

FatStriker

Specifications & game design document

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I) Context

- *The plot and the given names (in red) are not definitive or subject to modifications.*

In a time not so far away from today, **Ben&Fils** Corp. is set on dominating the world from their station in **Benland** megalopolis. The company has built its empire through heavy investing into the football business, for the last several decades.

Our young hero (whom we will call **Twann** in this pitch, although the character's name and sex will likely be customizable by the user) has grown up in a little city called **Highbury City**, where he has nurtured a life-long obsession since birth: to become a professional footballer and a legendary player. There's only one thing preventing him from it.

He's fat.

And that is why he desperately continues to feed his dreams by watching his favorite team play on TV or at the stadium while gobbling insane amounts of junk food and increasing his belly's girth.

Meanwhile, a new fast food chain named **FattyPatty**, owned by **Drizz The Plumpy**, has been inaugurated worldwide. The success is unprecedented. Its prized burger, the **Fat Brainger** (*Fat bringer + Brain + Burger*), becomes a planetary sensation in a glimpse. However, a strange phenomenon spreads among its consumers. They suddenly start to become excessively fat and eventually brainwashed.

Curiosity leads **Twann** to taste the **Fat Brainger**, intrigued by the craze since its commercial launch. The following day, he's astonished with a discovery:

He's thin... or rather less fat.

It is with no small joy that he decides to get to the nearest field in his neighborhood and start kicking the ball. But once there, he is bewildered to find out that the football pitch has been transformed into a large garbage dump, where empty **Fat Brainger** boxes are getting piled up. As **Twann** keeps walking around his hometown, he finds out that all places dedicated to any sort of physical activity have been totally abandoned. Additionally, roughly all the citizens are eating **FattyPatty** burgers and have gotten fat and lazy. Despite our hero fails to find people wishing to play football with him, everybody is somewhat still enthusiastic towards watching games.

In a quest for answers, the hero starts to ask about recent events to anybody passing nearby. Anger rises as he enquires insistently about the **Fat Brainger's** effects. At some point, **Twann** is attacked by a bunch of fat people and as he is about to get buried under a mass of living grease, someone pops out of nowhere and saves him.

When our less-fat hero comes back to his senses he realizes his protector is no more and no less than **Dennis Fatkamp**, his idol and former international football superstar, who became... fat as well.

The man tells him: “Your destiny is to become football’s new messiah and claim the forgotten values of this noble sport. You will stop the fat attitude hegemony and bring down the evil responsible for this catastrophe!”

Twann, still a bit disoriented by the events, answers: “But it’s impossible! It’s a team sport!”

“Don’t worry about that, we’ll build a team. There’s a chance that fit and relatively sane are still to be found in this world. We’ll just have to find them first.” Reassures Fatkamp.

“We? How are *YOU* going to play with all this weight?” the hero reacts.

The former celebrity looks at his stomach and answers, slightly irritated: “The size of my belly is none of your concern! And I won’t actually play, I’ll be much more important! I’ll be the team coach.”

“There’s something else. I was very fat until today so I don’t know how to play football!” tells **Twann** to his idol.

“I’ll teach you everything I know.”

That is how **Twann** and his newly-met mentor decided to undergo an epic journey filled with sugar and footballs!

--- Spoiler --- What happens next --- Spoiler ---

The main character will start a pilgrimage around the world and visit each major football country and its legendary stadium.

The hero and his sidekicks will discover that the **FattyPatty** food chain is secretly linked to **Ben&Fils Corporation**. The fast food restaurant was created for two reasons: the first of their goals is to eliminate all competing football teams, and any human who could become an athlete, therefore a menace to their football-hegemony dream. The second is to make sure people all around the world are brainwashed so as to succumb to their evil marketing plan, thus destroying the real values of sports.

Which leads eventually to world domination of course.

II) What is the game?

FatStriker is an arcade style 2D sidescrolling brawler-type game, mixed in with some RPG elements, using football (soccer) and healthiness as the gameplay and story background.

The core gameplay mechanics would resemble classic 2D brawlers such as *Metal Slug*, *Castle Crashers* or *Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World*, among others. The role-playing components would be introduced by recruiting teammates and by managing their evolution as well as the main character's. These sidekicks will help the player hero during combat sequences once they are called and will execute special moves.

