CS 591: Game Development, Spring 2008

1   Title

Quintellus

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2   Overview

For centuries two factions have lived with an uneasy peace in the city of Quintellus. Stability only reached through diplomacy by the leaders of the factions, whose friendship was the only thing stopping a civil war. On one side was a society who believed in science, in technology, and the continuous pursuit of breaking down the world around them in an attempt to understand. On the other was a society who believed in mysticism, in magic, and harmonization with the world. One day, the leaders were both assassinated, both societies blaming each other and the city quickly becomes a battlefield. Fifty years later, the war is still taking place, and the once densely populated Quintellus is now a shell of its former self. A city that once was home to hundreds of thousands is now shelter to a few hundred. It is up to the player to decide which side they are on, to uncover the truth and restore peace. Each side has it's own perspective and storyline to follow.

The "world" for the player is really a futuristic city, around which the player will be able to navigate somewhat freely. To start, the player will have a limited area which is reachable with their current skill set. The city is in the midst of chaos, with some areas posing a larger threat to the player than others, as the player progresses they will be able to reach more areas within, and possibly outside of, Quintellus. Throughout the game, the player will be exploring different buildings and structures within the city, talking to other characters, and uncovering artifacts scattered through the city and some surrounding areas.

The game is a single-player game directed towards teenage and older boys. Teen would be the expected rating, as there is violence in the game. The game would appeal to fans of role-playing and action

games alike. It caters to the action crowd by giving a lot of enemy interactions while still letting the player enjoy the game somewhat leisurely and only play for roughly an hour at a time, or less. It will appeal to the role-playing crowd by having a deep story, lots of character customization with abilities and the ability to upgrade attributes. It won't be as time consuming as an RPG, and will have plenty of secret locations and items to add to replayability.

3   Gameplay

i.   Experience

The game behaves as an adventure with some aspects of role-playing game development. The world will 'unlock' itself based on items and enhancements the character has found, in some cases the enemies will also act as a barrier to the player. These enhancements include increased mobility in terms of running and jumping, as well as taking on upgraded armor and character customization. The role-playing comes into play with the selections available to the character, who may chose to increase armor instead of weaponry or mobility. For instance, if the character should decide to wear heavier armor, they will be less vulnerable to attack, but may move slower or be unable to use some weapons or items. Also the choice of what items are equipped will impact the abilities the player has, as some items may be incompatible with others, or negatively effect the player by having some side-effect like slowly taking away life. Some of the decisions the player makes will greatly impact their effectiveness in areas. The player will not necessarily "level up", instead they will have some attribute upgrades in the forms of life increasing items scattered throughout the world, as well as armor upgrades. In this way the character will be able to survive encounters with enemies in areas they were unable to survive before. As previously mentioned, the player will have choices to make as to what to use in some areas of the world. Scattered throughout the city are "safe houses" that are controlled by the players faction. In these locations the player can sell unneeded items, purchase new low-level (potions, etc...) items, save their game, and be directed toward their next goal. They will be fairly common, though not very nearby in

cases when the player is on a new mission or in a 'dungeon'.

To start in the world, the player will need to run, jump, and be able to fight. Each side will have its own skillset, with some common weapons. Regardless of which faction the player sides with, they will be able to gain both offensive and defensive skills. The magic users will be able to use element-based attacks such as fire, electricity, and ice in addition to healing magic. They will also gain some enhancement magic such as being able to manipulate the environment with their skills, such as creating an ice bridge, or using fire to propel themselves in a higher jump. The technology users will need to focus on potions, but will also be able to manipulate devices around them, and will make use of more advanced weaponry.

> ii. Interface

The interface would be kept as clean as possible and have only as many indicators of the players condition on-screen as possible. Health and Energy will consistently be on-screen (presumably in the upper-left), and any other indicators that are necessary for the player at a given point and time. Other common indicators may be consistently displayed such as available ammunition for a weapon, or count of a particular object that is in use. If at some point the player has a limited time to reach a location or activate an object, the countdown timer will be displayed prominently in the upper part of the screen.

