What You Don't Know *Is* Hurting You:

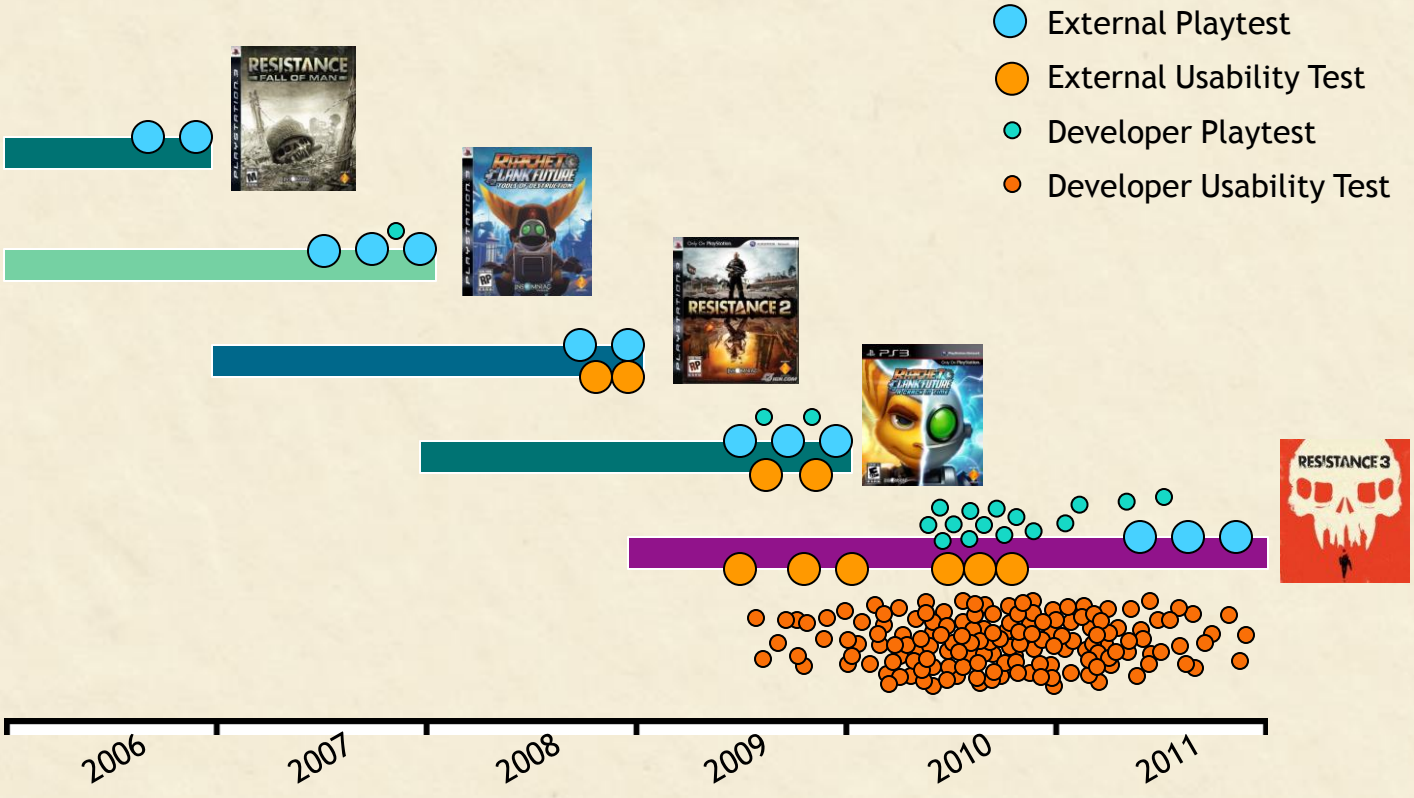
How Aggressive User Research Improved Resistance 3

Drew Murray
Creative Director, Insomniac Games
Lead Designer on Resistance 3

RESISTANCE 2

RESISTANCE 2

RESISTANCE 3


External Playtest
External Usability Test
Developer Playtest
Developer Usability Test
RESISTANCE
FALL OF MAN
RESISTANCE 2
RESISTANCE 3
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011

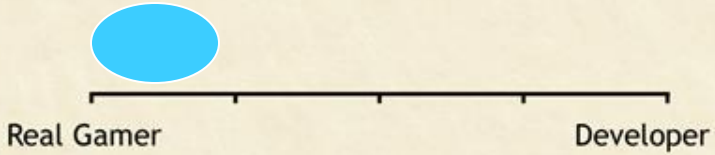
User Research Methods

Key questions:

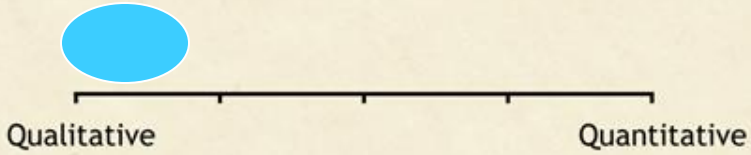
1. Who are you testing: Real gamers or developers?
2. Aspect of experience: Affect, Behavior or Cognition? (feeling, doing, or thinking?)
3. Category of data: Qualitative or quantitative?
4. How are you getting data: Observation, metrics, self-reporting in situ, self-reporting post hoc?

Usability Testing

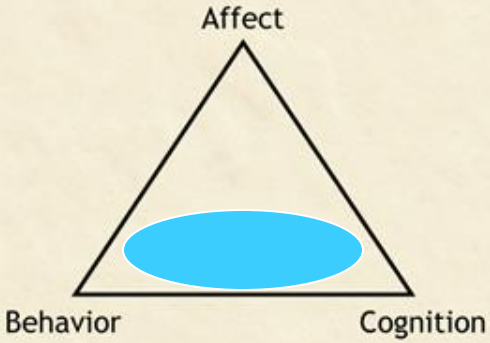
WHO Are You Testing?



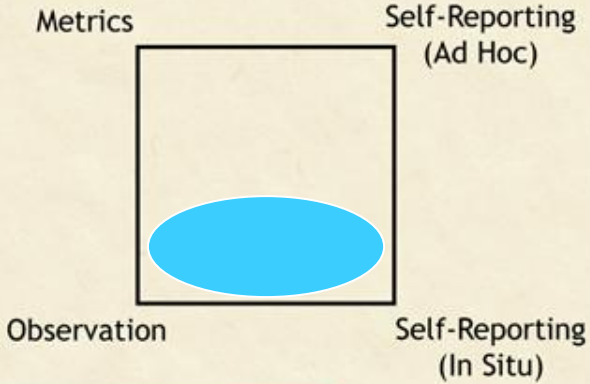
What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?



What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?



HOW Are You Gathering Data?



Usability Testing

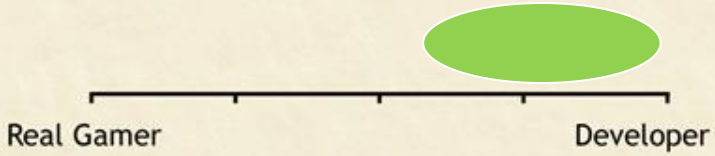
RITE Method:

Rapid
Iteration
Testing
Evaluation

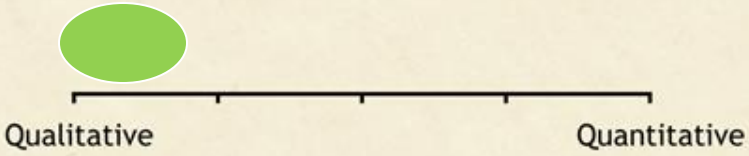
RONIN
USER EXPERIENCE

Internal Usability Tests

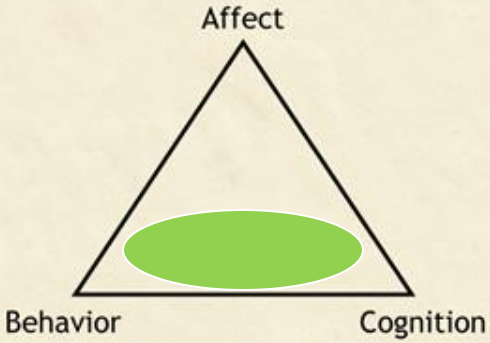
WHO Are You Testing?



