

Slender: The Arrival

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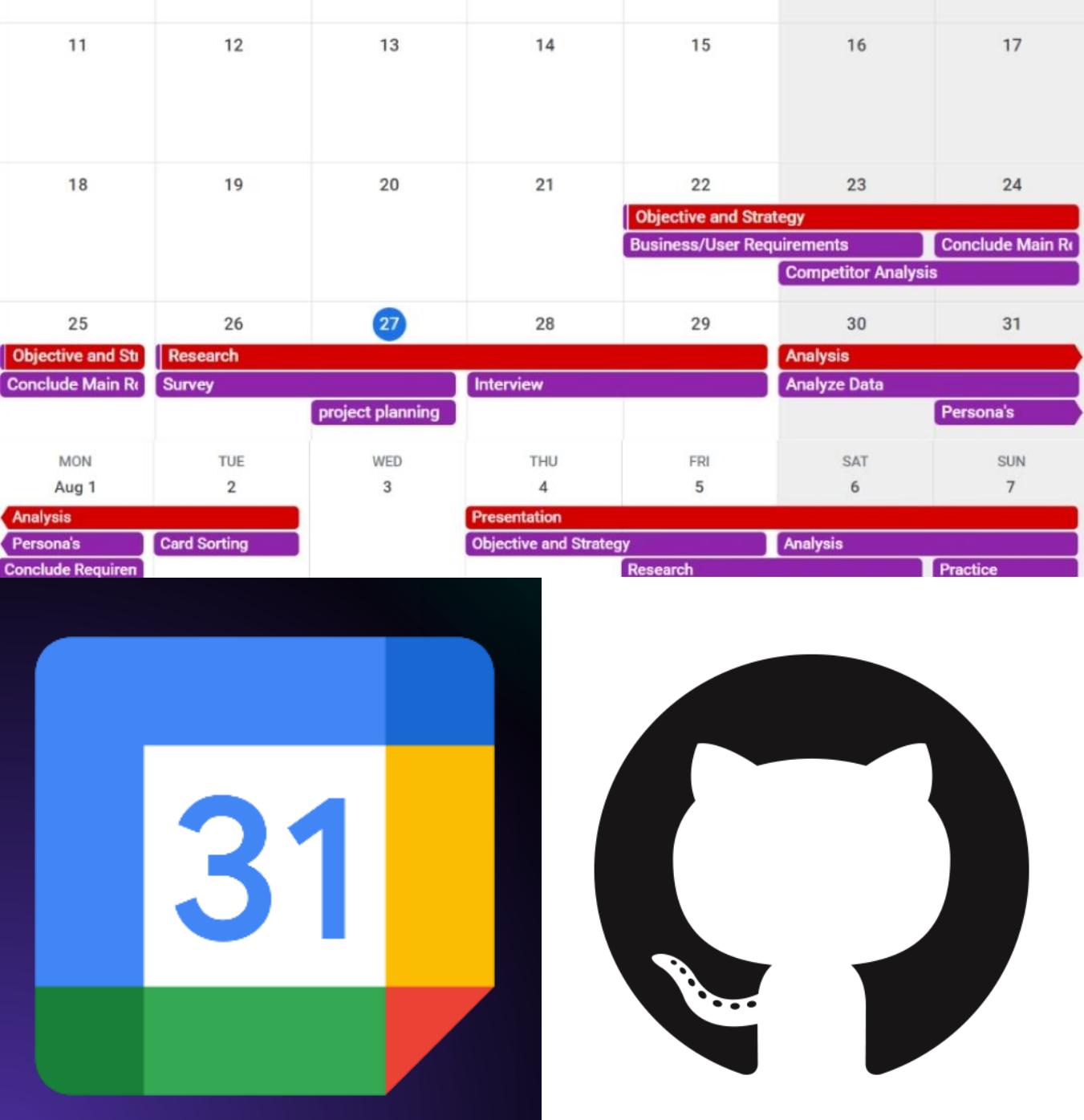
Project Introduction

This is a project report of my cs104 course to analyse, research, test, prototype and design a mobile application to be improved in the duration of 4 weeks.

To ensure the success of the project report and its completion in time, I decided to produce a strategy to keep me on task and meeting my deadlines.

