

<i>Author</i>	<i>Phone number</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Version</i>	<i>Document nummer</i>
Johan Lövdahl	+46737322327	090203	1.0	Docno

FROM CONCEPT TO REALITY

PROJECT PLAN

Abstract

A project about coming up with game concepts for downloadable games and to reduce the number of them in different steps until only one is left and this document explains how that will be done.

Public

This document is for me, my mentor and the examiner of the course.

Version history

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1.0	090203	Johan Lövdahl	First delivery

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	BASIC INFORMATION	4
1.1	PURPOSE.....	4
1.2	BACKGROUND.....	4
2	GOALS	5
2.1	PROJECT GOALS.....	5
2.2	PROJECT OBJECTIVES.....	5
2.3	STRATEGY.....	5
2.4	REQUIREMENTS.....	5
2.5	ASSUMPTIONS	6
2.6	INCLUDED/ EXCLUDED	6
2.6.1	INCLUDED	6
2.6.2	EXCLUDED	6
3	CONNECTIONS TO OTHER PROJECTS.....	7
3.1	FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS PROJECTS.....	7
3.2	LITERATURE/OTHER REFERENCES	7
4	PLANS	8
4.1	MILESTONE PLAN.....	8
4.2	TIME SCHEDULE	9
4.2.1	Phases.....	9
4.3	RESOURCE PLAN.....	10
4.4	PROJECT BUDGET	10
5	PROJECT ORGANIZATION	11
5.1	ROLES, RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY.....	11
5.2	MENTOR	11
5.3	REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES.....	11
5.3.1	Project Communication.....	11
5.3.2	Project Meetings.....	11
5.3.3	Project Reporting.....	11
5.3.4	Document plan	11
6	QUALITY PLAN	12
6.1	QUALITY OBJECTIVES.....	12
6.2	QUALITY FRAMEWORK.....	12
6.2.1	Reviews	12
6.3	SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES.....	12
6.3.1	Document Management	12
6.3.2	Change Management.....	12
6.4	VERIFICATION	12

6.4.1	Reviews, inspections and tests	12
7	RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES	13
8	PROJECT CONCLUSION	14
9	REFERENCES	15
9.1	ABBREVIATIONS	15
9.2	REFERENCE LIST	15
9.2.1	Books.....	15
9.2.2	Magazines	15
9.2.3	School projects	15
9.2.4	Games.....	15
9.2.5	Internet	15
10	APPENDICES	16
10.1	Appendix A: 100 Game Concept List.....	16
10.2	Appendix B: List of 20 concept.....	16

1 BASIC INFORMATION

1.1 PURPOSE

To learn different techniques to create game ideas and game concepts that can be developed to playable and/or sellable games. To learn how to communicate my thoughts with persons around me so that I get them to see what I see with the idea. To push my own creativity and think in new ways and not come up with the same things that already have been done, to come up with unique selling points that makes the games better than the ones already on sale or in development.

To learn how to develop quick prototypes that shows the core of the game in a good and interesting way and to use playtestings in giving ways. To learn what is required of a game design document that holds industry standard and also to write one.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The reason to why I have chosen to come up with 100 game concepts for downloadable games is because I think there is a future for those kinds of games. All three consoles in the current generation has downloadable games as a service, Xbox 360 have Xbox Live marketplace where you can choose between 177 titles¹, Playstation 3 have a lot of titles on their Playstation Network service and Nintendo released their Wiiware last year where you can download exclusive games for a small amount of money.

Today's development costs for games are sky high and to be a successful studio every title you release have to sell very well to not risk a closure for the studio. In the end of last year Free Radical Design had to fire a lot of people because their latest title Haze² didn't sell as expected. Free Radical Design is known for their Timesplitter³ series which have been rather successful but one title destroyed the studio. Many companies or publishers might not want to risk their money on a game that tries something new with the risk of an economic failure and red numbers in their budget report and this doesn't stimulate the game industry since all that will come out of this is follow ups on successful games.

If you take a look at last year's most sold games in Sweden⁴ on all formats only three games are new IPs. The rest is either follow ups or expansion packs. The same goes for each formats own list, most games are old IPs and only two to four titles are new ones. This is of not only because the economic situation, follow ups have always been a part of the game industry and is a great way to learn more about a character and to release more games without having to come up with a new character each time. Most video game icons are characters that have figured in a lot of games like Mario, Sonic and Mega Man.

