

It's off to work we go!

This week, the team continued diligently working on Magic Tiles and developing it towards its final state. Jennifer drew up the final maps detailing the positions of the animals, and how many squares to the left and right they can jump back and forth. Kai-Hsin modified the code according to these new level maps and the traveling distance of the animals. He added level transitions and implemented the tile sound effects that Adam made. He modularized the Unity project so that the animal models and animations could be worked on separately. Pei-Lin made prefabs for each of the animals, applied the appropriate animations and textures, and adjusted the models so that they had a flattering camera angle.

Osaka Internal Meeting and Meeting with Cooper

During Monday afternoon, Jennifer, Montserrat, and Stephen met to discuss the new textures that would be made. We decided to use color-based levels, and create corresponding textures for the animals, props, and tiles. The color of the background tiles also changes with each level. The animal textures would have naturalistic markings, but done in a cartoon style. The use of a cartoon shader in Unity would also help further the cartoon aesthetic. After our internal meeting, we met with Cooper via Skype to discuss these new art changes for Magic Tiles.

Artworks

Over the course of the week, Stephen worked on and completed the new textures for the adult polar bear. Megan and Amy made adjustments to the animal animations. Amy also worked on the new animal textures. Montserrat completed some animal and prop textures and worked on the opening and closing animations for Magic Tiles. Jennifer joined in on texture making and made new seal and prop textures. Dave has been sending us PNG sequence files for our backgrounds and level transitions.

On Tuesday, the team sent an art style update to the client and our advisors. We included visual examples of our new cartoon style, tile motif, and new animations so that the client could see our progress towards unifying the characters, background videos, and effects.

Weekly Skype Meeting with Pittsburgh

On Wednesday, we did our weekly Skype with Pittsburgh. For both of our interactives, we need to be able to run them on four computers and display them on the EDG LED screen simultaneously. John informed us about their solutions for splitting up EDG Twitter to the four screens, and Peter Kinney is helping us to rewrite some code so that we can accomplish the screen split. On the Magic Tiles side, we have decided that it's best to use Unity networking, so that the game can be run on four computers. The computers will sync up and play the game at the same time, like playing a car racing game on multiple machines.

That afternoon, Cooper sent an email to the team stating that he would be testing our content at the EXPO site on Friday at noon, and asked for packages by Friday at 5:59 AM.

Playtesting!

That evening, the team did a playtest of the latest build of the working game, which included all of the new textures, and captured video of the playtest to show the new artwork. We wanted to show the client our progress towards improving the experience and unifying the style, so that they can be reassured that our experience is high quality.

Team

Stephen Garland
Amy Kawabata
Megan Kennedy
Kai-Hsin Liu
Pei-Lin Lu
Montserrat Presno
Jennifer Sheu

Advisors

Dr. Salvador Barrera
John Dessler
Shirley Saldamarco

10 Second Trailer and Magic Tiles Explanation

At 2 AM on Thursday, Cooper sent an urgent email saying that the EXPO committee requested a 10 second long full-size (6820 by 960 pixels) trailer for each of our interactives that would be due on Friday, and the IT Evaluation Team in the EXPO committee asked for a document explaining why our contents changed from "Safe Spot" to "Polar Rescue" to "Magic Tiles." The deadline for the explanation document was at 11 AM on the same day. Both Kai-Hsin and Stephen contributed their thoughts for the write-up, and Cooper wrote a Korean version to submit to the committee.

Another Osaka Internal Meeting and Skype with Cooper

The Osaka team met during Thursday afternoon. First, we discussed the final deliverables for our project. We then talked about the test materials that would be due for Friday, and a 10 second trailer for both of our experiences.

After the internal meeting, we talked with Cooper over Skype to get more details about the 10 second trailer and tests on Friday. It turned out that we don't have to test EDG Twitter and Magic Tiles on Friday, and we could just conduct our tests when we are in Yeosu instead. As there was going to be an EXPO committee meeting the next day, we needed to submit as much of the updated artwork as possible to prove to the committee that progress was being made on Magic Tiles and that the interactive should be included in the show.

That evening, Stephen put together a video with footage from the playtest and sent it to Cooper on Friday morning, along with our storyboards, grey character animation videos, new character textures, and the background music.

Making of the 10 Second Trailers

On Friday, the team quickly played Magic Tiles to make Fraps for use in the 10 second trailer. That afternoon, Stephen composited together a trailer and sent it to Cooper to give to the EXPO committee. John sent the EDG Twitter trailer.

EXPO Committee Feedback and Last Minute Travel Details

On Saturday, we found out that only Cooper, Jennifer, Pei-Lin, Kai-Hsin, and Stephen would be making the trek to Yeosu for testing, and Salvador and Mika will not be accompanying us, due to the tight timing of the trip. Cooper sent the team an email with the feedback from the EXPO committee. The head of the committee pretty much liked our playtest video, but the committee decided to reserve their approval because it is difficult to tell without seeing the real interaction and all of it working. One of their feedback asked why we used cartoon characters, and not realistic or famous "proven" characters such as Pororo or Mickey Mouse. That evening, the Osaka team talked with Cooper via Skype about our trip schedule and flight and hotel details, and the EXPO committee feedback.

Some minor changes will be made to the Magic Tiles artwork and programming before everything (including our network camera!) is packaged up to take with us to Yeosu on Monday. Please wish us luck!