These values are ordered in their importance and following

- 1) Frequent delivery of completed projects
- 2) Simplicity of project to meet time crunch deadlines
- 3) Iterative testing of projects
- 4) Regular reflections on how to become more effective



How we tracked our progress

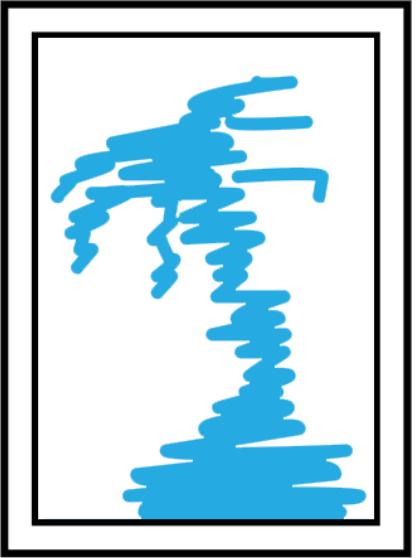
GitHub

- We're using GitHub to track tasks to be done, tasks in progress, and completed tasks as the project report is also located inside GitHub. The reasons for this are due to GitHub being able to track commits and pulls to track my activity and progress of the project. GitHub Project Manager makes this much easier, as it enables converting tasks inside the site to track progress and activity on the project.

Google Calendar

- Google Calendar is used to plan and track tasks completion. Instead of using a Gantt chart I found using google calendar is enough due to its simplicity and easier to manage and edit tasks and events. While it's not a good scheduling tool for a large team of members, for an individual project or a small group of developers, it is a powerful tool to plan projects effectively and efficiently.

BLUE ISLE studios



Client Requirements

Who is "Blue Isle Studios Inc."?

Blue Isle Studio Inc is an independent developer and publisher located in the city of Toronto in Canada. They are led by Alex Tintor and Brenden Frank which helps guide and direct the company in creating games that excites their audiences. They produce games available mostly on consoles and pc, but the company was mainly founded by their popular game called "Slender: The Arrival," which is a spin off of the popular game "Slender: The Eight Pages."

After its burst in popularity died down and they now look back at their very foundation, they want to understand their pitfalls and strengths and remaster their first ever game to give back to their studios first clients/fans by providing a remastered version of the game. For the game remaster to be successful in its launch they must research the pitfalls and strengths of "Slender: The Arrival" and compare it with today's modern competitors. Which can then be used to create a proposal by creating a prototype which is iteratively tested.

Due to the many projects the company is already taking, they are outsourcing to other companies for help. In this case I have been chosen to produce research and prototypes while iteratively testing during the process for the mobile application version of the game.

Audience Needs

Target Audience Needs

- The target audience of this game are the first fans of “Blue Isle Studio Inc.,” the Slender Man community, and horror fans. Assuming this the target audience age range from 14 – 40 due to the age group which was born in slender man era and anyone that is old enough to enjoy horror games.
- I assume that the target audience for the games remaster wont defined by anything else due to horror being a universal fear.
- I believe to successfully launch “Slender: The Arrival” to the target audience the game must...
 - a clear goal
 - have basic controls
 - be consistent within the Slenderman storyline
 - build upon the original origin of Slenderman
 - have good gameplay that gives a sense of fear and excitement
 - have good graphics that immerse the player
 - have good UI to further immerse player into story

User Needs

I assume that for a horror mobile application to be successful, the game must meet the users' needs which I assume are...

- good game controls / sensitivity
- good goals / objectives (interactivity in the world)
- objectives
- good graphics and music
- attractive User Interface
- Good Explicit Interactivity by making...
 - good controls of joysticks
 - good main menu and options menu
- Good Meta-Interactivity by following / adding onto the already built fan base of Slender Man by including notes and hints in the game



SWOT Analysis - Slender: The Arrival

Strengths:

- Immersive Graphics
- Binaural Sound
- Music and sound effects change in different areas
- High quality cut scenes, art and music
- Indication of interactivity is made easy to understand by a white highlight

Weaknesses:

- Graphics are limited by being a mobile game making the game less immersive
- UI controls are distracting and not attractive
- No objectives given at the start of the game
- Main menu has hard font to read
- No instructions of controls or goal
- No stamina (can run forever)

Opportunities:

- Have different graphic options
- Redesign main menu to increase readability
- Redesign controls
- Introduce the controls and objectives more clearly
- Option to make joystick invisible
- Add stamina bar

Threats:

- High sensitivity controls can cause you to feel nausea decreasing marketed audience
- Game relies on user knowledge as controls are not explained well
- The game is quite graphically demanding so people with old devices will have an less enjoyable experience



SWOT Analysis - Limbo

Strengths:

- Art design suits story and narrative well
- Immersive Music
- Atmospheric filters are used effectively
- Good gameplay and controls
- Invisible Controls / Joystick making the game much more immersive

Weaknesses:

- Instructions are not well displayed
- Instructions are not clear enough
- Finding the menu and instructions are difficult as exit / options button is invisible
- Interactable objects are not made clearly

Opportunities:

- Make interactable objects more clear
- Make finding instructions easier
- Introduce users with a tutorial

Threats:

- Game is quite hard so game is limited to older people who can understand and solve the puzzles
- Game mostly targets people who like its gameplay and puzzles rather than its narrative as the story is hard to follow



