

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Class code: 080615U
 Name of course: Game Development
 Course manager: Martin Pichlmair
 Course e-portfolio:

 Thesis or project title: **UNTERGANG**
 Supervisor: Max Alexander Wrighton

Full Name:	Birthdate (dd/mm-yyyy):	E-mail:
1. Alexander Artiles Jerrik	23/11-1988	alar@itu.dk
2. Carl Johan Hanberg	09/06-1989	cajh@itu.dk
3. Frederik Skytte Hummelgaard Nielsen	12/04-1992	fhun@itu.dk
4. Jonas Venzel Hingeberg Madsen	02/01-1991	jovm@itu.dk
5. Rasmus Bons	15/03-1992	bons@itu.dk
6. _____	_____	_____@itu.dk
7. _____	_____	_____@itu.dk

UNTERGANG
Game Development spring 2017
Final Exam

Alexander Artilis Jerrick, Carl Johan Hanberg,
Frederik Skytte Hummelgaard Nielsen,
Jonas Venzel Hingeberg Madsen , Rasmus Bons

May 2017



UNTERGANG

1 Introduction

In this report the development of UNTERGANG, a mobile multiplayer city simulator game, is described. The report includes a macro design document, a project plan as well as a marketing and business plan. The following is not a reflection on the process of the project. It is detailed plans and strategies of how we approached the development of the game as well as plans for future engagement with the project.

2 Description

There are several emerging problems in the otherwise magnificent city, and it is up to the four supreme leaders to solve these problems.

The four supreme leaders have always been ruling over the city with relative success, and always been able to get out of most problems. This has simply been when times were good. Now everything is turning around, times are bad, and the four supreme leaders must dictate and enact drastic laws in hopes to save the city. If against all odds, the supreme leaders prove to be too incompetent and it looks like the city will fall anyway, it's paramount that an example is made of one of them, the extremist, the black sheep, the one fool that is always to blame. It's the four leaders primary goal to save the city to the best of their ability, having to juggle with their political power, discuss news with the other leaders, enact laws that best fix the city's problems, and blame those they think, will ultimately lead the city's UNTERGANG.

In UNTERGANG you take control over of the fate of the city as one of it's four supreme leaders. Will you be able to save the city or will you try to blame your friends for it's inevitable downfall? Only politics will tell.

3 Macro Design Document

In this document, everything about the game will be described, from core mechanics to story elements. Of course, there are parts of the game, that is better explained by playing, however this document will clarify some of the underlying mechanics and elaborate upon some of the core concepts. The document will start by explaining the overall controls and mechanics and then move on to the structure and contents of the game. Ending out with a macro chart, story segment and an explanation of the metagame.

3.1 Controls and core mechanics

The game is made for a mobile platform, with the intention of having a mobile audience. Meaning for android and IOS phones primarily.

There are some core mechanics that were required for us when doing mobile development. Taps and screen swipes are utilized to control the menu and the game. The game is played as a collaborative multiplayer game, running on a local network. The game consists of different screens, the first screen the user is seeing is the login screen. This is where we find the first exotic mechanic, Signing In, explained later in the document. When the user has signed in they can tap a button which takes them to the lobby screen. This lobby screen is swipe-able. Swipe to the right and the user is directed to the host screen where the game can be hosted from. Swipe to the left and the user is directed to a join screen, that is used to join a game that is on the network. Both swipe functionalities are clearly marked with text and arrows animating in the appropriate direction.

The host screen has two states, the first state the user can see is the game name, along with the IP address and a slider to control the number of players. The game aims to be played by between 3 - 5 players, but is optimized for 4 players. When the user has put in the number of players there is a button to start the game. When the game is started the host screen will switch state and will wait for players to join. When the prior chosen number of players has joined, the host phone can start the game. Similar to the host screen, the join screen has two states. On the first state, there is a box where games on the same network is displayed, if one of these games are tapped, the second state of the join screen begins. This state has a box showing a list of players that have joined the same game, and here the player will wait for the host to start the game. When the game has been started by the host, the users are greeted with the overview of the city state. This is another exotic mechanic and will be in the chapter below.

Each player is presented with a problem of the city, they are supposed to try and fix this problem, with extreme legislation. the nature of the problems is that if they do not solve this problem, the city will be doomed. Then each player is given a news outlet with an expert opinion, for that round. These news outlets are randomly chosen by the system from 8 news outlets in total. These

news outlets are associated with an expert, the expert voices their opinion on the current problem and can provides insight into what can be done about it. Their advice is flavored by their position as an expert, one might be very environmentalist, another only focusing on profit. The experts can however, also be misleading or mention something irrelevant for the certain case. The player is stuck with one of these news outlets for the round, and won't be able to get any other input, except that from other players, however they will be given a new random news outlet in the next round.

