

Usability Report

Geoware

Sprint 4 – Beta

November 13, 2017

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| --- | --- | --- |
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# Summary Overview

## Methodology

On November 13th, our team visited the Southern Methodist University to gather volunteers to playtest our game. We split into two groups of two and settled at the commons area at Fondren Library center and at the Hughes-Trigg Student center from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. We asked students passing by to playtest our game for as much time as they desired and later asked them to complete a survey once they were done playing the game. Many players did not complete all of the levels due to time constraints. Once they completed the survey, we rewarded them with food.

## Major Takeaways

### Challenge

* 68% of playtesters did not find the game difficult (Figure 3).
* Much of the difficulty in *Smith and Dozer* came from unclear conveyances related to the buttons and the function of each character

### Conveyance

* *Smith and Dozer* is moderately successful in teaching players how to play.
* Most testers found the controls to be more comfortable than uncomfortable (Figure 4).
* Some testers were confused about how the switching mechanic works and the difference between Smith and Dozer.

### Engagement

* Most of the playtesters rated the game as fun.
* The character switching mechanic received mixed responses with many people liking it but finding it initially confusing.
* Smith and Dozer seem to be well balanced, as only 29% of players found Smith to be more useful and 11% found Dozer to be more useful. 61% of testers thought both characters were equally useful (Figure 6).

# Playtest Data

## Demographics

### Charts

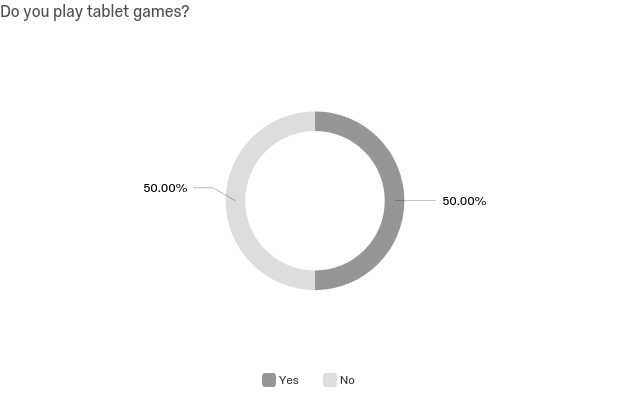


Figure 1: Do you play tablet games?

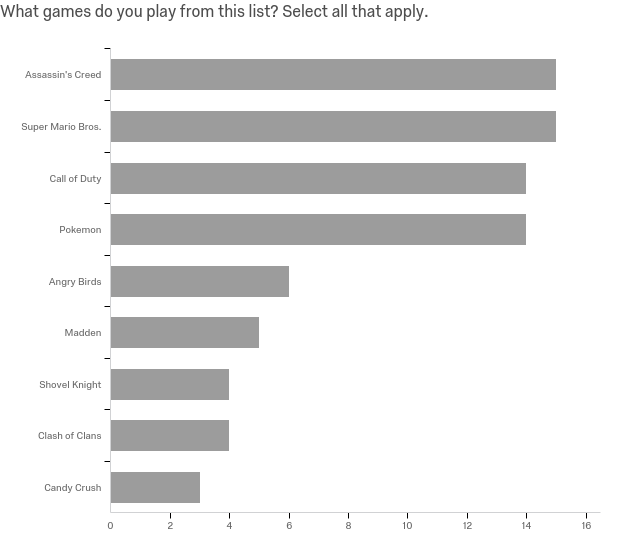


Figure 2: What games do you play from this list?

### Analysis

Testers of our game were mostly undergraduate students with at least a little gaming experience. Half of the testers played tablet games on a regular basis. More than half of the testers were enthusiast gamers, meaning they have played AAA titles such as *Call of Duty* and *Assassin’s Creed* before. Results from the survey indicate that our testers were within our target audience but only make up a portion of it. We did not find any younger gamers to test the game at this playtest session.