With downloadable games, the development cost gets lower since you don't need a team of 100 full time workers. Some games are developed by a single person; others are developed by smaller teams on 20 persons. This makes the risk lower and if your game doesn't sell as expected you still can keep the studio alive. When the risk is lower it gets easier to try something new and that is why I think it is an important part of today's games and also why I chose to work with them.

¹ The amount of Xbox Live Arcade titles on 6th of February 2009

² Haze, Free Radical Design, 2008

³ Timesplitter, Free Radical Design, 2000

⁴ <http://www.dataspelsbranschen.se/items/stats/DSB-Speltoppen-2008.pdf>

2 GOALS

2.1 PROJECT GOALS

One well explained game concept with a playable prototype and a design document on at least 20 pages.

Also I shall have one hundred game concepts, including the one that I have written a design document on, where 20 of them shall be explained further than the original concept then ten of those twenty shall have a presentation which explains their core gameplay and mechanics. Five out of those ten shall have been further researched to see if there is something similar released and if there is, what are the differences between them. Two playable prototypes out of those five ideas shall be developed.

2.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The result of this project is increased knowledge in idea conceptualization, prototyping and playtesting. Furthermore I shall have learnt how to communicate my ideas with other people in a communicative way so that s/he can understand what I am after.

2.3 STRATEGY

I have organized my workload so that I will use one week on each phase between phase two and four. The third week I will begin with phase two and I will write further explanations on five concepts each day which gets me done on four days. On the third stage I will create two power point presentations each day where I explain the concepts more deeply.

The forth step is where I will do some research on each of the five concepts and I will search the internet and take a look on the different consoles on what they have to offer. I'm planning to take one concept a day to be on the safe side which would result in one week's workload. The next step is two prototypes which I will develop on one week each. If one week seems much so it is because I am a freak for details and can't let go of something unless it's good enough. But as before, I have planned to use two weeks to be on the safe side. With one week on each prototype I have time for playtesting too which is an important part of the project. The last phase then is for the design document and I'm planning to use a design document format that I have found in the book Game Design Workshop.

2.4 REQUIREMENTS

Each phase has its own requirements on when it is fulfilled.

Phase 1: Have a document on one hundred game concepts on downloadable games.

Phase 2: Have a list of 20 game concepts with the core elements included, how many players and how you play it.

Phase 3: Ten power point presentations on the concepts.

Phase 4: A document on five game concepts that have been researched on how the concepts stand against similar concepts and how innovative they are.

Phase 5: Two playable prototypes, software or paper, with a play test session and a play test report each.

Phase 6 and end result: One design document on at least 20 pages that describes the game in detail.

2.5 ASSUMPTIONS

For phase 4 I am planning to use the current generation consoles; Microsoft Xbox 360, Sony Playstation 3 and Nintendo Wii, to look thru and compare the games that can be found on their downloadable game services with my ideas.

For phase 5 I am going to use Adobe Flash CS3 or Blender depending on what games I have to build prototypes on.

2.6 INCLUDED/ EXCLUDED

2.6.1 INCLUDED

Different techniques for idea creation, the development of prototypes and play testing sessions with other people. Blog updates at least three times a week and draw pictures for the presentations that describes the ideas on a figurative level.

2.6.2 EXCLUDED

Concept art and 2D/3D models. Remakes of older games and normal sport games as concepts. Games older than 20 years will not be compared with my concepts.

3 CONNECTIONS TO OTHER PROJECTS

3.1 FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS PROJECTS

“Prototyping in LBP” by Isak Anklew

“Space Race Design document” created by Johan Lövdahl, Rickard Hällgren, Joakim Joki & Johan Waldemarsson in the course Introduction to Game Design

“Traders Design Document” created by Johan Lövdahl, Edmond Baer, Rickard Hällgren and Robert Carlson in the course Game Design

3.2 LITERATURE/OTHER REFERENCES

Game Design Workshop: Designing, Prototyping and Playtesting Games; Tracy Fullerton, Christopher Swain & Steven Hoffman, 2004, ISBN: 1578202221

Game Developer Fall Career Guide 2008, Game Developer, 2008

Level #33-34, Reset Media, 2008-2009

“Space Race Design document” created by Johan Lövdahl, Rickard Hällgren, Joakim Joki & Johan Waldemarsson in the course Introduction Game Design

“Traders Design Document” created by Johan Lövdahl, Edmond Baer, Rickard Hällgren and Robert Carlson in the course Game Design

The Swedish Game Chart 2008, Swedish Games Industry, 20090203,
<http://www.dataspelsbranschen.se>

4 PLANS

4.1 MILESTONE PLAN

The milestone dates assume that project can be started no later than ?