The rounds represent being given a news outlet, enacting a law, experiencing the change of the state of the city.

3.2 Exotic mechanics

There are four mechanics which is classified as exotic. These are:

- *Enact laws*
- *Blame other players*
- *State of the city*
- *End game*

When a player is given a news outlet to read. The player is presented with 4 law options that the player can choose to enact. There is an overview where each law can be read briefly. When a law is tapped, there is a more detailed description of the law. The player can swipe left or right to see all law options in detail. If the player swipes all the way to the left, the given news outlet can be read again. When the player has made up his/her mind, there is two buttons under each law. A button labeled enact and a button labeled blame. If the player holds down the enact button, the law is enacted and the player is redirected to the city overview. When all players have enacted a law, all the laws that has been enacted (and only the laws been enacted) influence the city.

The city is an overview of the state of the game. The city overview is visible on every screen in the game. It is always expandable so the player can get a full overview of the state. The city represents 3 different states. The wealth of the city, the happiness of its citizens, and the population of the city. Underneath these values are also represented in percent. Each law (when enacted) has both a positive and negative effect on these three states. When these states change, so does the city. The wealth is the average height of the buildings of the city. The happiness is the average saturation of the color of each of the buildings, and the population is the number of buildings in the city. The city is consisted of a circle of buildings, which is sterile cubes that can be altered in color and height.

If the same law is enacted by multiple players, the effect of the law is only applied to the city once. On each law, there is also a blame button. This button is greyed out, unless the law has been enacted by another player. If this button is being held down, the city state is not affected in anyway (except from the previous laws) but the reversed effects of the law are applied to the player which affect the endgame.

The game ends when one of the city states are 0%. The state which is the losing state is the only state used to calculate the final score. Meaning if the city does not have any money left, only the laws affecting wealth counts towards the end score. Each player which has enacted or blamed a law towards the losing state scores the amount of point the law has towards that city state. E.g. if a law scores -2 points towards wealth players enacting the law score -2 points, while players blaming the law scores 2 points, as blaming is the reverse score. If the law does not count towards the specific state the score is not counted at all.

When the city has gone under, the app goes to an end screen, the score is calculated and the player with the lowest score towards the losing city state is the losing player, and is displayed on the screen, for the other players to blame. The progress of the city is also animated on the screen, and the consequences for each law throughout the entire game, can be seen.

3.3 Level structure, size and count

There is three to four parts in the game. The parts of the game vary much in size. The parts are the menu part, the game part, and the end game part. The game part can be divided into two sections, the news section and the laws section. The game part is the biggest, after that the menu and finally the endgame as the smallest. Common for all parts of the game is that they each have an overview of the city. They also all contain a news stripe that shows different information about the game, usually comments and feedback on the enacted laws. The News stripe, in the menu, has info about how to log in, host and join games. In the game, it initially works as a tutorial and then it becomes information about the laws enacted.

All parts are linked together in different ways. The menu is linked to the game part in that it has several required players to start. The news section and law section is linked to each other in a way that the player gets a random news outlet before being able to get to the laws, and a law must be enacted to get another random news outlet. Lastly the game part is linked to the end game part, by the city overview. When this city reaches a critical level of one of its states, the endgame part is up and visualizes a score depending on this final city state.

3.4 Level contents

In all parts of the game, there is swipe mechanics and button taps that does the same for each part. There is also text and title of each screen. The overall structure is: Title, info text/city state, swipe, buttons. A vital part of the game is the city overview. The city overview is also present in all parts of the game. The specific point in which the city overview plays a great role is at the very start of a round where all effects of the city is calculated there is an animation of 5 seconds where the city is reformed towards the new calculated scores.

In the game part in each of the two sections there is a tutorial popup. The popup is right before a news media is given, and explains briefly the mechanics behind each round, problem and news outlet. The other popup is right before the player is able to pick a law, and explains the mechanics behind enacting or blaming laws, and how it influences the city.

