

297 – Team Project: Design Document

All games begin with some form of brainstorming that manifests itself in a document. This document is sometimes called a pitch document, but it also contains key design elements of the game and serves as the starting point for the final design document. For this assignment, your team will be crafting a combination of a pitch document and a design document. For an example of a well-crafted document, see how Irrational pitched the original BioShock here:

<http://irrationalgames.com/insider/from-the-vault-may/>

Directions

To accomplish this lab, you will need to work with your team to create a detailed design document. Use the above Bioshock document as a blueprint. At a minimum, your design document should include:

1. A broad overview of the game, highlighting what your team feels is THE KEY feature or aspect of the game. You can think of this as your THEME, and nearly every aspect of your game should reinforce this theme.
2. A narrative or some fiction from the game. Try and put the reader's mind in the game world, by writing in the first person as if the reader was the main character or other character in the game world.
3. Identify the key aspects of your game, re-iterating the key feature but also identifying other features. Including your key feature, identify at least 3 features, elements or mechanics of your game and how they combine to create a compelling experience.
4. In addition to textual information, be sure your document includes:
 - a. Images. You MUST include at least two mockups using Gary's Mod. If you feel the assets available in Gary's Mod are not appropriate for your game, you can create mockups using screenshots from existing games or your own mockups using Photoshop or other artistic software. NOTE: You CAN NOT simply copy a screenshot of another game on a website, and include it as a mockup. You must alter it to some degree in something like Photoshop, so it represents YOUR vision.
 - b. Aesthetics. Note how the BioShock document is put together. The cover is more like a comic book than a typical term paper. Notice that on each page, Irrational opted to put concept art in the background. Notice how some pages have quotations of interest that relate to the game.
 - c. Concept art.
5. Describe the interface of your game based on the principles of Lorentzon Fagerholt's work (summarized here: http://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/4286/game_ui_discoveries_what_players_.php) Identify which of the four major UI's your UI will be most similar, and justify why this UI makes the most sense for your game.

Grading Rubric

Checklist	Possible Points	Points Scored
The document was presented in a professional manner with no spelling or grammar errors and contained an AUTOMATICALLY GENERATED table of contents (Use MS Word's ToC feature)	2.5	
Provided a brief overview, identifying the key feature that makes your game unique.	10	
Leveraged some sort of narrative from the game in an attempt to put the reader in the frame of mind of being in the game world or seeing something through a character's eyes.	5	
In addition to the key feature, provide an overview and description of at least 5 other mechanics or features that will be present in your game.	10	
Provide various elements in the document that directly impact the aesthetics. You used images within the document to convey both the feel of the game (such as concept art) as well as what the game might actually look like (screenshots). All of these are woven together to create one cohesive design document.	10	
Described your interface selection (of the four options referenced in the directions) and why this interface will work the best for your game.	10	
Identified the final technology you will use to build the game and why.	2.5	
Total	50 pts	

Comments: