SOFT'S TURNAROUND

This week we had our Soft's Opening Monday and we got a good amount of feedback from faculty members all around. We have incorporated that feedback into our core-gameplay and did multiple iterations on different levels to improve the game.

Soft's Feedback Highlights

The complete compiled feedback for all the faculty members that visited the team is available in complete details at this document. A summary of the high level feedback is below

- The calibration process should be fail proof. Asking the players to re-calibrate takes them completely out of the experience.

- A lot of the faculty members like the 1960s art style of the game which is both simple and elegant.

- The game mostly lacks pacing issues as the events seemed to be more absurd and randomly placed.

- The visual feedback for the use of stars in different parts of the game was slightly different which could be potentially confusing for naive players.

- The impact for people losing the game needs to be bigger as it should highlight the fact why humans lost the game.

- Virus if can recede could be a really powerful emotion.

- We have taken this feedback into account and made a number of changes on multiple levels in the game.

Conflict Rules

Conflict rules in the game have been modified to make the visual feedback much more consistent and easily understandable by players.

- To this extent the current rule set is -

- Stars are used for expansion in the game

- One star is destroyed every X seconds while a territory is trying to expand and is at conflict with some other territory.

- When a star exploded, it clears the surrounding area of enemy territory which can then be occupied by other territories.

- A territory cannot expand without stars.

- A territory can have at minimum zero stars.

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Internal Play Testing

After each step of making changes, we did multiple play tests internally. Since we are familiar with the game in-and-out, we adopted a different strategy for play tests. We asked naive players, 5-6 each time to look at the game as passive observers. Since near the end of the semester everyone is busy with their deadlines, we asked them to observe the simulation of the game that would take around 5 minutes. This was primarily done to get a sense of the changes we made to the UI layer are on the right track. Overall we received a good amount of feedback and the players were able to understand the game elements, they got the goal of the game, they understood mostly all the aspects of the game. Overall this gave us a sense of that the changes we made were for the better.

Metaverse ModSquad Play Test

We hired an external company, Metaverse ModSquad (MVMS), for conducting an large scale play test for us. This was scheduled for last Friday. Due to external factors there was a low turnover in number of the players for the play test. But we did get some statistics and feedback from these players. Overall this looked promising. A summary of the feedback form filled in by all the players can be accessed at this link. Since we did not meet our expected number of players, the company will be doing another play test for us this time in San Francisco. This is scheduled for Tuesday, 30th April.

What's Next

Currently the team is working on polishing the rules and the visual feedback for the Virus stage of the game to make the appeal consistent throughout the game. This will be highly crucial on delivering up the emotion and the dramatic twist of the game. This is the build of the game that we will be handing over to the MVMS for the play test. We are also targeting BVW Festival as a potential ground for demoing our game in front of naive audience.

That's it for this week. See you all next week.

Mayank Grover