3.5 Overarching structure

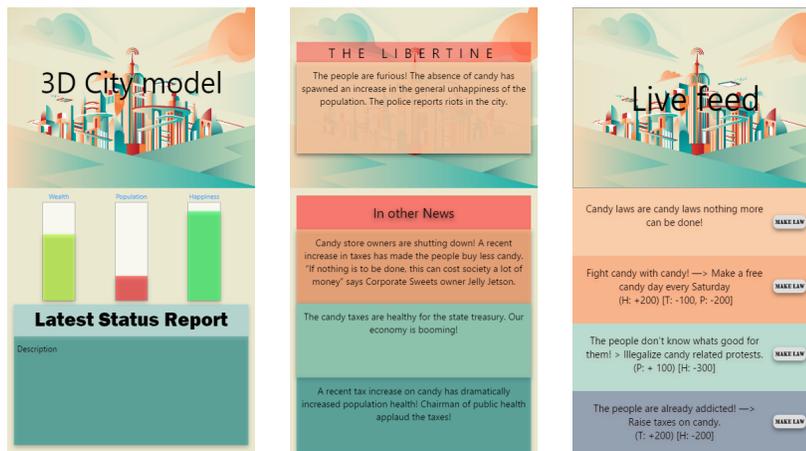
The whole game is a 2D GUI game. The structure of the game is that most of it is in 2D, except for the city overview which is the only 3D element in the game. Everything else is based on graphic user interface. Even the 3D city is projected onto a 2D plane, for the player to see. Laws, news and expert opinions are somewhat inspired by political issues up in the time, and greater historical political problems.

The news media are inspired from, and satirized on real news outlets, newspapers and online news providers. Both the laws and the news has been wrapped in satire in such a way that the user is likely to know what political problem or which newspaper it has ties to, but still enough satire and innovative writing that players do not get offended, even though they could have more radical political views. The art of the game is designed to reflect this; therefore, all buttons, fonts, and information is “toonified” to appear more satire like, but still uphold the same functionality. This is to ensure that the game is played as a “light” entertaining experience, and not taken too seriously.

3.6 Macro chart

Locale	Structure	Exotic gameplay	Required for entry	Received in level
Menu	2D GUI	-	-	Network connection + 4 players
News	2D GUI	State of the city	Network connection + 4 players	News outlet
Laws	2D GUI	Enact, blame, state of the city	Choosing of news outlet	Laws
End game	2D GUI	Score calculation	Enacting/blaming of laws, round end	Score, losing player

3.7 Concept art



3.8 Metagame

UNTERGANG as a game experience can be played silently with players being in different rooms, however the problems, laws and news media all give incentive

to gather with the other players to discuss what to do about those problems. This is the meta game of UNTERGANG, and it is this metagame that is the most important aspect, as this is what our player experience is build around. The news media and laws are designed in a way that pushes the players towards discussion, maybe cooperation or maybe just trying to make the other people fail. This is especially through the limited information each player is given, they can enact laws based on this information. By discussing with the other players, one would have a much better overview of the consequences of each law. "It is not enough that I should succeed, others should fail". This is the core player experience, but with most games it is ultimately up to the players themselves to figure out in which way they will play with the media that we give them.

4 Project Plan

This project plan was made at the end of the UNTERGANG game development project. The plan is based on the process related material we have produced throughout the entire project; meeting notes, presentations and of course our Trello.

In this section the project plan will be described along with a gantt chart of the initial project plan. Although we did not strictly follow the plan, it still viable as an overview of the work that had to be done.

The project followed a rather classic game development process, meaning that it has a concept prototype, an alpha, a beta, a release candidate and a golden master. After the beta we agreed on a feature lockdown, meaning that after the beta only polishing of the game was allowed, and there was not to be introduced any new features. This was somewhat upheld and not many defining features were implemented after the beta. However there were some polish features that naturally implemented new aspects to the game. The test also introduced some new features, these features were:

- *Endgame needed to be more visual as the test participants did not understand how the game ended and who was to blame, based on the status of the city.*
- *How the news outlet system worked, so that players would get an expert opinion associated with the news outlet, this expert would have much more tangible advice.*

Many of these new features, Though small, helped simplifying the play experience, as we could conclude from our testing: That the participants wanted something more simple and understandable to play.

The Gantt chart of the project process can be seen in appendix A. This gantt chart shows, as mentioned earlier, the project process as it would have looked, at the beginning of the project. This is not without a certain bias of course, as the main part of the project plan was made at the end of the project, rather than at its start. The gantt chart however shows the process as it has been completed from our Trello kanban.

5 Marketing Plan

In this document we aim at providing an overview of each of the different elements to our marketing strategy and marketing plan. The marketing strategy is made with the purpose of detailing what we want to achieve through our marketing, and what these goals require of us in terms of costs and workload. Our marketing plan thus gives an overview of the concrete actions that we intend to do to promote our game and how we are going to do it. We also tie it back to the marketing strategy, making it explicit why we have proceeded as we have. The strategy itself is short and only determines the direction, whereas the marketing plan is longer and explains in detail, concrete actions we can pursue with examples.

