OUR STORY & APPROACH

PLAYFORWARD: ELM CITY STORIES

DIGITALMILL

Freeport, Maine
207-518-5065

Digitalmill, enables unique collaborations so organizations can build games that solve their problems.

We design games…

form amazing teams, and find…

novel uses for incredible game technologies.

Every project is treated as a unique solution

we consider the widest possible solution set vs. limiting a game around the capabilities of developers first-at-hand.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

WHAT'S IMPORTANT

- Separate design & development to **increase innovation**
- Successfully managed **client-developer relationships**
- Provide **expertise not found in-house** and transfer it to you
- Seek **comparative advantages** of games to capture opportunities

DIGITALMILL

HISTORY & SAMPLE CLIENTS

- Founded 1997
- 1999 First Game Effort
- Independent Games Festival Finalist 2001
- 2002 Co-founded Serious Games Initiative
- 2004 Co-founded Games for Health Project

Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
American Public Media
Brookings
Cadbury
Cisco
Citigroup
DARPA
Elsevier
Georgia Tech University
Humana
Leimandt Foundation
Lockheed Martin
McGill University
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Space Science Institute
SportzSafe, Inc.
USAID
The Wilson Center
Yale School of Medicine

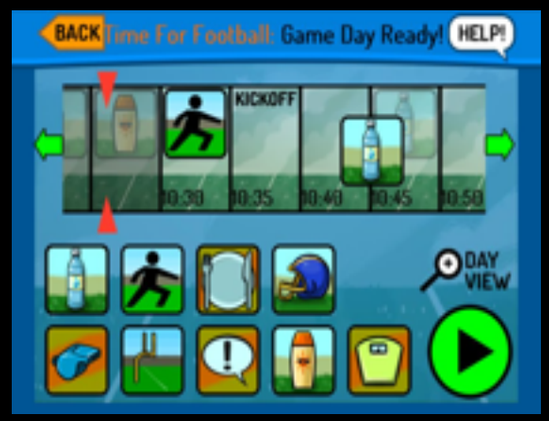
AREAS OF ACTIVITY

WHAT WE DO / HAVE DONE

COMMUNITIES & EVENTS	CONSULTING & RESEARCH	GAME DESIGN & PRODUCTION
SERIOUS GAMES INITIATIVE	RESEARCH & ADVISEMENT	PRE-PRODUCTION
GAMES FOR HEALTH PROJECT	PRESENTATIONS	GAME DESIGN
GAMES+CROWDS DAY	PUBLICATIONS	PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

WORK EXAMPLES

GALLERY



AFFILIATIONS

OUR CAST OF THOUSANDS

Digitalmill often works with great freelance designers from the games industry on a per-project basis.

For development & prototyping we partner with a variety of development studios and university based labs & programs.

Sample affiliations

Noah Falstein
Bob Bates
Ian Bogost
Larry Holland
360 Kid
Mr. Mike & Co.
Tiltfactor Lab
Totally Games
Thunderdog, LLC
Persuasive Games
Virtual Heroes

HOW WE WORK

STEP-BY-STEP

1. Consume **background materials** & initial **client input**
2. Develop **key project assessment** & recommendations
3. **Design**, storyboarding, engineering tests & prototypes
4. **RFP/matchmaking** for dev team + contract advisement
5. Production launched! **Supervise dev/advise client**
6. **Testing** and certification of deliverables
7. **Completion**, post-mortem + post-development activities

Our step-by-step process works to hold off core-development as long as possible to explore ideas and engineering approaches when costs are low, and changes are easy.

DIGITALMILL

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- **Remove engineering bias** from initial design & strategy work
- **Focusing on the problem** environment & definition vs. the solution
- Seek “**difference makers**” best addressed by games & gameplay
- Teams & **peer review** to foster arguments, checks, and balances
- “**longhand design** documents” & development manuals
- Preparing for **inevitable in-development changes** ahead-of-time

DELIVERABLES

BLUEPRINTS & PROTOTYPES

Common pre-production deliverables:

- Strategic documents
- Design Treatments (rough outlines)
- Design Documents (detailed outlines)
- Storyboards (visual outlines and details)
- Prototypes (paper or software)
  - Design prototypes test playability of design, rules of game, interfaces
  - Engineering prototypes seek to remove risk from full development
- Post Production documents
  (i.e. marketing, pr, user communities, teacher instructions, etc.)

WE'VE SEEN IT ALL

TOP MISTAKES

1. Never enough testing and adjustment
2. Poor pre-production process lacking effort to identify and test possible hurdles
3. Underlying model is too complex - game is too complex
4. Poor input controls and user interface
5. Goals of project not properly aligned, game aimed at wrong target output
6. Support for game in field is weak - nor considered at onset of project
7. Game too tough to explain to target users, hurting adoption
8. Not enough budget
9. Hired wrong developers, or developers with poor production methods
10. Client fails to provide constant support and vision to developer

PROJECT SAMPLES

EDUCATION

VIRTUAL U

- Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
- Over 100,000 Downloads
- Over 1000 University Sales
- Independent Games Festival Finalist 2001
- Heavy usage in University Management Classes including Penn, Harvard, Indiana St.

Users learn how major university organizations operate.

SOCIAL IMPACT

BUDGET HERO

- Originally Funded by Richard Lounsbery Foundation
- Original Design by Digitalmill
- Helped select developer (360 Kid), developed title/brand
- Over 100,000 plays and numerous media mentions

Users build their own solutions to the U.S. federal budget

CORPORATE TRAINING

CISCO BINARY GAME

- Original Design by Jerry Bush @ Cisco

- Re-Design of gameplay by Digitalmill

- Selected and managed developer (Persuasive Games)

- Hundreds of thousands of plays

- Assisted in widespread promotion of title in mainstream media

Improves fundamental 8-bit binary math skills for students studying to pass Cisco Certified Networking Associate exams.

HEALTH

TIME FOR FOOTBALL

- Original design outline and architecture
- Management of both front-end and backend completion tracking system developers
- Selected and managed developers (Phantom Compass & BlueSpurs)

Time for Football helps youth ages 8-12 understand key behaviors and knowledge related to playing youth football safer. Topics include concussion symptoms and reporting, equipment safety, and hydration.

STORYBOARDING

USAID GAMES STRATEGY

- Develop comprehensive USAID game and strategy

- Strategy + illustrative storyboards

- Sourced multiple ideas across team of designers

- Enable bidding by multiple contractors & funding partners

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

MOBILE, INTERFACES, OFFLINE

EXPERIMENTAL UAV CONTROL GAME (DARPA)

CONSUMER ADVERGAME

IPHONE EXERGAME

HEALTH QUALITY CARD GAME

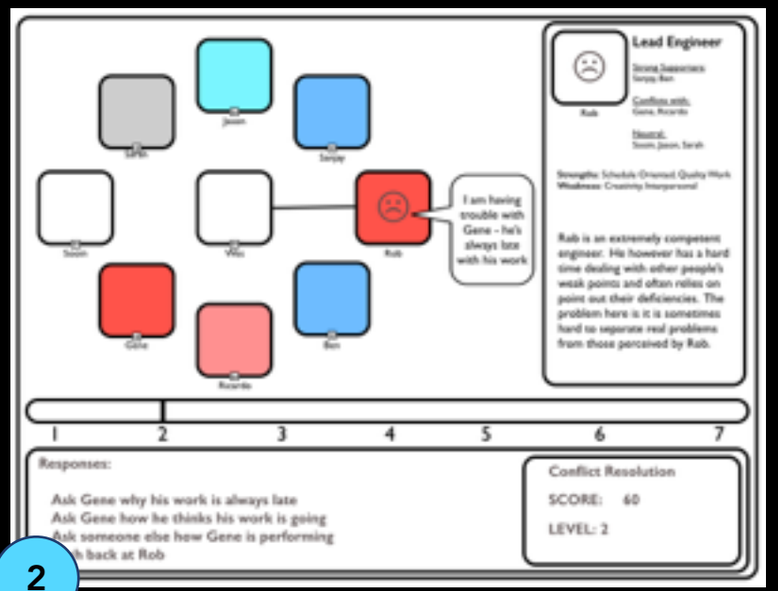
IP PROTOCOL GAME

"CHEMISTRY TETRIS"

LEADING EDGE

LEADERSHIP TRAINING WIREFRAMES

1



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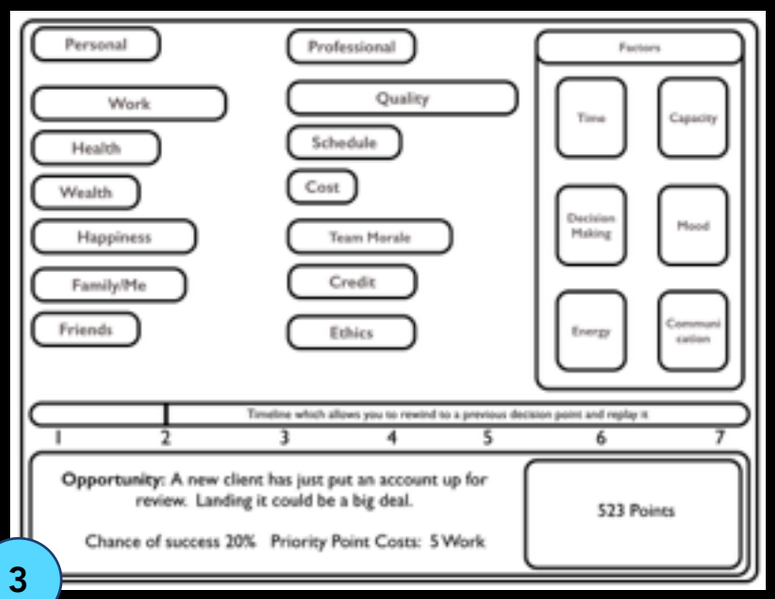

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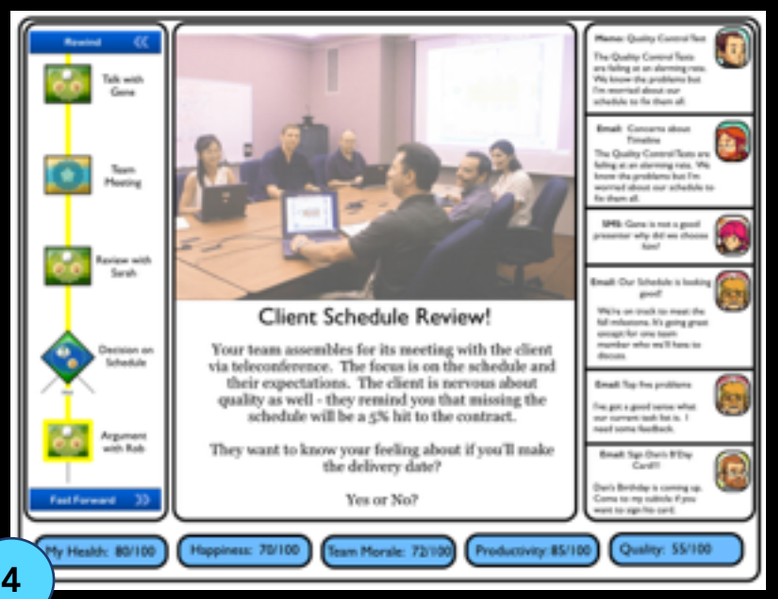


4

1. Gamified Web portal offering specific mini-games, and leadership content.

2. Team training, using specific skills to explore interpersonal dynamics around diverse team

3. Managing personal and professional work-life balance & priorities

4. Narrative game engine for deploying scenario-based training.

GAMES FOR HEALTH

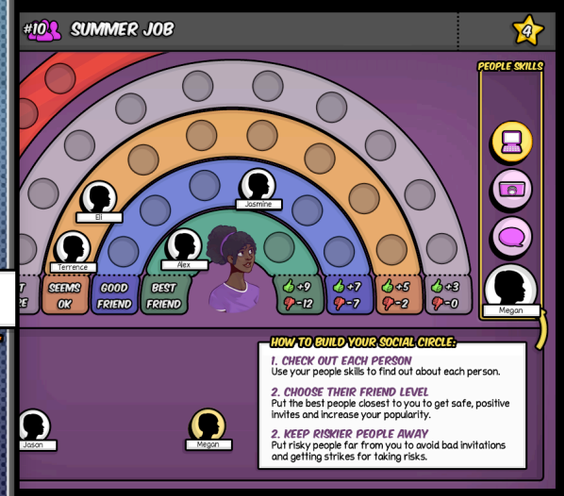
PLAYFORWARD: ELM CITY STORIES

- Yale School of Medicine : NIH Grant
- Original design and project scope
- Assisted with RFP and contracting
- Executive producer during development

