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Turbo Tantrum VR

Postmortem

With the first part of the Major Project finished I will now looked back throughout the course of the semester and evaluate on my research methods, time management, creative techniques and project scope and delivery. I shall reflect on both the positive and negative point of my contribution towards the project and towards the team members I have worked with.

At the very beginning of the term I will admit I had a few concerns about how I could possibly contribute in any way to the team or towards the project, I worried that I may not be very useful or helpful and would hold the entire team back. This is because I knew I lacked knowledge with Unreal Engine and what I did know was from a much older version of the engine and not using it for over a year had made me rusty and hesitant to try. I also worried about the size of the teams and panicked that I would just be pushed aside and forgotten about since I've only worked in groups of 2-4 and had to take charge as no one else would or they expected me too. With Need for Sleep however, I felt more at ease and less stressed about the situation. Having Adam, Connor and Joel as my team members really helped me and encouraged me to think creatively again, though not being in control of the situation was difficult and different for me it was something that was needed and I could ease myself back in little by little and get stuff done in a less stressful manner.

Communication with the other members of the Tech team was easy as we used Discord and Facebook when not at the University on Monday or Friday which helped keep up with our progress and do new things. We constantly kept each other updated with progress or issues we faced while working on Turbo Tantrum, we also used 3 Google Drives to send the latest Unreal file when we finished any work or when something went wrong so we could go through it together or go back to an older version to fix the issue or try something new or

different. We will have to come up with a different method of sending each other the Unreal folders other than relying on Goggle Drive and creating numerous accounts.

Time management was both easy yet difficult for me during the project for many reasons. The first one would be due to the fact I don't know when to stop working once I start something, this meant at times I would do too much and would have to look for something to do or do too little due to outside commitments like working a full time job, which I experienced during the Christmas holidays. This an issue I know I have to resolve and try to find a balance between the two before the next semester starts. One of the goals I aim for next semester are to prove my time management as I feel that I allowed myself to get behind at times due to the timer issue as well as the Christmas holidays being unable to contribute due to work commitments, as well as having a couple of days off or having to leave early, these issues didn't help time management or meeting if we had scheduled any. Another thing to point out with time management was the Gant Chart the team used, the Gant Chart only allowed 2 account to log in, any more would cost so only Adam and Connor had access to it, therefore I had to rely on telling either Connor or Adam through Discord or Facebook messenger to fill my sections in with a certain percentage or waiting till we were in Uni to physically do it, though we did consider using perforce which ended up not being used due to the fact we had to have a licensed key and the Uni didn't have it installed so again this meant we could only use it outside of Uni which was not ideal .

I have really enjoyed working on Turbo Tantrum and felt I have challenged myself and pushed myself out of my comfort zone this semester. From my previous experience with USW and the projects I did with them helped me a lot when it came to documentation and GDD's as well as game test documents that will be used when we test the game. I also had help with templates on Google and Jess gave me a few ideas to make a draft GDD very early on. Using Unreal and its blueprints was a real experience for me, since I've only used a bit in USW and outside of studying, I had to rely a lot on research and trial and error for tutorials, YouTube Videos and Unreal's own website to relearn hoe to blueprint and how it's coding system works. Researching took of time and some research went nowhere and ended up

not being useful or helpful, even when the timer wouldn't work I took a long time for someone on Unreal's forums to reply with a solution that could be useful or maybe not a solution at all, this has frustrated be a lot because the timer should work and dose work but not the way it is supposed to.

Working on this project has been interesting in a creative way, coming up with ideas that fitted with the 80's theme, the toy theme and kid theme was fun and us on the Tech team came up with multiple ideas and ways to keep the theme to include the adults from the time period as well as keeping them nostalgic and children that might get references due to TV shows and movies they watch. Connor, Adam, Joel and I bounced ideas and themes constantly and attempted to involve the Art team with this, at the begging they added their ideas and thoughts but not a lot of them and it felt like we were trying too hard to involve them when they clearly didn't care or were not interested.

