

Building an MMO RPG Game

The Wrong Way



Hello!

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Lessons Learned

or don't make the same mistakes twice

Lesson #1

Don't start with MMO games

Team



team of experienced backend Java/Ruby
developers start huge MMO game on Unity
3D - completely new technology



it's hard to apply existing enterprise experience, patterns and approaches in gamedev

Result



as a result, a lot of bad architectural solutions

much better idea is to start with small study project, familiarize with release lifecycle and game engine ecosystem

Lesson #2

Flat team structure is a myth

Flat team structure



we tried to organize flat team structure, where each team member was equally responsible for end product

inspired by Valve

Missing something?

problems: 1) no unified product vision inside team 2) no single team member, who keep all project in his head

reasons: 1) no end product vision 2) not enough understanding what flat team structure imply

So, is it only a myth?

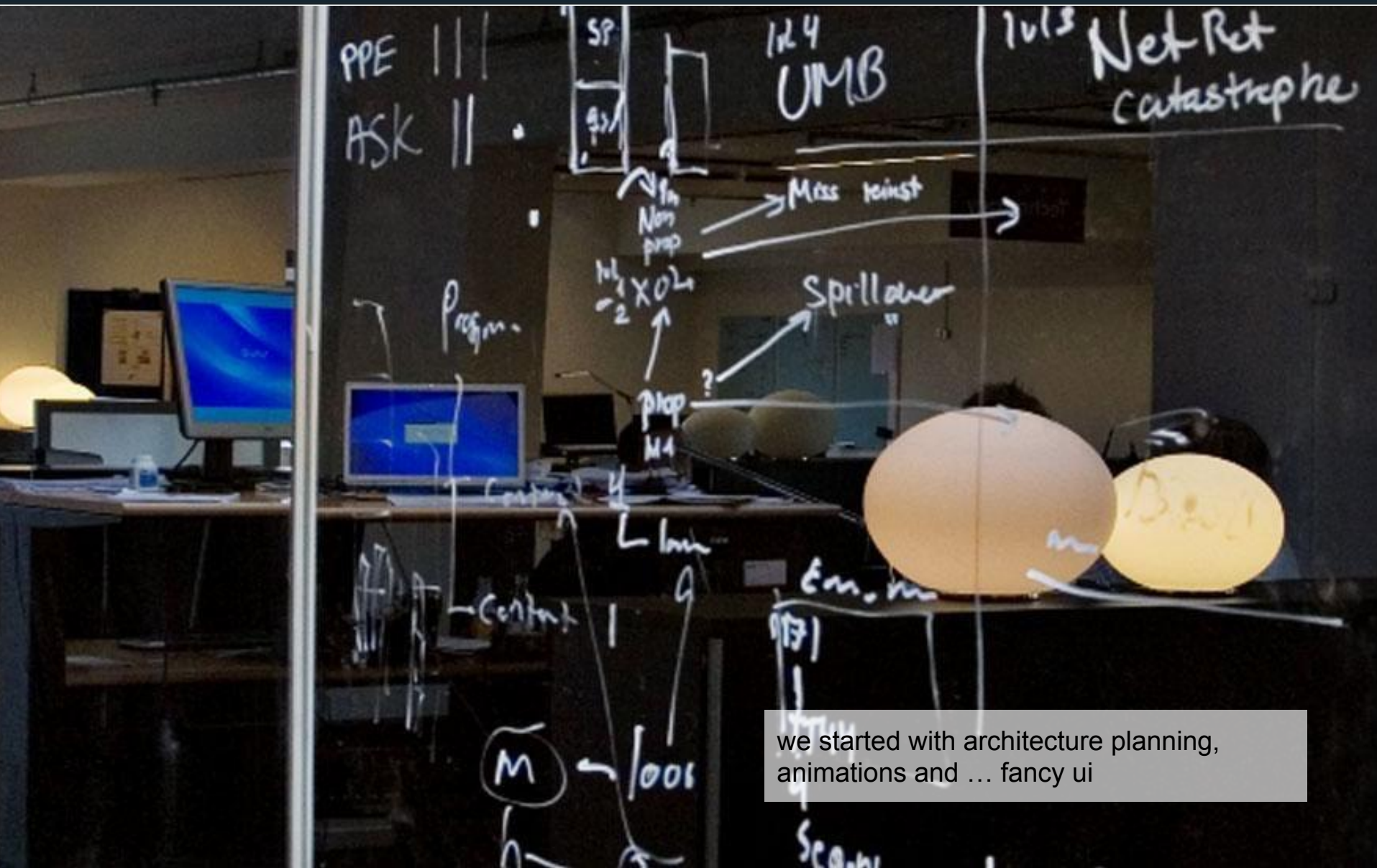


in order to create successful team with flat structure, each team member should be carefully selected (e.g. T-shaped)

Lesson #3

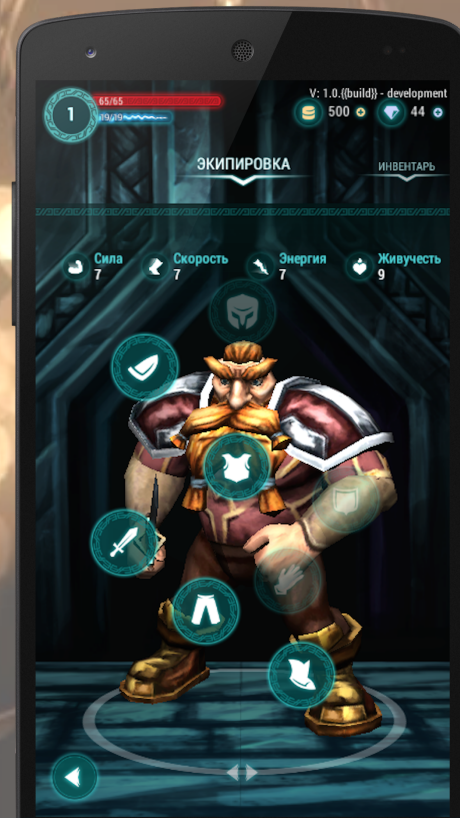
Reach fun ASAP

So we started...



