

# Foreclosure Bailout



# INTRODUCTION

- **FOUNDED IN SEPTEMBER OF 2008, WITHOUT LAUNCH CREDIT, AND NO FUNDING**
- **COMPANY IS COMPRISED OF COLLEGE STUDENTS, LOCAL MUSICIANS, AND ARTISTS FOUND ON CRAIGSLIST**
- **CREATED ON XNA FRAMEWORK TO ENSURE A LAUNCHED TITLE WITH XBOX LIVE'S INDIE GAMES CHANNEL**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID WRONG

- **NEEDING MORE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TOTAL SCOPE OF PRODUCTION IN THE GAME INDUSTRY**
  - **VIDEO GAMES HAVE SIMILARITIES TO OTHER FORMS OF MEDIA, BUT IT ENDS UP BEING THE CULMINATION OF ALL FORMS....MEANING MORE WORK!**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID WRONG

- **LOCALIZATION**

- **MAKE A LIST OF EACH WORD THAT IS TYPED OR SPOKEN AS YOU USE THEM IN YOUR DESIGN/GAME**
- **FIND PEOPLE EARLY TO HELP OUT, AS LOCALIZATION WILL OPEN UP MORE MARKETS FOR YOUR GAME**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID WRONG

- **FILE STRUCTURE STANDARD**
  - **COME UP WITH A NAMING CONVENTION FOR HOW YOU WANT THE FILES TO BE TURNED IN**
    - **WHAT DIMENSIONS ART ASSETS NEED TO BE**
    - **WHAT FORMAT MUSIC FILES SHOULD BE SAVED AS**
  - **DON'T ASSUME EVERYONE KNOWS THIS AS SECOND NATURE**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID WRONG

- **SET A DEADLINE FOR EVERYTHING**
  - **DESIGNING ON THE FLY IS EASY BUT YOU WILL GET CARRIED AWAY WITHOUT A DEADLINE**
  - **ARTIST WILL TAKE THEIR TIME IF THEY DON'T HAVE A CONCRETE DEADLINE**
  - **MUSICIANS WILL CONTINUE TO FINE TUNE FOR AN UNDETERMINED AMOUNT OF TIME**
  - **PROGRAMMERS ARE THE EXCEPTION TO THIS RULE**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID WRONG

- **CONTRACTS**

- **GET EVERYTHING IN WRITING**

- **DEPENDING ON PEOPLE'S GOOD NATURE CAN LAND YOU OUT OF MONEY OR CAPITAL**
- **STARTED OUT WORKING WITH PEOPLE PROVIDING AN XBOX 360 ELITE FOR WORK PROVIDED (ALONG WITH PAYMENT UPON COMPLETION AND SALE OF THE GAME)**
- **THE OFFER WAS QUICKLY FILLED BY PEOPLE CLAIMING THE ABILITY, AND TAKING THE XBOX WITHOUT A CONTRACT**
  - **ONLY 2 OF THE 8 SYSTEMS ARE STILL WITH THE COMPANY**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID WRONG

- **MARKETING**

- **WAITING UNTIL YOU HAVE THE RIGHT PRODUCT IS A GOOD IDEA WHEN SHOWING PEOPLE YOUR GAME**
- **NOT TELLING THE PRESS ABOUT IT CAN LEAD TO DIFFICULTIES WHEN LOOKING FOR FUNDING OR COMPANIES TO APPROVE YOUR IDEA**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID RIGHT

- **DEMO AT SMALL LOCATIONS BEFORE BIG ONES**
  - **THIS ALLOWS MARKET AND PLAYER DATA TO BE COLLECT AND FINE TUNING OF YOUR GAME**
  - **ALSO HELPS PREVENT POTENTIAL EMBARRASSMENT FROM THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID RIGHT

- **DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP AND SHARE YOUR IDEAS**
  - **THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY CAN BE HARSH AT TIMES, AND CAN KEEP US FROM SHARING OUR IDEAS WITH OTHERS**
  - **IF YOU DON'T SHARE YOUR GREAT IDEA IT MAY NEVER GET MADE**
  - **BY SHARING WITH OTHERS WE FOUND GREAT PEOPLE TO HELP US FULFILL OUR GOALS**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID RIGHT

