Orbital Drift

*Papers, Please* but in space

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Instant Summary

Overview

Orbital Drift is a *Papers, Please* like inside a space station. As the administrator, the player must manage the station. He takes care of the oxygen levels, the crew, the maintenance, the ship transit and stuff like that. The game could be labelled as an "infinite rogue-like management" game.

Look & feel

In 2D and pixel art. In game, every element of the game is featured on the "Admin Operator Dashboard." The elements of the UI (gauges, numerical variables…) are included in various screens present in the universe of the game. The graphic aspect is inspired by *Papers, Please* but in a futuristic style or even *Mind Scanner*, another inspired game from *Papers, Please* (see image below)
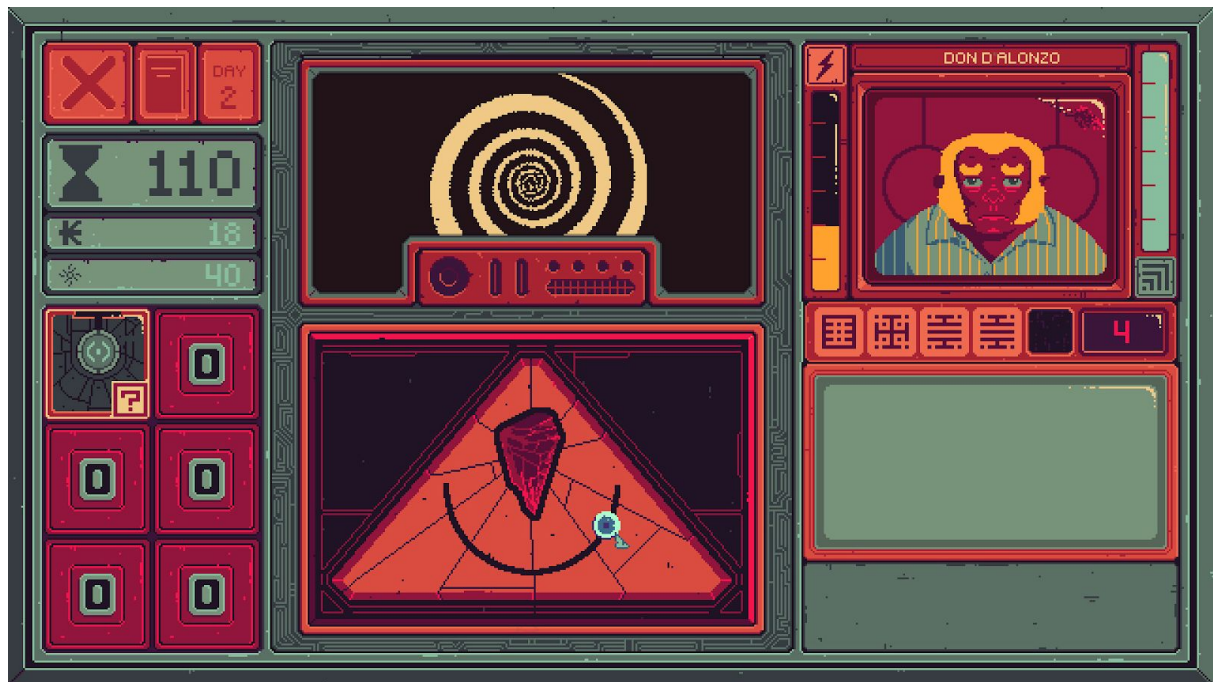
There are various ambient music in the background which change in rhythm and atmosphere according to the events taking place. Each of the buttons makes various digital beeps.

Plot & setting

The universe takes place in a space-opera inspired by the stories of Isaac Asimov, a future where humanity acquired the inter-system spatial travel, it has ended up greatly expanding it to colonize the galaxy.

The player-controlled character evolves in an *Eve Online*-style space station, which has a market, home port, and various other services, like a land seaport would.

The character embodies the role of station administrator-operator, that is, he is responsible for all decisions and coordination on board the station. The crew receive their orders directly from him and must report any damage or anomaly on board.

