Interactive Media and Game Development

Project

Introduction

• ARG story:
  - monolithic game corporation (like EA) is trying to take over the world
  - using videogames to turn people into zombies (or something)
  - lone game developer who’s smuggling out bits of information in little arcade games
  - help the player foil the plot
• Or:
  - There is an AI on the web... roaming, seeking to communicate
  - it’s making games in order to learn what we’re like
    * find someone who will nurture/harbor/keep safe the AI instead of destroying it
  - player has the choice to save it or delete it
• Or:
  - Someone is using little games to carry bits of code to machines all over the Internet
  - Each game installs a bit of code on your machine (not really)
  - When you’ve played all the games the new program is assembled
    * something either miraculous (birth of the first sentient AI?)
    * Or terrible (launches the ICBMs)
Game Idea Suggestions

- **Goal**: build complete, mini-game
  - Constrain idea by resources (time)
    - Think small (done by Wednesday!)
  - Additional puzzle? (Ask and list)
- **Extend custom game you’ve been making**
- **Take tutorial and modify**
  - Custom art
  - New gameplay (ie- powerups, weapons)
  - Boss levels
- If completely from scratch, think smaller
- See other Game Maker games made for inspiration

Good Communication

- All games begin with an *idea*
  - Original, mod of earlier game, or from sequel, film license
- But an idea alone is not enough
- Need enough elaboration that team members can begin their work
  - Programmers to deliver features
  - Artists to bring the various characters and places to life with sound and graphics
  - Designers to put together entertaining world
  - Testers to verify and communicate shortcomings back
- Documentation is integral to every role in the game development process
- Here, we just want communication
Building Your Game (1 of 2)

• Organize into groups
  - Group of 2 ideal
  - Group of 1 or 3 possible
• Discuss and determine game idea
• Design art and gameplay
• Determine art assets needed
  - Sound, music, tiles, sprites
  - For sprites, consider directions and frames for movement

Building Your Game (2 of 2)

• Determine tasks
  - Sprites/Tiles to draw
  - Art to select
  - Sound to select
  - Objects to program
  - Testing
  - Don’t forget splash screen, directions ...
• Assign tasks
  - Pair-programming encouraged
• Create timeline
  - Approximate, number of hours or chunks of time
  - Work backwards from due time
• Build + Test
Misc

• **Title and Description**
  - Descriptive title
  - One-sentence description - Distilling game concept down to a single sentence can help pin down what’s core

• **Game Summary**
  - Describe game in attention-grabbing paragraph
  - List of novel features

Tips for Working in Groups

• Find things you have in common
  - Interest in topic, kind of game
  - You can almost always find something ... work forward from that

• Make meeting conditions good
  - Room to talk, write

• Let everyone talk
  - Don’t interrupt, finish sentences

• Check your egos at the door
  - “Egoless” brainstorming, art, coding

• Praise each other
  - Find something nice to say, even if it’s a stretch.
  - Even the worst of ideas has a silver lining inside it

• Phrase alternatives as questions
  - Instead of “I think we should do A, not B,” try “What if we did A, instead of B?”
  - That allows people to offer comments, rather than defend one choice.

• Avoid conflict at all costs
  - When stress occurs take a short break. Clear your heads, apologize, and take another stab at it.

• Be open and honest
  - Talk with your group members if there’s a problem, and talk with me if you think you need help

http://www.alice.org/bvw2001/tips.html
• Idea
  - Gameplay
  - How it fits in
• List of art assets
  - Draw or select
• List of programming
• Art - what is needed? Draw? Get?