Information Architecture and Games

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Overview

• IA in Video Games
• Menus
• Loading Screens
• Tab Screens
• Questions?
• References
IA in Video Games

• Gaming is an escape from reality
• User Interface
  – Needs to maintain fantasy as much as possible
  – Provide relevant information clearly and quickly
Menus

- Typically hub-and-spoke type architecture
- Provides a simplistic view of options
- Acts as control panel for the game
- Need to be attractive
  - Add to users’ experience
  - Maintain fantasy
Menu Types

• Main Menu
  – Allows the user to choose from several actions
    • New Game, Load Game, Settings, Quit Game, etc.
Menu Types Cont.

- **In Game Menus**
  - Expand options beyond Main Menu
- Character Stats, Inventory, Points, etc.
Menu Types Cont

• Context Menus
  – Limited options
  – Location specific
  – Allows users to learn specific tasks as they go and are needed
  – Radial menus are becoming increasingly popular
Dos and Don’ts of Menus

• Do allow the user to skip splash screens
• Do allow the user to Continue Game on menu
• Do allow the user to quit to desktop
• Do save settings once changed

• Do not place a montage video before menu
• Do not constantly remind player of auto save
• Do not bury important information
Icons

• Customized icons can greatly add to the fantasy
• Accelerate navigation
• Adds to visual component of game
Loading Screens

• Quick, easy way to convey tips
  • Keeps users entertained while they wait
• Continues theme of game
• Loading status can be shown in unique ways
CURRENT OBJECTIVES:

- Interrogate Joker to uncover Protocol Ten
- Break into Joker’s office in the Loading Bay

“Radio transmissions are coming from within the Steel Mill.”
Tab Screens

- Easy navigation
- Requires users to interact with menu
- Increasingly popular thanks to touch screens
Conclusion

• The best game IA:
  – Eases navigation
  – Provides information quickly and efficiently
  – Enhances game use
  – Maintains the fantasy of game
QUESTIONS?
References

- http://mitchbanks.wordpress.com/2012/03/14/310/
- http://criticalindex.com/video-game-menus/