**CSFV**

**University of Washington**

**Monthly Technical Report for July, 2012**

Reporting period: 1 July 2012 – 31 July 2012

Date of Report: 23 Aug 2012

Project Title: Verigames

Contract Number: FA8750-12-C-0174

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# Verigames - Project Progress

**1. Expected Progress This Month**

This month we planned on continuing hiring efforts in earnest, bringing on at least two additional software developers. We would continue working on Pipe Jam, expanding the range of properties that can be expressed, scaling up the kinds of programs that can be ingested and represented as gameplay, and refining the game design approach.

**2. Accomplishments This Month**

In July, we interviewed about a dozen candidates for a software engineer position, hired one, and made an offer to a second.

We attended the CSFV kickoff meeting on July 10-12, presented our current progress, and learned about the desire for the game to be portable to mobile platforms. Several avenues for taking our current Flash implementation to an Android or iOS device are being investigated.

We did some preliminary work on visual representation of map keys, which presents some challenges in terms of visual metaphor for both “pipes” and “traffic”.

We set up task tracking and bug tracking software to help coordinate the growing number of developers on the project, and we filled out the integrator’s questionnaire.

**3. Deliverables Submitted**

N/A

**4. Publications Made**

N/A

**5. Meetings**

* CSFV Kickoff meeting (July 10-12, 2012)
* Weekly UW Verigames team meeting

**6. Issues or Concerns**

Some areas of concern have come up. The first is that hiring has been slower than we’d like; finding truly good candidates has been difficult. We had planned on having at least two software engineers by now, but currently we only have one with an outstanding offer to another. There is, unfortunately, not a lot we can do to mitigate this other than to continue looking for qualified candidates.

Our second concern is that iterative game development cannot start until our IRB (already approved on our side) is approved with all of the other IRBs. Our game design and development process is highly reliant on gathering data from real players and making adjustments to the game based on perceived patterns of play. Our inability to collect and study data in the short term means that there are a number of game design questions that will remain open for the time being.

Finally, we have some internal concern about with our use of visual metaphor for gameplay in special cases (such as map keys). In cases like this, metaphors such as “pipes and balls” or “roads with traffic” break down and can be difficult to intuitively understand by non-technical players. In the coming months, we will need to think carefully about these representations so that we either find a solution that does make sense and continues the metaphor, or that we find a way to effectively teach the mechanics of these objects to players as simply one of the immutable “rules” of the world of the game.

**7. Plans for Next Month:**

Next month we plan to ramp up our new software engineer and continue the hiring process.

We will continue development on the verification side, incorporating a new type system into the game, and beginning to incorporate flow sensitivity into the game. We will also begin trials with ingesting larger software programs.

On the game development side, we will begin the design of the game’s logging and playback systems, which will (once the IRBs are approved) allow us to analyze player behavior and start the process of optimizing for better engagement and retention.

**8. Financial Summary**

Projected second month expenditures were estimated at $213k. Actual was only $16k. As before, proposal projections assumed a full staff at this point. Matthew Burns has been hired as a producer. Hiring for programmers is in progress, but slow going.