McMaster University
Inspiring Innovation and Discovery

High Level Concept

Trouble Seekers

Version 1.0

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High Concept

The epic adventure of an orphan trying to find their best friend, who soon realises their friend's kidnapping is only the beginning of an even more sinister plot to take over the world requiring the player to travel through caves, dungeons, and other environments searching for the way to stop their world from being enslaved.

Features

- Customization and progression through items for both cosmetic and combat related elements.
- Open world gameplay directed with soft locks.
- Spin on typical RPG levelling system, the player does not level, but the gear itself can grow stronger through player use and specific player accomplishments.
- No standard cookie-cutter classes, all player builds are unique and can be completely changed at any point during the game.
- Many different dungeons exist in this world with many different themes, and some are not imperative to the story however these dungeons possess unique gear that can only be found in those dungeons, but to retrieve them means that the player has to navigate through traps, puzzles, and enemies.
- Players can follow the game's main storyline or go adventuring on their own at certain intervals in the game, completing side-quests that offer interesting rewards or experiences.
- The game may contain a new game plus feature allowing the player to replay the entire game from the beginning but with all the abilities and passives they used in the first play through.

Player Motivation

Uncover the truth behind the disappearances occurring in the land, save your best friend from certain doom, and save the world. Defeat increasingly dangerous enemies by acquiring new gear and weapons and discovering unique abilities throughout the world. Choose and combine acquired gear to develop effective styles of play.

Genre

Beat-em-up style RPG with unique character progression elements as well as a multitude of weapon and gear combinations which allow character customization.

Target Customer

The basic gameplay is set for any casual gamer, but the stat system may require more experience from the player in the RPG genre in order to utilize at its full potential. Recommended ages 12 and up.

Competition

- **The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time (Nintendo)**
    - A 3rd person RPG where the player, playing as Link, must rescue the kidnapped princess of the kingdom. The player is in an open world but can not access later dungeons until the earlier ones are completed. Using a variety of items which are found throughout the world by completing quests or completing dungeons, the player becomes more powerful as he reaches the end of the game. The player also has access to an Ocarina, a musical instrument which allows him to solve puzzles as well as teleport to previously explored areas. Using the Ocarina the player can also move forwards and backwards in time by 7 years, granting Link the ability to become an adult and gain different abilities.

- **Diablo 3 (Blizzard/Activision)**
    - An Isometric 3D Hack and Slash RPG where progression is based around the gear grind (randomized drops) and level grind. There is a main story that needs to be followed in order for the player to reach the best loot in the game located in the final act, where they battle Diablo at the end of the game in order to move on to the next difficulty. The levels have some random generation, changing the location of quest components and other events each time the host launches the server. The game supports up to 4 players in CO-OP, however the mobs become stronger as more players connect. There are 4 classes and each class eventually learns all skills available to that specific class, players can only use 6 skills at a time though, and each skill has a set of runes which can alter the way the skills behave. Players do not control the distribution of points upon levelling, gear controls how stat distribution works. The game contains a few bonus events which award players with experience however none of these events need to be completed.

- **Torchlight II (Runic Games)**
    - An Isometric 3D Hack and Slash RPG where progression is built around the gear grind and level grind. There is a main story that players follow related to the Alchemist trying to take over the world in Torchlight, however players have many optional side-quests available to them which reward players with new weapons/armor, experience and gold. The game also contains many references to other well-known games as a tribute. The game supports up to 8 players in CO-OP. There are 4 classes and each class has 3 skill trees for players to choose the abilities they want their characters to have and can rank up certain abilities multiple times for specialization in certain skills. Players can distribute stat points however they see fit regardless of class type. Players can use up to 10 active abilities at the same time.

- **Borderlands 2 (Gearbox)**
  - A first person shooter RPG where progression is built around gear and level grind. There is a main story that players follow related to preventing Handsome Jack from taking control of an ancient Eridian warrior resulting in the destruction of Pandora. The game also features many optional side-quests which lead to new weapons and cosmetic gear customization as well as experience and money. The game is filled with easter eggs and references to other well-known games and other pop-culture. The game supports up to 4 players in CO-OP. There are 4 classes and each class has 3 skill trees for players to choose the passives they want their characters to have and can rank up certain abilities multiple times for specialization in certain skills. The game does not contain a stat distribution mechanic, and most of the progression comes in the form of weapon upgrades however player skill is a key component to how strong a player becomes (critical hits as well as situational element usage). Players are given one active ability based on the class they take, however each character can carry up to 4 weapons at a time and there are a considerable number of weapons available each with unique abilities and passives.

Unique Selling Points

- Player gear customization for aesthetic progression
- Drastically adjust abilities and stats using *in-game tablets* for unique play-styles
- Certain abilities can become stronger and gain more passives based on a player's play-style and in-game choices earning them favour with certain deities
- A world full of creative lore injected with subtle humour
- Large focus on exploration where players and environments (dungeons/jungles/etc) can interact with one another for better or worse (using traps on enemies or triggering them)

Target Hardware

Any PC which is able to run the Unreal Engine with specific compatibility for Windows 7.

Design Goals

1. **Simplistic control scheme:** The game's controls should be simple (move, item, attack), with player skill instead relying on how those controls are manipulated, and also how they're manipulated by items found throughout the game, opening up many different play styles that can be discovered via picking and choosing abilities

2. **Illusion of an open world:** The player should be free to explore all locations from the beginning of the game, but will only be provided the abilities to do so as the story progresses. The player can choose to complete the game at their own pace, opting to explore and acquire new gear over running through the storyline

3. **Diverse combat options:** The player has complete control over their abilities, stats and passives allowing them to build their own unique play-style (assuming they have the items necessary) as well as the option to change their play-style at any point in the game for a completely new experience.

4. **Toon-like graphical qualities:** The art style for the game will be cartoon-like in order to emphasize the light-hearted side of our story. The character models will also appear rather simplistic in order to allow the player as much room to customize as possible.