

The Sims Project Completion

JDM, Revision 1, 18-Dec-98.

The laundry list...

Sources:

- *The Sims* recent write up (w/ Plateaus, etc.)
- Notes from Luc's ideas
- Development Plan task database
- [Design Priorities list if I can find it?]

This is first cut; will probably benefit a pass to break it down into design, production, programming, art, sound, etc.

1. Neighborhood and Setup

Neighborhood View

- Layout Final
- Static Artwork
- Common Area variations
- Spot Animations
- Sound Effects
- Functional Design Final
 - Bulldozer
 - Quit
- Initial Game Flow
 - Into Tutorial House
 - First Timer doesn't start w/ Nbhd
- Seasons(?)

Setup Screens

- GUI Art Design/Implementation
- House Catalog
 - Stock Houses and terrain authored
- View Mode
- Player log-on to choose neighborhood (?)

2. Live Mode

Character Control and Autonomy

- More obedient when happier
- More autonomous when happier (or for nicer objects?)
- "Relationship with Player" trigger and feedback
 - "I dig you, Player!"
 - "Fuck you, Player!"
 - Head Phakes™ to player (?)

Family Members

- Skins for population
- Bathing suits, nude skins
- Combinations of skins
- User drawn/scanned skins/faces(?)
- Better in-game indicator of active character

Kids

- Skeletons
- Skins
- Animation variation callout scheme
- Walk animations
- Interaction animations
- Object Interaction differences
- Social Interactions
- "Birth" and other Family issues

Careers

- Career Tracks defined
- Skills Objects
- Car Pool Scheduling
- Car Pool Graphics/Animation
- Morning Alarm Clock (purchased or auto?)
- Promotion/Demotion
 - Record Keeping and Triggers
 - Player Feedback
- Uniforms (Accessories)

Friends and Neighbors

- Making (and counting) Friends
- Social Interactions, incl. Conversations

“Action icons” for Social Interactions
Relationships through object interactions
Concept of best friend, mentor
Jealousy, other “transitive” relationships
Romance implementation
“Greetings” reflect relationship
Phone Book GUI
 Design Issues resolved
 Implementation
Parties
Gifts
Job Leads

Special Characters (NPC's)

Skins
Custom Behaviors
Supporting Implementation
 Theft
 Repossession
 Fire/False Alarm
 Architecture/Interior Evaluator
 Medics Take Character
 Etc.

Situation Engine

Engine
 Trigger conditions
 Tracking history
 Outcome determination
Dialogs: Set-Up and Reward
Music bumpers
Score keeping

Situations and Tutorial

Specific situations designed and authored

General Animation

Engine Improvements
Flexible Spine
Smooth Skins (?)
Expressive Walking
Hard ones
 Sleeping on floor
 Big fist fight
Better walking through doorways (?)
Debug routing edge cases, people collisions
Tune outdoor routing (favor sidewalks)

General Behaviors

Improve failures in Food Chain
Improve failures in trash/ash handling
Privacy (e.g., bathroom)

3. Buy and Build

Finances

Net Worth Calculation
 Lot
 Objects
 Architecture
Buying on Credit
Repossession

Architecture and Placement

Darkness fix
Roofs
Water
Better room aesthetic evaluator
Come-see-me device for new construction
Un-editable tiles around edge (flexibly specified)
Smaller lots (and how we specify)
Edge-of-world rendering changes?
Another crack at terrain rendering (?)
Seasonal terrain, flora variations (?)
Improve railings(?)
Dynamic cutaway for people outdoors (?)
Animated cutaway (amortizes draw time?)
Stairway refined, more variations
Window coverings (?)
Exterior ornamentation (?)
More random placement of trees (?)
Windows/Doors on diagonals (?)
Thick floors, foundations (?)
Animated construction effects (?)

Failures and Disasters

Improve fire
 Catch-fire location
 Alarm noise
 Fire Extinguisher cloud
Bigger flood
Complete set of motive failure animations

Objects

Sprites, animations, accessories, sounds, interaction trees
Decouple counters from small appliances
Current List
Support Career Skills
Support Special Characters
Support Situations
The Duck

4. General Game

Narrator

- Introductory Experience
- Advice Engine
 - Trigger/Record Scheme
 - Authoring
 - VOX and Text
- Narrator Guy
 - Game Freeze
 - Special Lighting
 - VOX playback

General GUI

- Control Panel simplified
- “Query” panel for family members
- Remaining icons for action queue
- Mouse-wheel support
- Follow the active characters
- Rework pointer cursors

Sound Engine

- Non-Exclusive
- Easier to tune locality
- Special channels (fire alarm, etc.)

Credits Screen

- Display System
- Authoring/Validating
- Music

Import/Export

- Extracting and Packaging
- Homes/Neighborhoods to Share
- Plug-In Objects
 - Installer Packaging
 - Registration with Game
 - Uninstallation?
 - Proxy in Shared Houses

Localization

- Identify Strings, Code, and Assets to Localize
- Localize
- In Game support
- Tools support
- Conversion to scheme
- In-Game Testing methods
- Installer localized
- Cultural sensitivity vetted

Platform

- Bitmap Compression
- Animation Compression

- Windows 95/98/NT sticker compliance
- Copy protection (mandated?)

Performance

- Culling obscured objects, people, architecture
- Inner loop optimizations
- 3D engine upgrade
- Hardware 3D?

Ideas

- Record and Playback
 - Character Animations
 - Sprite Animations
 - Sound Effects
 - Editing?
 - Text Note Track

Tuning

- Player Time Breakdown
- Character Time Breakdown
- Object Efficiency
- Cost Effectiveness
- Sleep and Energy
- Skills Investment
- Architecture/house prices (build vs. buy)
- Social Need increases with Success
- Salary

5. Miscellaneous Production and Development

Play Testing

- “Kleenex” Testing
- Tuned Game Testing
- Marketing Focus

Demo

- Crippling
- Installer Packaging
- Size Reduction

Software Packaging

- Upgrade Installer/Autoplay
- Artwork: Splash, installer, autoplay, Windows icons
- Intro video
- Plug-in installers, with digital authentication(?)

Tools

- Animation “Glitch” Capture
- More Automated Export

Multi-Language Build
Tuning Co-efficients in Edith
Mathematica graphing of interaction logs
 By character (personality)
 By architecture
 By object class

Web Site Support

Plug-In Object Browser
Shared House Thumbnail Browser

Marketing Events and Support

E3 Demo
Assets for Press
Assets/Screenshots for Packaging