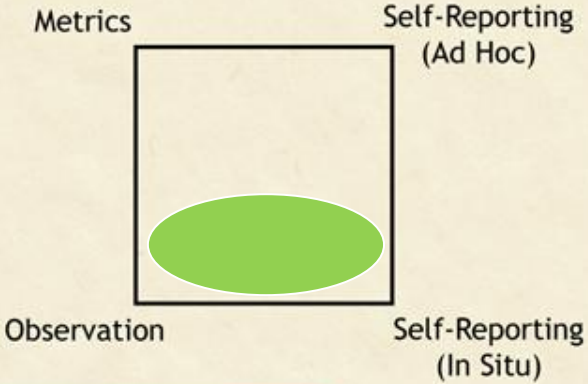
What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?



What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?

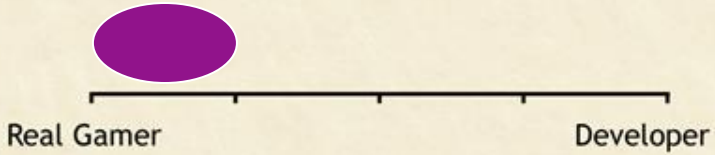


HOW Are You Gathering Data?

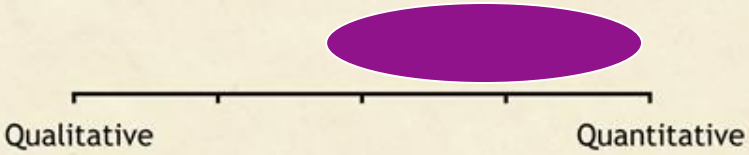


External Playtesting

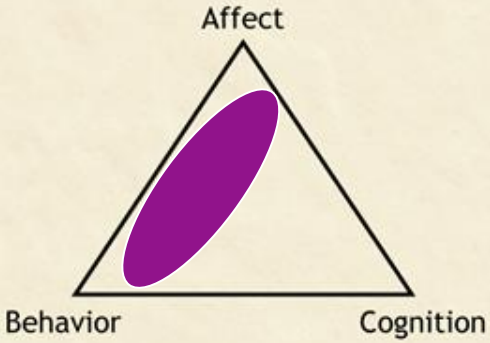
WHO Are You Testing?



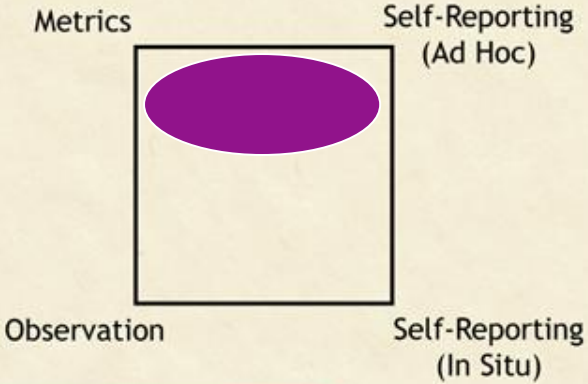
What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?



What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?

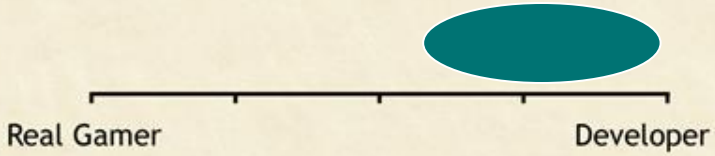


HOW Are You Gathering Data?

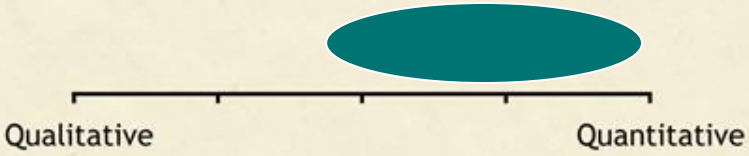


Internal Company Playtesting

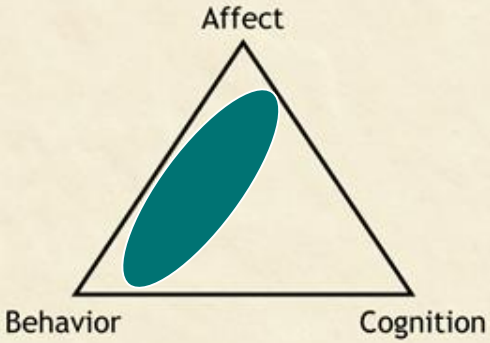
WHO Are You Testing?



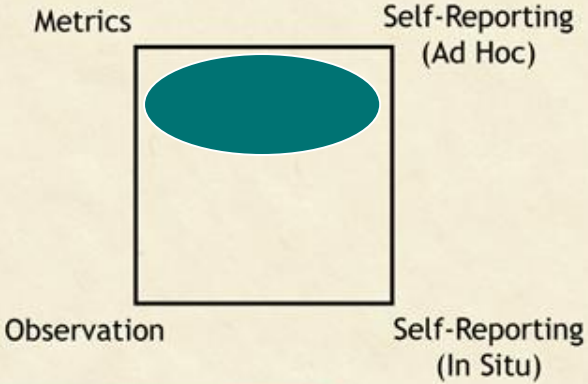
What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?



What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?

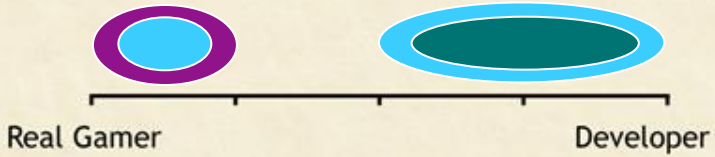


HOW Are You Gathering Data?

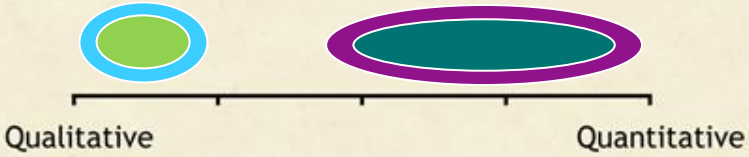


All Methods

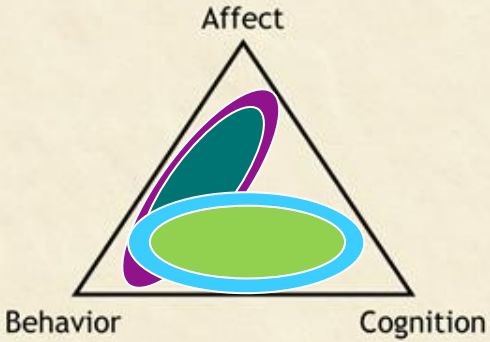
WHO Are You Testing?



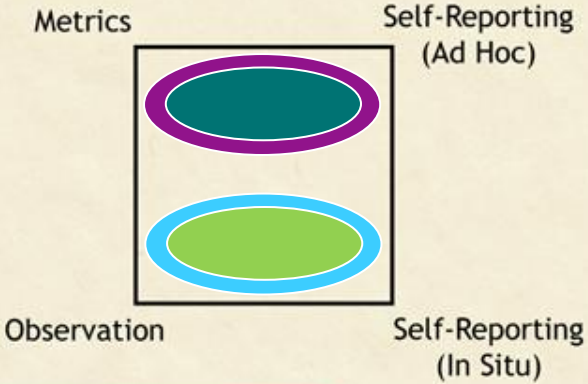
What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?



What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?



HOW Are You Gathering Data?