The following MileStones (MS) are defined:

<i>MS/TG</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Scope</i>	<i>Exit criteria</i>	<i>Responsible</i>
MS1	23.1.2009	Chose a subject and begin concept stage	A project proposal delivered to Anna Kaisa Kultima	J. Lövdahl
MS2	6.2.2009	Plan the project and fill out the Project Plan	Project plan filled out and delivered to Anna Kaisa Kultima	J. Lövdahl
MS3	17.2.2009	Write a report on what I've done and what I have plans on doing in the future along with a status report	Have reached phase 4 and to be done with the previous phases. Delivered a report on the going and status of the project to Anna Kaisa Kultima	J. Lövdahl
MS4	17.3.2009 18.3.2009	Have a game design document on at least 20 pages done for delivery and a presentation to explain my work with.	A finished design document and a presentation on my work.	J. Lövdahl

scope: the depth, the topic, the content

exit criteria: how it is delivered (how you know you have done the MS within its scope)

4.2 TIME SCHEDULE

Projectweek Phase		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week1	Date	19-jan	20-jan	21-jan	22-jan	23-jan
Phase 1	Notes				Skype meeting 16.00-17.00	MS1
Week 2	Date	26-jan	27-jan	28-jan	29-jan	30-jan
Phase 1	Notes				Skype meeting 16.00-17.00	
Week 3	Date	02-feb	03-feb	04-feb	05-feb	06-feb
Phase 2	Notes	Project Plan work	Skype Meeting 16.00-17.00		Skype meeting 16.00-17.00	MS2
Week 4	Date	09-feb	10-feb	11-feb	12-feb	13-feb
Phase 3	Notes				Skype meeting 16.00-17.00	
Week 5	Date	16-feb	17-feb	18-feb	19-feb	20-feb
Phase 4	Notes		MS3		Skype meeting 16.00-17.00	
Week 6	Date	23-feb	24-feb	25-feb	26-feb	27-feb
Phase 5	Notes				Skype meeting 16.00-17.00	
Week 7	Date	02-mar	03-mar	04-mar	05-mar	06-mar
Phase 5	Notes				Skype meeting 16.00-17.00	
Week 8	Date	09-mar	10-mar	11-mar	12-mar	13-mar
Phase 6	Notes				Skype meeting 16.00-17.00	
Week 9	Date	16-mar	17-mar	18-mar	19-mar	20-mar
	Notes		MS4	MS4		

4.2.1 Phases

Phase 1: Come up with 100 game concepts by using different techniques, one technique each day.

Phase 2: Have a list of 20 game concepts with the core elements included, how many players and how you play it. List five games each day.

Phase 3: Ten Power point presentations; create 2 presentations each day.

Phase 4: Research one title a day.

Phase 5: Create one prototype each week and let different people play test it.

Phase 6: Create the design document.

4.3 RESOURCE PLAN

I work alone because I want to keep a high standard over the project and do it the way I prefer. I will use Lisa Rosandher as a reference point, if she gets what I'm trying to say, most people will since she isn't into the games as much. I will also use Johan Waldemarsson as another reference point who I will send my documents to and let him read thru and see if anything is missing.

I hope I can find some people to try my prototypes in phase 5on.

4.4 PROJECT BUDGET

Quantity		Price (SEK)
2	Salary	15 570 ⁵
1	Adobe CS4 Design Premium	3 780 ⁶
1	Microsoft Office 2007 Home & Student edition.	995 ⁷
1	Downloadable games from XBLM ⁸ , PSN ⁹ , Wiiware	1 000
		Total: 36 915

⁵ According to Fall Career Guide 2008, p. 14, Game Developer, 2008

⁶ Student price at Dustin Home, <http://www.dustinhome.se>

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Xbox Live Marketplace

⁹ Playstation Network

5 PROJECT ORGANIZATION

5.1 ROLES, RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

Roles, responsibility and authority are described in the following section.

Johan Lövdahl, the author, does everything from building prototypes and all that is included in that to coming up with game concepts and blogging.

