**Game Design Document Outline Template**

**Title Page**

• Game name

• Author (your name), date (month, day, year)

• Copyright information

**Table of Contents**

• Outlines the document. List all sections and subsections; number pages throughout the document, but do not refer to the page numbers in the TOC; rather, use hyperlinks or bookmarks for quick navigation.

1. **Section I Design History or Revision Schematic**
   1. Records major changes to the design. A GDD is added to, but typically material is not deleted from it. The history schematic tracks the changes made.
   2. Looks like another TOC, but links to the changed page instead of the original.
   3. Original documents should be commented, highlighted, or otherwise noted that they were changed and to reference the new information.
   4. Date all changes
   5. Version 1.10 (minor revision #1)
   6. Version 1.20 (minor revision #2)
   7. Version 2.10 (major revision #3)
   8. Etc.
2. **Section II Game Overview or Scenario**
   1. Concept (five essential questions)
   2. Market analysis (target market, typical player, demographics of typical players, competing games)
   3. Game characteristics (list of major elements and features, such as worlds, levels, moods, etc.)
   4. Game layout chart (outline of how the player will move though the game from level to level)
   5. Feature set (functions available in the game)
      1. General features
      2. Multiplayer features
      3. Etc.
   6. Project scope (how large or detailed specific items will be designed; list of complexities)
      1. World synopsis
      2. Levels
      3. Boss structure
      4. Key locations
3. **Section III Game Script**
   1. Gameplay design
      1. Level progression and escalation
      2. Mission structure
      3. Competition models
      4. Strategy and puzzle structure
      5. Decision tree and objective flowchart
      6. Player options
         1. Avatar choices
         2. Campaigns
         3. Hours of gameplay
         4. Victory conditions
      7. Multiplayer options
         1. Customization
         2. Max players
         3. Internet options
         4. Game sites
         5. Servers
         6. World persistence
         7. Social system
         8. Economy
         9. Saving and loading
         10. Regulation and support
   2. Mechanics
      1. Rules
      2. Physics
      3. Particle systems
   3. Character script
      * 1. Player movement
        2. Player statistics
        3. Player actions
           1. Object script (how to pick up or move objects)
           2. Shell menus and button status
      1. Player inventory
         1. Inventory management system
         2. Tool/weapon change
      2. Game economy
         1. System architecture
         2. Gains and drains management
   4. Operations
      1. Shell screens (buttons and screen operations that show at startup)
      2. Screen descriptions (list each screen, buttons needed and purpose)
      3. Screen flowchart (organization chart of how player will flow from one screen to another)
      4. Saving systems (checkpoints, progress, statistics, etc.)
      5. Cheats, shortcuts, and Easter eggs (list any needed cheats or shortcuts that would be needed for proper testing; Easter eggs if time permits or integrated in gameplay)
   5. User editing and mod system
4. **Section IV World Design**
   1. Game flow
      1. Backstory
      2. Plot
      3. Storyboards
      4. Cut scenes
   2. World overview
      1. World sketch
         1. Scale to player
         2. Color palettes (common colors used by all artists throughout the game to create the same mood and feel)
         3. Time
         4. Weather
         5. Day/night
   3. Key scenes
      1. Scene overview (written description of the scene, mood, and character of the scene)
      2. Scene drawings (sketches of scenes with mood, lighting, and contrast noted)
      3. Scene notations (camera, movement, rendering, and off-screen actions)
         1. Background sounds needed/used and light directions, source, and intensity.
         2. Levels that use this scene
         3. Location of scene in world
         4. Physical characteristics
   4. Rendering system
      1. Overview
      2. Perspective
      3. Camera
   5. Game engine
      1. Overview
      2. Collision detection
      3. Particle animation
   6. Lighting models
5. **Section V Game Characters**
   * 1. Main characters/archetypes
        1. Hero character
           1. Backstory
           2. Backgrounder
           3. Elements

System of evaluation

Methodology

Purpose

Motivation

* + - * 1. Attributes

Physical characteristics

Special abilities

Animation list

* + - * 1. Class and relationships
        2. Decision tree
        3. Statistics
        4. Model sheets, concept art, or sketches, if available, or reference to the location of these in the art bible
      1. Shadow character
      2. Etc.
    1. NPC characters
       1. Cooperative
       2. Competitive
          1. Boss structure
       3. Neutral
       4. Minions and monsters
       5. Swarms
       6. Etc.

1. **Section VI Level Design**
   1. Tutorial level
      1. Overview
      2. Map
      3. Mission brief
      4. Entry points
      5. Objectives
      6. Events
      7. Scenes
      8. Navigation aids
      9. Storyboard (story components and encounters)
      10. Special weapons and skills
      11. Walkthrough
      12. Shortcuts
      13. Exit (victory condition, transition, escape, and end)
   2. Level #1
      1. Same as above
   3. Level #2
   4. Etc.
2. **Section VII User Interface**
   1. Player sophistication overview
   2. Input-interaction model
   3. Output-interaction model
   4. Visual system
      1. GUI
         1. Menus table or outline
      2. HUD
   5. Control system
      1. Input-device mapping
      2. Core mechanics
      3. Peripherals
      4. Feedback/error prevention
   6. Help system
3. **Section VIII Sound**
   1. Sound design
      1. Specs and standards (file types, size limits, quality)
      2. Library
      3. Red Book audio
      4. API sound
      5. Temporary sound
   2. Music
      * 1. Ambient
        2. Background and pacing
        3. Victory
        4. Defeat
   3. Sound Effects
      * 1. Environmental sounds
        2. Character movement sounds (footsteps, breathing, etc.)
        3. Weapon/tool sounds
        4. Interface sounds
   4. Dialog/voice/narrations
      * 1. Voice actor scripts
        2. Sync software/formats
4. **Section IX Artificial Intelligence**
   1. Competitive character AI
      1. Opponent AI
      2. Enemy AI
   2. Cooperative character AI
      1. Troop AI
      2. Friendlies AI
   3. Neutral character AI
   4. System AI
      1. Player detection
      2. Context influence
      3. Navigation (path-finding)
      4. Social system
      5. Etc.
5. **Section X Technical Overview** (technical bible may also be created for more details)
   1. Platforms
   2. Game engine
   3. Design tools
   4. Hardware
   5. Software licenses
   6. Scripting language
   7. Work flow procedures
   8. Networking
   9. Performance requirements
   10. Etc.
6. **Section XI Art Overview** (entire art library is recorded in art bible)
   1. Concept art
   2. Graphics style guides
   3. Characters
   4. Environments
   5. Equipment
      1. Software
      2. Tools
      3. Particle systems
      4. Mocap
   6. Cut scenes
   7. Miscellaneous
   8. Asset list
      1. Model list
      2. Texture list
      3. Animation list
      4. Effects list
      5. Interface art list
      6. Video list
      7. Cut scene list
      8. Etc.
7. **Section XII Management**
   1. Budget
   2. Work flow diagram
   3. Gantt chart, critical path, or PERT
   4. Internationalization and localization plan
   5. Distribution plan
   6. Testing plan
8. **Appendices** (other stuff)
   1. Appendix A
   2. Appendix B