## Challenge

### Charts

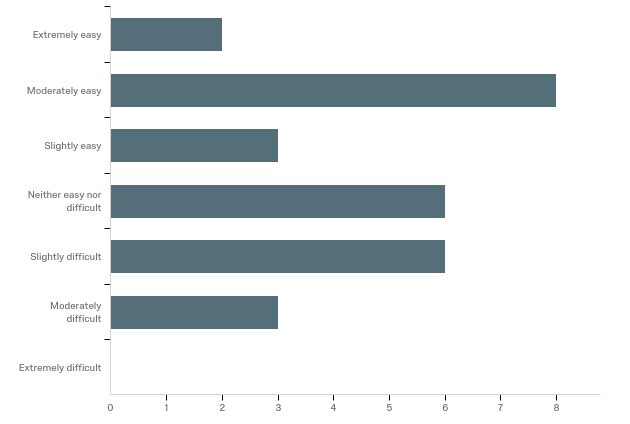


Figure 3: How would you rate the difficulty?

### Qualitative Feedback

* Most challenging aspects of the game:
* Knowing how and when to use each character
* Knowing when each character is attacking
* Adjusting to the use of virtual buttons

### Analysis

The data we gathered from the playtesting showed that over half the testers did not find the game to be too difficult. Several testers responded that they wished the game was harder than it is. Most of our testers play video games on a regular basis. This could explain why they did not find the game too challenging. The responses we received regarding difficulty were that the players initially found it unclear how each character is used, leading to the conclusion that the difficulty comes from a lack of conveyance. As they progressed, the controls and mechanics became more intuitive for the testers. Another aspect that may have added to the difficulty was players adjusting to the virtual buttons, as many of them were not used to play games on tablets.

## Conveyance

### Charts

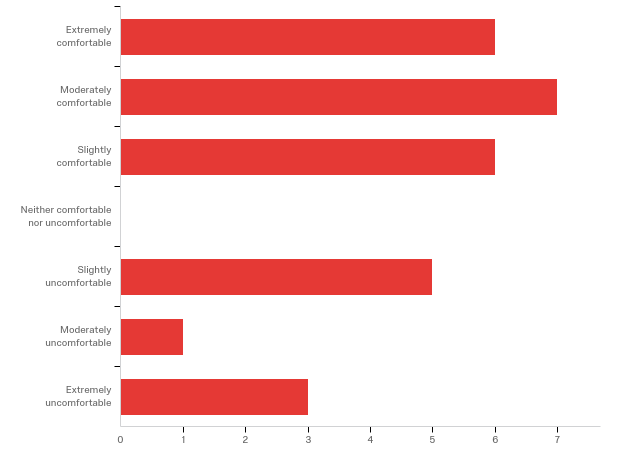


Figure 4: How would you rate the comfort of the controls?

### Qualitative Feedback

* Did you find anything confusing about the game?
  + Controls and switching mechanic (5 testers)
  + Characters’ roles and abilities (5 testers)
  + How attacking works (5 testers)
  + Nothing or no response (13 testers)

### Analysis

Feedback from playtesting shows that *Smith and Dozer* is moderately successful in teaching players how to play. Thirteen of twenty-eight testers left the question “Did you find anything confusing about the game?” blank or explicitly said there was nothing that confused them. However, there is some work to be done in showing players how the switching mechanic works and highlighting the difference between Smith and Dozer. One solution the team is considering is to add signs in the first level showing which button the players should press. Another solution is to redesign the look and layout of the jump and swap buttons. The team could also redesign portions of the first level to force the player to take certain actions at certain points, but this is a high-risk solution and is probably not feasible in the current timeframe.

We were pleased with the response to the control scheme of *Smith and Dozer.* Most testers responded that they found the controls to be more comfortable than uncomfortable or did not comment on it at all. However, this question was formatted inconsistently with the other two Likert scale questions, as the most positive response was on the left instead of on the right. Because of this, the integrity of the responses of this question may be damaged. Based on qualitative feedback and the less extreme responses to this question, we still believe our virtual button control scheme is the correct solution for our game.