Usability Testing

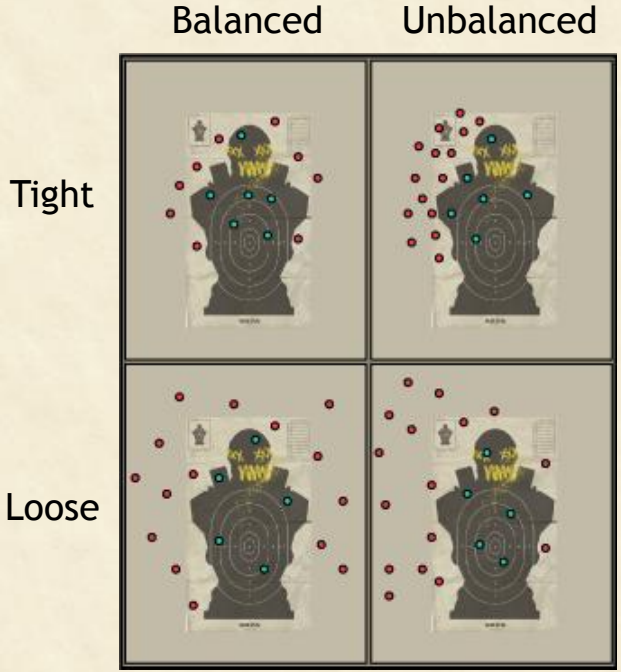
+ Momement-to-Moment Player Experience
+ Cheap and (Relatively) Easy
+ Flexible
- Not Focus on Emotional Response
- Limited Sample Size