5.1 Marketing Strategy

The Strategy of our marketing plan relies on achieving goals in terms of market positioning and also to secure income through sales. Thus the marketing becomes an important activity for us to sell our game.

Our marketing strategy is centered around creating a buzz and awareness about the outrageous statements and political actions public figures sometimes write on social media, or speak up about. Our marketing material is aimed at being humorous in the same sense as our game, promoting the player experience. The humor of our marketing material is also thought to be helpful in positioning our game, as a satire game in the market, that highlights absurdities.

As the end goal is selling our game to players it is also important to note that the primary marketing activity is selling the game to new players. Therefore maintaining a continuous marketing activity is necessary for us to make an income.

5.2 Marketing Plan

5.2.1 Marketing Plan Budget

For general marketing we are budgeting a total of 32.000,- DKK in which we have allocated 25.000,- for the game trailer and 7.000,- for online marketing through platforms such as Facebook.com, Instagram, and Google Adwords. The 7.000,- allocated to online marketing are furthermore budgeted to being burned through a 1.000,- per month. This is partly to secure not going all out in the beginning and then not having anything to spend towards the end of the year, but more importantly it is not a given that we will spend all of the 32.000,-. Since we are prioritizing the game trailer, any additional funding will be invested here until we reach the 25.000,-. Everything exceeding the 25.000,- will not necessarily be spent on online marketing, though the first 7.000,- will.

5.2.2 Market Research

The competitors in the market as of writing is limited to a small number of games that are somewhat similar to ours. Though these are perhaps our most direct competitors, we also have to compete with games that are very different from our game. This is due to the categories our publishing platform have, is sorted into more general categories within digital games. Our game is a very specific type of mobile game situated within a board game context. Therefore the game finds itself in the same category as some games, which are very different. This means that even though our game is vastly different from the mobile games such as Carcassonne or Monopoly. We still have to compete against them as we will be listed in the same category. It's an important aspect of our marketing, to focus on differentiating ourselves from those types of games.

Another aspect is that our game is intended to occupy the time people have when they spend time together, this could be at a dinner party or some similar social gathering as an example. In this example there can be many factors, fighting for the guests attention, as social gatherings can be filled with board games, but also talking, listening to music, watching a movie etc. Therefore our competition is not only in the form of other games. A competitor might as well be going out to watch a movie or drinking even, though these other activities are competing for the time we want to occupy. We choose not to include them amongst our explicit competitors due to a couple of reasons. First and foremost, if we include these activities that are not games but potentially occupy the same time slots in people's lives that we want, the line becomes blurry between competitors and non-competitors. Another reason; more often than not, playing a board game is something that is usually agreed upon beforehand, or viewed as the expected activity for the group of people, meaning this is what we are going to do when we get together.

5.2.3 Competitors

Before talking about competitors we want to define our target audience as that is of utmost importance for identifying our competitors. Our target audience are board game enthusiasts between the age of 18-40 and whom also own a smartphone. In terms of geographical location we have no specific target audience in mind, but we imagine that our game is suited towards western european and north american countries. This is partially due to the satiric nature of the game, but most of all due to the game only being available in english. Our competitors are sorted into different categories as they affect our marketing strategy in different ways. The first category are our most direct competitors, which are party games and board games on the android platform. This category includes all types of party games and digital remakes of classic boardgames. In this category we find games such as "Carcassonne" on android, "Catan", which is the digital remake of "Settlers of Catan", "Heads Up!", and "Who Can't Draw".

In this category there are a lot of other competitors but the ones we focus on are either the most successful in the category of board games in the android play store, or games that are most alike UNTERGANG.

Another category of competitors are conventional board games where examples are “Hint”, “Charades”, “Cards Against Humanity”, and the original counterpart to some of the digital remakes mentioned above. Moreover “Monopoly” is also a competitor both digitally and as a conventional board game.

A strength of UNTERGANG as a game in the play store, is that, to our belief, it’s an original game with an original play experience. Thus we think that there is some differentiation of our game, made clear especially through its flavor and play experience. One of the greatest challenges for indie game, is to get it’s name out amongst the target group. This is also the case for UNTERGANG, and overcoming this could be made somewhat easier through communicating the originality of the game.

In comparison, our competitors have the advantage of already having their name out as a known entity amongst our target group. Being a known entity however also has it’s drawbacks in the sense that the play experience is already known. Thereby curiosity is in our favour.

