

Marcos Lopez

Game Design Log – Fax Game

26 September 2017 – First Paper Prototype/Milestone #1

The grid paper will represent the room that the player (yellow) can navigate. Player 2 moves all of the documents (blue) and fax machines (red) to any square they want. Player 1 will have 250 seconds to put all of the right documents into the right fax machines. Player 2 must try to stop Player 1 from achieving the goal by placing obstacles (orange) on the grid. The time only moves when the player moves. Moving one square left, right, up, or down will cost you 1 second. Picking up a document will cost you 1 second. Using a fax machine will cost you 5 seconds. Destroying an obstacle will cost you five seconds.

When it is player 1's turn, they can move up to three squares in any direction. Picking up a document, using a fax machine, and/or destroying an obstacle will also count as a move.

When it is player 2's turn, they can place an obstacle in any squares that are not occupied by the player, document, fax machine, or another obstacle.

27 September 2017 - First Paper Prototype Playtest Notes

Although the game wasn't finished before class was over, I noticed that I was getting close to running out of time before faxing the last document in.

28 October 2017 - Digital Prototyping

For Milestone #2, I will convert the paper prototype into a digital prototype by writing a program that will run the game in Java. I decided to convert to digital prototyping because it will be easier to implement twitch mechanics.

29 October 2017 - Finished Digital Prototype

Just finished establishing the core mechanic of the faxing game into the digital prototype. This prototype uses a combination of luck and twitch skill.

Difference from paper prototype:

- This game is single player, a random number generator will place all of the documents and fax machines.
- There are now five documents per machine.
- The game uses real time to count how much time is left

Controls

- WASD: Move player
- Esc: Reset Game

In the first level, you will have 75 seconds to put all of the documents (blue squares) into the right fax machines (pink square). Each level will give you five seconds less to do the same thing until you run out of time.

I have also added a point system that keeps track of the player's score

- 10 pts per document faxed

- Upon completing each level, the player will be awarded 10 pts for every second that was remaining.

30 October 2017 - Milestone #2 Playtest 1

Based on the playtest, here are the things that were suggested to be added to the game: visual flair, powerups, obstacles, smooth controls.

31 October 2017 - Added Mechanics

For the next playtest on 1 Nov 2017, I have added the following things based on yesterday's playtest feedback:

- Smoother Controls - the player can now move at a constant velocity in any direction, even diagonally.
- Powerups - Every 10 seconds, a Time Extender will spawn on any position on the board. Each Time Extender collected will extend the time left by 5 seconds.

1 November 2017 - Milestone #2 Playtest 2

Here were the things suggested when getting feedback from the second playtest

- Making the machines or documents move around in higher levels so the player has to chase them.
- Adding an endless mode when documents constantly spawn around the map.
- Making the time bonuses disappear if the player takes too long to get them
- Making someone chase you and you have to avoid them

2 November 2017 - Change to Time Extenders Mechanic

The time extenders that spawns in a random location every 10 seconds will disappear if the player takes too long (more than 5 seconds) to pick up. This will make players have to decide if they want to go out of their way to grab the time extender or keep faxing documents.

7 November 2017 - Prototyping Aesthetics

To improve on the aesthetics of the game, I decided to draw images representing each game object (i.e. player, documents, machines) and implement them into the game.

- Player - To establish the setting that the player is in, which is an office, I decided to draw a person wearing a suit and tie.
- Document - To differentiate the documents from the machine, the document has a curl at the top and bottom to make it look more like a piece of paper.
- Machine - Each machine has a slot on the top where the document will go in. They are also given a slight blue tint to easily differentiate the machines from the documents.
- Time Extender - It is a circle with 12 “dashes” to give it a clock-like feature. It is also given an orange tint to differentiate them from other objects.

9 November 2017 - Added a Boss

Each level will now have a Boss that will chase the Player. If the Boss catches you, the game will end. Every 2 seconds, the Boss will move several steps closer to the Player's current position, giving the Player enough time to distance themselves from the Boss.

15 November 2017 - Milestone #3 Playtest

Changes from Milestone #2:

- Time extenders will disappear after 5 seconds (2 November)
- Added visuals to distinguish player, documents, and fax machines (7 November)
- Added a boss that will chase the player every 2 seconds (9 November)

After playtesting the following suggestions were made for improvements in both game feel and difficulty and how I plan to integrate these suggestions to improve the game:

- Smoother controls - As of now it is difficult to make precise movements due to how the key inputs and timer is being handled. I will make minor changes in the code to make updating key events much smoother and precise.
- Boss movement increases over time - The boss currently moves the same amount of steps every two seconds. I plan on making the boss move slowly on the first level and making him faster throughout the game.
- Make timer more noticeable - The timer is hard to see when playtesters were focused on not getting caught by the boss and faxing all documents in. To fix this, I am thinking about integrating the timer onto the board itself by turning parts of the floor gray with respect to how much time is left.

4 December 2017 - Made Timer More Visible + Minor Tweaks

During the Milestone 3 playtest, one of the criticisms of the game that I received was how the timer was small and at the edge of the screen, making it hard to tell how much time is left. I

decided to integrate the timer into the office itself by slowly shading the floor gray depending on how much time is left.

I also made a few tweaks to the game to make gameplay last a little longer:

- The timer on the first level now starts at 100 instead of 75
- The boss take only one step every two seconds on the first level, two steps on the second level, three steps on the third level, etc.

Concept

In this game, you will be faxing multiple documents on multiple fax machines. The fax machine will be spread out in the room and each machine has its own number. The documents that need faxing will also be spread out and each document will also have its own number. The objective of the game is to put all of the right documents into the right fax machines before the time runs out or your boss catches you.