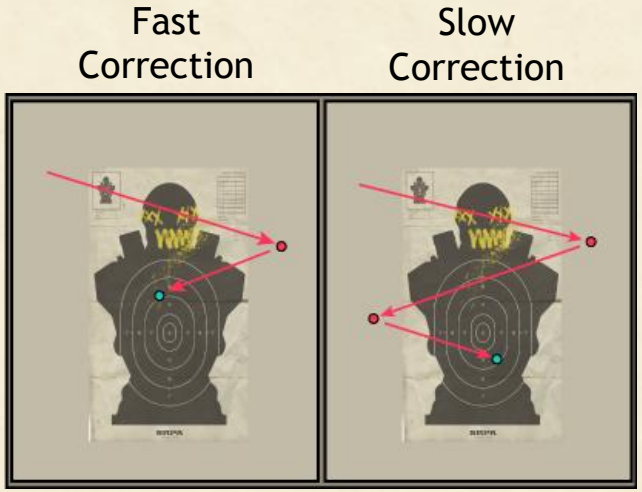
Resistance 3 Usability Research Goals

Core Shooting Controls

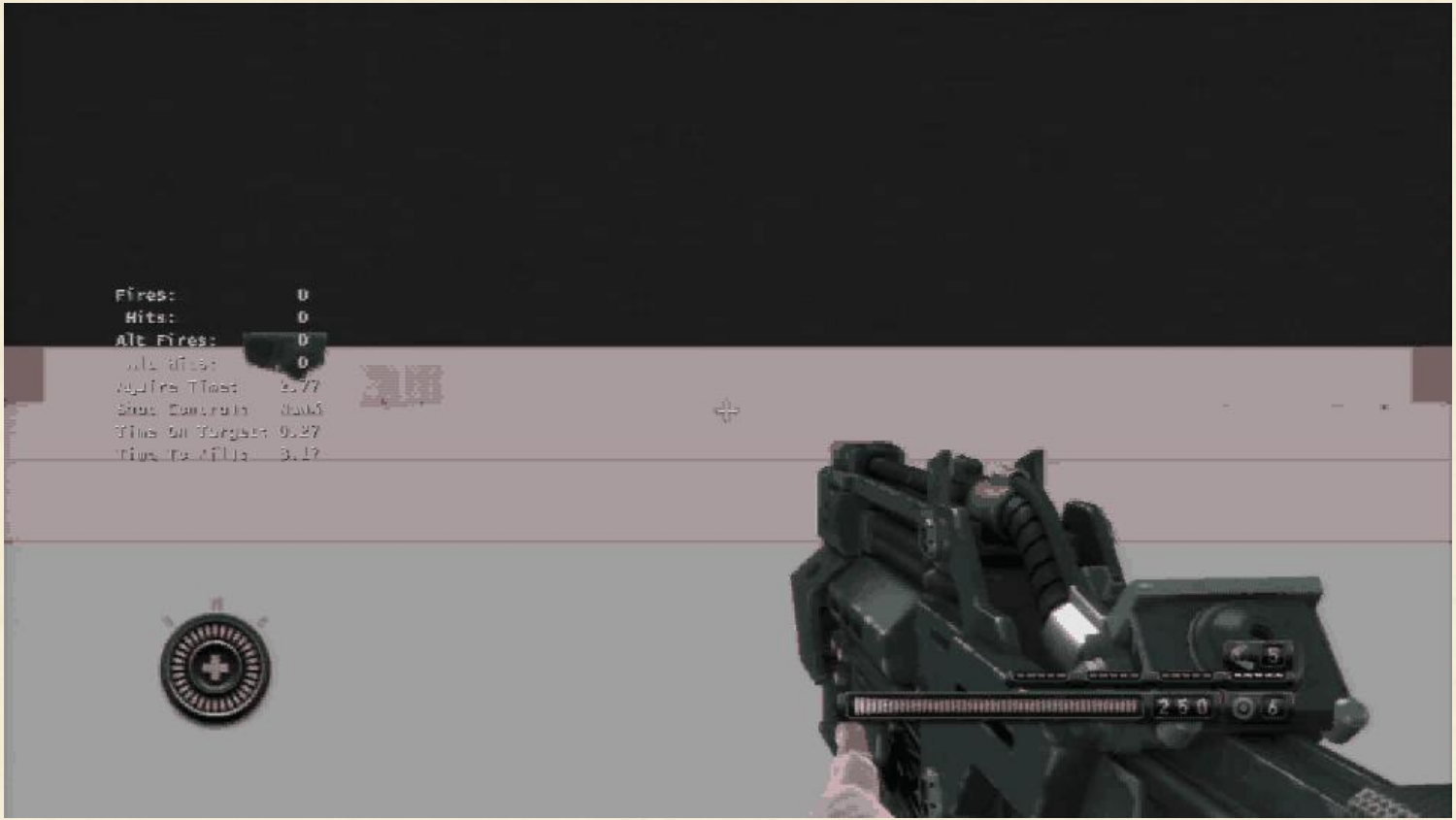
Criteria for Good Aiming Controls

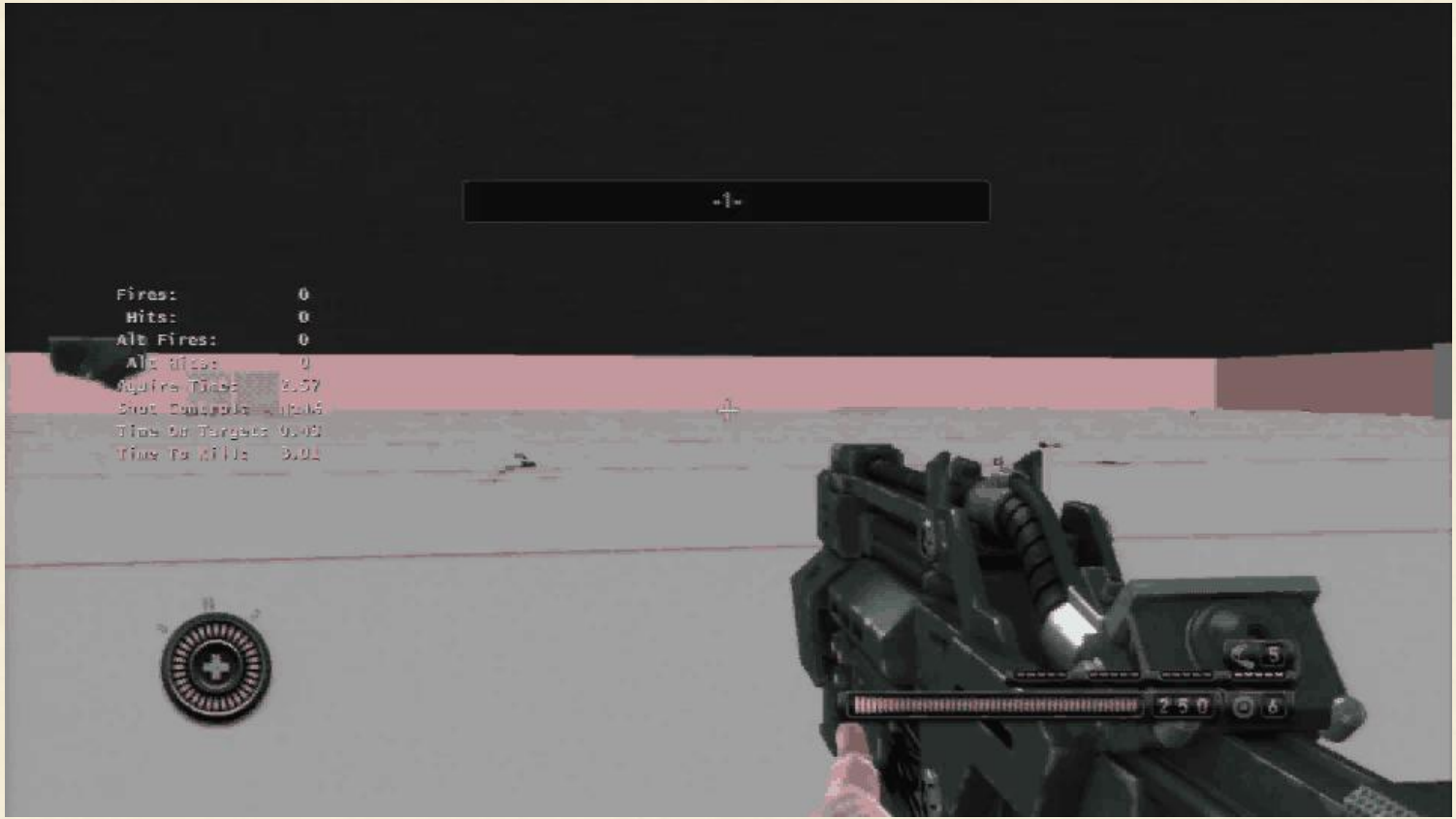
Balanced + Tight + Fast Correction

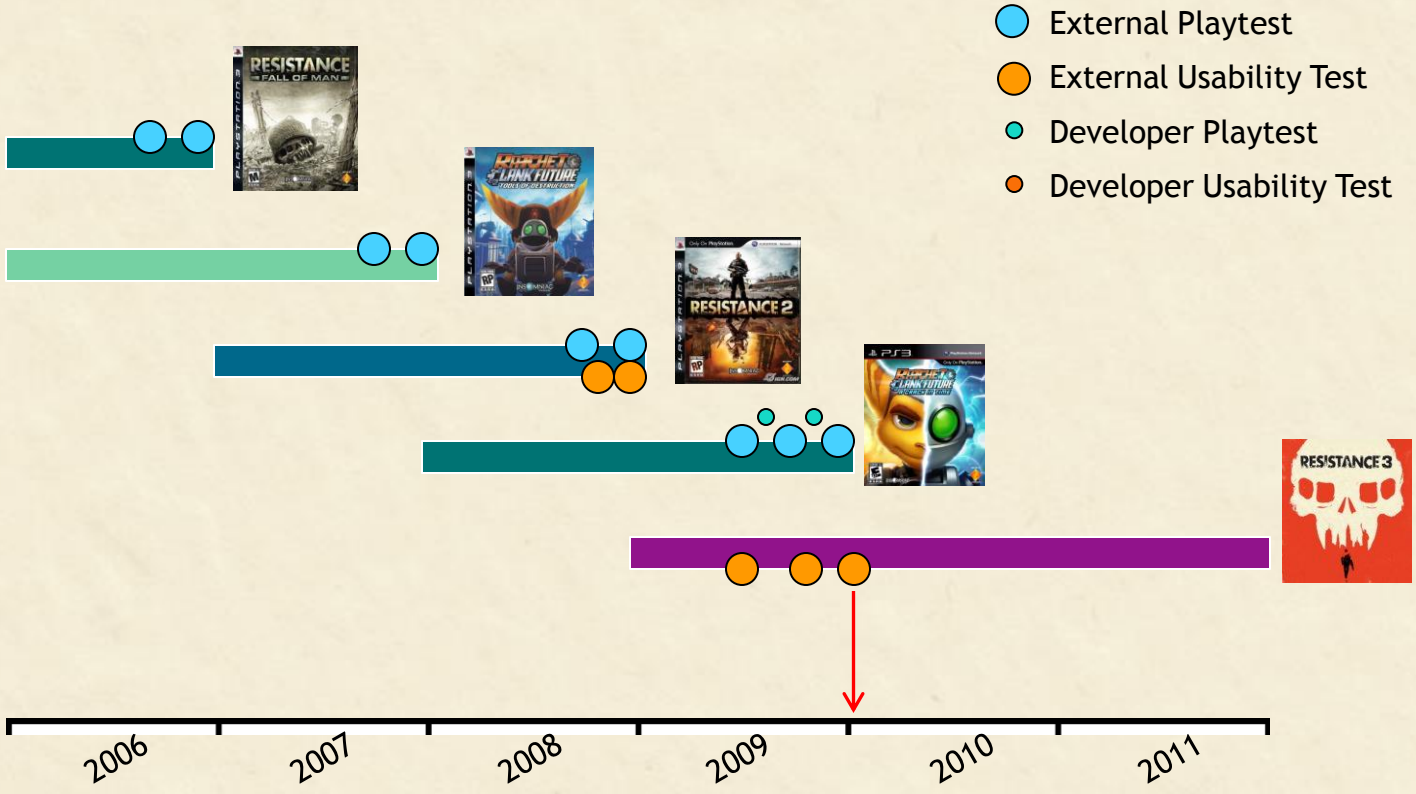




Testing Approach


Fires: 0
Hits: 0
Alt Fires: 0
250
6


-1-
Fires: 0
Hits: 0