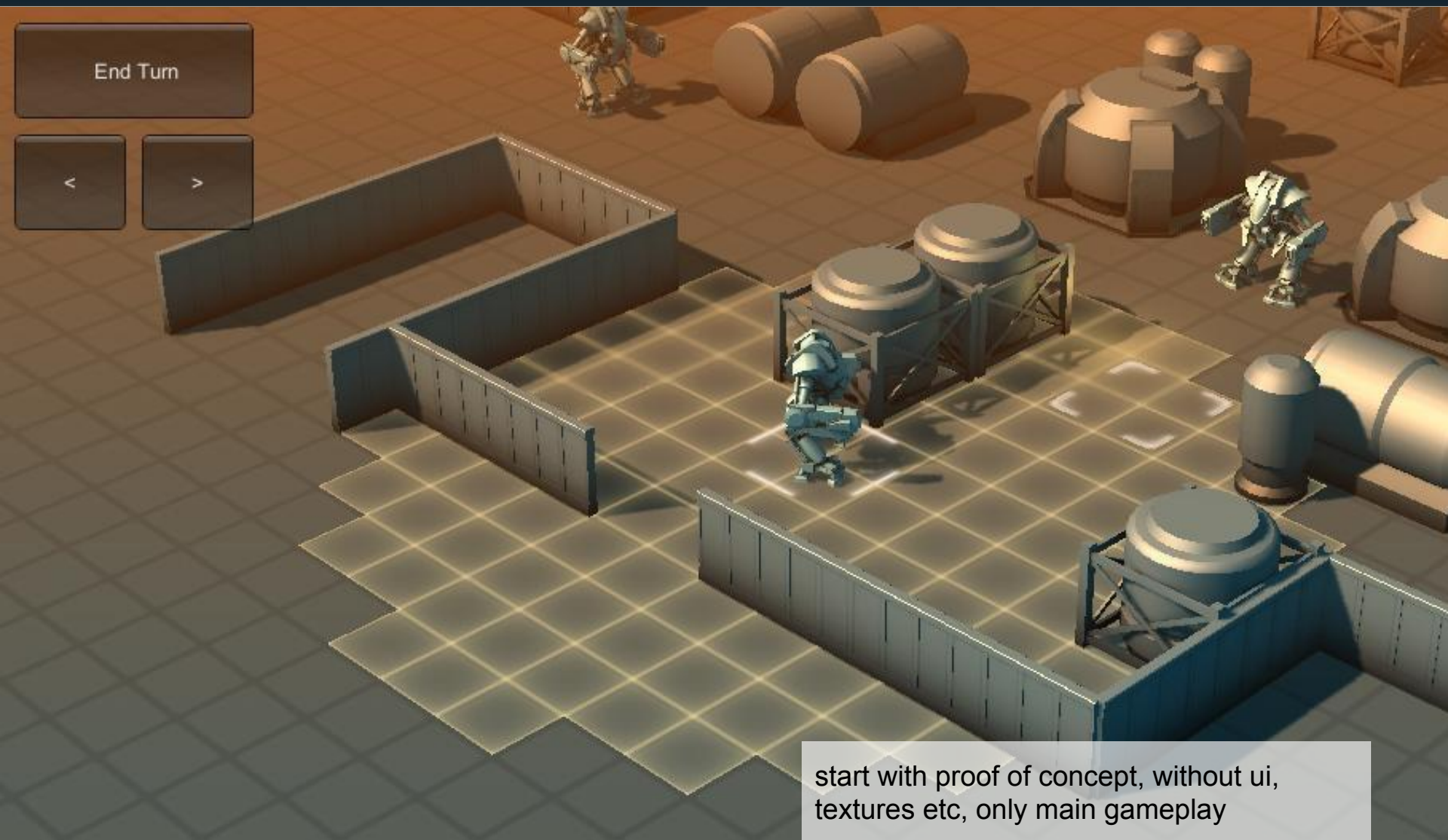
we started with architecture planning, animations and ... fancy ui

First Demo



result: after 6 month of development we didn't know how should main gameplay (fight) look like

PoC



source: <http://toasticusprime.tumblr.com/>

Lesson #4


Start with editors

Initial idea

Heim Admin Panel

http://admin.heim.com

Character
Items
Quests
Misc



Id
Name
Dwarf
Level 3

Inventory

- Wooden Helmet
- Bots of Glory
- Iron Sword
- Fire Sword
- Simple Shield
- Heal Potion

Add

Other options

- ☒ option 1 (selected)
- ☐ option 2
- ☐ option 3 (indeterminate)
- ☐ option 4 (disabled)
- ☒ option 5 (disabled and selected)
- ☐ option 6 (disabled indeterminate)
- A row without a radio button

initial idea: all game content is populated through web interface, saved in db and loaded to client

Good old XML

```
<?xml version="1.0"
  <person id="08470"
    <name>Kris S
    <address>
      <street>
        <city>
```

data transfer in xml

problem: without web ui it's hard to
populate large datasets and development
of web ui takes a lot of time and effort

Better way

