Request for Proposals (RFP)

GPS Based Text-Adventure RPG

Almost Games

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1.0 Executive Summary

Almost games is requesting proposal for a GPS Based Text-adventure RPG Video Game. The game must be completed within a 3 month period. The game will include RPG-like elements mirroring game styles of 80's text adventure games. The game will incorporate a modern element, GPS and smartphones, into the old genre. The game will be playable as an application on a smartphone.

The in game map, of which the player will traverse, is a replication of the UVic campus. In order to visit locations in the game and progress through the story, the player must also physically visit the in game locations in real life. The GPS on the smartphone will detect when the player is in the right location and progress the game. Riddles based on landmarks may be incorporated into the game to incentivize the physical aspect. Though, users will generally interact with the game using the traditional text based game approach.

It is intended that the in-game setting of UVic will have some themes within certain areas, game story will be designed around those themes.

The story of the game is intended to be satiric, heartwarming, and ridiculous. A variety of stories will be present in the game, a main story as well as smaller side stories

2.0 Introduction

This document describes Almost Games' need of a team to develop a GPS Based Text-Adventure RPG video game, and requests interested companies to provide a bid on developing the game. The requirements and constraints of the stated game are described, as well as desired aspects of the final product. Timelines and milestones are set out that bidding proposals are expected to follow, as well as related systems to help describe Almost Games' vision of the final application. This RFP also describes the method of bidding on this proposal, and the method of which the winning proposals shall be chosen.

3.0 Problem description / expression of need

Almost Games currently has a lack of captivating games due to release in their next quarter, particularly in the mobile market. This proposal suggests a low investment product that can allow Almost Games to gain market share in the mobile game market. Almost Games has a limited 3 month window in which new product development is enabled. In order to set the product apart from the saturated mobile market, Almost Games wants to build a text adventure style video game incorporating GPS location and tracking services. This is will be the first game released by the new gaming company so make it good.

4.0 Project Objectives

Develop a game that is enjoyable to play and easily accessible. To achieve this objective, the requirements are listed below:

4.1 Portability

The product is a video game for mobile platforms, it must release on Android and an iOS release is a stretch goal. The game will be available on the mobile device's respective app stores. The mobile app will be free to download.

4.2 User Interface

The user interface of the product should allow for an easy to use and compelling experience for the player. Coordination and inclusion of various buttons and inputs that the player will use will be negotiated between the client and supplier. However the input area should be consistent between screens. It is suggested that buttons containing preset commands are available for players to choose from during a certain context, some buttons will open up larger menus such as an items list.

A map showing the player's current position must be present in every screen. Placement and resolution/accuracy of the map will be negotiated. The map must not become convoluted with information and must always be easily readable. The game should be displayed on different sized screens at a reasonable similarity.

4.3 Gameplay

The game will incorporate traditional elements of RPG, such as quests, items, secrets, and levels. The game will run in a state to state manner, a player's current state consists of their items, level, prior interactions, and their point in the story, from the current state the next state the player can enter is determine from their decisions and current state elements. The number of states the game includes will be negotiated, though it should so much that through one typical playthrough less than 50% of the state elements are used.

Inclusion of puzzles and riddles is encouraged though difficulty should remain easy to not induce frustration in the player. Hints should be readily available to a player. No player should get stuck for an elongated period of time. Emergent gameplay and multiple ways to progress through a game element is a stretch goal.

4.4 Interesting use of GPS

The game should make interesting use of the GPS built into smartphones. The in game map will be a replica of the floor plan and environment of areas at UVic. The player's location in real life will be synced to the player's location in the game. The GPS on the phone detects when the user in is in a specific location and triggers game elements accordingly. The in game map will load a map for each location of interest the player walks into. The outside UVic campus will have its own map as well as buildings of interest.

4.5 Story Requirement

The story should be satiric, heartwarming and ridiculous. Story elements should be consistent throughout the game, limiting contradictions and breaks in logic unless intentional. The story should react to the players decisions and state, incorporating past choices and items held, for instance, to determine options available at a story point. There should be a large variety of story styles and themes, large areas should have a theme to them.