- *Castle Crashers*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/castle-crashers/3041>
- *Metal Slug*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/metal-slug-4-5/744>
- *Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/scott-pilgrim-vs-the-world/13338>
- *Muramasa: The Demon Blade*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/muramasa-the-demon-blade/5552>

III) Where does the game take place?

In a world not so different from ours, with a little more fantasy. From *Le Vélodrome* in France, to the *Emirates Stadium* in London after visiting the *Maracana Stadium* in Brazil or at *Santiago Bernabeu* in Spain, the player will be able to travel around the globe and discover different types of atmospheres.

The game will likely be divided into chapters, each representing a specific country/city and sub-divided into numerous stages.

For example:

- Chapter introduction cutscene.
- **Stage 1 to 10**: The player gets across the country/city including various scenes set in airports, streets or pubs as stage types, and more.
- **Stage 11**: The hero arrives at the stadium to fight the chapter's boss.
- In between, secondary missions can be unlocked and offer various bonuses (ex: special recruits, bonus items and upgrades, etc.).

IV) What does the user control?

Inside each stage, the user controls the main character (Twann in the plot section) and fights by using his increasing abilities and by calling up to two sidekicks who will perform extra moves/attacks/blocks.

Between stages, the player will be able to take care of the main character's evolution as well as manage his teammates.

V) What is the purpose of the game?

The main objective is to finish each stage by defeating all the enemies. In order to do so, users have to constitute a team tough enough by recruiting members and face the final boss, all the while uncovering the truth.

In addition to secondary missions, optional objectives can be implemented – including point-based systems for combo hits, level completion time, or amount of damage taken – to unlock extra items, special upgrades or simply establish online leaderboards.

If FatStriker was to integrate a multi-playing game mode, the user could use his main character to fight in competitive battles against other real players throughout the world. The game would then come closer to a 2D fighting game, with various objectives (traditional or boss fight type stages).

Furthermore, it would be interesting to develop an option where up to six players could fight (2v2 or 3v3) in a single stage. This would thus allow special moves or combinations between real players, similarly to those used with sidekicks in the single-player campaign.

VI) Why is the game different?

This 2D sidescrolling brawler will be mixed with more complex RPG elements (character/item customization and progression) and some fighting game mechanics (tag battle, special moves) using football as the main focus and gameplay component.

Similar games exist, but in most cases, the combat gameplay and the role-playing aspects are not at the same level of importance. The idea is to bring a much more complex character management in beat-them-all type games so that players can customize their heroes exactly as they want to play them, while offering plenty of other possibilities (increasing replay value).

Moreover, football (outside of simulation games) and health issues are not themes commonly covered in video games, especially in brawlers. For that matter, storytelling represents the third main aspect of the game in order to give it a distinctive identity.

In other words, the purpose here is not to create a soft with the greatest gameplay innovations, but to collide various components from different types of games together and make them work smoothly. All of this in a compelling atmosphere while introducing gamers to themes that they are not used to.

VII) On which platform and how the game would run?

The game should be developed on PC thanks to Action Script (Flash) or Java technologies, even though game creation programs exist. Despite a greater necessity in coding knowledge, it offers better flexibility for content creation. Gamepad support should be an extra asset for its conception.

Ideally, it might be more interesting to port the game for touch devices, such as smartphones or tactile tablets (Android/iOS), either for commercial purposes and for innovative touch gameplay possibilities.

In other words, the first builds or prototypes could be generated using specific game creation tools. Then, more advanced versions could be developed for PC and consider a mobile version after that.

VIII) What could the game look like?

The game could be considered as a 2D sidescroller with smooth animations and a distinctive art direction in a colorful and cheerful atmosphere. It is to be noted that the following examples only constitute some inspirational representation of what the game could feel like. Final game design and art direction are still to be determined after deeper analysis and work.

How the game would work:

- *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/scott-pilgrim-vs-the-world/13338>
- *Castle Crashers*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/castle-crashers/3041>
- *Muramasa: The Demon Blade*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/muramasa-the-demon-blade/5552>
- *Metal Slug*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/metal-slug-4-5/744>
- *Shank*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/shank/11993>

Design (besides previous examples):

- *Fat Princess (for overall design consistency)*: <http://www.gametrailers.com/game/fat-princess/9364>

- *The King of Fighters XII (for the quality of character animations):*
<http://www.gametrailers.com/game/the-king-of-fighters-xii/10312>
- *Skullgirls (for overall design and quality of character animations):*
<http://www.gametrailers.com/game/skullgirls/14603>
- *Persona 4 Arena (for overall design consistency and quality of character animations):*
<http://www.gametrailers.com/games/knd4w5/persona-4-arena>

Gameplay mechanic inspirations (besides previous examples):

- *Marvel vs. Capcom 3 (for the sidekicks system and the visual chaos on-screen):*
<http://www.gametrailers.com/game/marvel-vs-capcom-3-fate-of/13062>
- *Naruto Ultimate Ninja Storm (for the sidekicks system):*
<http://www.gametrailers.com/game/naruto-shippuden-ultimate/12679>

IX) What about sound design?

