

10 STEPS TO CREATIVE PROTOTYPING



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1. MAKE CHANGE



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HARD DECISIONS

- “A Point & Click adventure game in a world that has turn based battles”
 - Too large, too unfocused
- “Cut it in half and do only one part”



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QUESTION TIME

- How many people CUT their pitch after being told it was too large?



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FOLLOW UP

- Fallacy - False Dilemma
 - X or Y, when a whole spectrum of choices actually exists
- You will create False Dilemma's for yourself



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PIVOT

- Good advice does not mean right advice
- PIVOT – Taking an idea or product into a new direction
- MAKE a new prototype
 - THIS - “A Point & Click adventure game in a world that has turn based battles”
 - INTO THIS – “A turn based adventure game”



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1.5. DON'T GET STUCK ON TECHNICALITIES



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2. MAKING IT PERSONAL



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WHAT IS PROTOTYPING?

- Prototyping is building something YOU'VE never made before
- Every game is unique
- Treat everything as a prototype

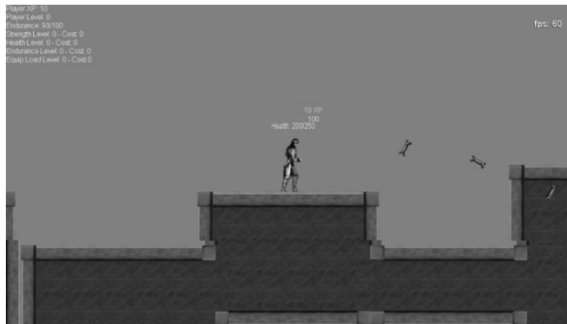
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THE ORIGINAL ROGUE LEGACY PROTOTYPE

- A 2D Dark-Souls with puzzles

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THE EVOLUTION OF ROGUE LEGACY



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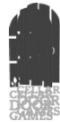
REITERATION

- Everything's a prototype
- A game is just a pile of prototypes



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3. DIRECTED PROTOTYPING



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BREAK IT DOWN

- Combat System
- Status Effects
- Enemy AI
- Meta Progress
- UI
- Skill Tree



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MAKE TIERS

- Combat System – Tier 1
- Status Effects – Tier 3
- Enemy AI – Tier 2
- Meta Progress – Tier 3
- UI – Tier 2
- Skill Tree – Tier 3



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KEEP BREAKING IT DOWN

- Combat System
 - Puzzle System – Tier 1
 - Mana – Tier 2
 - Blocking – Tier 3



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4. CREATIVITY SAVES TIME



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“DIFFICULT PROBLEMS”

- No such thing as “Creative Problems”
- There is only “Creative Solutions”



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“DIFFICULT PROBLEMS”

- Bullet Audyssey
- “A Rhythm-Based-Bullet-Hell where you couldn’t shoot unless you stole ammo by grazing enemy bullets”
- Tutorial? A problem for later
- Long Loading Time? MAJOR BLOCKER



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“DIFFICULT PROBLEMS”

- FALSE DILEMMA



great idea that we can play the tutorial while the game is loading :) (2615)

The idea of a tutorial while the game was loading was great! Also, the save warning was good because I know a lot of people use private browsing so it wouldn't if kept the saved game. And you made another style of game then the same as usual, its just fighting bosses in a way...But the biggest difference I could find in the game is that you don't have ammo in a way, you steal energy from there bullets then fire your own. (1449)



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5. SWEAT THE DETAILS



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GOAL OF A PROTOTYPE

- IT IS NOT:
 - To get something to WORK
- IT IS:
 - To see if something can be GOOD

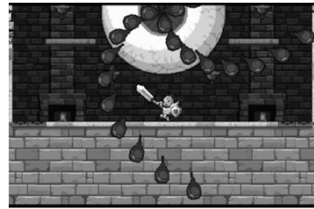


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DEVIL'S IN THE DETAILS



- GOAL: Faster paced Castlevania
- Castlevania without Move-Locking



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WHAT'S IN A SWING



- Animation Separation
- Added Direction-Locking
- Added Priority Animation Canceling
- Added Input Queuing
- Etc.

