

CORE GAMEPLAY

The Player Character is located on a spaceship called the ISS-Turnstone. The crew of said Spaceship has caught a virus, which slowly reduces their intelligence. Your task is to keep the ship together by performing various tasks, which are normally done by the crew. As the crew gets dumber, you must take on more and more tasks, while also balancing your original purpose, being that of a coffee machine. Failing to do so either causes the ship to be destroyed or causes you being damaged due to the frustration of the ever-stupefying humans.

GAME FLOW

To convey your position as a stationary coffee machine, your perspective switches with each minigame. The only task which is being done in a first-person view is that of your duty as a coffee machine. Every other function is being done from the view of either a camera or a diagram.

The game starts of simple with your only duty being that of providing coffee to the crew. You quickly gain control over other easy tasks, such as managing cargo. As more tasks accumulate, various interactions between minigames arise. One such example would be the use of the ships weapon systems, which require ammunition stored in the cargo space, or managing your ships energy output while you fly through an asteroid belt, balancing cutting power to avoid detection by an enemy radar and allocating power to shields to deflect small asteroids.

With additional systems under your control comes additional ways to solve various problems. Such as the above-mentioned asteroid belt scenario. This could be completed either by avoiding detection by an enemy ship or entering a combat scenario for a quicker, although be it more dangerous, result. Since you must also manage your duty as a coffee machine, in addition to an ever-increasing control over the other systems of the ship, what once was a mundane task now becomes a balancing act between keeping the ship together and satisfying the crews demand for coffee. Increasing in difficulty as the humans become more and more impatient, slurring their words or using different phrases to mean the same type of coffee.

Various upgrade paths help with automatization of different subsystems, such as an automated "Friend or Foe" detection system that allows your flak canons to automatically destroy asteroids and incoming missiles or allow the player to set key phrases which automatically trigger the dispensing of pre-selected coffee types upon said words being heard. Another way of reducing the stress of switching between minigames is to allow limited functions of some minigames to be executed in other minigames. One such example would be the ability to change the direction of shields while controlling your weapon systems or being able to emit Scan pulses while being in other minigames.

This results in an increasing difficulty curve, while also avoiding overwhelming the player.

MINIGAME DESIGN

Coffee:

Type: Bar Management. Perspective: First Person

In this mode, you take in orders from the crew. As the order is being recorded, you get a profile of the crewmember's previous preferences to aid you. In order to fulfil the request, you are required to provide the requested coffee within tolerances. As the illness spreads through the crew, the requests become more and more incoherent, and the crew becomes less tolerant of variations.

Keybindings:

- Left click: Adjust mixture. You can adjust how much milk is being added to the coffee, the grinding degree, the temperature and special variants based on ingredients such as ice-cream (Affogato), water (Americano), Hot Chocolate (Mocha) or Whiskey (Irish)
- Spacebar: Pour coffee.

Upgrades:

Preference selection algorithm

The profile displayed for the specific crew member also provides a button. Pressing this button will adjust the settings to match the previous preference.

Remote adjustment interface

Allows the player to complete basic orders while in another minigame. This interface will display the Order and the basic settings. Special variants will not be doable through this interface and the preference profile will not be displayed.

Interactions with other systems:

Cargo: When supplies run low, you can transfer new supplies from cargo to the cafeteria.

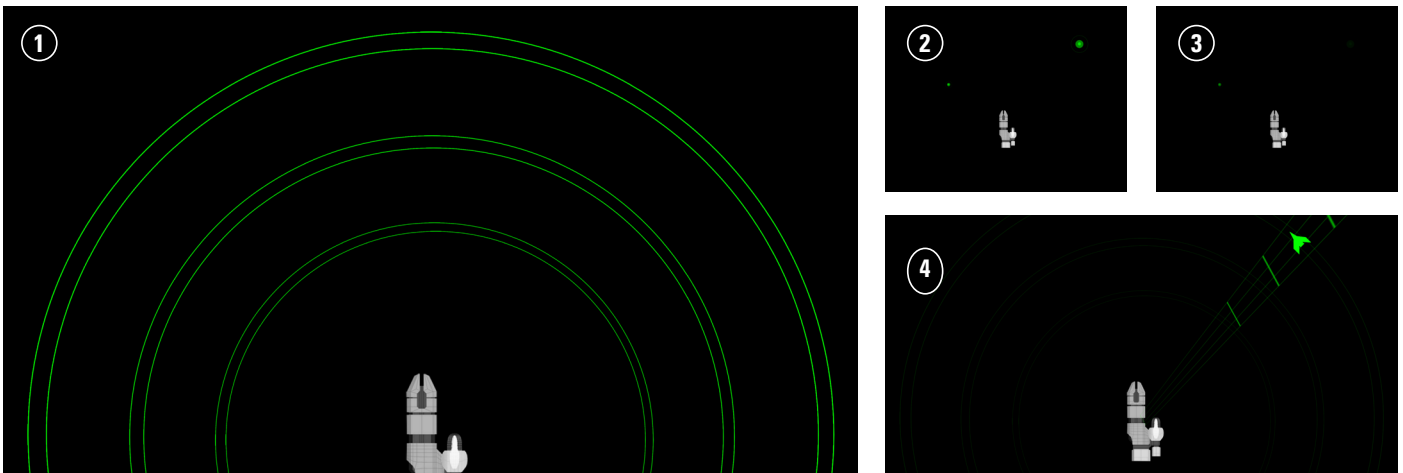
SENSORSCAN:

Type: Radar. Perspective: Top-Down.

You can emit scan pulses to determine the rough location of objects around your ship (1). While these pulses cover a wide area, they can not distinguish between asteroids or other objects and only show these radar reflections as ever fading dots (2). Objects further away will disappear quicker (3). Additionally: Objects that have an energy source such as active ships and rockets will also last longer, helping distinguish between these and asteroids. To determine the type of object, you can use a detail scan (4). This type of scan only covers a small area but allows you to determine whether an object is a ship or not. Additionally, fully scanning an object with a detail scan causes them to be displayed permanently. The duration of the scanning process is dependent on the objects size. Bigger objects take longer to scan. Time progresses slower than normal while you operate the ships sensors.

Keybindings:

- Spacebar: Sensorburst. Upon release you send out a sensor pulse. The range of the pulse is determined by how long you held down the spacebar.
- Left click: Detail scan. Scans an area around your cursor. You have to hold down the left mouse button for the duration of the scan.



Upgrades:

Scan automatization:

Causes your ship to periodically emit a minimum range "Sensorburst".

Filter algorithm:

your "Sensorburst" now shows asteroids and objects with no power source in a different colour.

Interactions with other systems:

Reactor management: Increasing the power allocated to your scanners will increase the minimum range of "Sensorburst" and reduces the time required to fully scan an object using a detail scan.

Shield / Weapons / Navigation: Scanned objects will appear in these modes. Note: Objects will always be visible if they are very close.

Repair: If your scanners are damaged, your "Sensorburst" will show phantom objects until repairs are done. These phantoms will disappear upon being scanned by your detail scan.

SHIELDS:

Type: Catch Game. Perspective: Top-Down.

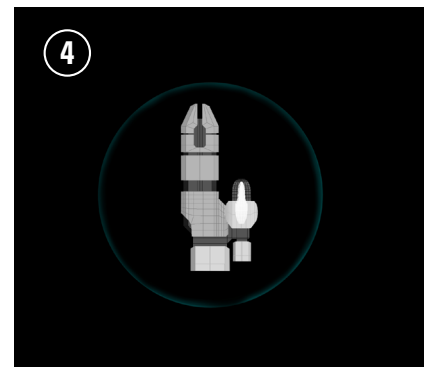
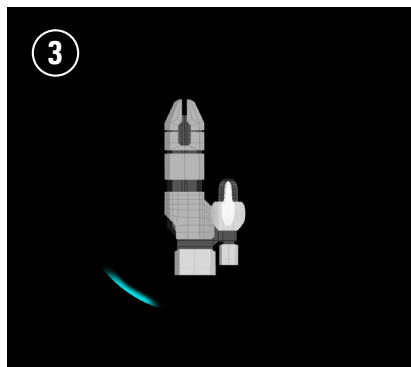
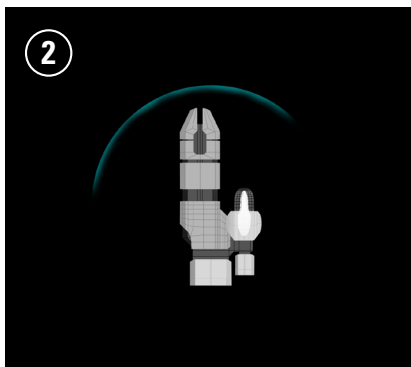
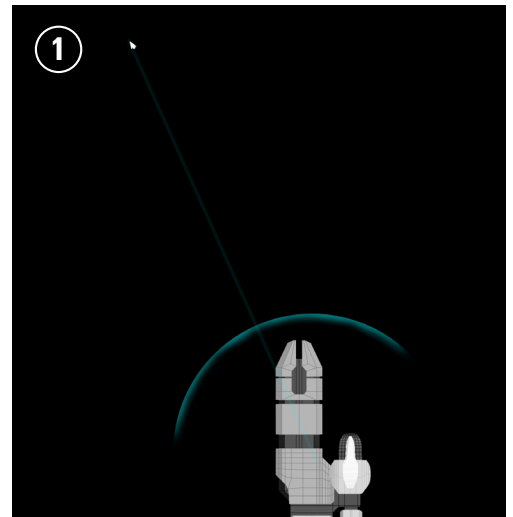
In this mode your task is to protect the ship from approaching objects. The direction of the shield is determined by the position of your cursor (1), while the size (2) and strength (3) are controlled with Q and E. A smaller shield is stronger than a wider one. Different objects require different shield strengths and failure to produce a strong enough shield causes it to collapse. A collapsed shield stays offline for a few seconds leaving the ship unprotected. The direction and shield strength are saved upon switching to another minigame.

