

Game Development Methodology

(2020/2021)

Group 9

Tower Domination - Playtesting Plan

Overview

The playtesting will consist of the user playing from the start of the game (class selection) to the end of the first boss (1st floor). It will occur from the 31st of May until mid June, starting with the Montra de Jogos (MOJO) event. During this playtesting, we will gather information from both the users and data collected from the game, so that we can address the different questions regarding the experience of the game, like the engagement, the progression and the balance of the game. We will then analyse carefully the data gathered in order to improve the feeling of the game for the different users.

Questions

We start out by listing the different questions that we want to see answered during this playtesting. We chose these with the different game experience goals in mind. We divided it into three different sections. The direct questions are to be answered with a certain value. The open questions are the ones that will provide us with a little more feedback and mainly will come from the player's feedback. At last, there's the agree/disagree questions which will be answered in likert scales.

Direct Questions

- What was the player's age range and gender?
- How long did the game feel (too short, too long, just right)?
- How would the player describe this game to his friends and family?
- Were there cards much stronger than others?
- What class was the most played (Warrior, Mage, Rogue)?
- Which card did the player never feel the appeal to buy?
- Were the three difficulties of combat balanced?
- Was there a dominant strategy?

Open Questions

- Which class did the player prefer playing?
- Which card did the player like the most to play with?
- How many elite combats was the player in?

- Was there any point where the player felt at risk?
- Did the game feel confusing at any point?
- What did the player like the most about the game?
- What did the player like the least about the game?
- How would the player describe their strategy?
- What other strategies did the player see or think of?
- What moments of the game were the most fun?
- What moments felt like work, or were boring?
- Did the player feel the need to continue beating their score?
- Did the player manage to control the random aspects of the game?
- Was there anything that the player wanted to do that they couldn't?

Agree/Disagree Questions

- There were enough classes
- All classes were interesting
- The level selection was easy to understand
- There was enough card diversity

Data Gathering

For the data gathering, it will be divided into three different phases. There will be the game instrumentation, a questionnaire and, in the case of direct contact with the user, we will observe and ask the players to talk about their experience while playing the game. These three different types will help us better answer the questions and we chose it this way since the majority of the playtesting will be done online.

Game Instrumentation

In this section, after each player's run of the game, we will log specific aspects of the game into the game folder. This type of data gathering will help us answer the different questions regarding mostly the balance and challenges of the game. To do so, we expect to log the following different information:

- The class chosen
- The player's HP after each combat
- The cards that were played
- The cards that were bought
- The cards that were discarded
- The cards that were destroyed
- The total duration of the run
- The level selection path that was chosen
- The result of the game

To implement this logfile, we intend to create events that run when certain actions are done, for example, when playing a card, we will save its name and increment the number of played

times. At the end of the game, we will save the different data gathered and generate a random number that will be connected with this run of the game, using it as the name file.

Questionnaire

We will ask each user to perform a quick questionnaire after their playtesting. With it, we plan to answer a lot of the questions related to the feeling of the game. We will also be able to ask more specific questions about the player's performance that couldn't be done by the data instrumentation method. We expect this type of data gathering to be the one that will provide us the best and most feedback, with the different open questions we will ask the players to answer, giving us better insight of the feel of the game.

As said above in the **Questions** section, there will be different types of questions, each one with a different representation (yes/no ; scales ; multiple lines). At the beginning, we will ask for the consent of the player and the generated code/s of the runs they played. We intend to ask some basic questions about the player like age, gender and their BrainHex class (optional). After these, we will present the different questions that we want the player to answer. We also intend to make some filtering and attention check questions in order to remove some unwanted responses from the pool. We plan that this questionnaire will take about five minutes to complete.

Live Feedback

This section will be specific to the playtesting done with a chosen set of users, where we will be on call or in person with the user. During the game, we will both observe the various reactions of the player to the game and ask the player to provide feedback while they play. We will collect this data live to later analyze it. We expect this type of feedback to be quite important to gather the different emotions that the player felt while playing the game, something that cannot be done with the game instrumentation and might not be accurate with only the questionnaire.

Procedure

We plan that each playtester will play the game with at least one of the classes. If they want, they can try the others for comparison. Each run of the game should last between 15 to 20 minutes. We will ask the users that, after the playtesting, they complete a quick questionnaire about their opinions on the game. The user will then submit to us a log file created in each run, with information gathered within the game specifically about the user's gameplay. To link the questionnaire to the logfile, we plan to generate a random number for each user and ask the user to put in on the questionnaire. The user will be given the option to receive an email regarding the findings of our playtesting sessions.

The playtesting will start at the MOJO event, with people trying out our game from the itch.io page, where we expect it to be the key event for the majority of the playtesting. Nevertheless, we will also try to expand it, by publishing our game website on other platforms for even more users. At last, we will also ask people from our surroundings to play the game, where we

expect to be able to do some synchronous playtesting, with the live feedback option of data gathering.

Analysis

After gathering the data, we will connect each questionnaire with the logs of that user. All this data will be split in 3 groups: gameplay statistics, long opinions, and direct opinions. Within gameplay statistics, we will plot all the information gathered across all user gameplays, compare them with each other and analyse the results, for example, this will allow us to see which cards are not being used or bought and then we can make changes to them accordingly. Long opinions will consist of the answers to the direct and the open questions, which will be read fully by the developers and studied for game improvement. Direct opinions will be plotted as statistics like the gameplay logs.

Sample

There will be two different types of users during this playtesting, the asynchronous and synchronous type. The majority of the sample will be composed of the asynchronous type.

Asynchronous

This type of user is composed by the MOJO attendees and the users that visit our itch.io page. Given the nature of the event and the website, we expect that this sample will be composed mostly of young adults (18-25). This type will be essential for the data gathering and will give us feedback mostly on the balance of the game and the different strategies that the users will play with.

Synchronous

This part of the sample will be composed by the users that we will ask in an active way to play. They will be divided into two types, **Via Web**, with the user sharing the screen and **Presential**. Given the state of pandemic, there will likely be a very low number of presential ones. This type of sample will be essential, as it is the unique direct contact with the users that will have. They will provide us live feedback and will help us answer more specific questions about the gameplay that cannot be answered with the other types.