Fostering Serious Games for Training

Kent Gritton
SGS&C
Why Initiated?

• Have you ever seen the energy surrounding the Independent Games Festival (IGF) at GDC?

• Three issues coalescing into SGS&C
  – Government unsure of gaming as instructional media
  – Industry unsure of Serious Gaming as niche market
  – Students unaware of Serious Gaming as employment avenue

• Given that:
  – there was no platform for the promotion and exhibition of game-based training opportunities ala IGF; and
  – I/ITSEC is logical location to showcase Serious Games and their associated technologies

• Serious Games Showcase & Challenge at I/ITSEC under NTSA sponsorship is born
ENTER YOUR SERIOUS GAMES TODAY
ARE YOU AN ASPIRING SERIOUS GAMES DEVELOPER?
Do you have a Game Based Solution to a Military Training Need?

This is your chance to showcase your work in front of thousands of people on the IITSEC show floor.

ENTER YOUR MOD OR ORIGINAL GAME BY JULY 31ST

WIN YOUR SHARE OF OVER $20K IN CASH AND PRIZES

WWW.IITSEC.ORG
WWW.SGSCHALLENCE.COM

Contact Barbara McDaniel at bmcdaniel@india.org or Debbie Dyson at ddyson@india.org for more information.

TRAINING THE 21ST CENTURY JOINT FORCE..."
2006 – The Year for Learning

2006 was all about restrictions
• Based on the mythical “garage programmer”
  – Company size restrictions
  – Company financial restrictions
  – No government funding
• And incentives
  – Cash prizes for various categories
• Learned a lot
  – Many serious games have government (of one sort or another) funding ties
  – Cash awards are not the primary incentive for entering the Challenge
  – There is a difference between a Serious Game and a Simulation using gaming technology
Entry Highlights 2006

Steel Beasts Professional
2006 People’s Choice Co-Winner

Point of Attack-2

Harpoon-3 Professional

Gator Six, Battery Command Virtual Experience
2006 Best Serious Game

Modern Air Power

Game DIS (GDIS)
2006 People’s Choice Co-Winner
SGS&C
Description / Background
The Challenge was a real success for us. Besides winning the (Best Serious Game) award, the traffic volume and potential future business opportunities generated from the Challenge pavilion were much greater than from our showroom booth.  

_Gator Six PM_
2007 was all about removing restrictions

- Wide open competition
  - No company size restrictions
  - No financial restrictions period
  - Military applications not emphasized

- Different categories to ensure level playing field
  - Students / Small Business / Large Business

- Emphasized entrant’s benefit
  - No cash prize – incentive is exposure
  - Location, location, location

- Emphasized Serious Games over Sims
  - 3 Honorable Mentions
Games vs Sims

• Highly debatable topic
  – SGS&C is squarely on the Games only side of discussion
• In order for a game to qualify for SGS&C, the following attributes are important (and evaluated against):
  – Uncertain game outcome; player required to tangibly affect outcome
  – Overriding goal/challenge (sub-goals/challenges) with positive and/or negative reward system
  – Strategy development required to win or succeed; need not be apparent at the outset
  – Multiple decision paths to achieve the desired outcome
  – Digital, engaging and inspires repeated play
  – Clearly defined learning / training objective; meets that objective in a measurable way
Entry Highlights 2007

Tactical Iraqi
2007 Best Serious Game

Vigilance
2007 People’s Choice Winner
Entry Highlights 2007

- PeaceMaker
- Ready to Work
- Response Ready
- Critical Thinking Training
- Saving Adryanee
- HuntIR
- Every Soldier a Sensor
- Tactical Combat Casualty Care
2007 Comments

• The SGS&C is an excellent idea that must continue. Everyone wins regardless of who gets the prizes. The education about SG's in general and the showcasing of the participant's instances of SG's are priceless for all publishers and consumers of SG's.

  *CEO Tactical Language and Culture Training System*

• The use of the space outside the hall was infinitely superior to last year's booth at the back of the hall. A much needed improvement which paid off for everyone.