Impacts on the ship cause damage to the specific sections.

Front left: Sensors.
Front right: Weapons.
Centre left: Cargo.
Centre right: Shields.
Back: Navigation.

Key bindings:

- Q (press): Increase shield strength.
- E (press): Increase shield radius.
- Spacebar: Shield overload. Creates an omnidirectional shield, encompassing the entire ship at medium strength. After a few seconds the shield will collapse and stay offline for a few seconds. (4)



Upgrades:

Combat-shield-redirection-protocol:

The direction of the shield can be adjusted in weapon mode [Hotkey: R].

Navigation-shield-redirection-protocol:

The direction of the shield can be adjusted in navigation mode [Hotkey: R].

Interactions with other systems:

Energy management: Allocating additional energy to the shields accelerates shield changed, increases the shield strength of shield overload and reduces the time required for a collapsed shield to regenerate.

Repair: Damaged shields decrease the radius of your shield.

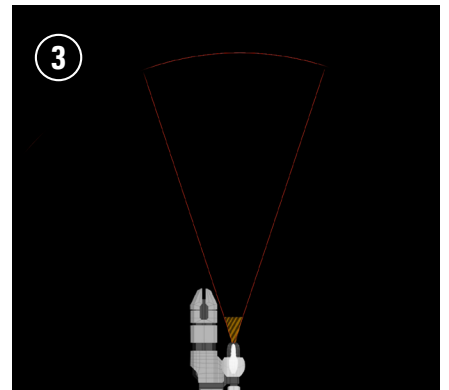
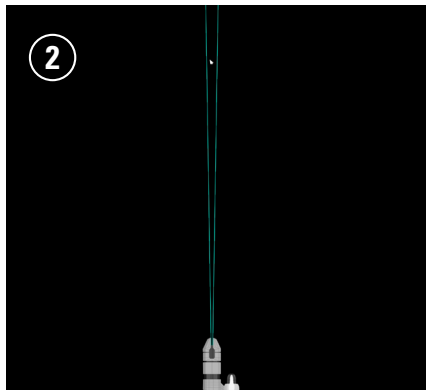
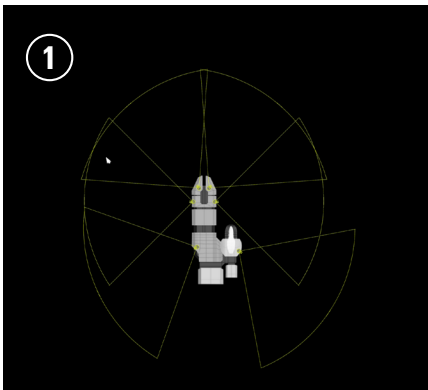
WEAPONS:

Type: Top-Down Shooter. Perspective: Top-Down.

In this mode, the player has to destroy objects (or capture them). Different weapons excel at different tasks. Laser batteries act as the ship's flak system, the main railgun is used to destroy large targets and the tractor beam is used to capture small objects. Each weapon has its own targeting reticle and displays the range of the selected weapon. The tractor beam has an additional marked area which automatically loads objects into the hangar. Aiming is done with the mouse cursor.