SWOT Analysis - Distrain: Pixel Horror

Strengths:

- Art design suits story and narrative well
- Immersive music
- Atmospheric filters are used effectively
- Good gameplay and controls

Weaknesses:

- Controls are not well suited for mobile
- User Interface is unclear due to the use of letters for buttons of menu, inventory, and action as “A, B and C”
- Buttons take over half of the screen
- Game screen is incorrectly proportioned making the game unattractive

Opportunities:

- Correctly portion the game screen to increase attractivity of game as well as increase player immersion
- Better control UI

Threats:

- Game targets more adult users to understand the story and be immersed as its narrative is adult in theme



SWOT Analysis - Endless Nightmare

Strengths:

- High quality cut scenes
- High quality graphics

Weaknesses:

- Map is not well decorated (reused assets everywhere)
- Game has lots of pop-up ads
- Graphics are limited by being a mobile game making the game less immersive
- UI is ugly filling up the screen
- Enemy doesn't strike fear to player due to it never being present
- Narrative and storyline are confusing, so the player must rely on the objective instructions text to continue the story

Opportunities:

- Having a very high in quality game focusing on simple puzzles to keep the high quality rather than lose it to quantity of features
- Remove the ads
- UI improvements to fit theme of game more

Threats:

- Struggles to compete with a large and already quite established first-person, role-playing game genre

Requirements Conclusion



For the game to succeed in its launch, we believe that the threats and needs that must be considered moving forward are...

- have story driven objective where user is driven to find objectives through narrative implications
- make the goal and objectives of the game clear from the beginning
- Make sure controls are explained early on and are clear to the user
- Make controls easy to understand and use
- build upon the origin of Slenderman to attract the Slenderman community and not just be a repeat of the first game
- Have game run well on multiple devices (old and new)

Lessons learnt by gameplay tests and competitor analysis are...

- redesigning main menu and options menu
- redesign of player controls / UI such as invisible controls
- decreased sensitivity
- adding a rule of stamina
- adding instructions and objectives to help first time players out
- realism doesn't equal into a better horror experience, but the atmosphere created by well-matched themes of music, art, and game design



Research

To ensure that my assumptions on the reasons we have given of 'threats and needs' to be met to ensure the success of the games remastered launch is reasonable, I have created a survey and conducted interviews to validate my reasoning.

We did this through surveying and interviewing a large variety of audiences to confirm our assumptions.

We surveyed questions which questions the users...

- Age group
- Technological level
- Likelihood on playing horror games
- How objectives should be presented to player
- Instructions and control
- User expectations on horror games
- Important features needed for success in todays mobile market
- Problems that the user may face when playing a horror game

Survey Conclusion

By doing surveys we were able to confirm that our assumptions of...

- Age is right / wrong - stats...
- Target Audience is right / wrong - stats...
- ...



Interview

The interview resulted in finding out different unknown game mechanics as well as difficulties overlooked of playing the game.

We did this by creating an instruction set of how we would conduct our interviews so that our results are not prejudiced and is consistent.

Then would question them after certain events in the interview. These are...

Interview Conclusion

- Age group
- Technological level?
- Likelihood of playing horror games?
- Should a horror game imply objectives or walk your through?
- Should a mobile horror game explain controls or assume the player already knows?

Analysis

- From the research conducted, we found users wanted...
 - Bug fixes, smoother gameplay
 - Customisable controls
 - Easier ways to locate objectives
 - Better font & design choices in the main menu
- Pain points
 - Game is slow, and buggy
 - The camera is too sensitive
 - There is no save feature, so it can't be picked up at any time



Dan – Age 23

Occupation – Law Student

Relationship – single

Location – Christchurch

Preferred platform – PlayStation

Lifestyle

- Goes to UC five days a week
- Works at the eco store on Saturdays
- Plays games to unwind, chill out with friends after class

Environment

- Can usually be seen in a lecture or tutorial
- Otherwise resides in a flat in the heart of student Ville

Want/needs

- Wants a quick game to sink into between classes and then carry on later in the day



Life Style

- Goes to school five days a week
- Does a paper route every Sunday morning
- Plays games with friends after school

Environment

- Goes to school everyday
- Otherwise spends time at home or at a friends house

Wants/needs

- Would like a game to play a game before going to sleep, as a way to shut down before sleep

James – Age 17

Occupation – High School Student

Relationship – N/A

Location – Wellington

Preferred platform – Computer



Raegan – Age 22

Occupation – Medical Student

Relationship – Engaged

Location – Auckland

Preferred platform - Mobile

Life Style

- University four days a week to be a nurse
- Works Friday & Saturday at New World
- Plays games to pass time, e.g. on the bus