While I was coding I added a pause section, saving the best lap time, UI implementation them into the game like the Main Menu, Pause Menu and a Game over Screen which will need to be coded to work. The most challenging and time consuming was the Timer system, which I planned would record gold, silver and bronze times, this I attempted to make for Turbo Tantrum which at this moment has been unsuccessful, I feel that it's been my biggest achievement due to the amount of time and effort I have put towards trying to make this work for the game. Though I was hoping to have the timer working before the end of the Christmas period, I have been unable to figure out why it's not working and even though I have posted this issue to the Unreal forums no one at this point has come forward with a solution, meaning that I may have to remove the timer that we have and come up with different method entirely. Sadly over Christmas I have not made much progress due to working full time and not having any real time off, but I have rectified that with the team. Connor, Adam and I have figuring that the checkpoint system within the game is using similar coding to the timer I made so once we will go back for the next semester we plan to sit together all four of us to fix the current unfinished issues like the timer, the movement of the cars, UI implementation and VR interaction before moving onto the next stage of the

game. This conclusion came to us during the presentation which I felt went very smoothly and we didn't have any awkward or unsure moments and used the time we had to show our progress and team work, though sadly this meant that we were pretty hard on the art team and the lectures saw this through the presentation and how we talked the current state of the game and the communication or lack of between us.

Communication between us Tech and the Art as felt very one sided at times, meeting have been difficult and not all members have been to meeting when we have tried to involve them more with our progress. I feel that the Art team really need to do more communication to us Tech's and to each other as I have clearly seen no leadership and not much art work, what I have seen I'm not very impressed with and hope improves. It has felt that us Tech have been going to Art with ideas and things we could do for the game, but art haven't done this as much, again very one sided. It feels as if the art team are not as invested or care about the project and are doing minimum work just to get it done with and this needs to change or the game is not going to be finished or up to the standards that we have set for us as an entire group. I think us all as a group need to come together and sort something out or even step in and get work done.

With this in mind I feel overall that I have made some good progress in contributing towards making the game with the help of tutorials and what I remembered from my pervious experiences however, for the next semester I hope I can do more towards helping the team forward to making this game a success . My goals are to prove my time management as I feel that I allowed myself to get behind at times due to the timer issue as well as the Christmas holidays being unable to contribute due to work commitments. I also would like to push myself more with the Engine and do more blueprinting although, I have learnt a lot and done more than I thought I would, I feel that I can benefit learning more and pushing myself to more complicated and complex coding, to challenge myself. I feel that also as a whole the team's both Art and Tech really need to communicate more on both sides, though I know myself and the other techs have tried, it has felt that the teams are divided and not totally on the same page.

Speaking of the teams, I feel that I and the Tech did a very good job communicating with each other inside the University and outside of Uni, informing each other with our progress or issues often that we knew where we stood with the goals we gave each week, we also helped each other with research and ideas for the game. I feel that the Tech team have done a lot of work and underestimated ourselves a little as what we have so far project wise is really good but needs a lot of refining and polishing. This is something I feel we will do together and this will be a great learning experience for me to work with all 3 guys on the project and not us working on stuff individually. For the next semester I would like to see both teams have more meetings to see progress and updates on both tech and art sides. Though we had a few big team meeting I feel that we should have had more and regularly through the course of this semester.

Overall I feel that I might have been too hard and harsh towards myself, I doubted my self-worth, my confidence and determination to try but I think this has also helped me. I've wanted to prove to myself that I can push myself to do something different; I wanted to do more and think outside the box and not just sticking to what I know and comfortable with, this year has been a fresh perspective for me, seeing out progress through the trailer made me realise I need to do more and want to do more towards the project. Having the other Tech members around have been a huge blessing and as made sort time I have been on the course very enjoyable. Though at times I have struggled not to get too overwhelmed or stressed by this project as proved that to be challenging and exciting. I hope in the future that I am able to continue to challenge myself further and try more complex things involving Unreal engine and the game itself and find a balance between overworking and no work.

Also I would like to do to more for the team both Tech and Art as a whole and not divided as I feel we are currently. I hope for the next semester that we can come together and finish this game, help each other out more and be able to come up to one another with ideas or questions or to even play the game, test it even. Us Tech's know that we have to refine and polished what we currently have within the game before progressing to other things and I'd

like to say that we knew what the Art team have planned for the next semester and this is something I think we will have to ask them and plan with them to inspire them, which shouldn't be the case, I feel like they should already be inspired and at the start of the project they were but now not so much as we currently do not know what they have done or what needs to be done in their case.

Postmortem Points

Positive

- Hardworking
- Creative thinking
- Tech Team communication
- TechTeam idea building
- Researching Skills
- Coding

Negative

- Time management issues
- ArtTeam communication
- Knowledge of Unreal
- Organising Team meeting
- Coding (Lack of knowledge)