



Making the Factory of Tomorrow



Week 3 – February 3, 2012

To the Motor City...

Preparation

Week three continued our process of determining the best way to approach the project. Our client phone meeting revealed a few more details and avenues for us to pursue and consider. It also emphasized our internal concerns about the scope of the project and how we should best work to narrow our focus before quarters. We also tried to generate new ideas and paths that we were to reveal to our client on Friday during our visit to Michigan.

Flint Assembly

Our client visit this week kicked off with a trip to GM's Flint Assembly complex, specifically the GMT900 based Chevy Silverado and GMC Sierra truck lines. This was a fascinating and insightful experience for the team as we gained an appreciation for the sheer scale and complexity of the processes we are to attempt to simulate. While our tour was perhaps not as linear as we had hoped, in terms of seeing all the processes required to build a truck from start to finish, we were able to get a feel for the main steps in the manufacturing process. The tour also exposed us to the atmosphere of the plant, the people that work there, and the sights and sounds one should expect to see in a manufacturing simulation. From a logistical perspective, it was most impressive how vehicles could be assembled in a seemingly random order, with the appropriate components arriving at the precise time they are needed, as if by magic.

Client Meeting

Shortly after our visit to Flint, we arrived at the GM Tech Center in Warren. We met with Bob and Ron and continued to discuss the project and how we should work to approach the challenge. It was very useful to meet our clients in person and to see how we should best consider prioritizing and aligning client expectations with our own team abilities. As we rapidly roll toward quarter presentations, it is our hope that this meeting has set the stage for some quick decision-making and compromise as we begin the build phase of our project.

Where We're Going

Week four will be our first crunch time of the semester as we work with our clients to narrow our projects focus and begin to go into production and quarters. Today, we do not have a fully defined focus, but many doors are open, so this week will certainly be a busy one.

<http://www.etc.cmu.edu/projects/gm-serious-game/>

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