



To succeed in business it is necessary to make others see things as you see them.

Dedicated Game Testing for Multiplayer Online Game

Abstract

US based online gaming company, highly reputed for their Desktop Games and had captured a large scale of users following their games. Game was on a theme of “The Militant Attack” where commandos were to rescue the public and premises staff from the Terrorists with minimum casualties. Client had spent good amount of time in research prior to developing this kind of a game functions with highly interactive and rich multi media. There were 3 different Game engines involved based on the target select and the pattern of the fight selected. Client was looking for a test partner to operate in dual shore model to do the needful for testing this project. Gateway TestLabs was selected as dual shore test partner to perform manual testing of MOG game based on unique theme and rich multi media concepts. From Gateway’s efforts – Client admitted that this Test activity had generated more than 100% Value on Investment (VOI).



Client Profile

US based online gaming company, highly reputed for their Desktop Games and had captured a large scale of users following their games. The game company had spread their wings in game areas like Mobile games, static games, educational games, flash games however they were trying their first release of multimedia rich games with multiple characters where players can play these games online without downloading installer to their computers.

Business Need

Game was on a theme of “The Militant Attack” where numbers of commandos were to rescue the public and premises staff from the Terrorists with minimum casualties.

Client had spent good amount of time in research prior to developing this kind of a game with highly interactive and rich multi media. Client was highly keen on game functions where the selected theme based characters, screens, levels, pathways, rescue patterns and different sounds were major challenge for team to verify. Client also had to ensure the ease of game use and make it most interactive so that the game is best suitable for current MOG users. Each level based on the target selected had a various point awarding scheme and Game players would also be granted credit based on the points achieved, using which they would have different gifts to be distributed. Verification of this point calculation and credits was quite a complex.

Challenges

The main challenges Gateway faced were:

- Multiplayer game with each commando being a real-time user.
- High level of application complexity with multiple scenarios to tackle.
- Rich multimedia game based on ActiveX and flash components.
- Multiple levels with increase in complexity, Level based complexity was one of the major test criteria.
- Game understanding and test planning was to be completed in less than 2 weeks by traveling to clients development center.
- Close communication with Client and their development team during the test execution.
- Complex Multi media screens to be tested for high level of GUI concepts.

Case Study

There were 3 different Game engines involved based on the Target select and the pattern of the fight selected. All these game had to be rigorously tested along with the message parsing between the game engine and the web client.

Client was looking for a test partner to operate in dual shore model to do the following:

- A Test lead can travel to their development center and understand the complete game rules, functionalities; various theme based parameterization and also suggest various alternatives on Test plan and strategy to the team to select from.
- As the Game release was quite near and the first version for testing was almost ready, client needed highly responsive team with good amount of Game testing knowhow
- Post first release client needed complete documentation of the game testing scenarios to be done
- Test the game and its themes for following:
 - Game Engines
 - Message parsing between game engines and web client
 - Random number generator
 - Game functionalities
 - Ease of game play
 - Points and credit calculations
 - To be tested across 8 browser/OS combinations
- Execute and maintain test repository

Benefits

- Client admitted that this Test activity had generated more than 100% Value on Investment (VOI).
- Game Play, usability, help files and guide to pathways were improved by more than 70%.
- Dual-Shore model helped client in saving major of their crucial time during the tight deadlines.
- Improved Performance of the game play by 60%, also suggested future hardware bottlenecks led to plan effective budget for future.
- Extensive Compatibility test helped in gaining clients across the globe.
- On time releases via effective test planning helped client in leaping ahead from the competitor games.

Technology

- .NET 2.0, SQL Server, Flash 7.0, and Flex 1.0, Action Script 3
- Linux, Windows
- Mantis BT (Bug tracking tool)

Industry

Multiplayer Online Gaming(MMORPG)



Gateway's Solution

Gateway TestLabs was selected as dual shore test partner to perform manual testing of MOG game based on unique theme and rich multi media concepts. Gateway TestLabs team had to ensure the timely delivery, escalation of any major findings, and overall quality of this game releases where due to high end marketing the expectation from the Gamers' community was very high.

To ensure that the Game rule understanding is at its best, a test lead had traveled to the Development center, Test Lead also planned the complete testing phase along with releases. Once the test lead was back to the Offshore test center in India, was suppose to educate the team of 5 testers to ramp up the team in just one week. 5 Testers had already learnt basic game rules and usability aspects as they had been participating in the Game understanding sessions via GoToMeeting and other collaboration tools.

The communication and reporting channel were established to ensure that planned releases and deadlines were met. Test team's duty timings were changed to manage the overlapping between different time zones. Initially there were two reporting session were per week, reducing it to once a week as the process streamlined. Daily reporting via Email and phone calls were planned to keep the development team and client updated about each test completions and issue findings.

Gateway TestLabs defines test designs and delivers business enabled Testing solutions that help Global 2000 companies win in a flat world. These solutions focus on providing strategic differentiation and operational superiority to clients. Gateway creates these solutions for its clients by leveraging its domain and business expertise along with a complete range of testing services

With Gateway, clients are assured of a transparent business partner, world-class processes, speed of execution and the power to stretch their IT budget by leveraging the Global Delivery Model.

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