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Newsletter: Week of Oct. 22th, 2012

OVERVIEW

This week, we prepared for Softs and began implementing in Unity. On Monday, we ran through a practice presentation that addressed the design and technical challenges we have encountered thus far, and the solutions we came up with for these problems. On the technical side, now that we have settled on the Unity game engine as our development environment, Duarte has been evaluating the technical feasibility of implementing the interactions we are looking for in Unity- like swiping, pinch-to-zoom, and so forth.

From Monday onward, our team jumped into our first implementation. Duarte began creating the different scene elements- like the top-down map view and our places screen- and integrated the weather data quickly. Because of our pop-up style, our art style will be 2D, but implemented in a 3D environment.

This means that most of our 3D models will be incredibly simple- merely cubes. All but one side of the cube will be transparent, and on the opaque side, we will use a texture with a transparent background. Alex has been developing these textures- different images for different kinds of weather, and the different objects to display in our place view. Mara has been 3D modeling and animating the objects that will require depth and movement- like the book upon which our pop-up-world will occur, and the avatar who will live in our virtual world and interact with its weather.

Here are 2 screenshots from our current build. In the first, you see the map view with the island's weather juxtaposed on top. If you click the map over Funchal, you get brought to the place screen for Funchal. This build is using placeholder content- for the final version, the interaction and content will be different.





Plans: On Monday, we have our Halves presentation. We will present on our progress thus far, highlighting the implementation and work done most recently in Unity with placeholder content and a sample scene. From there, we will jump full-bore into content creation and implementation.

Progress: We have the back-end coming along well. The XML file with all of the weather data is sent to the phone. On the front-end, we have settled on our pop-up book visual style and the format and presentation of our home screen map.