

Game Design & Development III

CGR 255

Professor Morrison

Alpha Requirements

Purpose

An Alpha is generally the first time that the developer can make it from the beginning of the game to the end of the game in some way. It is not a “pretty” version of the title, but it is a very functional one. It is a piece of software that demonstrates to the publisher and/or producers of the development team that the project can be seen all the way through technically. From this point forth, relief should be felt by the Technical Director in that what the GDD called for has become possible.

Instructions

Prove to your publisher that the Designer’s vision of this title is possible from beginning to end. This cannot be stressed enough! There must be some way for the publisher to “complete” this game. This is a “feel good” milestone for both the development team and the publisher – so do just that.

In addition to handing in a CD with your Alpha submission, each team should write a “game-completion” plan. This entails a step-by-step guide on how the publisher can succeed when playing your Alpha title. Essentially, this small document could be written as a flowchart because it instructs the publisher on which decisions to take (the decisions that work!). This should be presented at the same time the CD is presented.

Finally, start a bug-tracking DB. Anything and everything goes into this DB – even suggestions from testers. The spreadsheet or DB that you use for this should be considered a working document through to the end of the semester and should be available whenever the publisher wishes to see it. In other words, the structure for this DB or spreadsheet should be fleshed out immediately and used ASAP.

Scoring

Scoring is based on the following criteria:

- Game Completion Plan
 - o Was the list handed in with the Alpha?
 - o Was it accurate?
- Bug Tracking DB
 - o Has it been available whenever the publisher required it (from the class following the one in which this document was presented)?
 - o Is it available to all members of the development team and actively used by each member?
 - o Are the bugs categorized and prioritized?
- Alpha CD
 - o Can the publisher complete the game from beginning to end?
 - o Does the game still follow the guidelines laid out in the GDD?
 - o Was it “really” tested or just assumed to be OK since it is a modification?
- Subjective
 - o Would a publisher feel comfortable advancing with this project?