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6. KEEP EXPERIMENTING



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CHURN AND BURN

- Prototyping is about rapid experimentation
- Make Editable Values
- Don't stop at "it works"

```

EV
REVIVE_LENGTH = 3.00f; //3.15f; //3.5f; //3.25f; //2.5f; //2.0f; //3.0f; //3.5f; //6.0f; // Length of time required to re
REVIVE_HP_PERCENT = HEALTH_REGEN_AMOUNT; //SHOULD BE SAME AS HEALTH REGEN AMOUNT; //0.20f; // Will change once m
REVIVE_DEGRADATION_TIME = 0.5f; //2.0f; // Length of time before the revive bar starts to degrade.
REVIVE_DEGRADATION_LENGTH = -24f; // -30.0f; // -32f; // -35f; // -30f; // -25f; // -30f; //25f; //30.0f; // Length of time req
PLAYER_CRAWL_SPEED_MOD = 0.20f; //0.15f; //0.125f; //0.155f; //0.200f; //0.130f; //0.075f; //0.05f;
PLAYER_CRAWL_ANIMATION_SPEED = 1 / 7f; //1 / 9f;
REVIVE_ELLIPSE_WIDTH = 38; //35; //50; // Remember that this is radius, so diameter is x2.
REVIVE_SPEED_INVULN_MOD = 0.50f; //0.55f; //0.6f; //0.5f; //0.45f; //How much SLOWER reviving is when you're invulne
or2 PLAYER_FLAVOUR_DELAY = new Vector2(0.5f, 14f); // (4.5f, 6); //5; // How long you must wait until the player does
  
```



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- Prototyping is about rapid experimentation
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```

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DON'T STICK TO THE SCRIPT



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~~10~~ 6 STEPS TO CREATIVE PROTOTYPING



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THE PLAYTESTING CHECKLIST



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THE 4 STAGES OF PLAYTESTING

- PREP - What to do before the playtest
- LIVE – The Psychology of Assholes
- POST – Collating data
- FIX - Reaching conclusions

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STAGE 1

PREP



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FIX OBVIOUS ISSUES

- Feedback stops at:
 - The First Major "bug"
 - Poor Balance and Controls
 - Confusing User Experience



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MAKE A TUTORIAL

- One Un-Manned Tutorial
 - In-game or on a cut-out stand
- One in-person Tutorial Pitch
 - Backup



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DATAMINING

- DATAMINING - Collecting user play session data programmatically
 - Heat maps, Damage dealt, Item usage, etc.
- Be selective
- Too much is a bad thing



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STAGE 2



LIVE



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WRITE IT DOWN

- You WILL forget the details
- Laptops? MEH
- Pen and Paper? GREAT
 - Mobile
 - Doodle



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MAKE IT A CONVERSATION

- Get people talking
- Keep it open ended
 - “What are you thinking about?” - GOOD
 - “How’s the difficulty?” – GOOD
 - “Did you like that?” - BAD
- Real-time opinions > “neutered” thoughts afterwards



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QUESTION TIME #1

- “This is literally the worst boss fight ever”
- “That boss fight was ok”
- “That boss fight was interesting”

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SUSS OUT PERSONALITIES

- “This is literally the worst boss fight ever”
 - The boss fight sucks
- “That boss fight was ok”
 - The boss fight sucks
- “That boss fight was interesting”
 - The boss fight sucks



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BEWARE THE EUPHEMISM

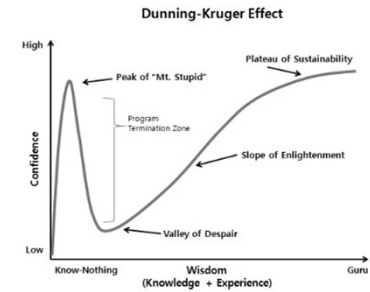
- Don't trick yourself
 - "That boss fight was interesting"
- Euphemisms lead to bad games



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EVERYONE SUCKS

- Dunning Kruger Effect



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STAGE 3



POST



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QUESTION TIME #2!