5.2 MENTOR

To this project I have consulted Ted Kjellson, Director and Production Designer at Direktörn & Fabrikörn, to be my mentor who will help me pick ideas and help me in the right direction.

5.3 REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

5.3.1 Project Communication

The project uses a blog for tracking progress and uploading documents.

E-mail and blog comments will be used as the primary project communication tool.

5.3.2 Project Meetings

A project meeting with LTU staff can be requested by the student if there are functional and design changes or other change requests that cannot be regarded as minor in the project.

Agreements and decisions are documented in the minutes of meeting (of project meetings and technical meetings). Minutes on meetings must be available on the blog site no later than two working days after the meeting.

5.3.3 Project Reporting

Reports and results will be delivered with every milestone using the blog and via email.

The Milestone presentation material must be available on the blog at least four working days before the presentation date.

5.3.4 Document plan

The following documents will be prepared within the scope of this project. These documents will also reference documentation not listed in the plan.

<i>Title</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Resp.</i>
Project Plan	Project goals and objectives, organization, responsibilities, communication.	
Concept/Proposal	Chosen subject and	
Post Mortem/Final Report	Project conclusion.	
100 idea list	A list of all my game concepts that I have come up with during phase 1	
List of 20	A list with further explanations of the 20 best ideas for phase 2	
Presentation of 10 ideas	Each of the ten best ideas in phase 3 will receive a presentation	

6 QUALITY PLAN

6.1 QUALITY OBJECTIVES

The quality objectives of this project are:

One well explained game concept: with *well explained* I mean in a way that someone who is not into games should be able to understand what the game is about and what the core of the game is.

6.2 QUALITY FRAMEWORK

6.2.1 Reviews

Milestone deliveries are performed according to in chapter 4.1

Review of the Milestone deliveries are made prior to the presentation. Changes or additional work might be needed for approval. This will be notified through mail two working days after presentation at the latest. The additional work must be completed and uploaded before the presentation is scheduled.

The presentation itself is reviewed and approval/failure will be notified by mail two working days after the presentation is made.

6.3 SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

6.3.1 Document Management

All project-related documents shall be written in English.

Documents and material must be version managed. Each revision of project related documentation shall be uploaded.

Project correspondence (e-mails, faxes, and letters) with important information for the project will be treated as project documentation.

6.3.2 Change Management

Changed requirements or exemptions can be addressed at project meetings or by e-mail

6.4 VERIFICATION

6.4.1 Reviews, inspections and tests

The author of a document has the responsibility to initiate a review of a document. This is planned to be for each milestone delivery. Additional reviews can be made if it considered to be needed by LTU.

The student can also ask for additional reviews which will be performed if available time and resources are available at LTU.

7 RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

With the risk of a computer crash I will make a backup every second day to prevent any work being lost.

In case of sickness; I have planed my schedule in a way that I have some time over and I also do more then I should each day working before the schedule, so if I get sick, I won't be losing that much work.

8 PROJECT CONCLUSION

The project is done when I have one design document that explains one of the game concepts in detail. It should hold industry standard or close to it and be on at least 20 pages. It should be finished the 17th of Marsh and it should be the work of two months fulltime work, 40 hours a week.

9 REFERENCES

9.1 ABBREVIATIONS

XBLM	Xbox Live Marketplace
PSN	Playstation Network

9.2 REFERENCE LIST

9.2.1 Books

2004	Tracy Fullerton, Christopher Swain & Steven Hoffman	Game Design Workshop: Designing, Prototyping and Playtesting Games
------	---	---

9.2.2 Magazines

2008	Game Developer	Game Developer Fall Career Guide 2008
2008	Reset Media	Level #33
2009	Reset Media	Level #34

9.2.3 School projects

2007	Johan Lövdahl, Rickard Hällgren, Joakim Joki & Johan Waldemarsson	Space Race Design Document
2008	Johan Lövdahl, Rickard Hällgren, Edmond Baer & Robert Carlsson	Traders Design Document

9.2.4 Games

2000	Free Radical Design	Timesplitter
2008	Free Radical Design	Haze

9.2.5 Internet

20090203	Swedish Game Industry	Swedish Sale Chart 2008 http://www.dataspelsbranschen.se/items/stats/DSB-Speltoppen-2008.pdf (in Swedish)
----------	-----------------------	---

10 APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix A: 100 Game Concept List

See file ojoola-7_Appendix_A

10.2 Appendix B: List of 20 concept

See file ojoola-7_Appendix_B