HUDDLE UP AND REGROUP

This was week 12 and one of those weeks were we looked back on a lot of elements to pick and refine the ones that feel right and leave the others behind.

Play Test #3 Feedback

We conducted our last play test at the Most Wanted Art Gallery and for this week of development we took a lot from the feedback we received at the last play test. Our key takeaways were

Leveling up mechanism felt complicated and none of the players really cared about the icons (representing the level of the territory) over the territory indicator.
The population numbers did not mean anything for the players. Most of them were confused as to what this numbers represented while others did not care about it at all. People do exactly as the game tells them to. They prefer following rather than experimenting during the free gameplay.
The game is super fun but everyone had concerns about how it would sound like having 100+ people doing the same thing. Overall we got a good number of play testers, 24 naive players to play the game over the course of a couple of hour.

Game Play Iteration

Taking all the feedback into account, the team regrouped to brainstorm over how to make best use of feedback and suggestion we got. We decided to make the below set of changes

to the game -

- Take away the population figures from the game since it is really difficult to make others understand how these numbers impact the game. Also they are small compared to actual area occupied by the country and get shadowed.

- Take away the level up indicators have been changed to simple "stars". These are analogous to power and each territory can only have at max five stars.

- During conflict each country losses 1 star each but the one with the more number of stars ends up winning the territory.

- The twist ending in the game would be that virus starts attacking all the countries from all sides from outside of the map moving towards the center.

- Much clear feedback will be added to indicate conflict between countries.

- Also a major change we will be adding to the gameplay would be running the game back-to-back. The first time the players would fail and would know what exactly to do working closely with their teams on the next iteration to beat the virus and save humanity.

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Professional QA and Play Testing

This was one of the things that Jesse Schell pointed out as part of our halves feedback. And we have followed this up as most of our efforts to try and test our application on most iOS and Android devices have been met with bottlenecks. For Android the microphone is not supported on the emulator and the application crashes. Whereas for applications developed in Unity3D, there is very limited support for iOS emulator and it freezes the application at start up itself. For such reasons, our best bet has been to try and get our application out to the market as both Apple and Google have different processes for publishing the application and require different timelines. We reached out to Metaverse Mod Squad, a company based in California and do a lot of QA and play testing for the game industry. We are currently working with them on setting up an actual play test in Sacramento office getting 50-70 people under one roof for running our game experience. This would be an invaluable experience for getting a sense of how the game will perform in the actual festival with a large audience.

Publishing the Application

One of our challenges has been to publish the application on both the Android and the iOS market. For publishing the application on iOS, we have reached out to CMU main campus for permission to publish the application through the CMU account. Unfortunately we were informed today that our request has been declined primarily because the application and the client are not affiliated with the university as well as after the Games for Change festival the application may not be used again. We will continue to talk with Laura Welsh from main campus in order to determine what our next step will be. Tricky part here is the ETC does not have permission/access to have its own account to publish an application on iOS. On the other hand, publishing to Android is comparatively less stressful. We confirmed with Steve and we will be providing him with our first build of the Android application on Monday to get the process started.

The team is working hard to implement the major gameplay elements and bring the game up for a final end to end execution. That's it from this week, see you all next week!

Mayank Grover