The screenshot displays a Unity game editor interface. On the left, the 'Inspector' panel shows the configuration for a 'Mock Character'. The 'Mock Character Data' section includes fields for 'Is Tester', 'Id', 'World Id' (testworld), 'Name', 'Race' (DWARF), and 'Current Place Id' (home). Below this is the 'Money Pack' section with 'SOFT' and 'HARD' options. The 'Level' is set to 1, and 'Health' and 'Mana' are both 100. 'Experience' and 'Free Stat Points' are 0. The 'Current Sub Tutorial Id' is 'combat_tutorial'. The 'Masterings' section shows 'sword' and 'axe' masterings, each with a 'Level' of 1 and 'Xp' of 0. The 'Skills' section lists 'sword_1', 'sword_2', and 'sword_3'. The 'Stats' section shows 'STRENGTH', 'AGILITY', 'ENERGY', and 'VITALITY' all set to 7. The 'Asset Labels' section is at the bottom. On the right, the 'Project' panel shows a hierarchy of assets, including 'Avatars', 'Comixes', 'Db', 'Dev', 'GameSettings', 'conf_MasteringInfos', 'conf_MockCharacter', 'conf_musicSettings', 'conf_RandomLocationLockConfig', 'conf_ResourceFolders', 'conf_skillInfos', 'conf_tutorial', 'conf_VeryImportantConfigs', 'conf_WorldState', 'mock_InAppProducts', 'Gui', 'Locale', 'Models', and 'Particles'. The 'Model Preview' window shows a 3D model of a dwarf character. A text box at the bottom right of the preview window contains the text: 'better way: use Unity API to create game editors, for data storage - Unity assets'.

