

neuraltone



Training Brains with Games

April 15, 2013



Team (Left to Right)

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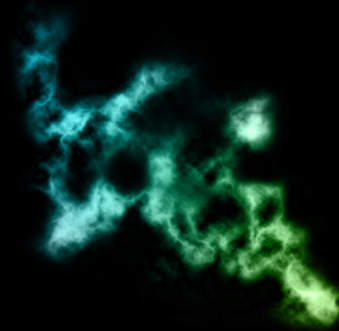
Advisor

Mike Christel

What's going on with neuraltone?

This week, lots of time was spent getting the customization tool into a working state. Unfortunately, unexpected complexities arose and it is not quite ready yet for use. However, we did show some major progress in its development and we're confident about having a working version by soft opening.

Some surprising things happened to the game this week as well. First, Rod spent time talking to Jesse Schell about how to make the reload mechanic (necessary for "resetting" the initial mouse position to center for each trial) more fun and understandable. Jesse's solution was elegant and simple: have the aliens drop collectables when killed, and have the player drag them back to the ship before launching the next wave of enemies. With this advice in hand, we rapidly pumped out a new version and delivered to Dr. Holt for testing. (cont. Pg. 2)



New art assets



neuraltone



What's going on with neuraltone, continued.

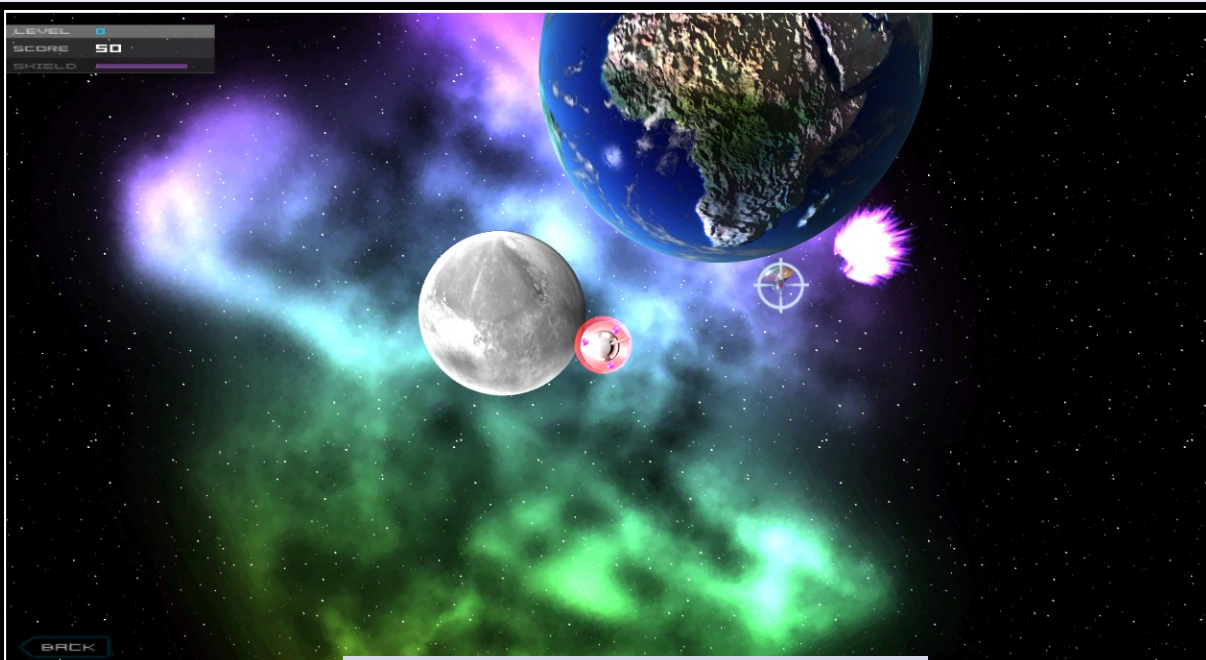
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Dr. Holt's team liked the new mechanic a lot; it was easily understood and kept the game flowing very nicely. However, after a couple days, the second biggest change showed up. Ran Liu brought up the question of whether or not resetting the mouse was strictly necessary. Through their tests with research participants, they've learned that folks seem to have a natural "idle" state for mouse usage, and that the prediction of first-click from center wasn't actually very useful to them. With this in mind, we again redesigned the game to remove the need to drag the collectible to the ship, and instead add the points directly to the player.

At this point, the player has no ammo count; instead, they can fire freely without the need to reload. Trials occur much more rapidly, owing to the lack of a need for resetting, and the player is presented with more to do during play time. Ultimately, we feel these changes greatly improve the feel of the game, and Dr. Holt's team believe this may be the trick to improving its usefulness as a tool as we move forward.

Soft opening is next Monday, and we've got a lot to prepare for that, so stick around: we're almost there!

- team **neuraltone**



Snapshot of the game's current state.