Alt Fires: 0
250
5
8

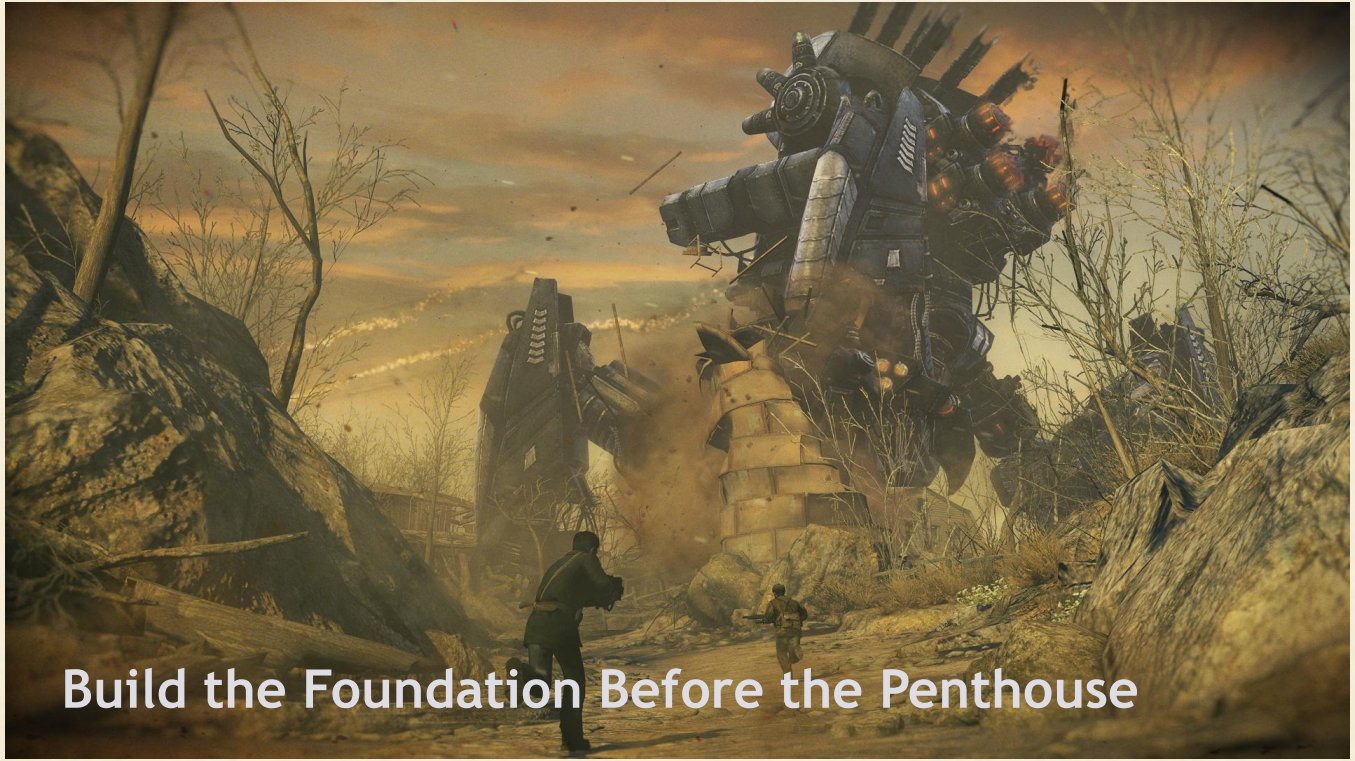

External Playtest
External Usability Test
Developer Playtest
Developer Usability Test
RESISTANCE
FALL OF MAN
RESISTANCE 2
RESISTANCE 3
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011

"Right off the bat, Resistance 3 controls wonderfully. . . .
The shooting mechanics are tight and responsive. . . ."
- IGN