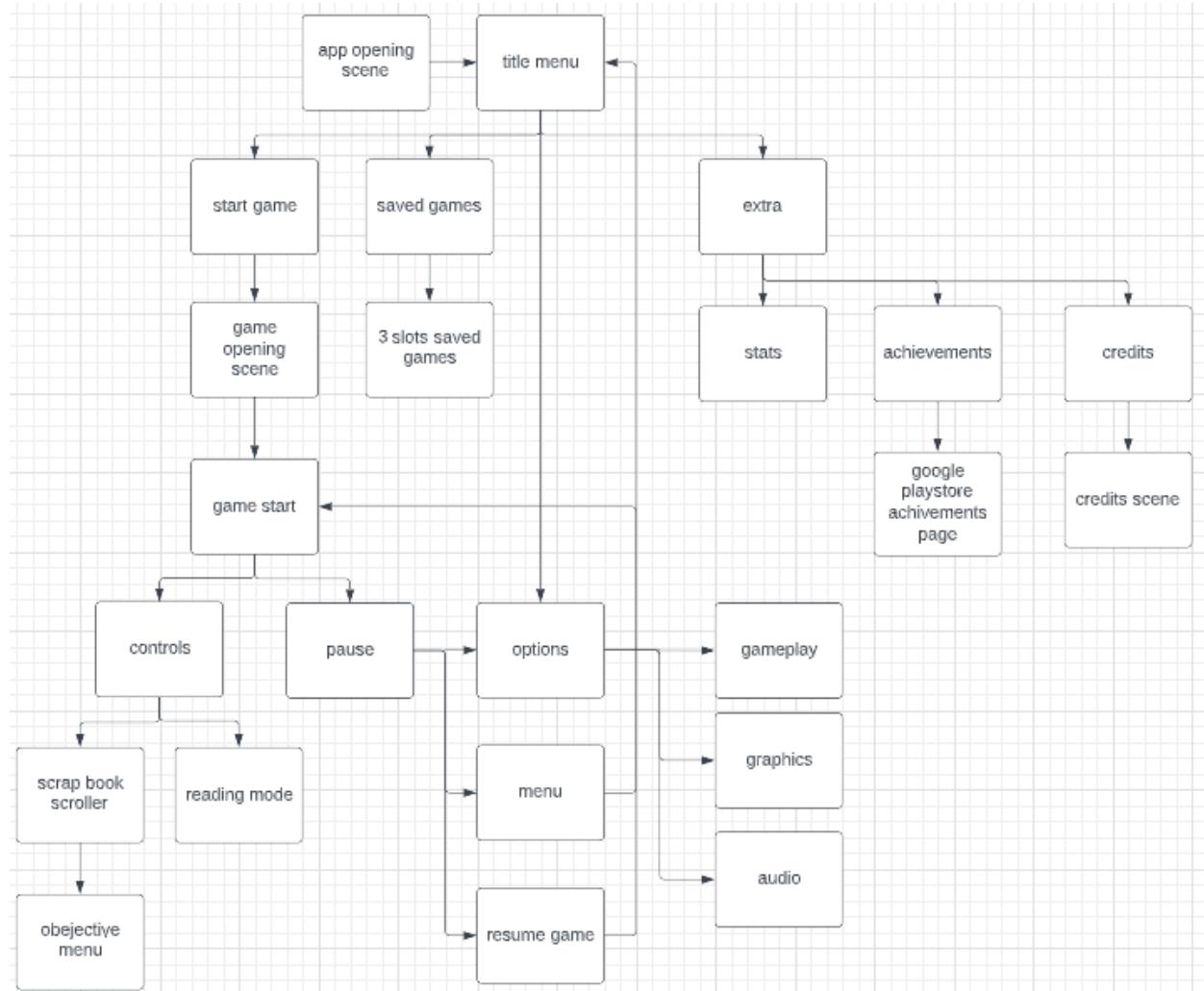
Environment

- Spends Mon – Thurs, 9am – 3pm in lectures and classes or the library
- Else can be found in the university halls

Wants/needs

- Wants a fun and casual game to play on the bus to work, which can be picked up and keep playing on the way home from work

Card Sorting



User Assumptions (Revised)

- Users play to take up quick spaces in free time
- Users want to pick it up and play any time
- Users want to have the Slender Man more involved during the opening sequences
- Users would like more concise and visible menus

Revised User Requirements

- Users feel that the game sensitivity needs work
- Goals and objectives very vague, the objectives screen could at least be easier to find
- Users say the appearance of the game needs a fair amount of work, though the sound is fantastic
- The interface is okay, though users want some customisability to aid their immersion
- The note gathering across a big map users found frustrating, though it pushed them perfectly into feeling helpless
- Users believe the controls don't obstruct much of the game, though the option to turn them off would help the feeling of helplessness
- Users believe the main menu is poor and is in dire need of an update



End

- Thank you for watching ☺<3