

Alpha

Mystic Quest: The Forgotten Realms

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Alpha Overview

The alpha phase is a critical stage in the development of “Mystic Quest: The Forgotten Realms”. During this phase, the primary focus is on ensuring that all major game features and systems are implemented, albeit in a rough and unfinished state. The goal is to achieve a playable version of the game that includes all key gameplay elements, even if they are not yet fully polished. Here’s an outline of key activities during the alpha phase.

Alpha Phase Activities

Feature Completion

- **Core Mechanics:** Ensure all core gameplay mechanics are implemented and functional. This includes combat systems, character movement, puzzle interactions, and AI behavior.
- **Level Design:** Develop a representative sample of levels, including various environments, obstacles, puzzles, and enemies. Ensure these levels showcase the main gameplay elements and narrative progression.
- **Basic UI/UX:** Implement basic user interface elements, including menus, HUD, inventory, and character progression screens. These elements should be functional but may lack final polish and design.
- **Sound and Music:** Integrate placeholder sound effects and music tracks. While the audio may not be final, it should provide a sense of the game’s atmosphere and pacing.

Initial Content Integration

- **Story and Quests:** Implement the main story arc, key quests, and side quests. Ensure that players can progress through the narrative and complete objectives, even if some content is still rough.
- **Character Abilities:** Implement character abilities, spells, and skills. Ensure that players can unlock and use these abilities as they progress through the game.
- **Enemies and Bosses:** Integrate a variety of enemy types and boss encounters. These should be functional and offer a challenge, even if they require further balancing.

Alpha Testing

- **Internal Playtesting:** Conduct extensive internal playtesting to identify and address major bugs, gameplay issues, and performance problems. This helps ensure that the game is stable and playable.
- **Focus Group Testing:** Invite a small group of external testers to play the alpha version. Gather feedback on the overall gameplay experience, difficulty balance, and enjoyment.

- **Bug Tracking:** Use a bug tracking system (e.g., Jira, Bugzilla) to log and prioritize issues discovered during testing. Assign tasks to the development team to address these issues promptly.

Iteration and Refinement

- **Gameplay Tweaks:** Make iterative adjustments to gameplay mechanics, level design, and difficulty based on feedback from playtesting. Focus on improving the core experience and addressing any major pain points.
- **Performance Optimization:** Begin optimizing game performance, including reducing load times, improving frame rates, and addressing memory usage issues. This ensures the game runs smoothly on target platforms.
- **Basic Art and Animation:** Integrate basic art assets and animations, even if they are not final. Ensure characters, environments, and effects are visually distinct and functional.

Document and Planning

- **Update Documentation:** Revise and update design documents, technical documents, and project plans based on changes and feedback during the alpha phase. Ensure all team members are aligned with the current state of the game.
- **Roadmap to Beta:** Develop a detailed plan for the beta phase, outlining key tasks, milestones, and deadlines. This includes finalizing features, polishing content, and preparing for more extensive testing.

Key Deliverables for Alpha Phase

- **Playable Alpha Build:** A functional version of the game that includes all major gameplay elements, core mechanics, and initial content. This build should be stable enough for internal and external testing.
- **Alpha Feedback Report:** A comprehensive report summarizing feedback from internal and focus group testing, including identified issues, player suggestions, and areas for improvement.
- **Bug Tracking Log:** A detailed log of all reported bugs, issues, and performance problems, with prioritized tasks for the development team.
- **Updated Design and Technical Documents:** Revised documents reflecting the current state of the game, changes made during the alpha phase, and plans for the beta phase.
- **Beta Phase Plan:** A clear roadmap outlining the tasks, milestones, and deadlines for the beta phase, focusing on polishing content, optimizing performance, and preparing for wider testing.

Implementation in Unity

Scene Management

- **Sample Levels:** Create and implement sample levels showcasing key gameplay elements. Use Unity's Scene Management system to organize and load different levels.
- **UI Integration:** Implement basic UI elements using Unity's Canvas system. Ensure menus, HUD, and inventory screens are functional and accessible.

Scripting and Mechanics

- **Core Scripts:** Develop and refine scripts for player movement, combat mechanics, and AI behaviors.
- **Interaction Systems:** Create systems for puzzle interactions, quest tracking, and character progression. Use ScriptableObjects for flexible data management.

Audio and Visuals

- **Placeholder Assets:** Integrate placeholder art assets and animations. Use Unity's Animator Controller to manage character animations.
- **Basic Audio:** Implement placeholder sound effects and music using Unity's Audio Source and Audio Mixer components.

Note: By focusing on these activities and deliverables during the alpha phase, "Mystic Quest: The Forgotten Realms" can achieve a solid foundation for further development, ensuring that all core elements are in place and ready for refinement and polishing in the subsequent beta phase.