Original Design Document for:

Cellphone Zombie

a.k.a.
"Chucky from Rodenbaugh"
"The Slow Walker"
"Old Man, New Phone"
"Watch Where You're Going!"

"Hey, you! Get off the phone and watch where you're going!"

Prepared by PJ Hruschak

Version 1.0
May 28, 2013

Table of Contents

Design History

This is a brief explanation of the history of this document. Future updates will be annotated here for reference.

Version 1.0 – May 28, 2013

Version 1.00 is the original version of this document, combining general ideas and firm design decisions from both **CELPHONE ZOMBIE** design meetings held in the indiePub office.

Game Overview

Philosophy

Replay Value

Key features and mechanics of the game should lend themselves to be designed for optimum engagement and replayability. The game will also utilize touchscreen capabilities as best as possible as well as offer a rethinking of the constant runner genre of games.

Balanced Economy

The in-game economy should be balanced so the player never feels that the more desirable unlocks are completely out of their reach. Premium items should always feel attainable but be enticing enough to justify real-money purchases.

Expandability

Core features of the game should be expandable to promote our ability to update and support the game. By taking a generalized approach to character, enemy, and environment design, we enable ourselves to more easily modify and extend different components of the game's design for future feature updates.

Common Questions

What is the game?

CELLPHONE ZOMBIE is a rethinking an infinite runner game with an atypically slow protagonist strolling through increasingly hectic and dangerous surroundings.

Where does the game take place?

The game takes place in multiple seemingly calm and serene environments: Walking to the corner store, walking down a hallway, strolling through the park, sauntering across town, etc.

What do I control?

You control the unseen "Helping Hand" or "Hand of God" that blocks, stops, diverts and otherwise thwarts the dangerous and deadly actions of oncoming opponents, objects and enemies. You also create temporary platforms to help the walking avatar traverse gaps in the path.

You also help Chucky answer incoming Text Messages using a conversation tree (all responses are canned options the player must tap to formulate a response).

How many characters do I control?

The controls are essentially invisible although there may be a visual cue to indication the actions the player is performing. So you indirectly control the main character by helping him or her maintain their pace and continue as long and far as possible without interruptions.

The game does include a main character. For more information on these characters, refer to the (**GAME CHARACTERS**) section.

What is the main focus?

The player's main focus is to protect the Main Character as he/she strolls. In order to do this, the player must divide their focus across multiple segments: Objects heading toward the Main Character in the surrounding environment, the

actual path and text messages scrolling across the bottom of the screen. Progression stops when the Main Character drops his/her phone.

What do I earn?

Players will be rewarded "Distance" based on the distance travelled - like a very rewarding pedometer – and "Minutes" for defeating distractions and travelled distance. You also earn "Stars" for completing in-game missions which also yield "Minutes" and "Badges."

What's unique about this game?

CELLPHONE ZOMBIE is a rethinking of the "infinite runner" genre of games. In a typical "infinite runner," the goal is to run and jump, with increasing speed, to avoid simple obstacles. In **CELLPHONE ZOMBIE**, the protagonist moves at a steady pace but the impending attacks come from all directions with increasing rate and intensity. As such, the gameplay pace constantly increases, adding stress and becoming visually more frenetic.

Feature Set

General Features

- An Infinite, procedurally generated world.
- Lovely art with full retina support.
- Multiple Main Characters (YTBD)
- A lot of unlockable powerups.
- Unique and interesting Gear.

Multiplayer Features

- Leaderboards: See who can walk the farthest without dropping and breaking their phone.
- Achievements: Multiple game-based quests.
- Missions – Small goals that help to add replayability and temporarily change the player's focus.

Gameplay

- Incoming opponents come at an increasing rate.
- The path can changes over time so there are more and varied ground-level obstacles.
- Contextual touch controls make the game fun and varied.
- In-game shop offers tons of upgrades to cash in your hard earned "Minutes."
- Fun enemies make for a humorous yet challenging stroll.

The Game World

The Physical World

Overview

The Game World can consist of common and seemingly droll places to stroll. Each area will be presented in an interesting artistic style that will make an art historian cry with appreciative joy.

Key Locations

Locations will be common places you might take a stroll while talking on the phone:

- The Park
- The City Sidewalk
- The Office Hallway
- The Beach

Each location will have core elements that will be operationally similar but visually unique based on each theme. The oncoming opponents and obstacles will reflect the environment but may cross over (eg. aliens attacking).

Scale

The scale of the world is based on horizontal distance and limited in height by the display area. There will also be a narrow area for Text Messages, Distance and "Minutes" feedback.

Objects

Object will exist on multiple planes:

- **Above Ground** – Come from any area above the ground. These objects typically need to be swatted away, tapped out of existence or blocked. These include weather and objects on the ground and that might come at Chucky from the side.
- **Ground** – This is the path. It will primarily vary by height – as in small hills or dips – and some gaps that will need to be "Filled" by the player's hand.
- **Underground** – These are both obstructions, missing sections and semi-hidden objects that will pop up from the group and will need to either be tapped or swiped away. Players can also create a small "Bridge" with their hand or finger so the Main Character can walk over it.