During stages, sound effects (attacks, character motion, special moves, etc.) and voices would play along with each individual's actions on the screen. To stay consistent with the game's lore, the background soundtrack would be composed of catchy rhythmic tunes, remixed fan songs from famous teams or national anthems. All together, it would create an intended acoustic chaos and reflect the game's spirit through the sound design and support what's happening on-screen.

While managing the main character and sidekicks' progression, background music should be more peaceful to remind players that they are in a safe and chill out environment.

An expertise in advanced audio design is still to be done to better direct final choices.

X) Gameplay mechanics

Basic gameplay

The game can be divided into two segments: the brawler and the RPG sides. In the first case, and like any traditional 2D sidescrolling brawler, the basic idea is to get across the stage without dying, from point A to point B, and defeat all the encountered enemies. In the second, users have to keep track of their crew's evolution and customize them.

Brawler side

a. Staying alive:

The player will stumble upon a various amount of unfriendly protagonists, including fat people, junk food lovers or characters indoctrinated by the *Fat Brainger*. Since the main

character was fat and unthreatening at the beginning of the story, they will try to make sure he will come back to his previous state. Therefore, enemies will attack with all sorts of weaponry (junk food, ice cream, BACON, grease, cooking oil, etc.) to get the hero overly fat. Then, he will be unable to strike back or even move.

As a result, the game would not implement a health bar, strictly speaking. The more the character controlled by the user takes hits, the more he gains weight. The Game Over panel then appears once the hero is incapable of any kind of actions, which would make him very sad (his dream being crushed once and for all).

To keep up with the fight, several options can be picked:

- Find/purchase and use specific items to lose weight or be immune to attacks. Items will be discussed further in this document.
- Another way to stay in shape would be to execute perfect combo/kill streaks. A special confidence/mental bar would then be dedicated, as it would fill up progressively. Once replenished, the player could choose to decrease one “level of fatness” or continue stacking confidence levels for more efficient results. In addition, with an optimal body shape and a full mental strength, the hero could enter a frenzy mode and activate even more powerful skills.
- Last but not least, sidekicks could be used to resolve health related matters: for example, the user could choose to select a fitness coach instead of a field player. What he would lose in striking power, he would gain in support capabilities.

b. Offense/Defense:

Alone:

The hero uses his football knowledge and skills in order to beat his opponents or defend himself. The following non-exhaustive list presents move examples that the player could accomplish or learn while playing:

Offense:

- Shooting the ball
- Tackling
- Throw-in
- Header
- Fist saving (only for goalkeepers)
- Combo-attacks: Juggle to lift the ball then strike a volley
- Etc.

Defense:

- Jersey grabbing (equivalent of a throw)
- Nutmeg (to dodge an enemy)
- Step-over (to stun an enemy)
- Other technical skills to humiliate an opponent (de-buffs)
- Etc.

With teammates:

The use of sidekicks is mandatory to perform more powerful moves or to escape dangerous situations:

- Free-kicks (require a defender to be used as the wall)
- Passing or crossing (to attack from behind)
- Goalkeeper's hand throwing (to throw the player in the air)
- Call the coach (buffs/ heals the player)
- Scouting (scan the enemy)
- Combo moves (ex: Goalkeeper's throw + long pass + bicycle volley)
- Etc.

c. Sidekicks:

Team composition represents a key part in the game's mechanics. The user will have the ability to recruit other characters during the game, train them and develop their specialties to widen the gameplay possibilities. Although the number of teammates will be limited to two for each stage, the player will be able to hire a lot more. As a consequence, the creation of a versatile crew will be necessary to face any kind of circumstances with the suited character types.

