

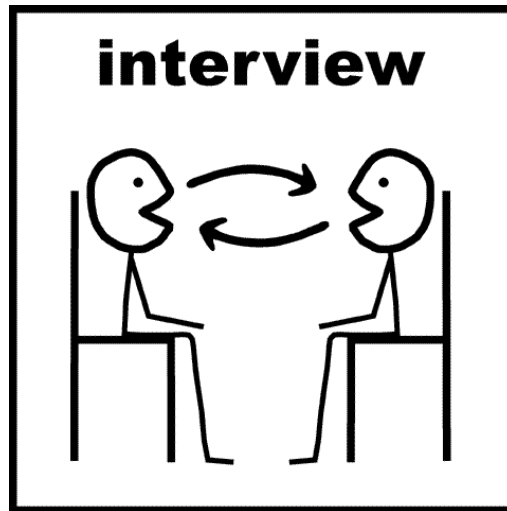
BEHIND THE PIXELS

ISSUE 6

Foreword from Mark:

“This week I've mostly been doing bits and pieces while jumping in and out of meetings. Neja and I finished off the horse quests on Monday, and then on Tuesday we started our new project which is to bring back Public Spaces. The “new” Public Spaces will be revamped versions of the older Public Spaces, made using the new tools we have available for the ad-sales rooms. I've been working on four bots for three of the new rooms. One of the bots is called Chloe. Another is called Johnson. I'm tempted to have one of the bots be ChronoZomfg, because he really needs the work. Maybe next week I'll include a small piece on how we work on Bots and give them personalities, which is a really interesting topic, interesting to someone at least.”





An Interview with Funkstein (by Mark)

Funkstein is a Senior software developer. He joined the company in 2011

What's your role in Sulake?

My official title is Senior Software Developer, which means that most of my day to day work consists of programming new features for Habbo. In practice this means writing code for things such as how the room hopper teleports you between rooms, creating new user interfaces, adding effects etc.

As a team member another big part of my job is designing how an idea is transformed into an actual new feature. This includes detailed planning on how the feature exactly works, what kind of development is required for it and of course making sure that the end result is fun!

And one of the funniest part is checking out fan sites, forums and the Hotels so that I have some idea what's happening in Habbo :D

How did you come to work for Sulake?

You could say that it was a series of lucky decisions, but the long answer is that I've been interested in games and graphics programming from a very early age and luckily I've ended doing something I enjoy a lot!

Before joining Sulake I worked at a mobile games studio, which closed. Luckily we had a recruitment event and a few of the senior staff from Sulake were there looking for developers for Habbo, and the work description matched pretty much my own personal interests and desires, so here I am.

What training/ education/ skills do you need to perform your role?

I've worked for a company developing mobile games, in a digital marketing firm and a couple of other tech companies. And I've got a bachelor's degree for some formal qualification.

However, I think the most important training I've had has been my graphics-programming hobby. I don't think you can learn to program just by reading some books and taking a few courses at a university – you need to bang your head against the wall and find out the hard way how to make your programs work and how to design them. So for any aspiring programmers out there, just get on with your own projects. It's the hard way to learn, but you will prevail in the end!

What's the coolest project you've worked on in your time at Sulake?

I think the coolest project I've been working has been the room hopper. I really like the fact that the idea behind it is so simple - placing a Furni in room makes it part of a network - but it opens up so many possibilities. And I love the fact that it really didn't require any user interface work, which is always a good sign that it's part of the core Habbo experience.

How do you plan your work when making a new feature?

Usually the most important thing is to first understand why a new feature is being developed at all. Before actually working on a new feature you need to be able to answer questions like: what problem does the feature solve, why is it fun, what kind of users will enjoy it etc. After you really understand this you can actually start to think about how to implement it.

After this the designing goes into more details and we usually try to break the new feature development into small tasks. This is done in the agile programming way, so we might end up with 30-40 different tasks on post-it notes describing the actual work. And after that it's just writing the code to actually do those things and fix the bugs testers will find in your code.

What are you currently working on?

Currently we are working on the first versions of the Hotel view replacement. We already did the horse community challenge, but more work is going on with that. And then there is this 514 project going on...