## Engagement

### Charts

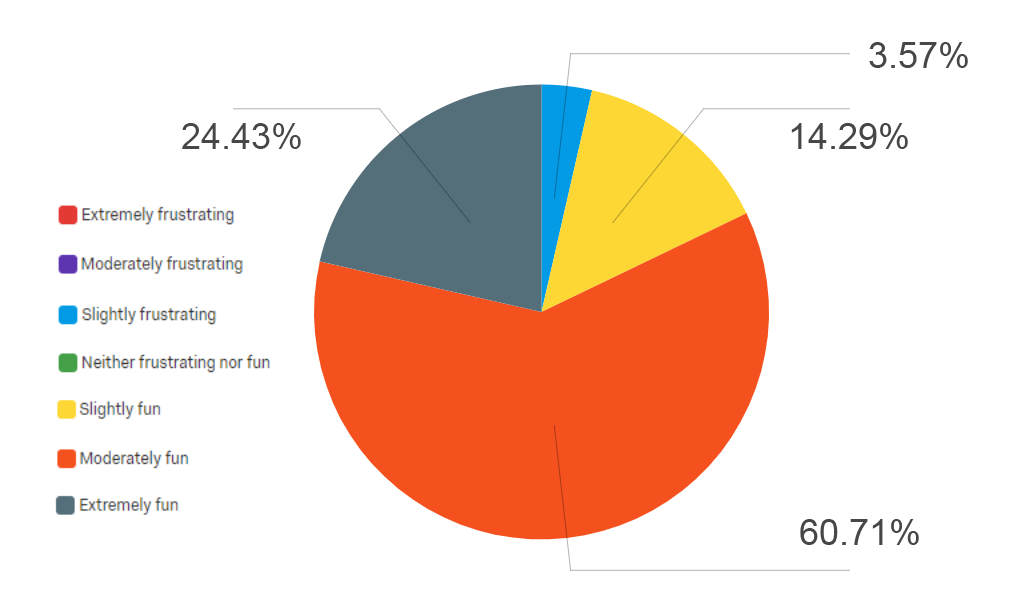


Figure 5: How fun was the game?

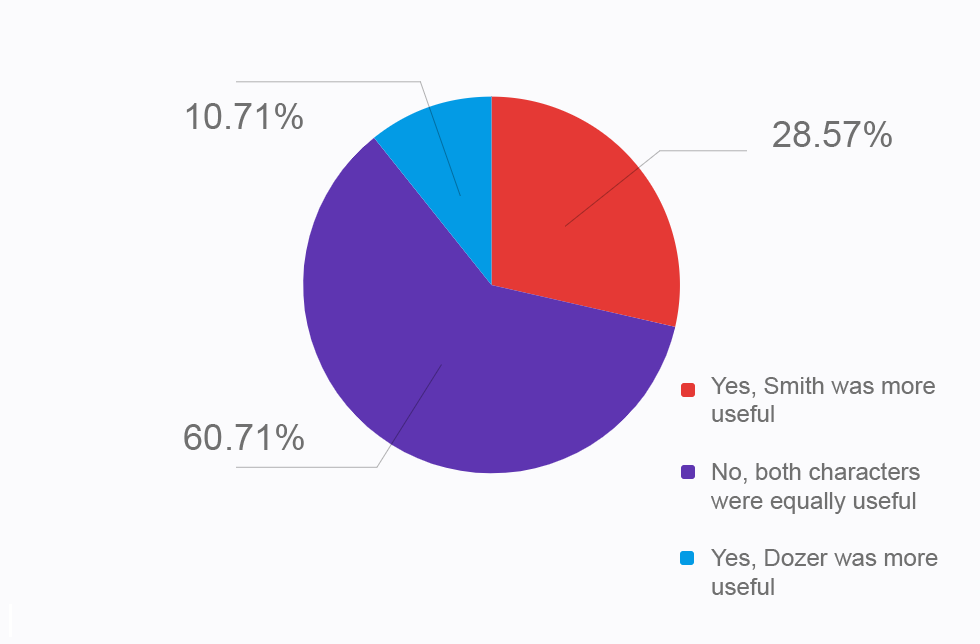


Figure 6: Did you find one character more useful than the other?

### Qualitative Feedback

* What did you like the MOST about the game?
  + Art - visuals and music (9 testers)
    - The visuals (8 testers)
    - The music (2 testers)
  + Mechanics (14 testers)
    - Switch mechanic (5 testers)
    - The fast-pace action-oriented style (5 testers)
    - Playstyle and concept (7 testers)
  + No response (7 testers)
* What did you like the LEAST about the game?
  + The lack of difficulty (4 testers)
  + virtual controllers (4 testers)
  + Smith’s shooting mechanic (2 testers)
  + Figuring out the characters and the switching mechanism (2 testers)
  + Nothing (1 tester)
  + Premise (unlimited lives, lack of story, and the level select feature) (1 tester)

### Analysis

Based on our observations and the testers’ response, most of the players had fun playtesting our game. They were engaged by the game’s art style, the music and sound effects, and the gameplay. The character switching mechanic produced mixed responses. Some players enjoyed it and thought that the character switch mechanism was interesting, and other players found it slightly confusing. Players were not sure what the strengths and weaknesses of each were initially. Despite this feedback, most players had a good idea of how to use each character effectively by the time they completed the first two levels.

