



Week 13 Newsletter - April 13, 2012

Simplify

This week, the team made a small but significant revision to the design of the experience that greatly simplifies and enhances the concept without creating any added programming challenges. The Machine-building activity will revolve around one central community Machine, rather than many disparate entities. This will be achieved by requiring all placed e-Gears (electronic Gears) to be connected to an existing e-Gear in the online Machine.

Players click to select the desired e-Gear when prompted to connect, and can make their selection based on whatever criteria are meaningful to them, such as the deed's story, the appearance of the e-Gear, the location of the deed, or some connection to a personal interest. By opening up the selection criteria, much more room becomes available for emergent behavior to arise.

Additionally, now that Gear Tags are being printed on merchandise such as stickers and t-shirts, the Gear Tag concept is being reformed into an all-purpose entity. Rather than using the system to connect e-Gears with Gear Tags, players can print or order as many Gear Tags as desired, as a commodity. They then add the ID# of their e-Gears to the Gear Tag - by allocating this action to the players, it opens up the possibilities for creative Gear Tag use.

Nuts & Bolts

With Soft Opening looming on the horizon, the team is moving forward with strong progress on the programming and art production. The Login, Home, About, and FAQ pages are completed, and e-Gear animations have been completed and are being implemented into the site. Additionally, forum and Add e-Gear functionality has been implemented, and the site has been optimized to be displayed on mobile devices. Currently, the programmers are working hard at solving routing issues, which, once overcome, will allow much more functionality to be rapidly implemented.

Playtesting

The designers have been hard at work orchestrating and organizing several playtests to be performed by the end of next week. First on the list is this Sunday's trip to the Christ Church at Grove Farm, where the team will present *kindworks* to a youth group (ages 8-21) of approximately one hundred members. The primary purpose of this playtest will be to assess the array of good deeds and ways of promoting them that the youth group members generate. The presentation will consist of an initial focus group session to obtain some qualitative data in those regards, and the subsequent activity that the group will engage in is the Facebook-based experience that has been an ongoing process thus far. After one week, the team will review



Week 13 Newsletter - April 13, 2012

results.

The team also is preparing to hold a playtest tailored to a specific event next Friday, utilizing a tour group visiting the ETC. While those plans are still being finalized, the general idea as of now is that the tour group will visit the team's project room at both the beginning and end of their tour, and will witness staged events with opportunities to provide aid for a random stranger. The test will be a behavioral study to determine whether awareness of *kindworks* makes the participants more likely to engage in altruistic acts.

The Home Stretch

With one week remaining before Soft Opening, the team will be hard at work next week wrapping up loose ends and completing the remaining programming and art asset production. Based on the headway made this past week, the team seems to be in good position to reach completion.

Work this week also included the filming of interviews and the recording of voiceovers for the three-minute promotional video for the project's media archives. All footage has been obtained, and the team is in the process of trimming down content to fit the three-minute duration. The three-minute and thirty-second video rough cuts will be finished by Soft Opening, and additional documentation, such as a draft of the project post-mortem and all Web content will be prepared. Efforts next week also will include generating visuals to post in the project room and organizing the room itself to accommodate the presentation.