There are three main character classes:

- ***Offensive (striker, attacking midfielder):*** used to perform powerful attacking moves or combinations with the main character when called.
- ***Defensive (goalkeeper, defender, defensive midfielder):*** used to protect the hero or to bring him out of harm.
- ***Support (technical staff, assistant manager, fitness coach, etc.):*** used to increase the main character's (or second sidekick) capabilities by healing or increasing strength, speed and confidence, etc.

The idea behind these categories is to let the users adapt the game to their playstyle and the main hero's specialty. For instance, offensive sidekicks will most likely be chosen if the player decides to become a defender in order to increase the overall attacking strength, and vice versa. Furthermore, the two slots option mixed with character specialization encourages experimentations and gives a better replay value to the game.

Combinations would thus stand for an interesting part of the gameplay in combat, as well as the most spectacular one. For example:

- ***As a defender:*** Call two teammates to prepare a free kick, and place a powerful header to cause damage in a wide area.
- ***As a striker:*** Call a goalkeeper to be thrown in the air, call the second player to achieve a long pass and be able to execute a bicycle volley.

For the sake of game balancing, the use of sidekicks would be limited. The related system still has to be defined, but various solutions can be applied: a timer, a “team-meter” that fills up according to damage dealt, or the use of the confidence/mental bar (ex: calling one sidekick would consume one level), etc.

d. Enemies

Encountered opponents will be of various types and appearances depending on each stage locations and on the user’s storyline progression. They could be members of the *FattyPatty* fast food, fans from a specific team or country, simple fat dudes, security guards from Ben&Fils Corp., etc.

Enemies would be divided into four different categories:

- **Light** type – low health and attack power, but fast
- **Normal** type – standard health/attack power/rapidity
- **Heavy** type – tough, powerful but slow
- **Boss** type – further description in next section

It is to be noted that the first three types’ descriptions stand only as examples, since each of them will present sub-categories. Different enemies within one category will distinguish themselves thanks to their appearances, skills (ex: hand-to-hand combat or ranged attacks) and stats (ex: different balance between health/attack power/agility).

Their equipment (weapon/protection) is still to be determined more precisely (ex: pancakes, hamburgers, football, fat, etc.) and either if the arsenal will be available for the player’s use or not.

At some point throughout the adventure, players will be granted the chance to recruit enemies to their team after fighting them, including bosses. The confrontations with these special characters will be different to other standard adversaries because gamers will have to “wake” them rather than beat them.

e. Boss fights

Boss encounters are special events, occurring at the end of a chapter or a specific level (ex: when visiting a club stadium). The hero will eventually confront a brainwashed version of a team’s star player (ex: *Gignac* at *Le Vélodrome*, *Mertesacker* at the *Emirates Stadium*, etc.). These fights would take place in arenas or during set-pieces (ex: being chased by a huge boss) and offer a significantly different gameplay experience compared to the classical stages.

They would be divided into several phases. For example:

- **Phase 1:** The confrontation happens inside a football stadium. First, the boss sends his goons (ex: stadium stewards), while attacking from an unreachable position. The

users would then have to beat all the enemies and dodge attacks coming from the boss at the same time.

- **Phase 2:** Once all the goons defeated, the boss enters the arena and goal posts are placed at the end of each side. The objective is to humiliate the rival by using technical skills and score goals (ex: step-overs to stun the boss, nutmeg to pass him through and shoot to score). An anger/mental bar dedicated to the enemy would fill in for each successful strike. During this sequence, use of sidekicks would be disabled. The fight would then pass on to the third phase once the anger/mental meter is full.
- **Phase 3:** Once the boss goes into frenzy, fans in the stadium would also be angry and would invade the pitch to harm the hero. Sidekicks would be enabled and the players would fight the boss and a great number of his fans at the same time.

Some sidekick moves or combinations might be ineffective against certain enemies. Therefore, information gathering (ex: through collectibles or scouting specific enemies) during the levels preceding the boss encounters could represent an additional gameplay mechanic to implement.

After the boss is beaten, users will have to choose between two options: recruit him into the team or learn his signature move. The first alternative would allow players to hire more powerful sidekicks, whilst the second would grant new skills to the main character. Both choices would enable special combinations when used with other team members.

f. Items

Like any other RPG oriented games, items and collectibles can be found throughout the levels or bought from shops. They can serve as temporary power-ups, stats upgrades, health restoration, or key elements for plot progression among others.