Gameplay

User Interface

The user interface is represented by the dashboard of the station admin. Every element seen on screen exists in the universe of the game. The dashboard is divided by three panels, one is wide on the left, the other one is smaller on the right, and the last is a banner on the top. On the two bottom screens, we can see different views:
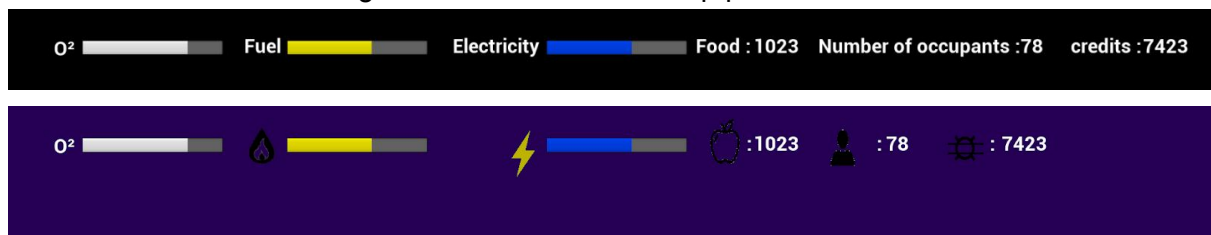
Left panel :
- assets management
- incoming ship analyse, scan and board information
- docks and storage spaces
- map view (station surroundings)

Right panel :
- logs (events, alerts)
- crew members files

The resources will be arranged in the banner at the top pane like that :

Top panel
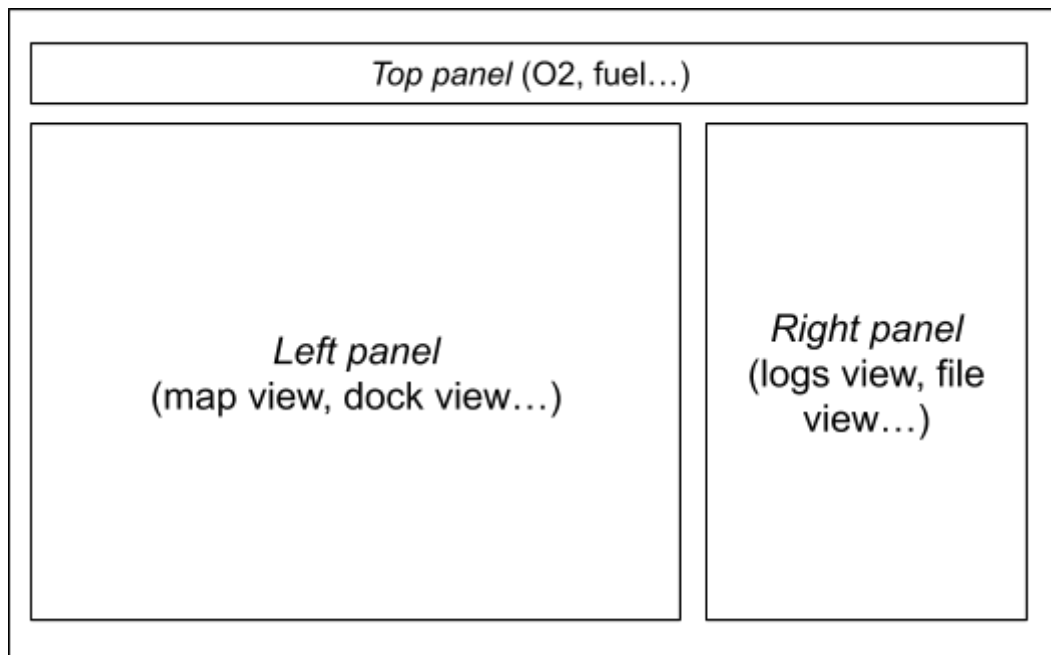
Dashboard

Map view

Map view (white elements are clickable)

