Project: Survival

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Higherwind
**Project: Survival**

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**Game Summary:**

Dice Feathers is one unlucky guy. Friends from his home planet are suffering from a disease that can only be cured by an antidote from a foreign planet, and he was sent to find this antidote. After attaining this antidote on a distant planet, his spaceship started enduring engine problems and took a turn for the worse. Dice had no choice but to enforce an emergency landing. Upon crash-landing on the planet Makan, he was immediately taken by the Makani aliens and thrown into a dungeon.

As Dice, players must get through four intense screens filled with traps and Makani aliens in order to get to your spaceship to escape. But beware! Only with your own creativity can you get past the tough security and escape with your life! Dice is equipped with a powerful gun that vaporizes Makani aliens on contact. Navigate around the mazes to set off triggers to open up new paths, and fight your way to safety! The Makani chief is holding your ship captive! You must clear him and all his followers out so you can escape!

Project: Survival is a quick and easy play, suited for those times when you want to play something short to refresh your mind. The controls are easy to learn and game is easy to adapt to once the simple rules are mastered. This all comes together to make a great 2D shooter to have fun with.

**Plot:**

- **Introduction:** Dice Feathers is traveling from the planet Earth to a distant planet via spaceship. Many of their friends are suffering from disease that can only be cured by an antidote that is only grown with ingredients from the distant planet. After attaining this antidote on a distant planet, his spaceship started enduring engine problems and took a turn for the worse. Dice had no choice but to enforce an emergency landing. Upon crash-landing on the planet Makan, he was immediately taken by the Makani aliens and thrown into a dungeon. Little does he know that the Makani aliens are eager to take over his spaceship and use it for their evil deeds…
- **Level 1:** Dice is captured by the Makani tribe when he landed and is dragged into an interrogation room in front of the king. After his refusal to follow their commands, he is swiftly knocked out. Later, he finds himself locked in a dark dangerous dungeon, slated for his sacrifice to the Makani king. He must escape from his captors with his life!
- **Level 2:** Now out from the dungeon, they must traverse dangerous grounds to get to the docking bay where their ship is being held before it is
too late! This desert is not very friendly, with tons of treacherous holes and Makani guards roaming the field. The entrance to the docking bay is heavily guarded. Dice must use all the wits he has to get by the Makani guards!

- Level 3: At the docking bay, their ship is being held in some inner chamber! Blast through the defenses and get to your ship before it is too late! The amount of guards has heavily stepped up. Can Dice get through them all?
- Level 4: You’ve made it to your ship! But something tells you that you’re not going anywhere soon! Makani aliens are all over your ship! Clear out all of them and get to the cockpit so you can get out of there. But be warned… you must defeat the sinister chief hiding there, who is the strongest enemy they could possibly face. Prepared to be OWNED…

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How to Play:
You are Dice Feathers, equipped with a powerful gun that can vaporize Makani aliens on contact. Use it as you seem necessary. Your bullets, however, do not travel through objects, so keep this in mind when trying to snipe at enemies.

Use the arrow keys to help Dice traverse through the levels. The game is made up of four levels, each consisting of one screen, put together to make the whole game. Inside the game are switches that Dice can press by going to them. They explode all the green walls so he can get past them. Blue walls are doors that lead to the next level. Use the space bar to fire Dice’s powerful gun, which has unlimited ammo and firing rate.

Avoid the Makani aliens, and holes, and the Makani chief’s bullets. Dice left Earth with no protective armor, so even one slight error can result in death!

The Makani chief is very powerful, and has immunity to Dice’s gun. But that’s only the case when his followers are around! Defeat each of the Makani aliens around him, and then confront the chief himself. Only then will you be able to claim victory!

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Level Descriptions:
Level 1: The dark dungeon is filled foul odors of the dead. The place is barely illuminated by slivers of light and Dice’s cell phone. Four guards are patrolling the area, ready to take action. Find the most efficient way to escape; noting you’re your cell is blocked by green walls. Bust through the dungeon in your quest to safety.
Level 2: The planet is filled with holes and Makani aliens. Enemies will be all over, ready to completely destroy you if you don’t fight back. The docking bay is heavily guarded; you must trigger the switch before you can enter the docking bay.
Level 3: The docking bay is filled with even more ruthless Makani aliens that want your spaceship. Watch out! There are so many of them, it's hard to keep track! The exit to your ship is guarded by a lot of aliens, not to mention Dice must press a switch in order to open up the room.