4.6 In-game Elements

The game contains a variety of characters, items, and character skills. Characters will populate the game world at a rate of about 1-2 per area. The characters should all have distinct personalities. The characters should offer the player insight, advice, items and other game-related elements. Some characters will attempt to harm the player. Items are available to the player from character interaction and finding them in the map. Randomization and luck in finding items should be used sparingly. items include consumables and weapons. Consumables

are used by the player and affect player status and other game elements. Weapons are mostly aesthetic since the game does not feature an active combat system. Some weapons will have special effects however. The character will level up in various skills at arbitrary intervals. These skills will have a weak effect on the game and are mostly there to make the player feel good about themselves.

4.7 Style

The game is text based and should have a retro feel to it. A dark overtone will fill the game screen to reflect the period of command line interfaces.

5.0 Related System(s)

Almost Games has released mobile games in the past. These games, however, are of strong resemblance to current market trends and lack unique innovation.

There are many competing products currently on the market, none of which meet the objectives as set out in this Request for Proposal. Detailed below are a non-exhaustive selection of a few of these products, and how they are related. In addition, unmet requirements as well as unnecessary inclusions are included.

5.1 ARIS

ARIS is a platform for developing adventure games on iOS and Android that utilize the device's location services, although typically for use in the education field. Aris utilizes the device's GPS by having events occur when the player enters specified geolocation area and the pre-requisite flags have been met. In addition, the player is able to gather and use items in these events.

ARIS, however, does not contain sufficient customizability when it comes to displaying events to the user. For instance, events can not happen easily in a linear progression, and are always based on location instead of item usage or time. The educational focus of Aris, however, dampers the effect of the storytelling of the games which utilize the platform. [1]

5.2 Zork

A classical example of good RPG storytelling is Zork. Zork is an old text-adventure game which maintains high regard among game designers, mostly due to it's unique storytelling method of which the player is able to interact and change the environment. Almost Games would like to refer potential bidders to Zork as a good inspiration source for story material, as it encompasses many of the aspects Almost Games is looking for in responses to this RFP, including uniqueness, charm, and detailed backstory.[2]

5.3 Pokemon GO

Pokemon GO is the newest game from Gamefreaks. It is set for release in 2016. This game is possibly the closest to the game that our company has envisioned. The product plans to heavily base the game in real life locations where the player have to visit certain places in the real world to catch the pokemon that lives there. Gamefreak also plan on incorporating augmented reality into their gameplay.[3]

6.0 Intended users and their interaction with the system

The product is limited to the geographical area of University of Victoria. However, the game is not restricted to anything else. To provide anonymity to the user, the game does not inquire the user about the gender, age, the faculty and occupation.

The product works on mobile phones and depends on the physical location of the user. Hence, it requires the user to enable GPS access.

7.0 Interaction with other systems

The game will run as a mobile app on the Google Android system. The product must comply to Android application standards and code institution.

The product will make use of the Google GPS location API available on Android smartphones. The product must be developed around the features of the API and changes from Google must be accounted for.

8.0 Known constraints to development

There are a number of known constraints for the development process. The main topics are discussed below.

8.1 Development time

The project development has to follow the project timeline specified below. Detailed description of the timeline has been provided. Any changes in the deadlines will be notified in advance.

8.2 Scope

The product must be small in scope. This is to allow project completion in the limited 3 month development cycle Almost Games is willing to commit to. Additionally a small scope game becomes easier to introduce to new players. The terms of scope measurement will be

negotiated between client and supplier. Factors such as game mechanics and story length/detail will be the most significant.

9.0 Project Timeline

18th February, 2016
Core mechanics of the product has to be working.

3rd March, 2016
The user feedback and the necessary changes for the initial phase must be finished.

15th March, 2016
The storyboard for the game, and the written documentation explaining the content must be completed and forwarded.

24th March, 2016
The implementation of the content proposed and previously decided must be completed.

31st March, 2016
Identifying any issues, fixing bugs for the final release must be completed. The product must be ready for deploying and shipping.

1st April, 2016
Any changes on the final product has to be finished. The product must be completed without any hidden bugs or unexpected features.

10.0 References

[1] "ARIS Games," 28 01 2016. [Online]. Available: http://arisgames.org/.

[2] "Wikipedia," [Online]. Available: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zork. [Accessed 28 01 2016].

[3] "Pokemon," [Online]. Available: http://www.pokemon.com/us/pokemon-video-games/pokemon-go/. [Accessed 28 01 2016].