Players explore stories but advance via strategic mini-games designed to improve decision making & knowledge

PLAYFORWARD

ADDITIONAL SCREENS



INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

PATENTS & PUBLISHED RESEARCH

- Helped develop patents for Yale (U.S. 20130309641 Pending), private developers (U.S. 20130275230 pending), and Humana, Inc. (U.S. 8747199 granted)

- We are co-authors on several peer-reviewed journal publications with Yale's Play2Prevent project concerning the development of PlayForward

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

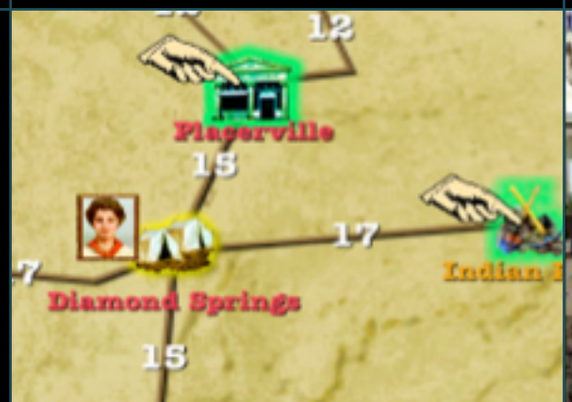
PROJECT	TOPIC	PLATFORMS	RELEASE?
AMERICAN REVOLUTION GAME	HISTORY	IOS/ANDROID WINDOWS/OSX	LATE 2016
MATH ROGUE	MATH	IOS/ANDROID WINDOWS/OSX	LATE 2016
HEALTHYNOMICAL	HEALTH FINANCIAL LITERACY GAME	HTML5	2017
SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT TITLE	SPORTS	IOS/ANDROID WINDOWS/OSX	SPRING 2017

CUSTOM FIT

MANY FORMS & PLATFORMS

FLASH

IPHONE



SONY PSP

CARD/ BOARD GAME

TABLET

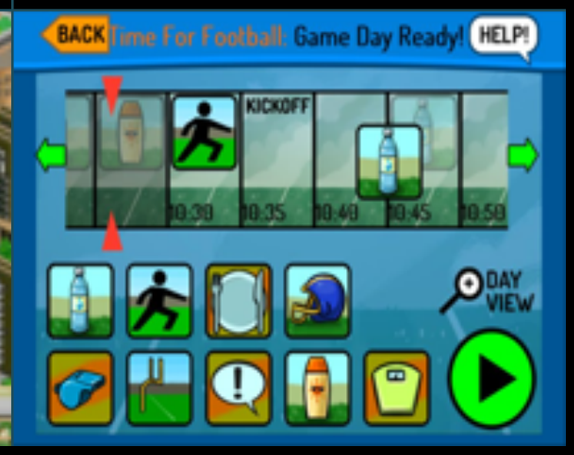
PHONEGAP +JAVASCRIPT

Meili

mobile activities engine

NATIVE PC

HTML5



COMMON ENGAGEMENTS

WHERE TO START?

- **Triage & Assessment**
  Review your current problem/project and provide 1-2 days on-site or videoconf + resulting strategy & assessment memo

- **Workshop**
  On-site 2-day training workshop on game design & production

- **Design Treatments**
  2-3 Specific designs (3-5 pages each) + wireframes

- **Design Document & Production Plan**
  Full-scale design document & production plan (30-50 pages) with wireframes & optional storyboards

* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

NEXT STEPS...

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

- **Evaluate** if a game is a reasonable part of your plan
- **Decide** if separating the design process from the development process offers advantages
- **Model** amount of initial design & eventual production management assistance you need
- **Deliver** a full proposal and schedule for your consideration

CONTACT US

Ben Sawyer

bsawyer@dmill.com

Freeport, Maine
207-518-8065