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TAKE TIME TO COOL OFF

- You are not thick-skinned
 - Professional criticism != Personal criticism
 - Go to sleep
 - Give yourself 24 hours to think on it



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THE SURVEY

- Surveys are a safety net
 - Don't make it just about the game
 - Feedback ISN'T EQUAL
 - Pay attention to wording
 - BAD – “How fun was the boss?”
 - GOOD – “I found this boss to be...”
- Use the right answer forms

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ANSWER FORMS

My favorite types of games are:

Short answer text

In general I prefer games that are:

	1	2	3	4	5	
Easy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Difficult

I believe that I am:



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RESULTS

RPG
Coop, indie
MMO or RTS
RPG (but really anything except sports games)
Action adventure
Platformer
Action adventure, survival horror
Action-Adventure / RPG
Cellar door games - P - simulation
Zombie related
Action games in general (2D, 3D, Platformers, FPS, Fighting etc.)
Tower defence, puzzle... I don't have a specific favorite.

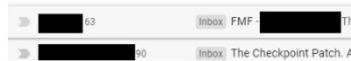


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THE FOLLOW UP



- Don't be afraid to follow up
 - Be Honest and Responsive



How many pieces of equipment have you bought do you think (all classes)?

I've attached screenshot of what equipment I got, along with skill tree for each character. Looks like I remembered my levels wrong D. (sorry!) I've had the chance to buy Sniper's stuff.

How many times do you think you've died?

That's hard to say, I've died a tonnnn of times. Probably between 80-150? Mostly in Styx & Tartarus. And then there's also dying in the Security drone

How many stages do you think you've grinded for gold?

Not sure how to estimate this one... I haven't really replayed a mission with the intention of grinding for gold, though I find that the New Foloi (Tartarus

And finally, and this is a long shot, how many "levels" do you think you've gained from dying/grinding stages?

I think I was around Lv. 26 & lower after beating Lelantos, and am at around 35, so I guess about 10 levels per character? (After Lelantos, I played it

....

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READING THE DATA

- LEARN EXCEL
- It's only as good as what you extrapolate



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EXACERBATE THE ISSUES

- Then fix it



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PART 4

FIX



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ISOLATE THE PROBLEMS

- Full Metal Furies was too difficult



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COME UP WITH A SOLUTION

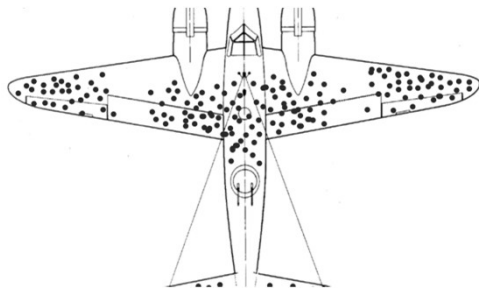
- “Make it easier”
 - NOT a solution
- Design a REAL solution
 - Less enemy HP, tweak econ, etc.
- Think of the consequences (3-Steps ahead)
 - Effects of your solution
 - Effects that cascade from that solution
 - Effects that cascade from the cascade



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IS THIS THE “REAL” PROBLEM?

- Abraham Wald – Hungarian Mathematician



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ISOLATE THE “REAL” PROBLEM

- Parsing feedback is both Science AND Art
- Game is too HARD?
 - Yes, but it’s misleading
- Game is too FRUSTRATING?
 - Yes, and this was the main problem



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THE ACTUAL PROBLEM

- A stage in FMF takes around 5-10 minutes.
- When a player died, they had to replay the whole stage again
- Even 3-7 minutes of replaying stages was too frustrating (even with XP rewards)
 - So how do we fix this?



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SOLUTION

- How do you alleviate frustration?
 - Added a checkpoint system
 - Jury rigged it onto existing camera triggers.



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RE-CAP

- Game's too hard!
 - False Feedback - No, too frustrating
- Lower frustration by lowering difficulty!
 - False Dilemma - OR we lower punishment
- Game designed for 1-life runs
 - Pivot – Add checkpoints
- We'll have to remake every stage!
 - Creative Solutions - Jury-rig off camera



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MORE THEN A PROTOTYPE

- If you are good at prototyping you'll be good at making games.



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THANK YOU

- Contact

- Teddy.Lee@Cellardoorgames.com
- www.cellardoorgames.com
- www.kongregate.com/games/rete
- www.twitter.com/cellardoorgames

