

Brainstorming Activity: Pizza Delivery in Space

My satirical game concept, “Aliens Love Pizza,” is a single player economic adventure about delivering pizzas in outer space. It follows the story of Paul, a young pizza enthusiast that ventures away from Earth to sell pizza to aliens. As Paul's adventure continues and his space pizza business slowly grows into a real company, the game will begin to poke fun at business concepts like collecting ingredients, managing multiple pizza delivery ships, and competing against rival companies.

The game, like edutainment parody “Frog Fractions,” is divided into a series of levels with mechanics gradually changing in response to story events and the player's purchase of upgrades.

A “Standard” Level: Paul starts with just one simple ship filled with pizza, and he traverses linear 2D levels (using WASD to move forward and dodge obstacles) to reach an alien planet where he then sells his pizzas. Getting hit by obstacles “damages” the player, causing him to lose pizzas. When Paul reaches the planet, some dialogue is triggered, Paul sells the pizzas he has left, and the player is then presented with an upgrade screen where he can spend his earnings.

Upgrades & Story Events: Purchasing upgrades will develop Paul's business and move the plot forward in unexpected ways (just like in Frog Fractions). For example, purchasing an “advertising campaign” will trigger a story event where other aliens form pizza companies, and the next level is then about racing against these aliens to sell pizzas first. Dialogue after certain levels can respond to upgrade choices (e.g. “Extra Flavor” upgrade makes aliens say the pizza tastes good) and lead to new story events (e.g. an alien requests a topping like anchovies, and then the next level has anchovies scattered around that the player can collect while dodging obstacles and heading towards the planet). Once a player has all upgrades and has completed all story events, the game is over and he wins.

Scope: This game's main source of inspiration, Frog Fractions, has an hour long plot and went crazy with its scope, incorporating radically different mechanics like maze traversal, text adventure gaming, political simulation, and even Dance Dance Revolution. To keep this game in scope for a final project, the game will only include a few sample levels and its upgrades and story events will mainly focus on tweaking core mechanics like movement capabilities, obstacle types, and the collectible items that are available. At most in terms of complexity, an upgrade could add a “pizza launcher” that lets the player shoot pizzas to interact with obstacles and sell pizza to hungry aliens passing by on screen.

Appendix

Frog Fractions:

A) Link to game: <http://twinbeard.com/frog-fractions/>

B) Game review: <https://www.rockpapershotgun.com/2012/10/25/frog-fractions-might-be-the-greatest-game-of-all-time/>

Pizza Ship: Sample image