Usability Testing Tips

Usability Testing Tips

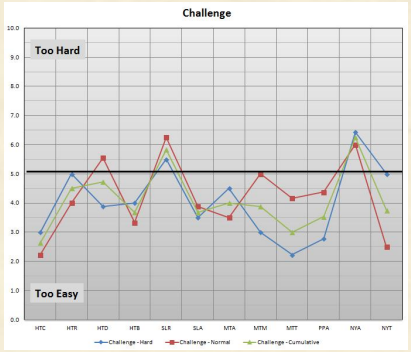
Usability Testing Tips



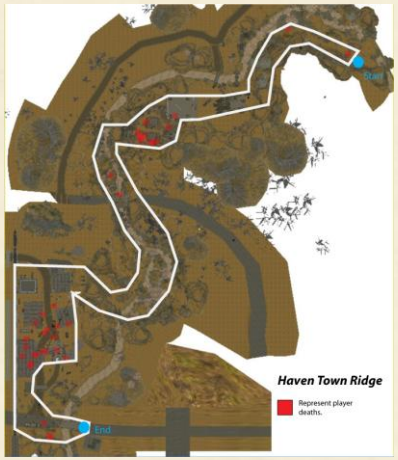
Usability Testing Tips

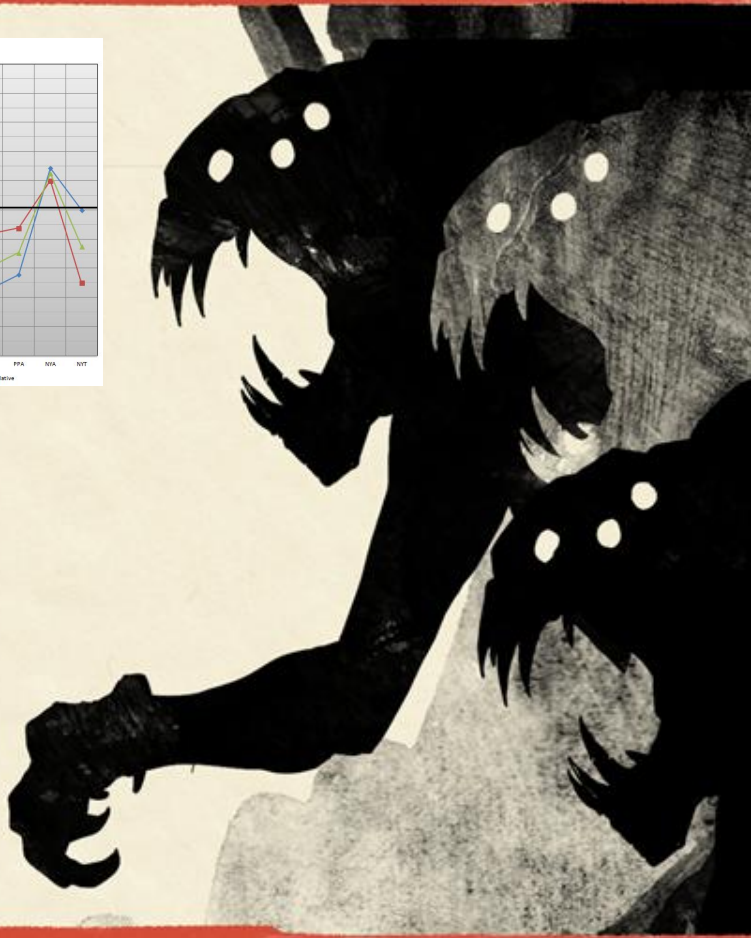
Group Playtesting

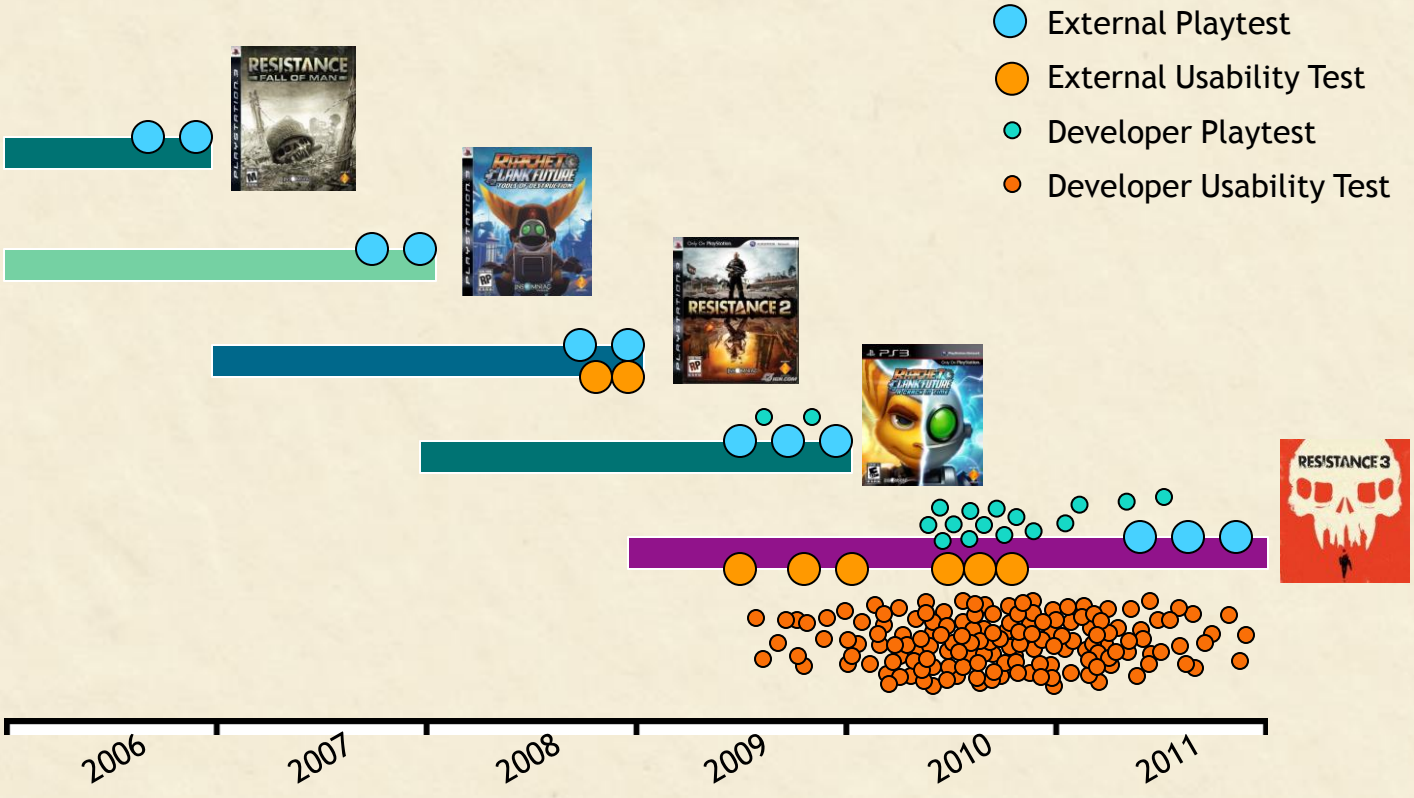
+ Metrics
- Amount of Time Involved



LEVEL SUMMARY				
Fun	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Fun - Hard	7.0	9.0	9.4	9.0
Fun - Normal	6.7	7.5	7.8	5.6
Fun - Cumulative	6.8	8.3	8.6	7.4
Interest in Continuing	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Interest - Hard	9.5	9.0	9.4	8.5
Interest - Normal	6.7	8.0	7.8	7.8
Interest - Cumulative	8.2	8.5	8.6	8.2
Plot Continuity	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Plot - Hard	n/a	8.0	9.4	9.0
Plot - Normal	n/a	7.5	7.2	6.7
Plot - Cumulative	n/a	7.8	8.3	7.9
Stuck	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Stuck - Hard	9.5	8.0	9.4	9.5
Stuck - Normal	7.2	7.0	8.3	8.3
Stuck - Cumulative	8.4	7.5	8.9	8.9
Challenge Level	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Challenge - Hard	3.0	5.0	3.9	4.0
Challenge - Normal	2.2	4.0	5.6	3.3
Challenge - Cumulative	2.6	4.5	4.7	3.7
Pacing	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Pacing - Hard	3.5	4.5	4.4	3.5
Pacing - Normal	3.9	4.0	5.0	5.6
Pacing - Cumulative	3.7	4.3	4.7	4.5
10 = Best, 0 = Worst				
5 = Best, 0, 10 = Worst				






External Playtest
External Usability Test
Developer Playtest
Developer Usability Test
RESISTANCE
FALL OF MAN
RESISTANCE 2
RESISTANCE 3
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011

Appropriate Research for Group Playtesting

Individual Feature Comparison

Pacing and Difficulty Tuning

Scores Generally Moving Up?