Key bindings:

- Q: Select flak lasers. (1)
- W: Select railgun (2)
- E: Select tractor beam (3).
- R: [Requires upgrade] Adjust shield direction.
- Left click: Fire weapon. Hold for continuous fire.



Upgrades:

Trajectory-prediction-algorithm:

Scanned ships and asteroids display a predictive reticle in their trajectory assuming consistent speed and direction. Assist in aiming.

Flak-automatization:

Automatically shoots down incoming rockets. At close range.

Interaction with other systems:

Energy management: allocating additional energy to your weapon systems increases the rounds per minute of your flak lasers, the damage and projectile speed of your railgun and the strength of your tractor beam.

Repair: Damaged weapon systems decrease the accuracy of all weapons.

NAVIGATION:

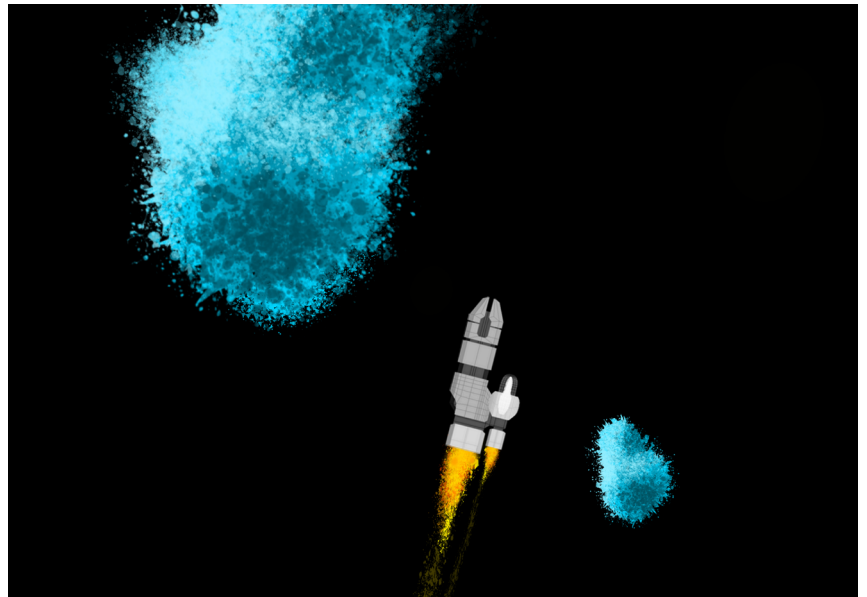
Type: Top-Down shooter. Perspective: Top-Down

In this mode, the player takes over the autopilot of the ship for precise manoeuvres. The Navigation mode acts as a framework, combining other modes for more complex solutions to problems. For example: In combination with the Energy Control mode, the player can avoid enemy detection by shutting down systems during enemy radar scans, making your ship appear like an asteroid on the enemy radar. This grants the player a stealthy solution where otherwise a combat encounter could follow. Alternatively, the player could position the ship to be protected by larger asteroids or space-junk to get an advantage during combat encounters. Due to the reliance on other systems, the Navigation mode is one of the last modes introduced to the player.

The controls are basic W, A, S, D, Q, E controls, where W and S control the ships speed, A and D make the ship turn and Q / E allow for strafing manoeuvres. The Mouse can be used to look around, however: the ship always remains within camera view.

Key bindings:

- Q: Strafe left
- E: Strafe right
- W: Accelerate forward
- S: Decelerate
- A: Turn left
- D: Turn right



Upgrades:

Boost extension:

Engines will run on maximum boost for a short time. Maximum boost is the current max cruising speed plus 20%.

Hail Mary Protocol:

Disables navigation engines, causing the ship to only be able to fly forward at maximum boost. A frontal shield is created with maximum strength. Additionally: All weapon systems will fire at maximum strength for the duration of this ability. The Hail Mary Protocol, as its name implies, is a last resort option. The increased stress on all systems involved causes each system to become damaged, in addition: Shields will collapse afterwards, the cruise speed is reduced heavily for a few seconds and weapons need to be reloaded. This leaves the ship wide open for enemy attacks, but in the hands of a skilled coffee machine, it can decide an otherwise lost battle in favour of the player. Because after all: Who could anticipate a salvaging ship to perform a mad ramming manoeuvre at max speed?

Interaction with other systems:

Energy Control: The ship's maximum cruising speed, max boost and acceleration/deceleration scale with the allocated power to the ships navigation systems.