To aide the player in navigating the world, a map will be available to the player. However, it will only prominently show the areas (rooms) of the map that have been explored already. The player will be given a 'clue' of where to go next and given a location on the map. These clues will serve as a means to progress the player through the game and reveal more of the story. When the clue is given, it will not force the player to stop whatever it is they are currently doing and examine the map. Instead, a visual cue will be given in the UI and the player can then look at the clue once they have available time.

The game is conceptually a console game, though a PC with a controller will work just as well as an XBOX. Movement will be done in a 3rd person overhead camera that will dominantly be behind the

player, and can be adjusted by the player as they are playing to accommodate for actions such as jumping, targeting, or investigating an area.

iii. Advancement

The perspective and actions will depend on what will be required to progress at some point in the game. Progression will involve some puzzle solving, level exploration and world navigation. In order to progress through or to some areas, the player will have to obtain some new skills or items in order to open doors, reach previously unreachable areas (I.e. Higher ledges, longer gaps in pathways, locked doors, puzzle barriers, etc...). Most of which will require a 3rd person perspective to show the player's positioning in the world. Some items will place the player in a first person perspective to solve puzzles or use the item.

During play the player will be tasked with solving puzzles which will place them into a first-person interactive mode. While in first person, the player will gain a more fine-tuned control and in some cases will force a focus on a particular item and require the player to enter some combination or shift pieces around to form a working artifact/object (akin to the 16-tile game). This perspective will also be used for fine control of individual objects, such as weapons or items used to reach new areas. For example, reaching a ledge would require a first-person aim to use a grappling hook. There would also be some button activations that require a first-person aim of a weapon to activate, since it may or may not be reachable by the player directly.

The majority of the game will be spent in a third person perspective navigating the world, jumping between platforms, ledges and rooftops. During the course of the game there will be a lot of enemy conflict, which will put the player into a "combat" mode. Combat will require the player to have found and equipped various weapons such as swords, guns, staffs, etc... Enemies will also drop weapons and other supplies the player can pick up and equip or sell. These include assorted armors, weapons, and varying kinds of health, magic, and ammunition replenishing items.

Scattered through the city are assorted powerups and weapons that the player can put to use. Some powerups, such as magic, ammunition or health increasing powerups will be hidden, though accessible. Powerups that modify the characters speed, agility, or magic/weapon set will be obtained by killing boss characters. As these boss characters are defeated, the faction the player is supporting gains more territory (I.e. Less resistance from the opposing faction in that region), though not all resistance is removed from that area and it will still pose a possible threat to the player. The results of these battles are the milestones of the game, as they open up more areas for the player to explore, as well as give the player new abilities.

4 Audio and Video

The game will have a blend of 3rd person and 1st person perspectives, depending on what the player is actually doing within the game. The player would be immersed in a colorful world without many muted colors, despite the somewhat dystopian feel. An artistic style that fits the mood of the game would be somewhat realistic while retaining a slight cartoon feel with vibrant color. In general the game should feel well lit, without many occasions where the player is left in a pitch black room. However, in some cases lighting will need to be taken down drastically to give the player a feel for the environment, such as in a sewer or a basement.

The world itself would have a very refined look, with a molding of natural structures and technology to create a very natural feeling blend. Quintellus itself will be part of a mountainside, with a terraced approach to creating neighborhoods, markets, factories, and all other common buildings interlaced with roads and highways, both on ground and suspended. The city itself will appear very much alive, although not completely densely populated.

Audio will play an important role in the game, as the player will engage in dialog with many other characters in the game. This will help convey emotion in the game and aide in the telling of the story. There will also be ambient sound in the game to help immerse the player into the world they are

exploring. Common sounds would be traffic in open areas, water dripping, background conversational noise in crowded environments, and so on. These ambient sounds should rarely take the players focus, though they can be the only audio outside of any player movement (I.e. No music playing) to bring the player further into the world.