Consequently, there would be three types of items:

- Consumables dropped inside a stage and used instantly used for health recovery, temporary boost to stats or other confidence/mental replenishment (ex: fruits, vegetables, *Fat Braingers*, gold ball, etc.).
- Items used between stages for character management to keep players in shape, learn new skills or upgrade stats (ex: skill books, medical kits, etc.). This category could also include character equipment (outfits, shoes, balls, accessories, etc.) to gain bonus stats/skills.
- Key items used to unlock storyline milestones or to access new features (ex: find a key to unlock a fitness club and allow character enhancement).

This section is still a work-in-progress as some of the items might be usable in both cases regarding the consumable ones.

RPG side

a. *Teammates recruitment*

The role-playing components enter the scene once a stage is over. As introduced previously, crew management quickly becomes an important aspect of the game. To recruit them, various opportunities will be offered to the users, throughout their game:

- Hitting specific story plot milestones (ex: *Dennis Fatkamp*, the first sidekick, etc.),
- Boss fights,
- Secondary missions or occasional optional paths within a stage.

Sidekick recruitment regroups different character types:

- ***Standard sidekicks***, used in combat.
- ***Staff members***, used in combat (not for all of them) or for team enhancement (ex: A scout can grant additional side-missions to recruit players with specific stats. Or, if not selected for combat, a fitness coach can stay at bay and boost the teammates stats during stages.).
- ***“Named” figures***, including storyline characters (ex: *Dennis Fatkamp*) or Bosses (ex: *Gignac*, *Mertesacker*, etc.) used in the RPG elements and/or during combat.

b. *Sidekicks management*

Each time a character is recruited, he would be fat (most of the time). This is why the users would need to take care of them so that they could reach their optimal fitness, and substantially increasing their stats. As a result, there would not be a traditional level grinding system per say, but rather an innovative and required character-“maintenance” system.

By keeping a balanced diet and good hygiene, sidekicks would also be able to unlock new moves according to their class. Teammate enhancement would be possible through two options: by using gathered items or fighting with those who are out of shape.

Once the perfect body shape achieved, users would then have the chance to further boost their abilities thanks to additional training (ex: using protein shakes or continuing hitting the gym club).

Besides, sidekick customization (name, physical attributes, nationality, favorite team, etc.) could be a valuable idea to create a sense of attachment between the player and his peers.

c. *Main Character progression and specialization*

Specialization will also be a key feature in the hero’s evolution. As a matter of fact, the character controlled by the user will be the first to gain access to such a thing. Each specialization path leads to a specific talent tree, on which players can learn unique moves

(ex: fist saving for goalkeepers, powerful tackle for defenders, bicycle volley for strikers, etc.).

Even though it still has to be determined, it is unlikely players will be able to evolve into a support type character. The core mechanics for fighting sequences would totally change, thus losing consistency with the other specialties. However, developing a stage allowing users to control a manager (ex: *Dennis Fatkamp*) for a short period of time would be interesting both to explore new gameplay potential and to get feedbacks from users (ex: if this set-piece is fun to play).

Similarly to teammates, **Twann** could unlock new abilities through item consumption or by fighting enemies. The slight difference being that the hero will keep the same body shape from the end of a stage to the starting point of the next one. This indicates that if the hero is close to death (meaning relatively fat) after finishing a level, he will still remain fat if his condition is not treated in between. Item management will therefore become very delicate from time to time, especially if in restricted amount whilst sidekicks also in critical shape.

XI) Planning

Considering it is a personal team project, there is neither real planning nor deadlines to match. Nevertheless, milestones will be set to stay focused and keep a constant motivation level:

- **End of 2012:** Define the background (plot and main characters), an advanced art direction and a glimpse of a sound direction. Define the development method and acquire technical basics.
- **Mid 2013:** Advanced character and level design, advanced sound design, beginning of programming.
- **End of 2013:** Finish a first level with basic features, including one or two enemy types, basic skills, one special move, some items and no RPG elements. An introduction cutscene would be a plus.
- **2014:** If the results are satisfying, start the full game development.

XII) Budget

There is no budget allocated to this project, for now. If by any means the game were to be fully completed and sold on the market, licenses for professional softwares, used during the development, would have to be purchased. As a result, a proportion of the budget would also need to be dedicated to marketing purposes.

XIII) The team

Tatsugoro Kawakami: Creative direction and technical overseer

Melissa D.: Art direction

Elliott C.: Sound direction

Additional external expertise is likely to be provided for the game's completion.