



Integrated Project on Pervasive Gaming
FP6 - 004457

Work package WP9: *Showcase – Insectopia*

**Deliverable D9.8B:
Game Design Document – “Insectopia”**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document presents the game design for Insectopia. Insectopia is a new kind of cell phone game where the real world spills into the game world. Players roam the cityscape searching for and catching a multitude of different insects. Each insect in the game world is generated by using the available bluetooth devices available in the player's vicinity. By catching insects and trading them with other players, players build their own collection bigger and better. Insectopia is available at <http://www.insectopia.org>.

Target Audience

This document is intended as a public document to all interested parties within the European game designer community and is intended to foster pervasive gaming development within the European Community.



Deliverable Identification Sheet

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| Abstract (for dissemination) | This document presents the game design for Insectopia. Insectopia is a new kind of cell phone game where the real world spills into the game world. Players roam the cityscape searching for and catching a multitude of different insects. Each insect in the game world is generated by using the available bluetooth devices available in the player's vicinity. By catching insects and trading them with other players, players build their own collection bigger and better. |
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1 INTRODUCTION

This document provides the game design description for the Insectopia prototype developed under the IPerG 6th frame work agreement.

2 GAME DESIGN OVERVIEW

| Features | The Insectopia Game Design |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Research Goals | <p>The primary research goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several layers of participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploiting non-players - Moving between layers <p>The secondary research goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the game where players normally use their phone • Other challenges that conflict |
| Design Goals | <p>The primary design goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A non-event based game that uses using bluetooth IDs <p>The secondary design goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gameplay that requires players to be social |
| Game Setting | Insectopia takes place in the real world around the players. There is no special storyline attached to the game, nor is there any defined start or end in the game. |
| Game Area | The game can be played anywhere where there is possible to establish a GPRS connection with the phone that the game is played on. |
| Infrastructure Tools | Insectopia uses the MUPE platform for both server and client. |
| Genre | Pervasive collect'em up. |
| Target Group | <p>Selected Target Group</p> <p>Insectopia is targeted towards urban cell phone users who are mobile and like to explore their technological surroundings. It is also aimed at commuters who are likely to have a few minutes to spare on their way to and from work.</p> <p>Reasons for selecting Target Group</p> <p>Insectopia can and should be played in many ways, from very slow paced to moderately fast. Players will need to both actively search out new insects, but also maintain their collection in the long run. It therefore fits a quite wide audience, but a smaller selection has been made to clarify the niche.</p> |

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| <p>Gameplay</p> | <p>Overall Game Details</p> <p>Insectopia is a single player game played in a massively multiplayer environment. Players roam the cityscape searching for and catching a multitude of different insects. Each insect has a certain score associated with it based on how frequent it is. By catching the insect and adding it to the player’s collection, its score is added to the player’s total score. The goal of the game is to advance on the game’s various global high score lists.</p> <p>Insects can be found anywhere where there are bluetooth devices available. Mostly this will be crowded areas where people’s mobile phones are equipped with Bluetooth, but also static devices like photo kiosks and other bluetooth equipped machinery will spawn insects. The bluetooth ID of each device is used to generate a unique insect that always is associated with that particular device.</p> <p>However, to make the game more interesting than simply harvesting bluetooth IDs, the caught insects have to be kept alive by revisiting the source of the insect at least once every eight days.</p> <p>The insects exists in various rarities and the rarer the insect the more it is worth. This means that if a player has found a rare insect she will try to keep it alive by trying to find the source again, either by going to the same place where it was found or actively searching for the source device.</p> <p>Player Interaction</p> <p>When playing the game, players search for insects and if any are found they can select one of the found insects and keep it. After having caught an insect there is a cool down on the catch mechanism for three minutes unless two players team up.</p> <p>Although players compete for having the largest or the most valuable collection of insects, they can also team up and help each other. In fact, teaming up is a very good way to get the upper hand on an opponent on the high score list. When teaming up players need to be co-located and can them catch all the insects they find while co-located instead of only one as in solo mode.</p> <p>Other activities for the players include browsing their collection to see which insects need attending, and viewing the high score list. It is also possible for a player to send owned insects to other players in order to trade or just for fun. This can be used as a way to help a friend to get a few extra points to advance on the high score list.</p> <p>Game session</p> <p>Insectopia is a game that is played in a single game session over a very long period of time (from the start of the server until it is shut down). During the game session players may come and go as they like. The number of players active (as in having a collection to maintain) at any given moment can be anything from none to as many as the server has capacity to handle, in other words, infinite.</p> <p>Outsider participation</p> <p>While non-players may not be aware, they are still affecting the game by carrying cell phones with Bluetooth discovery services turn on. Depending on how extrovert players are, they may ask non-players to turn their phones on, or off. A person carrying an extremely valuable insect also suffers the risk of being stalked by players that are too eager to scan it. The same goes for all stationary equipment equipped with Bluetooth, it is all part of the game world.</p> |
| <p>Core Features</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • utilises non-players and real world items as game resources • allows players to explore the urban landscape • slow paced gameplay • easy for new players to get into, but requires skill in the long run to stay |