Repair: If the ship's navigation system is damaged, it will cause the ship to constantly drift into one direction.

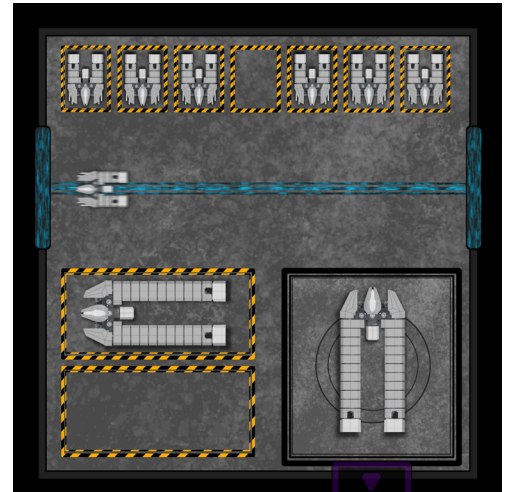
HANGAR:

Type: Drag and Drop. Perspective: Fixed Camera.

In this mode, the player manages fighter jets and transports. The player can drag individual fighters onto the deployment rail for a quick launch or assign multiple fighters or even a freighter to a wing. Within a wing: All assigned ships will act as one unit. The maximum deployment time of a wing will always be the same as the shortest deployment time of a ship in the wing. While coordinated wings cause freighters to be less likely to be damaged by enemy craft, it also reduces the combat effectiveness of fighters. A pure fighter wing will also be less likely to suffer losses, but this comes at the cost of reduced deployment time.

Fighters will seek and destroy enemy fighters, while freighters will collect cargo pods in the area. Freighters on their own will be able to be deployed for much longer than fighters.

The player can also load cargo into freighters to accomplish various missions. For example: A broken down station still has a functioning navigation relay. Loading repair robots into a freighter and deploying it will repair the reactor core for long enough, that you can interact with the station and get information of the surrounding sector.



Key bindings:

- left click: Drag ships onto the rail to launch them or drag them off the landing pad to refuel in their corresponding bay.
- right click: Select an action from a drop-down menu. Fighters: Assign fighters to a wing / Refuel weapon energy cells / Repair fighter. Freighters: Assign freighter to wing / Load or unload cargo / Repair Freighter.

Upgrades:

Management Assistance Software:

Fighters which are being placed in the correct bay will automatically be repaired and refuelled. Freighters will be emptied automatically when being placed in the correct bay.

Interaction with other modes:

Energy Control: Additional energy allocated to the hangar causes ships to be refuelled faster. In addition: Fighters will have an extended deployment time with additional energy.

Cargo: Freight can be exchanged between hangar and Cargo.

CARGO:

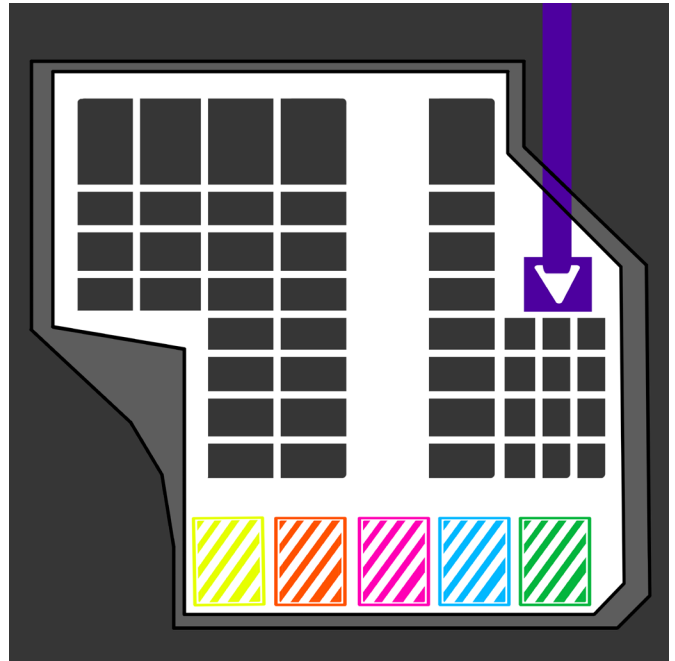
Type: Crane-game. Perspective: Fixed Camera.