Each of these will also have varied levels of strength or effectiveness. This may be reflected in the size, color and frequency it appears. In effect, the longer you continue to stroll, the larger, faster and more powerful the opponents that come at you.

Objects will also reflect the current environment and exist as cross-level doppelgangers.

Initial Release:

- YTBD

Update(s):

- YTBD

Rendering System

Overview

YTBD

Path

YTBD

Camera

Overview

The game will utilize a stationary camera. The Main Character will remain centered and the world will scroll by with slight dips and inclines.

Game Engine

Overview

We will be using the Unity3D game engine (v???). This will allow us to easily deploy the game across multiple platforms while minimizing the amount of native functionality that needs to be ported.

Universal Code

Certain game and engine functions like Localization support, indiePub notices, 2D sprite atlasing and currency tampering prevention will be implemented using internally developed libraries that are used across several indiePub games.

Game Characters

Overview

There is one Main Character and many non-player opponents that range from small, inanimate annoyances to large, mobile enemies.

Playable Character

Release

Chucky - This is the default character. There is nothing at all extraordinary about Chucky. He has evenly distributed stats and a very basic cell phone.

Enemies, Opponents and Monsters

All dangers and opponents will be procedurally generated so they will randomly appear. The impending danger will increase in frequency and difficulty the further Chucky walks to give the game a hectic pace. Care will need to be given to make certain that controls are not conflicted as one hand will be needed to hold the device and the other can only perform one task at a time. (For example, most finger or hand placement actions will require the entire hand and a set length of time to perform, so incoming dangers should offer a polite pause before coming onto the screen).

Release

From Above

Alien Invaders – They try to zap Chucky with lasers.
- Tap to stop.
- Block with stronger Hats and Umbrellas).
- Pre-empted by alien noises.

Lightning Strike – Zaps Chucky and the cellphone out of service.
- Hold finger to block.
- Block with stronger Hats and Umbrellas.

- Pre-empted by thunder.

Tree – Falls and knocks the phone out of Chucky's hands.
- Swipe to chop the tree.
- Block with stronger Hats.
- Pre-empted by "Timber" sound effect.

Falling Piano – Falls and crushes Chucky and his phone.
- Swipe to slice piano –OR- tap to hold and drag to move piano.
- Block with stronger Hats.
- Pre-empted with discordant piano chime.

Falling Anvil – Falls and crushes Chucky and his phone.
- Use finger to swipe the anvil in a different direction.
- Block with stronger Hats.
- Pre-empted by hammer-on-anvil sound.

Falling Crate – Falls and crushes Chucky and his phone.
- Use finger to swipe and break the Crate (Chief Kona falls out).
- Block with stronger Hats.
- Pre-empted by drumming sound.

Frisbee/Flying Disc – Hits Chucky and knocks the phone out of his hand.
- Use finger placement to block or swipe to swat it up or down.
- Block with Stronger Hats and Umbrella.
- Pre-empt with "swoosh:" sound.

Baseball – Hits Chucky and knocks the phone out of his hand.
- Use finger placement to block or swipe to swat it up or down.
- Block with Stronger Hats and Umbrella.
- Pre-empt with baseball bat hitting ball sound.

Rain/Hail – Drenches Chucky and zaps his phone.
- Use finger placement to block weather.
- Block with Umbrellas.
- Pre-empt with storm cloud forming and sky darkening.

Ground Level

Ground Squirrels - Attack Chucky at the knees to prevent forward momentum and cause him to drop his phone.
- Must be swiped away.
- Blocked by better Boots.
- Chirping sounds.

Mime – Accosts Chucky with bad acting. Causes Chucky to throw his phone at him/her in grand fear and disgust.
- Tap repeatedly to "punch" (or, if luck would have it, swipe heavy falling object onto Mime).
- Cannot be blocked by gear.
- Grind organ music chime.

Clown – Accosts Chucky with bad acting. Causes Chucky to throw his phone at him/her in grand fear and disgust.
- Tap repeatedly to "punch" (or, if luck would have it, swipe heavy falling object onto Mime).
- Cannot be blocked by gear.
- Pre-empted by creepy circus music chime.

Gust of Wind – Pushes Chucky back and blows phone out of his hand.
- Finger of hand placement blocks the gust.
- Blocked by better Jackets.
- Wind blowing howl sound effect.

Balls/Toys – Small items that kids leave out. Can make Chucky stumble and drop his phone.
- Swipe to knock object away.
- Smaller items are blocked by Better Boots.
- Squeaky toy sound effect when hit (or other appropriate noise).

Underground Level

Audrey 3 – Man-eating plant will devour Chucky and cause his dead arm to drop the phone.
- Swipe to chop plant into salad.
- Block with Heavy Boots.
- Chomping sound.

Zombies – Dig up from the ground and try to eat Chucky's brain.
- Tap repeatedly to "punch" (or, if luck would have it, swipe heavy falling object onto Mime).
- Cannot be blocked by gear.
- Creepy groaning.

