Not Just Another Fucking Space Shooter

Introduction

Sosol: In the beginning of making Shooter we decided to offer whole game documentation to the public. My source codes are available at quite free licence, then we have there English and Czech version of both this post mortem as well as original design document. This was a small project, although it explains clearly how much can final version differ from the planned one. I cannot predict how useful are these texts/source codes to wide public. We didn't plan any massive „popularization" nor distribution – Kahi had his small project with nice graphics and months of fun with map design :o), I had a chance to make somewhat clean source codes, which I tried to make as readable as possible. There it lies – our beloved open source project and by now we know that it won't be our last open source – it has its kind of magic.

Kahi: I would just like to say that this is not a genuine documentation, but rather a kind of recapitulation, summary...

Early phase of development

Sosol: It all started somewhere in the middle of October when we agreed with Kahi to make a small space shooter game. I had engine in development for one „big" project (Project Ignis) and I wanted to have a rest for a while. Original idea was to finish this little one in about 14 days. In fact we can say that it came true, because prevailing part of the program was made (transformed) during one weekend, while graphics was made in the following week. Reality was that after 14 days we had 90% of program and the whole graphics except of the last type of enemy (star shape), which was added later. The only problem were maps and we waited those, pff, 6 months only because of them. We didn't hurry anywhere, from time to time Kahi added new parts of the map, while I was working on some other projects. Well, we didn't realise our „weekend minigame" idea, but on the other side I think that the map is the greatest part of the whole project.

Kahi: Exactly as you say, 90% were made during few afternoons. But that mapdesign... took a little bit more time :). We can't say that shooter was being developed for 6 months. It wasn't. It was developed in a week – in a week that lasted half a year :). But remember – there's no reason to hurry.

Graphics

Sosol: I liked it from the beginning, it's that Kahi's minimalistic style. It corresponded well with the original concept – a minigame. Personally, I don't like „windowed" games, but this one finally managed to convince me – nice small spaceships flying over something like 300*200 background, cool.

Kahi: The start was interesting – Sosol, that time working on his big project, asked me how to paint pretty stars, so I made a few for him. And as I was making them, I added a nebulae. And as I saw that together, only one thing was missing – a spaceship. And that was just a step from a vision of nice'n'cool minimalistic space shooter game.

Programming

Sosol: As I said in the introduction, Shooter was created by changing and minimalising source codes of my big project (**Kahi:** you didn't say that! :)), which I'm gona finish soon, at least so I hope. I didn't have to write everything from scratch, I copied a lot and used prepared techniques, so the core was made in about three days. After this I only added few debug feature from time to time (when Kahi wanted them for his map-making). The last big deal came with finishing of the game – control of sources, cleaning… :)

Music, Sounds

Sosol: One day I decided to find some music for the game. We chose to use tracker MOD format, so I went to www.modarchive.com and some other sites like that one. After a while I found one song from Stepan Voles. However, it was already used by someone else, so we chose another song from the same author and today I think it's even better.

Kahi: Yep, at that time I was disappointed about it. But today I would prefer our present song :).

Sosol: And about sound – we didn't want to use any. You know – minimalistic concept ;-).

Experiences

Sosol: What I learned? It' s a fact that it „lasted" half a year, but most of the experiences with game development and programming in that time I got from other sources. If I speak only about this project, I must mention my relationship to open source – I've searched through a lot of open source licences, I was preparing the documentation and I tried to make it at least a bit useful for „someone". In a project like this it's maybe excessive, but imagine that every **good** project would have at least documentation like this together with open source codes. I know a lot about today's freeware scene, but unfortunately there are only few post mortems and other developer related documents, at least in our (= Czech) language. Czech developers produce quite a lot of freeware games of which about 10 in a year are **very** good. However, mostly without articles, developer diaris, source codes, design documents etc.

Kahi: Shooter is a miniproject, so it's nearly impossible for a graphic designer to get any significant experience. Only background, few spaceships and that's all. On the other side I got some experience in other parts of game development. I know which features are mapdesigner's good friends, I know that making a map by writing lines of numbers into mapfile is really an uncomfortable way. Next time I wouldn't agree to make a map without map editor. Anyway, I think that if the map wasn't made with a lot of good mood and motivation to work, it would be many times worse.

I'm glad that Shooter was finished this way and especially I'm happy that I endured the whole Sosol's pressure and Shooter remained minimalistic – I had to hear a lot of notices like „Anyway, I would like to add some more RPG features" :-)