In this mode, the player has to manage the ship's cargo-space using a crane. The player can pick up and drop containers of varying size, managing the cargo space in such a way as to quickly react to demands of various sections. The contents of the containers are listed in a menu which can be accessed by pressing shift. Each time the player scans a cargo container which is being transferred from the hangar, it gets an entry into the cargo list.

This simple mode is introduced early on.

Key bindings:

- W, A, S, D: Move crane
- Space bar: Pick up / drop cargo container
- Shift: Access container list



Upgrades:

Section management software:

after scanning a container, this upgrade automatically categorises the container based on its content. Scanned containers will show up in the colour of the corresponding section.

Interaction with other systems:

Hangar, Med station, Repair, Coffee, Weapons, Navigation: Freight can be transferred to these sections to keep them operational.

Hangar: Containers can be transferred from freighters which have scavenged the area, providing additional wares to be sorted in the cargo space.

Med station:

Type: Drag and Drop. Perspective: Fixed Camera.

In this mode, the player must detect injuries or illnesses of crew members. To assist the player, a copy of a previous health check up to compare.

Key bindings:

- left click: Select a piece of medical equipment to use on the patient. This can range from ingestible medicine like antibiotics or other pills, to surgical equipment for wounds.

Hovering over a section and releasing the left mouse button causes a drop-down menu to appear with specific actions for each piece of equipment.

Upgrades:

Patient abnormality detection algorithm:

This upgrade causes differences in patients from the previous health checkup to be highlighted.

Interaction with other systems:

Shields: Damage to the ship causes an increase in patient count.

Cargo: Medical equipment can be transferred from Cargo.

STORY

Stardate 2491-7-12. The ISS Turnstone has been ordered on an expedition course to the Eta sector. The mission was simple: Find a planet with the right atmosphere for an industrial outpost and map the surrounding planets. Upon exploring the planet Merius-3H and refilling their water tanks, the crew unknowingly brought back a virus which is slowly stupefies the afflicted.

In their induced stupidity, the crew broke various AI onboard of the ship and triggered the alternate overwrite for the Central AI, causing it to lose all direct control over the ship's subsystems. Only a single AI is still fully intact and as the ships other AI slowly break, the Central AI has to use it to keep the ship intact and find a way back home. The AI in question being: YOU, The coffee machine.

Log Entry 401-XK: Expedition status: Ongoing.

The crew has been acting strange. The Turnstone has been experiencing increasing turbulence and system error. As such, I have to perform my action with more care, as it is the utmost important one.

System status: Initialising.

Hydraulic stabiliser: Compensating

Internal pressure 19.03 Bar. Acceptable.

Temperature: 364.55 Kelvin.

Grinding Degree: 3.6.

To pour the perfect cup of coffee.

Warning: Heavy turbulence detected. Hydraulic stabiliser unable to compensate.

(...) and another perfect cup of coffee.

CHARACTERS

You:

The ship's coffee machine. At the beginning of the adventure, you must be convinced to do other tasks, by linking them to coffee in some degree. As you gain control over other systems, your cognitive flexibility also increases. Resulting in you being able to see that while not everything you do correlates with dispensing coffee, doing said tasks allows you to continue doing what you were intended to do. You serve coffee. The ship has coffee. The ship is in danger. Saving the ship means saving the coffee. As such: your task becomes clear. To continue your purpose of dispensing coffee you must save the ship!

Central AI [CAI]:

This character was originally designed to manage other artificial intelligences, that govern the ship's systems. As the crew in their stupidity damages its connection to other AIs, the CAI must look for an alternative to rescue the ship. The only hope being an old connection to the ship's food dispensers, one of which being the coffee machine. At first the CAI has to lie to make the coffee machine cooperate, such as rewriting the entry log for the content of a container to contain coffee instead of medical supplies and tasking the coffee machine to deliver this coffee container to the medical station. As the CAI allocates additional computing power to the coffee machine, it also becomes smarter. Resulting in a growing partnership between the coffee machine and the Central Artificial Intelligence.

Crew Members:

Various members of the crew, which through entry logs display how the virus affects their intelligence. Example: A mechanic could write "Warning Log 2-A7. Core instability warning generated at 1:09 central processing cycle. Recalibrated Core 6 to solve this issue." While later as he becomes more stupid logs such as these: "red blinky light appeared. light annoying. smacked light with metal thingy. light no more blinky. fixed! jim said I smart. me like jim. such nice guy." appear, explaining the increase in ship errors that you have to fix.