Manhole – Chucky falls through and drops his phone.
- Flip the manhole cover back on the manhole or use finger placement to make path.
- Cannot be blocked by gear.

- No sound effect.

Sinkhole - Chucky falls through and drops his phone
- Use finger placement to make path.
- Cannot be blocked by gear.
- Crumbling dirt noise.

Creeping Vine – Causes Chucky to trip (and quickly engulfs him) and he drops his phone.
- Swipe to slash vines.
- Cannot be blocked by gear.
- Squeaky stretch noise.

Update 1

YTBD

Update 2

YTBD

Update 3

YTBD

Update 4

YTBD

User Interface

Overview

The user interface should be simple and as incorporated as possible with the actual design of the game itself. UI can be based on the type of phone Chucky is currently using.

Stats

The user should have a constant awareness of Chucky's current status at all times. Core stats (Health?, Distance and Minutes) should be clearly visible on the screen at all times. Active powerups should also be visible.

In-Game Menus

Menus that are presented to the player in-game should be as streamlined and as unobtrusive as possible.

Items

Overview

CELLPHONE ZOMBIE features an extensive array of items to aid in the player's not so leisurely stroll. These can be divided into three main categories: In-Game Pickups, Consumables and Equipment.

In-Game Pickups

Battery Pack – For increased cellphone power.

Scooter Ride – Hitch a quick ride down the street and avoid all obstacles.

Skateboard – Temporarily speed up and grind over ground obstacles.

Consumables

Cellphone Case – The tougher the case, the more times Chucky can drop the phone before it breaks.

Bluetooth Headset – For the real business pro. Chucky's hands are temporarily free to karate chop or kick low and mid-range attacks.

Fancy Hat – The sturdier the hat, the more sky opponents that can be automatically thwarted before the hat is knocked off.

Tech Squad – A tech team rushes in and quickly fixes Chucky's phone.

Equipment & Gear

Phones – These are critical items. Chucky will start with a basic phone that can be upgraded to better phones.

Shoes/Boots – These help prevent Chucky from stumbling over rocky terrain. High heels would be bad and boots would be best. However, each slightly

changes Chucky's pace: Heavier boots would slow him down while jogging shoes would speed him up.

Walking Stick – Helps Chucky automatically pick Minutes Cards dropped in the street.

Umbrella – Protects Chucky from light and small sky objects.

Voice Mail – Automatically sends secondary calls to voice mail without penalty.

Jacket – Keeps Chucky warm when the wind blows.

Ringtones – Can be used to chase away small creatures. (Maybe import ringtones from Sounds Crazy?)

Angry Mutt – Chucky walks the dog but pays no attention to it. The dog, however, is hyper aware of the surroundings and will pick up (and gulp down) Minutes, snag Powerups and help defeat small opponents (atleast as far as the leash will reach).

Music and Sound Effects

Overview

Think walking or travelling music for the background. There should be some cellphone sounds, background sounds (chirps, etc.) and sounds to accompany each enemy (including an early warning sound for some) The overall soundscape will be settled once the visual style has been finalized. But it will likely be Lynn. Just because.

Music

YTBD - Think walking or travelling music for the background.

Sound FX

YTBD - There should be some cellphone sounds, background sounds (chirps, etc.) and sounds to accompany each enemy (including an early warning sound for some).

Single-Player Game

Overview

The core of **CELLPHONE ZOMBIE** is to get Chucky as far as possible. You will collect pickups along the way to keep Chucky going and Minutes you can cash in to upgrade Chucky's gear and buy items to make Chucky's next stroll an even greater success.

Story

Chucky leads a humdrum life and uses his cellphone way too much (probably playing Pictago). So much, in fact, that he misses the exciting – and dangerous - world around him. The story should be explained through either an opening comic or brief animated sequence.

Hours of Gameplay

The duration of the game experience is and should be "infinite." However, to keep players engaged and returning to the game, continued post-launch support and updates are the keys to its success.

Mini-Game(s)

YTBD

Game Over Conditions

The game is over when Chucky's phone breaks or stops working. At that point, barring any consumable usage, Chucky's walk is complete. A summary screen is then displayed showing key stats. Players are also prompted to either buy consumables and upgrades or play again.

Chucky's phone can break in many ways although most of the time Chucky will drop the phone and it will break.

Multiplayer Elements

Overview

Multiplayer exists through the support of Third Party Services like Apple's Game Center and Amazon's GameCircle. Social media elements will also be encouraged.

Leaderboards

Leaderboards will be hosted across all platforms to track which players have walked the furthest and gain the associated bragging rights.

Game Center Challenges

On iOS 6.0 devices and above, players can issue Game Center challenges to one another challenging them walk further than them on an identical route. By using a set random seed the game can reliably reproduce a map so that another user can replay it. (Or so Tim says).

Social Media - Facebook

Players can post their longest distances on Facebook and see their Friends' distance records within the game (signs in the level).