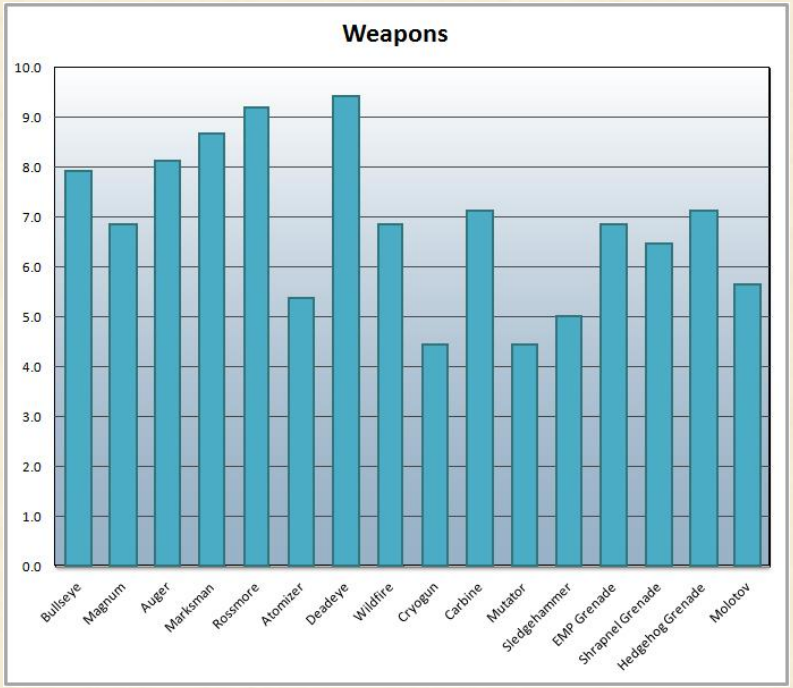
Benefits to Developer Testing

Testing Prototypes and Speculative Gameplay

Asking Detail-Oriented Questions

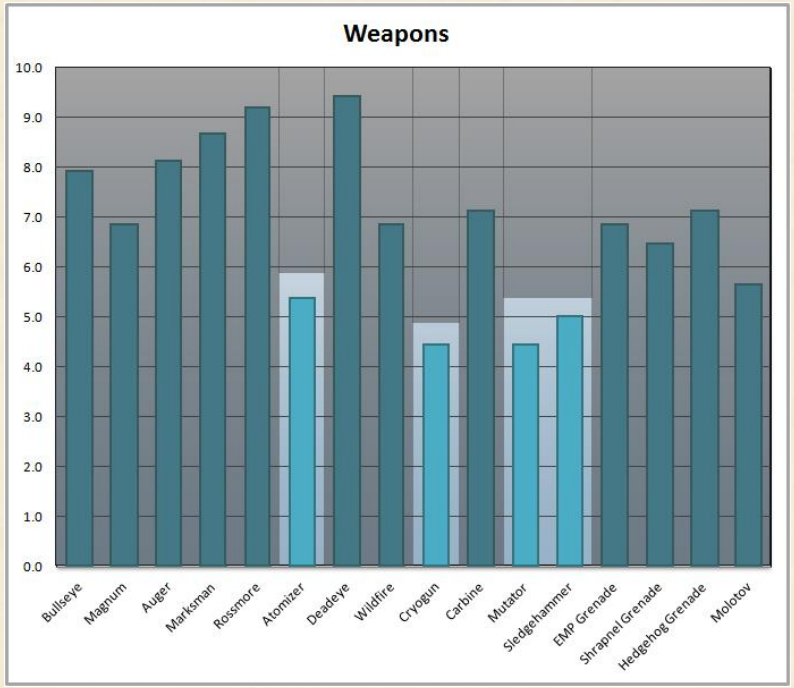
Individual Feature Comparisons

Individual Feature Comparisons



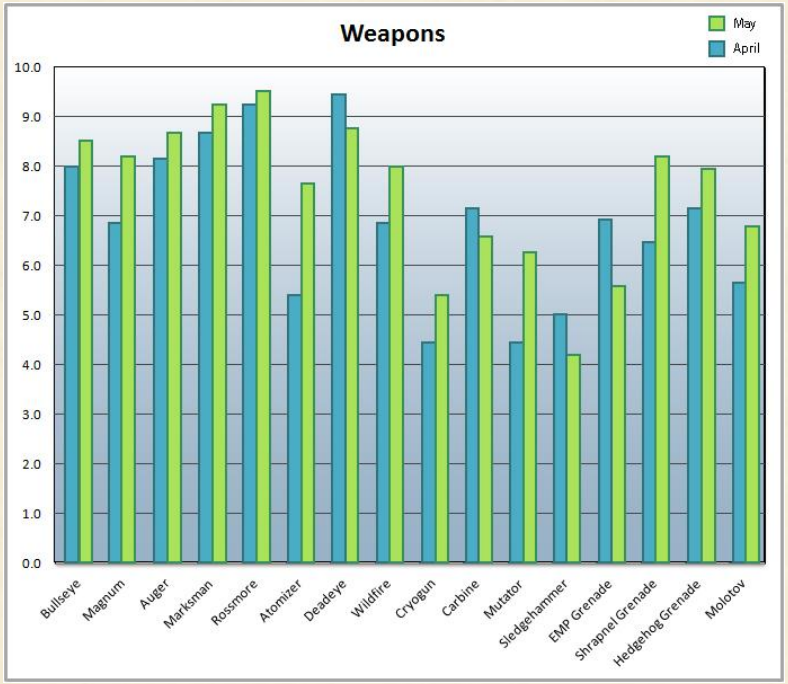
April 2011 Survey Results

Individual Feature Comparisons



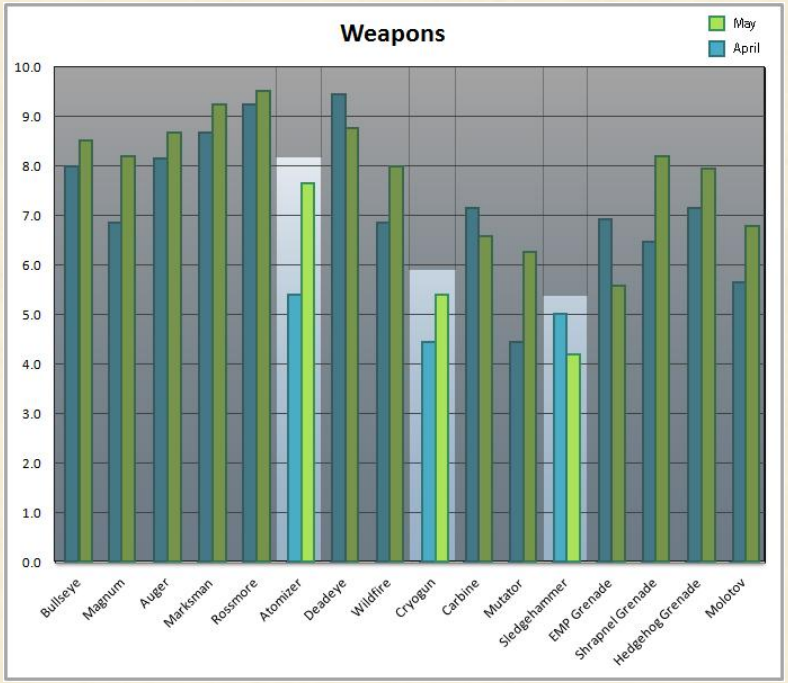
April 2011 Survey Results

Individual Feature Comparisons



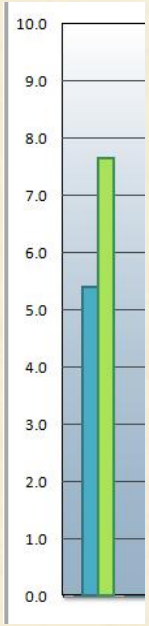
April & May 2011 Survey Results

Individual Feature Comparisons

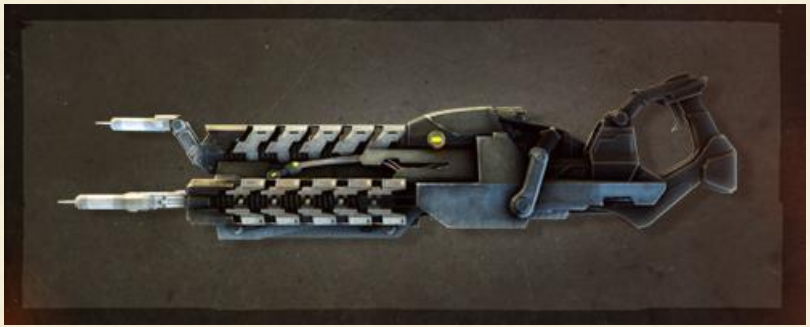


April & May 2011 Survey Results

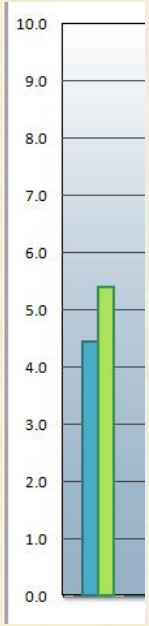
Individual Feature Comparisons



Atomizer

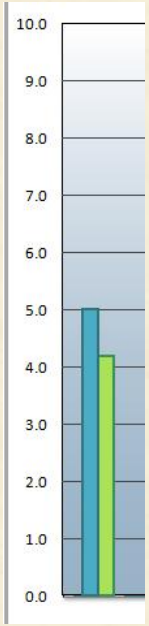


Individual Feature Comparisons



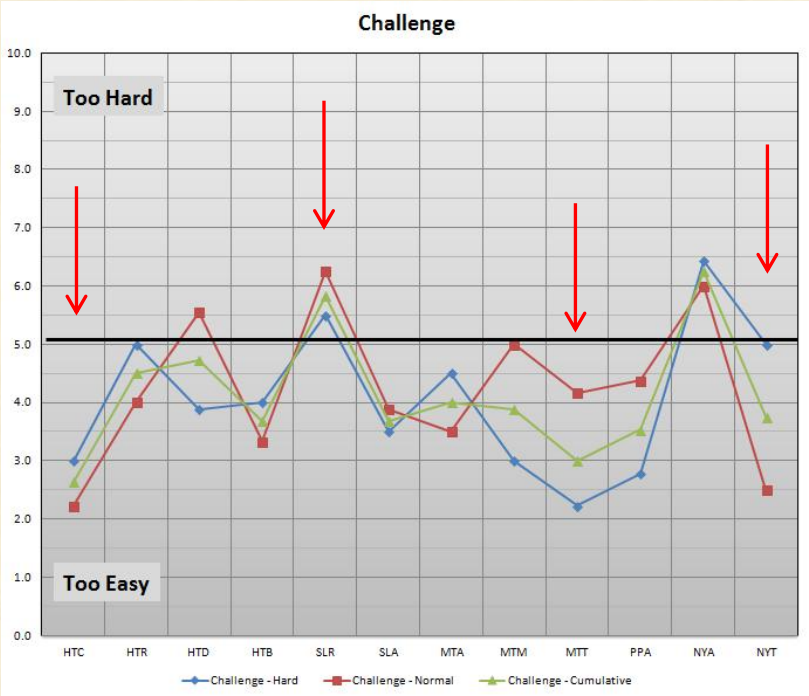
Cryogun

Individual Feature Comparisons



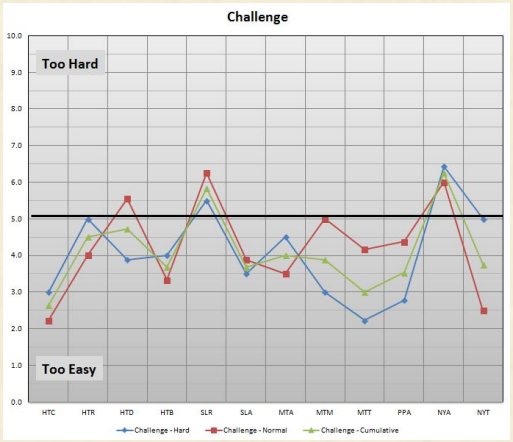
Sledgehammer

Challenge / Difficulty Tuning