5.2.4 Activities

Our Website

The plan for the website is to have our presskit present together with a player introduction to the game, and a link to Untergang on Google’s play store. We intend to get a domain with “Untergang” in the domain name together with “game”, as many “untergang”-domains are taken. In the presskit and on the website, we want to have our game trailer together with an explanation of what the game is and how it’s intended to be played.

A temporary presskit can be seen in appendix B

On Facebook

The UNTERGANG facebook site is meant to act as the game’s front page towards our target audience. Every single post on Untergang’s facebook page is supposed to create a story either about the game, or the Untergang team in the process of working on the game.

The first post will be an announcement about when the game is available and where people can get it. The second post will be a facebook canvas, which should showcase some rich content with an engaging story about the creation of UNTERGANG. Furthermore we want to introduce the leading figures behind UNTERGANG and what they did to make the game a reality.

A temporary facebook page can be seen in appendix B

On Twitter

The use of twitter in our marketing plan is more satirical than the promotion we intend to use through other channels. The plan is to have a twitter account for UNTERGANG which is the serious and more politically correct twitter front. We want to create twitter accounts for the various in-game characters so that they will get a say in the political debate going on, on twitter. They will shout their “expert” opinions and retweet the most outrageous tweets from the different actors in their respective field in the real world. To give an example our in game character “Larry Kane” that will retweet tweets from stereotypical conspiratorial theorists. We will pick the most outrageous tweets, and retweet those and tweet them at the untergang account together with relating hashtags such as ”#play” ”#UNTERGANG”.

A temporary twitter account can be seen in appendix B

Other promotional activities

As all members of our group attend game events and have a network within games, we can utilize that to introduce UNTERGANG to different board game events such as the board game night at ITU or at one of the different board game cafés in copenhagen. This way of promoting our game gives us both the opportunity to facilitate great play experiences and insight into what our target audience think and feel about the game.

Furthermore we are currently discussing whether or not we should make a kickstarter.com campaign to kickstart the awareness of the game and hopefully make a splash amongst our target audience.

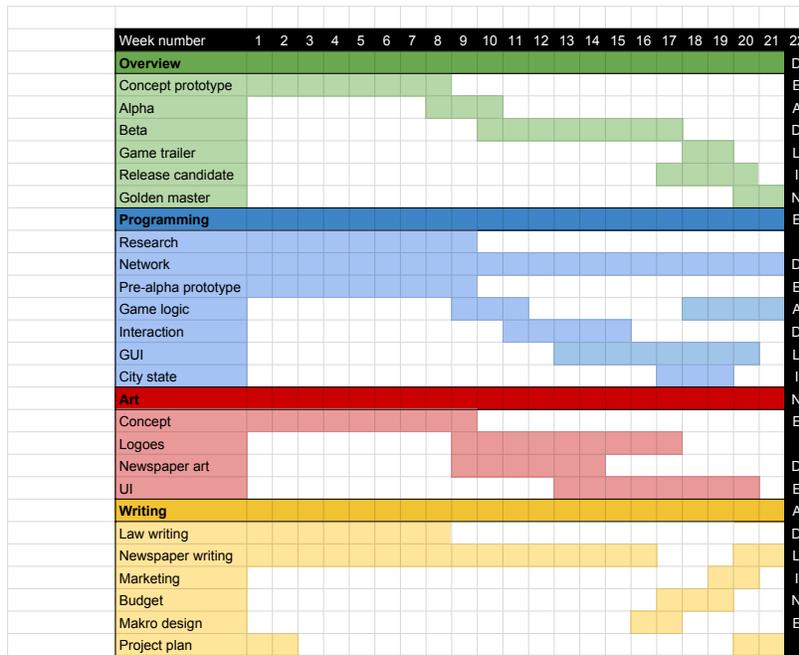
5.3 Marketing Goals

The goal with our marketing plan and strategy is to first and foremost sell copies of UNTERGANG. However we also pursue to make a name for ourselves in the industry and create a stir around board games in general. The ultimate intention with UNTERGANG’s marketing plan is closely related to the goal of Untergang itself. Our hope is to create a **fun** and **unique** play experience with untergang, facilitating engaging conversation and discussion between players even though they each have a smartphone in front of them.

7 Appendix

A Gantt Chart

Gantt chart



B UNTERGANG links

A temporary UNTERGANG presskit link: <http://carljh.dk/press/>

A temporary UNTERGANG facebook link: [https://twitter.com/Untergang_](https://twitter.com/Untergang_Game)
[Game](https://twitter.com/Untergang_Game)

A temporary UNTERGANG twitter link: <https://www.facebook.com/UntergangGame>