Personal Essay

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Prologue

Admittedly, I looked forward to this very last course of the year. Not just because summer break is right around the corner, but mostly because this is one of the few courses this year where we can express our creativity and are able to work with film. All the other courses this year were interesting in their own ways, but 'Project Interactieve Multimedia' felt unique and probably matched my interests the most.

First Ideas

Right from the start I decided that I wanted to work hard this period, as this is a typical course which rewards great dedication with direct satisfaction. I aimed to record my own material, even though the course allowed the usage of 3rd party video files, just to make something unique and personal. Furthermore, I wanted to deliver something out-of-the-box, to show that I'm not afraid to dare something new, even though others might raise questions toward my potential results.

From the moment I heard that the subject this year was 'career', I wanted to create something based on choices one makes throughout their life. I do not see 'career' as a label of 'work', but rather as a sum of everything in one's lifestyle. This caused me to believe that personal characteristics should be more important in the game than personal interests, as characteristics define a person whereas interests lead a person. The difficult part was to somehow determine one's characteristics within a decision-based game, preferably through a method which is considered out-of-the-box and preferably somewhat creative. Then it hit me; let's make a horror.

Horror?

Yes, horror. At first glance, it might seem the least appealing genre to apply on an interactive career game. However, as tension rises, which horror does better than any other genre, one's choices become increasingly more personal and true. In desperate times, one can truly identify another's character by its decisions, and we wanted to create that idea within our game, in order to provide the most accurate results possible. Since career is practically a result of decisions, this appeared to be a rather unexpected but effective way of determining it.

Recording & Editing

My main responsibility was the recording and editing of the game's footage. I took this task on me, since this is where my interests lay. I think that film is a very effective medium to bring ideas across toward the broad audience, which makes it a rather powerful and interesting form of media. I did not really have the opportunity so far in the IMM bachelor program to experiment with this medium, so I wanted to grab my chances and go for it.

The work itself went fairly well. The ideas I had in my mind came pretty good to life on screen, and the recordings went surprisingly smooth. The editing part was a little rough at times, since the software did not always work the way I intended it to work, but most of the issues were solvable through the help of various YouTube tutorials. It was quite a challenge to make something pretty out of all the home-made video recordings, but I'm proud of the end results.

Task Division

I worked together with Wouter van Zeijl, who mainly managed the code, the Ximpel application and the website. I think our task division was pretty effective and clear; we both knew what we had to do without being too dependent on each other. This allowed us to each explore our fields at our own pace and created a rather relaxed atmosphere. I felt happy with the division of tasks as I am probably a little bit more creative than technical, and I got the impression that Wouter had peace with his part as well.

The communication was mainly done through WhatsApp and the tutorials. We opted to go for WhatsApp, as it is a rather effective and quick way to communicate, allowing us to optimize our communication efficiency.

Post-Application Comments

I am pleased to say that our final result was really above my expectations. It is not often that I am actually proud about something I made, but this is an exception. Admittedly, Ximpel really helped making the separate pieces of film material into a game. Its interface is easy to use and really effective in guiding the user through the interactive game. It is my first time I made such a project, and I'm very happy with its result.

Problems and Improvements

I do not think I have encountered any major problems. The hardest thing probably, concerning the assignment itself, was the ambiguity of the assignment. We had to make an interactive movie about 'career', but we did not really get a more detailed briefing about the intended definition of 'career'. Yes, this opens various doors for creativity and personal intentions, but due to the broad description, there is

always a certain kind of fear of going into the wrong direction. Especially when searching for the boundaries, what we did, it becomes rather difficult to argue whether it directly relates to career. Therefore, we tried to explain our choices as thorough as possible in all our deliverables, to provide insight in our decision making.

Final Words

I really enjoyed the course and the freedom it provides for the students. I had a blast recording the scenes and editing the film fragments to create essentially a short interactive movie. Now that the course is almost over however, I have to say that I am glad that summer vacation is just around the corner. After all the intensive weeks I am really up for some relaxing holidays.