  *CEO Tactical Language and Culture Training System*

• Camber managers from the CEO on down were thrilled with the additional exposure and contacts made as a result of the contest.

  *HuntIR PM*
SERIOUS GAMES
SHOWCASE AND CHALLENGE

ENTER YOUR GAME BASED TRAINING
AND EDUCATION APPLICATION

SHOWCASE YOUR WORK
IN FRONT OF TOP GAMING,
SOFTWARE AND SYSTEM
INTEGRATION COMPANIES

ENTER YOUR GAME
BY AUGUST 31ST

3 DISTINCT CATEGORIES
STUDENT
INDIVIDUAL / SMALL BUSINESS
LARGE BUSINESS

UP TO 12 AWARDEES

Visit WWW.SGCHALLENGE.COM
for detailed information
Questions: info@sgchallenge.com

2008
2008 – Year for Growth & Stability

2008 = Challenge and management refinements

• Category expansions
  – Added Government category

• Emphasized getting the word out
  – Students / schools
    • Still haven’t received a student entry
  – Conferences
    • Nor any large business entries
  – Web outlets

• Organizational and management improvements
  – IPT growth
    • Many hands make light work
    • Sub-divided IPT
  – Concentration on process documentation
    • Don’t re-invent every year
Timeline

• 01 Mar-15 Aug: Intent to submit forms
• 15 Aug-15 Sep: Game submissions accepted
• 15 Sep-15 Oct: Game evaluation/down-select
• 15 Oct: Finalists notified
• 01-04 Dec: SGS&C at I/ITSEC
  – 01-03 Dec: People’s Choice Award Voting
  – 04 Dec: Awards Announcement and Presentation
Evaluators

- Serious Games experts (~20 each)
  - Academia
  - Government
  - Industry
- Conus/Oconus (European, Australian)
- Depending on number of entries, each evaluator rates ~4 games
- Anchored criteria guard against evaluation flux
- Top averaged rating is winner
• Anchored Criteria
  – Defines the “serious” in the game
  – Focuses evaluation
  – Tracking and positive/negative reward system

• Technical Quality
  – Production quality
  – Conflicts

• Usability / Playability
  – Engagement
  – Ease of learning / playing
  – GUI / feedback

• Innovativeness
  – Bonus in each category

• Evaluator comments

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Statement Creativity and Documentation of Problem and Solution Intended</th>
<th>Creativity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intended solution as defined meets statement goals</td>
<td>Most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well articulated supporting activities</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>High Quality of work demonstrated</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Player scored and providing real-time information to player</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usability and Playability</td>
<td>Highly effective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Game play is alluring, mostly intuitive and easy to grasp</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>User Interface and Feedback</td>
<td>Fully customizable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Game exhibits high quality production values in most aspects</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflicts degree of sensory conflicts, negative feedback, poor information flow</td>
<td>Low quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement degree of fun and engagement in the application</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usability and Playability</td>
<td>Highly effective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Game play has and engaging and enjoyable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usability and Playability</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Game play and problem solving activities are intuitive and playable</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usability and Playability</td>
<td>Nearly all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Anticipated SGS&C Entries 2008

- 2006: 5 entries
- 2007: 12 entries (6 red, 6 blue)
- 2008: 12 entries
- 2009: 0 entries
- 2010: 0 entries
ROI

Over 17,000 I/ITSEC attendees!

- **For Students**: Expands the showcasing of their skills to potential employers beyond the saturated pure Game market
- **For Small Business**: Provides unequalled visibility of their Serious Games capabilities to an interested market
- **For Large Business**: Provides excellent and cost-effective marketing platform for new Serious Games products and technologies
- **For Government**: Provides unparalleled venue to explore training requirement leveraging opportunities with other Government entities
So What?

• If you are developing a game for training or educational reasons, and at least one level will be in Beta stage or better by September 15th, enter it into the Challenge

• If your game will not be ready for this year, consider entering it for the 2009 Challenge

• Bottom Line: SGS&C is the most ROI-effective venue for showcasing your Serious Game – period!