

Conclusion Chapter

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Summary

Overall it was a very rewarding experience. Though, compared to what we had initially planned, our game resulted in having much less features - which does not necessarily need to be a bad thing. Feedback has mostly been positive and some of the implemented features are actually rather distracting from the actual gameplay. Though it shows, that during the planning stage we were too optimistic about the progress we would be able to achieve. We were able to stay on schedule only for roughly the first three weeks, before things started getting off schedule. One of the major ideas missing in the final game is the puzzle solving, as this indeed showed to be too difficult to implement and we already had enough problems with keeping the random environment in check. But overall the main game idea remained over the whole time of the course and - based on the feedback - seems to work.

The deliverables were mostly helpful at keeping us working and on track with the schedule - except for the paper prototype which we experienced as a bit pointless for our game. The most helpful deliverable in the process was certainly the playtesting chapter. It really showed how players would play our game and in what ways it was flawed. Though, the remaining time was almost too short to really change all the necessary things. But starting playtesting earlier would probably also not have resulted in an enjoyable experience for the players. This also means that there were a lot of changes done since the alpha release. First and foremost in terms of graphics but also in terms of interaction with the environments, UI and understandability of what is going on in the game. For example the addition of lights to the enemies, to indicate their size, was a very helpful feature. Returning back to the old version made us miss this feature quite instantly as it was again really hard to tell smaller enemies from bigger ones - no matter for how long we had already played the game.

Visuals

The end result of the graphics was rather a lucky guess: After the playtesting some of the responses were, that it is too difficult to say what's going on on screen. So we started to make all environments semi transparent such that enemies can also be spotted if they are within an environment. It also made the environments a bit less prominent. Finally, in the last week of coding, we then tried some other illumination techniques and ended up with a darker background and the spotlight in front of the prisms. The feedback for it was great and the graphics are also the aspect of the game we are most proud of!



Sound

Within the last week we also added some sounds to the game. One to indicate when we eat an enemy and another one to indicate when the player is hurt by something. These were also things we were told to do by players that were invited to our playing sessions. Also two days before release, we added some soothing background music which makes the whole experience much more relaxing and enjoyable.

Tutorials

In the last week we also implemented three basic tutorials. One, which introduces the player to eating enemies. Another one to make them aware of the environments and how to avoid them. And the last one being a basic form of the actual game with all the abilities, such that the player can get used to them. This also showed that the code was not well enough structured as gathering some information, happening somewhere in the game, was rather difficult. The feedback for the tutorials was good but at the booth demo after the presentation we saw no body playing them - it seems that the basic gameplay is self explanatory enough.

Conclusion

Over all we would have liked to have some more time to polish our game. This being said, it was a tight schedule but also very rewarding. We learned a lot about working in Unity and about how to structure the code. Also the benefits and problems of working in a team of people from individual backgrounds belonged to the experience, that we all take home from this semester project.

Q&A

What was the biggest technical difficulty during the project?

The main difficulty here was generating the levels. Since there were supposed to be no boundaries, we had to come up with some level design that continues endlessly. This does work as long as the player does not get too big. At the same time the placing of the environment blocks is getting out of control once the player reaches the boundary of a designated area.

What was your impression of working with the theme?

Evolution is an interesting subject and after some time of thinking about it, gives a lot of possible pathways to build a game.

Do you think the theme enhanced your game, or would you have been happier with total freedom?

At the beginning we would have been happier to have total freedom but this probably would have resulted in a game totally out of bounds of the given time. So, eventually everyone of us was happy with the game choice.

What would you do differently in your next game project?

We would build a better code structure to not run into problems later on during development. After some time we had to add features which quickly showed were not so easy to implement due to the way it was coded up until now.

What was your greatest success during the project?

The greatest success was most probably the change in graphics which really added some simplistic beauty to the game.

Are you happy with the final result of your project? Of course. Though we would have liked to have a few less bugs and that the playing experience wouldn't degraded as longer as one plays (due to bugs and unbalanced parameters).

Do you consider the project a success?

Yes, absolutely!

To what extend did you meet your project plan and milestones?

We hit the low and medium target pretty much on time but then things started to get more difficult to implement than we intended.

Did you like the Unity engine?

We really liked working with unity as it already provides a lot of features that we therefore did not have to care about. Though in the beginning it needed a bit getting used to as the way of coding in it is vastly different than in usual programming projects.