The information of the spaceship and its pilot will be visible on the map by clicking their icon if they are close enough to the station. The following different information can be then displayed:
- the license of trader or transport (if applicable)

- the recent actions of the pilot (if not available, there will be the possibility to question the system around the station to access this information)
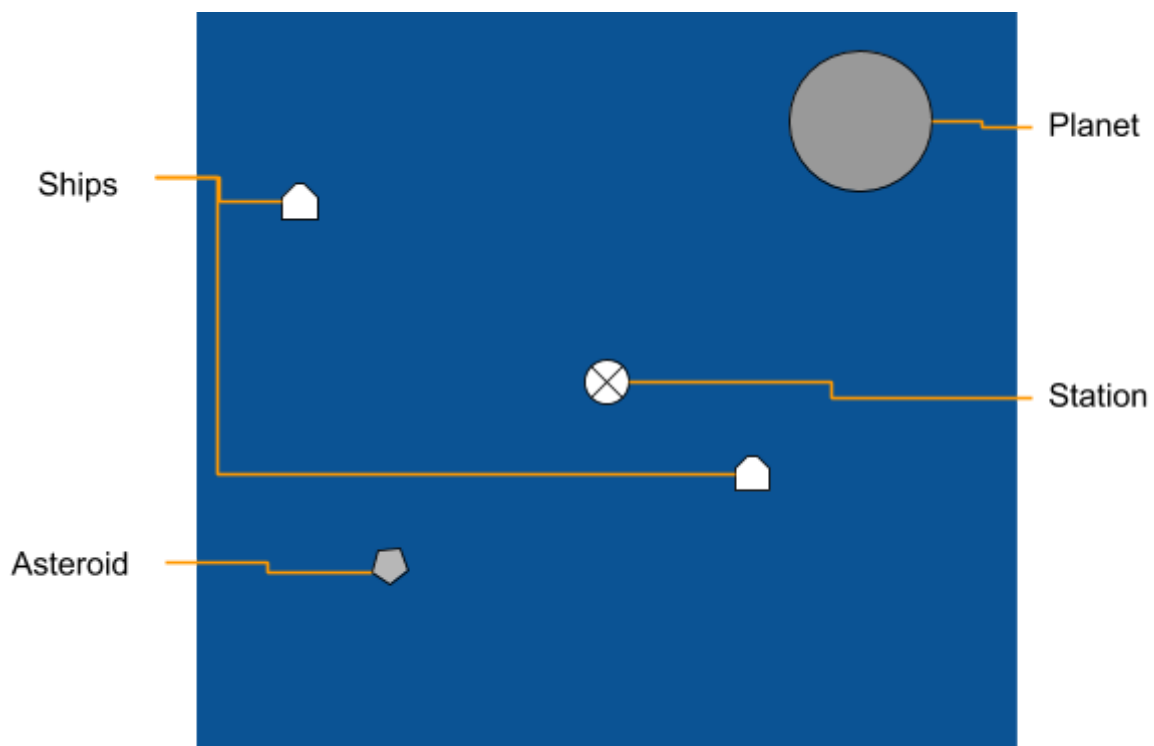- a scan of the spaceship which allows you to see the number of life forms and resources on board

The station will be visible from an external point of view by clicking on it on the map view allowing to visualize the state of the shields, the availability and the size of the hangars (the size is easily identifiable by a letter followed by an identifier, example "A2" for the second big hangar, "C4" for the fourth medium hangar). By browsing the different rooms of the station on the map, it will be possible to distinguish by signs whether a room has been sabotaged or requires any maintenance.

Logs View

Alert description	
ok	
Log example	12:20
Ship approaching	12:17
Ship leaving dock B3	12:12
Crewmember ended task	12:11
...	...

Displayed if an alert occurs (low o2 levels, anomaly, damage taken, task successfully achieved…) The background color may change following the alert level (red = danger; yellow = warning; green = info)

An alert is like a "mega log" that stay on top of the stack until the player clicks "ok"

Crew file view

Each crew member gives access to a file accessible from a menu in the right panel where all their information is documented (functions, history, salary, schedule, etc.).

