Glossary of Terms – Video Games

Motion Capture (MoCap):
This term covers body capture only. The recording of physicality by a professional performer. The performance is recorded as data which is then processed to create an altered and/or enhanced image of human or non-human forms.

Performance Capture (P-Cap):
This term covers the recording of physicality (as above) as well as voice and facial performances using a head-mounted camera (HMC). The facial performance is for animation reference and guidance only and this does not include performer likeness.

Voice and Facial Capture (V-Cap):
The recording of a vocal performance in a voice studio or Performance Capture volume, plus capture of the facial performance using a head-mounted camera (HMC). No body performance captured.

Likeness scanning:
The process of digitally scanning a performer's face and/or body to aid or instruct the character design. Contracts should distinguish whether true likeness will be used or whether the likeness will be altered or enhanced in character.

Developer:
The company that programs video game structures and mechanics from concept to final product. Some of the major developers include Warner Bros, Sony, and Sega/Creative Assembly.

Publisher:
The company that (in whole or in part) finances, distributes and markets the game. This is distinct from the developer, though the publisher may own the developer. Some of the major publishers include Microsoft and Sony.

Vendor:
The company that is hired by the developer for a particular service that contributes to the development of the game, such as voice studios and Performance Capture studios. Some of the major voice studios include Side, Molinare, Liquid Violet, OMUK, and Pitstop Productions. Some of the major Performance Capture studios include Target 3D, Centroid 3D, Audiomotion/Rebellion, Imaginarium Studios, The Mocap Studio and Creative Assembly.

Trade Body:
There are two industry representative organisations operating in this sector: Ukie, trade body for the UK games and interactive entertainment industry; and TIGA, network for games developers and digital publishers.

Animation:
Responsible for animating the characters and other elements of the in-game environment.

Art:
Responsible for creating 2D concepts or 3D models for characters, creatures and environments.

Audio:
Responsible for the soundscape; recording sounds, voice actors and music, edits, designs, and mixes, and the implementation of the game.

Brand & Marketing:
Responsible for creative camping for defined audiences about key aspects of the game using social media, reviews, adverts, online communities, dedicate game website, sales platform, and face-to-face events.

Design:
Responsible for defining the rules of the game and game world, narrative, and overseeing creative development from concept to release and beyond.

Performance:
responsible for delivering voice and/or captured performances that bring to life the characters of the game.

Production:
responsible for organising the creation of the game, overseeing the game's development, and project managing from a business and financial perspective.

Programming:
responsible for writing the code to bring the game, feature, or service to life, making a playable/usable build.

Quality Assurance:
Responsible for ensuring product quality by identifying bugs, errors, and test results, and effectively communicating these issues throughout the development process.

JRPG:
Japanese role-playing video game, typically referring to a subgenre of RPGs that originate from Japan.

Educational:
A game whose purpose is to educate players in a particular skill or subject matter.

Esports:
Professional competitive gaming events.

Fantasy:
See role-playing game (RPG).

First-person shooter (FPS):
A game from the shooter's perspective, as they point the gun at different targets.

Multiplayer:
A game that allows more than one player to play at any given time.

Multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA):
A type of strategy game that has teams of players pitted against one another, with each team's members coordinating their attacks and defenses to achieve victory.

Real-time strategy (RTS):
A game in which players typically control a squadron of characters and try to dominate a computer or player-controlled opposing army. Games like Civilization, Age of Empires, and the original Warcraft/Warcraft II fall in this genre.

Roguelike:
A type of role-playing action-adventure game in which players typically have one life to make it to the end of the game, or at least very limited opportunities for resurrection.

Role-playing game (RPG):
An immersive play style that typically encourages immersion and interaction, as well as the ability to heavily customize and personalize your playable characters. Sci-Fi and Fantasy are popular types of RPG.

Shooter:
A genre of game based on gunplay. There are first-person shooters, third-person shooters, and other subgenres.

Remaster:
A modern version of an older video game rebuilt from scratch to run on modern hardware, often with upgraded graphics and gameplay, but retaining the fundamental gameplay concepts and core story elements of the original game. See also reboot.

Agent:
An in-game character or object that uses AI to interact with other objects in its environment.

AI:
Artificial intelligence; an in-game entity whose functionality is dependent on computer code rather than human input. NPCs are common AI entities.

Atmospheric Voices:
Scripted/recorded lines that do not further the story. Also known as World-filling.

Barks and Onos:
Lines which are 5 (five) words or less and are called out, yelled, or involve greater vocal effort than a line spoken in normal conversation. These lines are intended to convey urgency or important information to a player about their environment while in a conflict situation. These lines may also be referred to as a "Sound Set," and may involve vocal sound effects such as efforts and various expressions.

Cinematics/cutscenes:
Segments of a game that are not controlled by the player. These are usually used to draw attention to major story points.

Cyber scanning:
The process of digitising facial or full body likeness for use in the digital environment.

Dev:
Slang for "developer" or "development."

Development:
See game development.

Downloadable content (DLC):
Additions or expansions to a game that can be downloaded and added through a typically simple in-app installation process.

Favoured nations:
When everyone (not including stars or celebrities) working on the project is paid the same basic session fee.

Game designer:
One who designs the aesthetic and structure of a game. NOTE: The terms "game designer" and "game developer" are often used interchangeably, though the two roles technically vary.

Game developer:
One who turns a game design into a playable game through coding and in-engine asset creation.

NOTE:
The terms "game designer" and "game developer" are often used interchangeably, though the two roles technically vary.

Game development:
The act of creating a game; sometimes referred to as "gamedev." The game development process typically requires input from one or more game designers, artists, programmers, animators, testers, project managers, etc., though some games have been created by just one or two game developers.

Handheld Platform:
Means any mobile device now known or hereafter invented including without limitation cell phones, smart phones, Apple iPods, tablets and videogame portable consoles (such as Nintendo DS, Playstation Vita, and the like).

Interactive:
Describes the attribute of products which enable the viewer to manipulate, affect or alter the presentation of the creative content of such product, simultaneous with its use by the viewer.

Interactive Media:
Means any media on which Interactive product operates and through which the user may interact with such product, including but not limited to personal computers, games, machines, arcade games, all CD-interactive machines and any and all analogous, similar or dissimilar micro-processor-based units and the digitized, electronic or any other formats no known or hereinafter invented which may be utilized in connection there with.

Line of Dialogue:
Means a line of script of ten (10) words or less, including directed but unscripted dialogue.
Localisation: Translating a game into multiple languages and adapting it for different regions and territories.

Locomotion:
'Locomotion' shoots cover all playable actions within the game. These are technical shoots which rely on specific actions and movements being captured in order to build a library of movements which are blended and sewn together to drive the game-play.

Mapping:
The term used for projecting a digital environment or likeness onto a pre-existing environment or character rig.
Non-player character (NPC): Abbreviation of non-player character or non-playable character, is a computer-controlled character or any character that is not under a player's direct control.

Player-character (PC):
The character controlled and played by the human player in a video game. Often the game's main protagonist.

Non-playable character, or non-player character (NPC):
An in-game character controlled by artificial intelligence (AI).

Volume:
The room/space where Motion Capture/Performance Capture is recorded.

Walla Voices:
Unscripted voices/sounds not assigned to a specific character.