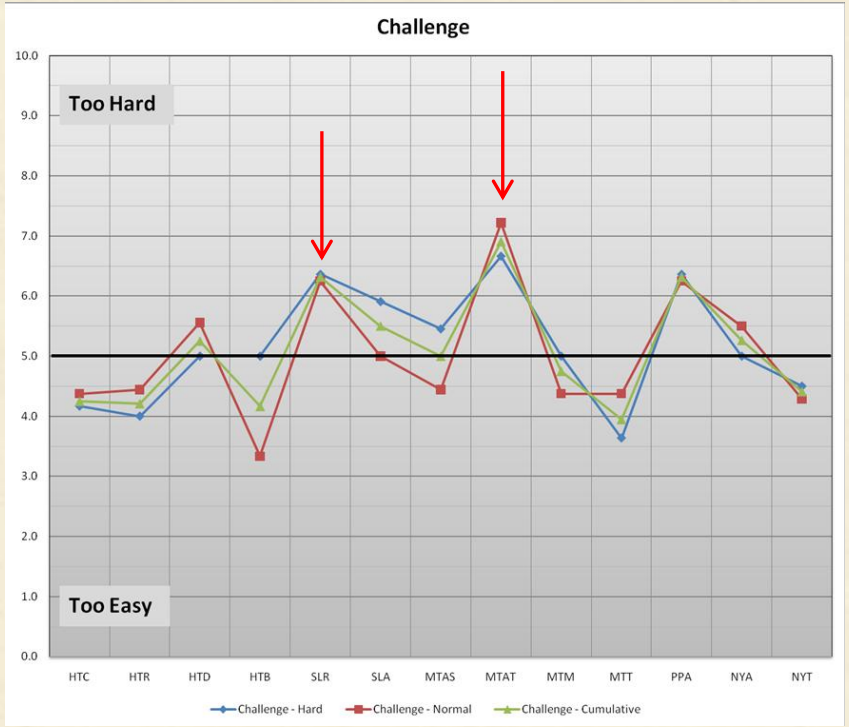


April 2011

Challenge / Difficulty Tuning



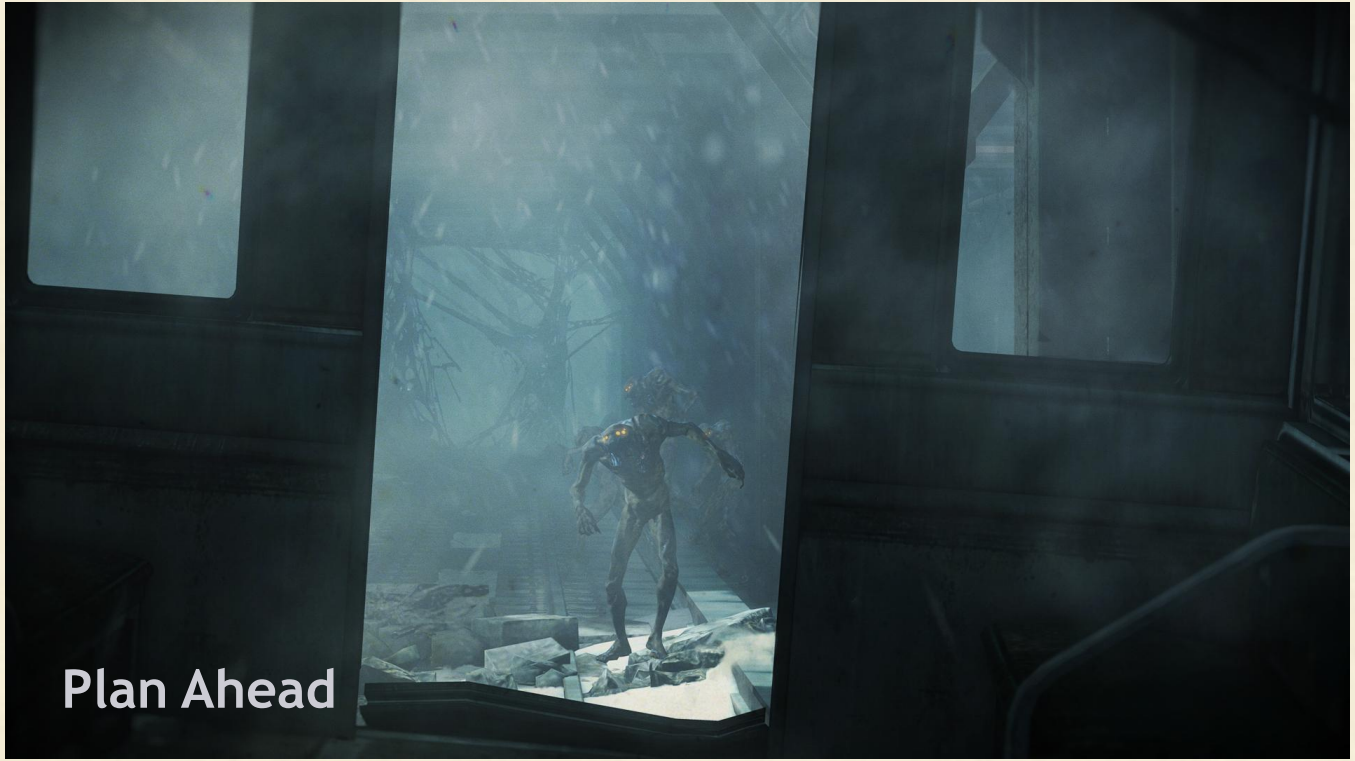
April 2011



May 2011

"**. . . Resistance 3 possesses one of the most ingenious collections of weapons ever assembled in a video game; a veritable wheel of abject destruction which inspires a degree of familiarity which very nearly resembles *parenthood*."** **- Joystiq**

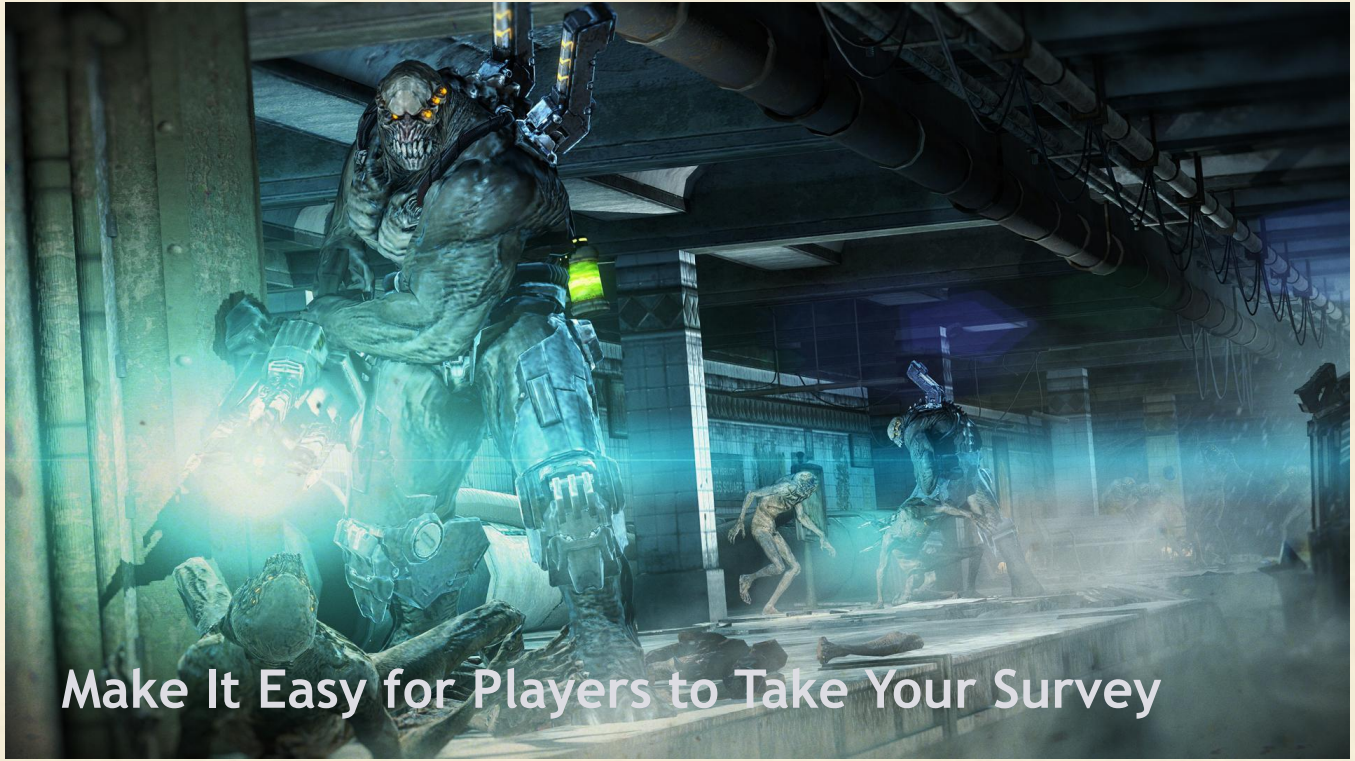
Group Playtesting Tips



Group Playtesting Tips

Group Playtesting Tips

Group Playtesting Tips



Group Playtesting Tips

Did It Work?

"Best Resistance yet. . . by far."
- Playstation LifeStyle

"It's easy to say that this is the best Resistance title."
- 1UP

"This third title is easily the best yet."
- Play.tm

Was It Worth It?

What You Don't Know *Is* Hurting You:

How Aggressive User Research Improved Resistance 3

Drew Murray
dmurray@insomniacgames.com

Additional Information on Game User Research:

Bill Fulton
www.RoninUX.com