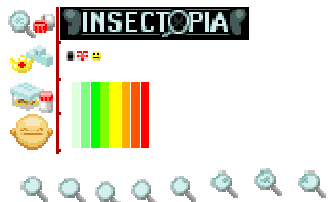
| | |
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| | successful |
| Pervasive Features | <p>Spatial Pervasivity</p> <p>The game exploits the fact that there are many bluetooth devices around the real world that have discovery turned on and the fact that these can also move around. The bluetooth devices are used as generators for the game’s resources.</p> <p>Temporal Pervasivity</p> <p>Insectopia extends very far in time. Players are encouraged to play it when they have time to spare even if they can also decide to actively play it.</p> <p>Social Pervasivity</p> <p>To get the upper hand in the game players are encouraged to team up and play the game together. Also, many of the game’s resources stem from non-players cell phones.</p> |
| Other innovation in game design | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insectopia’s game world is persistent. Once the server is up and running, the entire world is the playing field and will continue to be so until the server is shut down. All players share the game’s resources. • The trading functionality encourages an online community to trade insects and there might also be a need for a forum or something similar where people can share where they have found valuable insects. • The game can be played when there is nothing else to do and still have an effect on the long time game. |

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| Play Modes | <p>There are four distinct play modes even if there are grey zones between them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • browsing the collection and not doing anything to change the game state • searching for insects and catching them • searching for insects to stop them from dieing • teaming up with a friend for super searching |
| Game objectives | <p>Here are the primary game objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search and catch valuable insects for points. • Climb the high score lists. |
| Game World | <p>The game world in Insectopia is the same as the real world with an added virtual layer that creates and adds insects.</p> |
| Storyline | n/a |
| Graphic Design Theme | <p>The graphics in the game should be light hearted and set a mood for adventurous insect catching.</p> |

3 GAME FLOW

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| Overview | Insectopia is a game that is easy to just pick up and play whenever the player feels for it. |
| Entering the game | Entering the game consists of downloading the MUPE client from the game’s server (or from some other place) and starting it. Once running, the address of the server must be entered and from then the game is stored in the client. The first time the game is run the player creates a profile on the phone and on the server. This profile is then kept through out the game. |
| Switching play modes | The player can select activity by simply selecting what to do in the in game menu. |
| Entering/Leaving and re-entering the game | As the game is constantly on, players only need to start up the game when ever they want to play, and simply drop out when they’ve had enough. |
| Social Adaptability | The game has a very low social weight and can be played in the background of many other social activities. Although it can be played quite aggressively, it mixes especially well with commuting and other periods of time where the players would otherwise be inactive. |
| Pacing | Insectopia offers a variety of gameplay dynamics affecting the tempo in which the game is played. In the fastest mode of the game, two players can team up and search and catch |
| Typical Playing Situation | Players are likely to play the game when in a crowded area in order to catch new insects, and when waiting for a bus or train. Due to the fact that insects must be kept alive, players are also likely to keep looking for valuable insects where they found them, for instance every time they ride the Monday bus etc. |

4 GAME CONTENT

| Features | The Insectopia Game Design |
|--------------------------|---|
| 2D Graphic Design |  <p>Icons for each mode in the game, game title, insect status icons, insect age bars and animated magnifying glass.</p> |

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| | <div> </div> <p>Buttons and cursor indicator for selecting search mode.</p> <div> </div> <p>All insects that is possible to find in the game.</p> <div> </div> <p>The splash screen that is shown when the game is loading to get the player in the mood.</p> |
| <p>Online content</p> | <p>A website http://www.insectopia.org accompanies the game with full information on how to play the game and constantly updated high score lists.</p> |

5 TECHNOLOGY USED

| Device | | Description and Function |
|---|--|--|
| Phones (S60) and servers capable of running MUPE. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MUPE is a platform for multiplayer mobile games. It handles both the server and the clients. |

6 FULL CREDITS

Game design: Johan Peitz

Java coding: Johan Peitz

MUPE coding: Johan Peitz

Graphics: Johan Peitz

MUPE platform provided by Nokia.