- **MEET WITH A LAWYER**
  - **LAWYERS ARE EVIL**
  - **AGAIN....LAWYERS ARE EVIL**
  - **LAWYERS ARE A WONDERFUL WAY OF HELPING YOU LEARN HOW TO PROTECT YOUR COPYRIGHT**
  - **LAWYERS CAN ALSO COME UP WITH INTRICATE WAYS TO AVOID LARGER ISSUES**
    - **TAXES**

# PRODUCTION POST MORTEM: WHAT WE DID RIGHT

- **WORK WITH TALENTED CAPABLE PEOPLE, AND RELEASE THOSE THAT CAN'T PERFORM**
  - **STARTED WORKING WITH PEOPLE CLAIMING PASSION**
    - **QUICKLY REALIZED THAT PASSION IS NOT ALWAYS ENOUGH**
  - **HURT FEELINGS HAPPEN, BUT SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO HURT A FEW TO HELP OUT THE MANY**

# INDIE GAME PROGRAMMING

- **SMALL IN SCALE AND/OR SCOPE.**
- **USUALLY BUILT FROM ONE IDEA OR CONCEPT.**
- **EASY TO MAKE THE GAME AND THEN REALIZE THAT YOU CAN'T RELEASE IT IN THAT STATE.**

# NETWORKING

- **KNOW AT THE START WHAT TYPE OF GAME YOU WANT TO MAKE.**
- **TENDENCY TO MAKE A SINGLE PLAYER EXPERIENCE AND THEN TACK ON MULTIPLAYER ON TOP OF IT.**
- **IF MULTIPLAYER IS AT THE HEART OF YOUR GAME, IMPLEMENT THE GAME WITH THAT IN MIND**

# NETWORKING

- **START NETWORKING EARLY AND OFTEN.**
- **GET A NETWORK FRAMEWORK UP THAT IS FAST AND RELIABLE AND ITERATE OFF OF IT.**
- **DESIGN YOUR SYSTEMS WITH NETWORKING IN MIND.**

# TOOLS

- **TOOLS ARE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.**
  - **DON'T RUSH THE TOOLS TO GET TO THE GOOD STUFF.**
- **DESIGNERS SHOULD BE TESTING AND EVALUATING TOOLS FROM DAY ONE.**
- **DESIGNERS WANT SOMETHING THAT JUST WORKS.**
  - **TOOLS SHOULD BE USER-FRIENDLY.**

# TOOLS

- **QA YOUR TOOLS**
  - **QUALITY TOOLS WILL ALLOW DESIGNERS TO PRODUCE CONTENT QUICKLY AND PAINLESSLY**
- **SPEAKING OF QA...**

# PHYSICS

- IF YOUR GAME IS LIMITED, DON'T BE AFRAID TO DESIGN YOUR OWN.
- EXTERNAL ENGINES COME WITH A COST BOTH IN INTEGRATION TIME AND IN PERFORMANCE.
- OFTEN SMALL INDIE GAMES DON'T NEED MUCH IN THE WAY OF PHYSICS. SIMPLE CAN WORK BEST.

# **DON'T DO EVERYTHING YOURSELF!**

- **GAME ENGINE, PHYSICS, PARTICLE SYSTEMS**
- **SAMPLES**
  - **NETWORK/MENU MANAGEMENT**
  - **DISTRIBUTED HIGH SCORES (FOR XNA)**
- **BEGINNER BOOKS**

# PROTOTYPING

- **WORKING PROTOTYPE AFTER ABOUT 2 MONTHS**
- **PROTOTYPE IS QUICK AND DIRTY. YOU WON'T BE THINKING ABOUT THINGS LIKE:**
  - **NETWORKING**
  - **MENUS**
  - **PERFORMANCE**
- **TOOLS CAN BE PROTOTYPES AS WELL AND CAN FALL INTO THE SAME TRAP.**

# HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

- **SMALL TEAM = EVERYONE HAS A SAY**
- **CO-PROGRAMMING**
  - **QUICK TO DESIGN NEW SYSTEMS**
  - **QUICKLY CATCH INTEGRATION ISSUES.**