Inspector

Lightmapping Atlas Maker

conf_MockCharacter

Mock Character Data

Clone from Mock Character

Params 3D Presentation

Is Tester

Id

World Id testworld

Name

Race DWARF

Current Place Id home

Money Pack

500 SOFT

50 HARD

Level 1

Health 100

Mana 100

Experience 0

Free Stat Points 0

Current Sub Tutorial Id combat_tutorial

Masterings

sword

Mastering Id sword

Level 1

Xp 0

axe

Mastering Id axe

Level 1

Xp 0

Skills

sword_1

sword_2

sword_3

Stats

STRENGTH 7

AGILITY 7

ENERGY 7

VITALITY 7

Asset Labels

Loading textures from Models/dwarf_male/Materials/

Editing

Create Asset

Create Zone

Zone Id

Field Zone Id can't be empty

Create Zone

Model Preview

Reload

Project

Create

Avatars

Comixes

Db

Dev

GameSettings

conf_MasteringInfos

conf_MockCharacter

conf_musicSettings

conf_RandomLocationLockConfig

conf_ResourceFolders

conf_skillInfos

conf_tutorial

conf_VeryImportantConfigs

conf_WorldState

mock_InAppProducts

Gui

Locale

Models

Particles

better way: use Unity API to create game editors, for data storage - Unity assets

Lesson #5

CI for MMO is important

We started

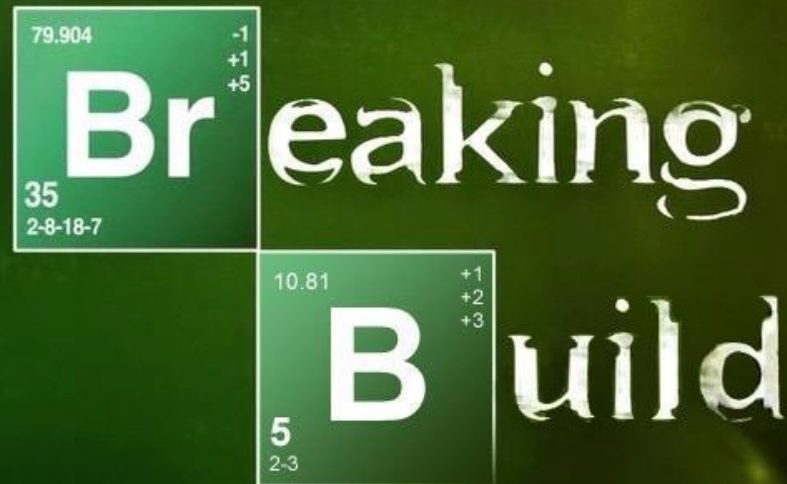


TESTING

I FIND YOUR LACK OF TESTS DISTURBING

we had all infrastructure set up, but at some point delivery become more important than testing

But later...



as a result, during last three months we were afraid to make event small changes, because no one know what could brake

Sum up

- vision at the beginning
- start with a small experienced team with PM
- start with PoC - reach fun ASAP
- get feedback

“

A man must be big enough to admit his mistakes, smart enough to profit from them, and strong enough to correct them.

John C. Maxwell

Thank you

Questions?

Presentation will be available at:
v.zasadnyy.com/slides/

References

- Valve Handbook for New Employees