer.

17. Multiplayer Game.

Single player support only (classic adventure game).

18. Character Rendering.

A. Overview.

Pending.

B. Character Rendering Details.

Pending.

19. World Editing.

A. Overview.

Pending.

B. World Editing Details.

Pending.