Level 4: The final level inside the spaceship is filled with a ton of Makani aliens, with a twist! Tackle this level and defeat the evil Makani chief, and you will stand victorious! Be warned! The Makani chief will take everything you've got and more to stand victorious! Can you win, or will you be owned?!?! The Makani chief is invincible to your fire… what will you do?

Designers of the Game:

Matthew Low:
I am a senior computer science student at University of California, Santa Cruz. I have had a many years of experience in programming and working with computers, which will help immensely in working on this project. In addition, I have been a fan of video games, namely the Mega Man series, for years, and have played a variety of genres of games on a variety of platforms. These experiences will all attribute to helping the design and creation of Project: Survival.

I am also a “professional” card game player for the Dragon Ball Z Trading Card Game and Inuyasha Trading Card Game by Score Entertainment. As a writer for Scrye magazine, I frequently travels around the United States to premier level tournaments, covering events and competing in them. A gamer and writer by trade, I have played a large number of various card games, and this knowledge of both the casual and professional gamer will help see to the minds of consumers as well as the ins and outs of what makes various games attractive and successful. I am also a playtester for the Inuyasha Trading Card Game, which has helped opened my eyes to seeing how important testing games are in making the final product one that people will love and enjoy, and the hard work involved in doing so.

Jack Guan:
I have an eleven year experience in playing various video games. Throughout the years I have played numerous types of games from MMORPGs to Action Adventure. When it comes to creating games, my specialty comes in analyzing the quality and the concept of the game. This skill developed from playing abundant amount of games throughout the years. I have played almost every major game title that came out either for the Playstation 2 or PC. An important aspect I will contribute to Project: Survival is that since I have seen the game play and concept of so many games, I can incorporate the important game concepts of other games I played and integrated into Project: Survival. Creating a multi-unique game that is appealing to all audience will allow me to put to the test all my various skills and experiences.
Andy Feng:

I’ve started playing videogames ever since I was around the age of 5 starting with Nintendo’s Famicom (NES) and the arcades. The first games I played were side scrolling shooters of Contra and Raiden and interestingly, they were introduced to me by my father. Ever since that epiphany of videogames was brought to me by my father, I’ve continued to play games ever since. Over the course of my life, I have purchased the SNES, Playstation, Xbox, and multiple PCs to continue my interests in videogames. From my experiences in these 4 different consoles, I discovered that my favorite game genres were Role Playing Games (*Final Fantasy VII*, *Elder Scrolls III*), First Person Shooters (*Halo 2*, *Call of Duty*, etc), Real Time Strategy (*Rome*, *Command & Conquer*, *StarCraft*).

I considered myself to have played many titles over several systems but when I realized that the others’ accomplishments have far surpassed mine in titles played and experience. However, I do know that even though all my game purchases did not always involve the “classics” or award winning titles, I do pride myself in having playing my games over and over to death! One of these games was StarCraft and its accompanying map editor. Having worked with some of the triggers in the map editor has given me some skills to work on my videogame project. Therefore, I feel like I have good input for creating videogames, and will translate this expertise to Project: Survival.
Reflections:

As a group, we worked hard in trying to accomplish the original goal of the assignment; what we had submitted originally. But as Anne had noted on our concept document, this was much more than we should have bitten off. We realized this quite early in the process. Instead of making five levels, we instead had to change the project to one real level, made up of four screens that made up most of what we had hoped to make.

We had to change the plot as obtaining the antidote and having three different player characters ended up being more complicated than we thought. We do, however, have the sprites for all the characters and have included all the extra work on the CD since we already did it.

One thing that we learned multiple times was how fragile Game Maker is. We were almost completed with the game (finishing up level 3) when we inserted background music, and then Game Maker came up with the message that the file had been corrupted. Bad thing is we hadn’t saved a back-up copy in a while, but the good thing is we had one on a different computer, even though it only had level 1’s objects complete. Due to this, we had to make the levels again, which worked faster than before, but they had to be much more simplistic. Instead of having the aliens move on individual paths, we had to make them move randomly, changing what we did before. Game Maker also froze on us four additional times, each time losing some important parts of our game, but nothing to the level of the first loss. We learned that we couldn’t have too many things moving around on any one given screen or it would freeze the computer, forcing us to continue from the previous save point.

We hope that you enjoy playing our quick and easy game, created with the minds of Higherwind put together. It may seem simplistic, but it involved all of us working together, and each of us learned a lot about Game Maker, but most of all, how our imaginations can really make ideas a lot bigger than we anticipate. We had fun making it (except losing our game…), and hope that you have fun playing around with it.

~Matthew Low, Jack Guan, and Andy Feng – Higherwind