



Wasting No Time

by Brad Buchanan

Hello from BarrelEye! We are a team of seven Carnegie Mellon students working with Electronic Arts to create a connected living room experience utilizing Smart TV technology. We are thrilled to be working with the Office of the Chief Creative Officer at EA this semester, and we're looking forward to building a new and different experience with their assistance.

We hit the ground running on our first day. After an orientation to the Silicon Valley campus and assembling our workspace we walked into a boardroom with the EA team and learned about our task for the semester. They've given us an intense production schedule that will begin with some rapid prototyping on the technology and research on related experiences. It was an honor to be introduced to Rich Hilleman, Vice President and Chief Creative Officer, and to Dan Driscoll, Associate designer. We will be working with Dan a lot this semester.

Dan's first task for us was to try out the Artemis Spaceship Bridge

Simulator, a connected cooperative multi-screen experience. He arranged for us to train on the simulator each day this week in order to familiarize ourselves with a multi-screen experience and build a shared vocabulary for designing one of our own – not to mention, it's a lot of fun.

It's not all fun and games though. We've hit a few bumps in the first week while setting up access to EA's resources, and our first deadline is very close: We are to pitch three game ideas to the OCCO next Tuesday. We got to work right away.

On Tuesday we started work on our team identity, selecting "BarrelEye" as a team name (it's a kind of fish) and getting our group and team photos taken by Carl. On Wednesday we had started our logo design, and we met with Dan again and starting our brainstorming in earnest, filtering through dozens of ideas to find those that really fit our project goals – a connected, living-room experience that will attract attention on a trade show floor.

By Thursday we were narrowing down our list of ideas and getting all our project organization set up. We had another long brainstorming session and attended a class where we watched Randy Pausch's lecture on time management, a very timely reminder. We were also getting pretty good on the Artemis simulator by this time, and we were probably overconfident when we failed a mission for the first time!

Friday we finally got one computer set up with all the licenses and credentials needed to build the example game the OCCO provided to us. We also refined our brainstorming further and met with Jiyong, Carl, and Dan to get their feedback on our game ideas. We finally got our list down to three and assigned weekend responsibilities so we can have the pitch ready to go on Tuesday. We didn't expect to work through the first weekend, but the OCCO likes to move fast and it's very exciting. We're looking forward to an incredible semester!