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│  ┌──────────┐   Name - age          │
│  │          │   **Job**             │
│  │  Photo   │                       │
│  │          │   Current activity (task / │
│  └──────────┘   break)              │
│                                     │
│  ┌──────────────────────────────┐   │
│  │ Planning :                   │   │
│  │ Task name            07:00   │   │
│  │ Break time           12:00   │   │
│  │ Task name            13:00   │   │
│  │ Break time           19:00   │   │
│  │                              │   │
│  │                              │   │
│  └──────────────────────────────┘   │
│                                     │
│  ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐         │
│  │ Do task  │  │ Fire     │         │
│  └──────────┘  └──────────┘         │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
```

┌────────────────────────┐
│ To ask them to   │
│ do "out of   │
│ planning" task   │
└────────────────────────┘

Development

Character

The character is defined by the administration table with the dashboard (map, communication, management of resources, systems (O^2 ventilation, shields ...)) of the station, with its buttons, sliders and electronic / paper / information modules...

Controls

Everything is controlled with the mouse, with shortcuts to change the dashboard screens.

Camera

The whole game takes place on the dashboard, the camera does not move. Slightly effects such as camera shake may however occur.

Walkthrough

Procedurally generated and scripted ships will come at random times during the day, forcing the player to respond to their requests. It's up to the player to make choices so the supplies of the station stays up. Events like oxygen vents malfunction, pirate attacks, hull damage, sabotage may occur. The player needs to use their crew members so these events are fixed.

Event List

- Oxygen vent malfunction - *Generates alert (danger)*
  Job type : Tech
- Pirate attack - *Generates alert (danger)*
  Job type : Shooter - Pilot
- Hull damaged - *Generates alert (warning)*
  Job type : Tech
- Storage slipping - *Generates alert (warning)*
  Job type : Any
- Hack - *Generates alert (warning)*
  Job type : IT
- Space anomaly - *Generates alert (info)*
  Job type : Scientist
- Incoming inspector - *Generates alert (info)*
  Job type : None (Shooter / Pilot if choose to kill)

More may come.

Victory :

Maximum station improvement levels, the value of wealth exceeds that of the faction or system.

Defeat :

Oxygen or electricity and or occupation by pirates or a rebel faction, starving population, or bankruptcy.
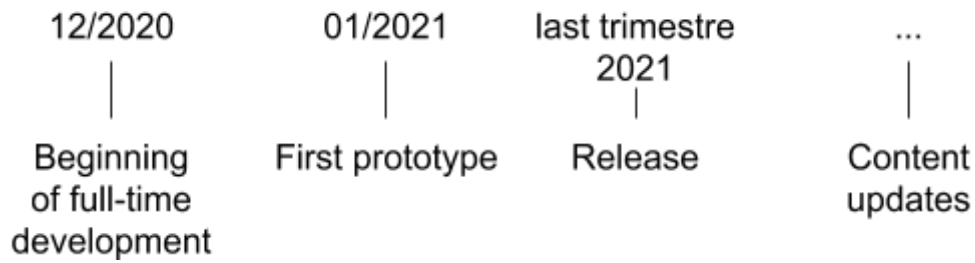
Marketing

USP

It's a space station management-puzzle game that has consequences for its inhabitants

Economic model

License sale ~ 5 €, paid or free additional content to be expected. PC platform (Steam, Epic Games Store, Humble Bundle, itch.io) (maybe smartphones later). No microtransaction.

Roadmap

12/2020 — Beginning of full-time development

01/2021 — First prototype

last trimestre 2021 — Release

... — Content updates

MVP (Minimum Viable Product)

These are the things we tend to present in our prototype.

Feature	Development time (days)
User interface	3
Simple event system	2
Incoming / leaving ships script	2
Station levels (O2, fuel, electricity)	1

Techs

The game is meant to be played with a mouse almost exclusively. It can easily be developed for Windows and Linux at the same time without change in costs.
The game can be ported on phones later on, depending on its success.