Because we had a variety of skill levels among our testers, some found the game too easy and some were struggling with the difficulty of the game. Testers who play games regularly were able to quickly figure out the enemy behavior and master the controllers quickly whereas players who do not play games regularly struggled to understand the game. Overall, most of the testers figured out how to play the game after finishing level one.

Regarding the usefulness of each character, 61% of the players though that both Smith and Dozer were equally useful in the game, which is what we are trying to achieve with the level design. Among the testers who didn’t agree that both characters were equally useful, most of them found Smith to be more useful than Dozer. However, most of the testers didn’t get to the later levels where Dozer is more useful than in the earlier levels as Dozer can take more damage from enemies than Smith, so these results were also expected.

# Major Issues and Bugs

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Severity Rating | Severity Category | Description |
| 3 | Severe | Most testers struggled to figure out the abilities for each character on their own. |
| 2 | Moderate | Some testers were confused about the use of the swap button. |
| 2 | Moderate | Some testers did not try to smash the doors with Dozer. |
| 2 | Moderate | Testers were unsure when Dozer was attacking or how he attacks. |
| 1 | Irritant | Testers could not aim with Smith’s bullets due to the auto-shoot. |
| 1 | Irritant | Dozer would get stuck in first ramp of Level 1 while switching characters due to a collision bug. |

# Appendix: Raw Notes, Qualitative Feedback, and Observations

What did you like MOST about the game? - Survey

* Slaying evil dinos, carcasses everywhere not disappearing.
* Art was beautiful. Switching system was nice.
* I enjoy having to incorporate both characters to solve the game puzzles.
* Fast paced is good, character movement is nice and fluid.
* Visual Control.
* The sounds, visuals and general feel of playing the game. Very satisfying to play.
* Old school feel.
* the action-based feel.
* Retro feel.
* the music.
* I like the easiness to use and shooting monsters.
* The sounds, visuals and general feel of playing the game. Very satisfying to play.
* Fast paced
* Old school feel
* Mobility
* Graphics
* Switching characters concept
* The switch mechanics
* Visual control
* Retro feel
* The action-based feel
* Fast paced
* The switching mechanic was interesting
* Fast
* The visuals and gameplay

What did you like LEAST about the game? - Survey

* Levels were short.
* the only way to shoot or attack is to jump, making it hard to aim or hit enemies.
* The jumps (only b/c I couldn't figure out how to do them initially with switching between the large and small player).
* Placement of jump and character switch buttons.
* Platforms felt a bit too far spaced.
* Easy to mess up since controls are maybe too simple.
* Nothing.
* This game seems like it could benefit from having a score for time in the game. Being rewarded for speeding through it as well as getting the gems and enemies sounds good. The controls felt a little floaty at times and the platforming in the first part of the last level was a little difficult because of it.
* Graphics.
* the monsters were too weak.
* Smith's gun attack seemed less effective than Dozer. Through my play through, it seemed more effective to move with Smith and attack with Dozer since Smith's attack is not controllable.
* Maybe just that I had to switch characters very often.
* Not much increased difficulty by level 3
* Visual buttons are a pain for me. No lives so I really had no purpose. I don’t like a level based system. Try to add a story like megaman.
* It took me a minute to figure out the two characters but I’m just slow
* AI patterns are easy to learn
* NA

Did you find anything confusing while playing the game? - Survey

* Why doesnt smith shoot when he’s of jumping
* when smith was shooting and when he wasn’t shooting
* The switch characters control was a bit confusing.
* The only thing that was unclear was how the player used the axe
* the level of health that you gain/lose throughout gameplay
* The jumping
* The different characters until I learned them
* The atk and jump action is combined
* Not necessarily and the controls were simple, knowing to effectively switch between characters is the main concern as you typically want to stick to one character and forget to use the other
* No, very straightforward
* No attack, got it after
* Jump and character switch buttons were too easy to confuse
* it takes a little while to get used to the switching of characters and learning how to function with each character on the fly.
* I wasn’t sure that I needed to change characters to jump higher.
* Figuring out the strengths of each character
* Controls were very awkward, confusing at parts, didn’t explain controls that well