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Anonymous

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Safe Zones in Virtual Reality

ABSTRACT

This disclosure describes techniques that enable players in a virtual reality (VR) game or environment to create safe zones. Per the techniques, once a user activates a safe zone, they can block another user who violates the terms or spirit of the game. Users are given the option to leave the game. A blocked user can be blocked right away or at the end of the game, in which case they are muted in the interim. The techniques provide tools that enable players of a game to enforce constraints to respect the intent of the game, and also give a choice to offending users to stay in the game with improved behavior.

KEYWORDS

- Virtual reality (VR)
- Safe zone
- VR game
- Sportsmanship
- Game-spirit violation

BACKGROUND

It is possible in multiplayer virtual reality (VR) or video games for one or more players to violate the spirit of the game. This can result in ruining the gaming experience for other players.

DESCRIPTION

This disclosure describes techniques that enable players in a virtual reality (VR) game or environment to create safe zones around their avatars. Per the techniques, once a user activates a safe zone, they can block another user who violates the terms or spirit of the game.

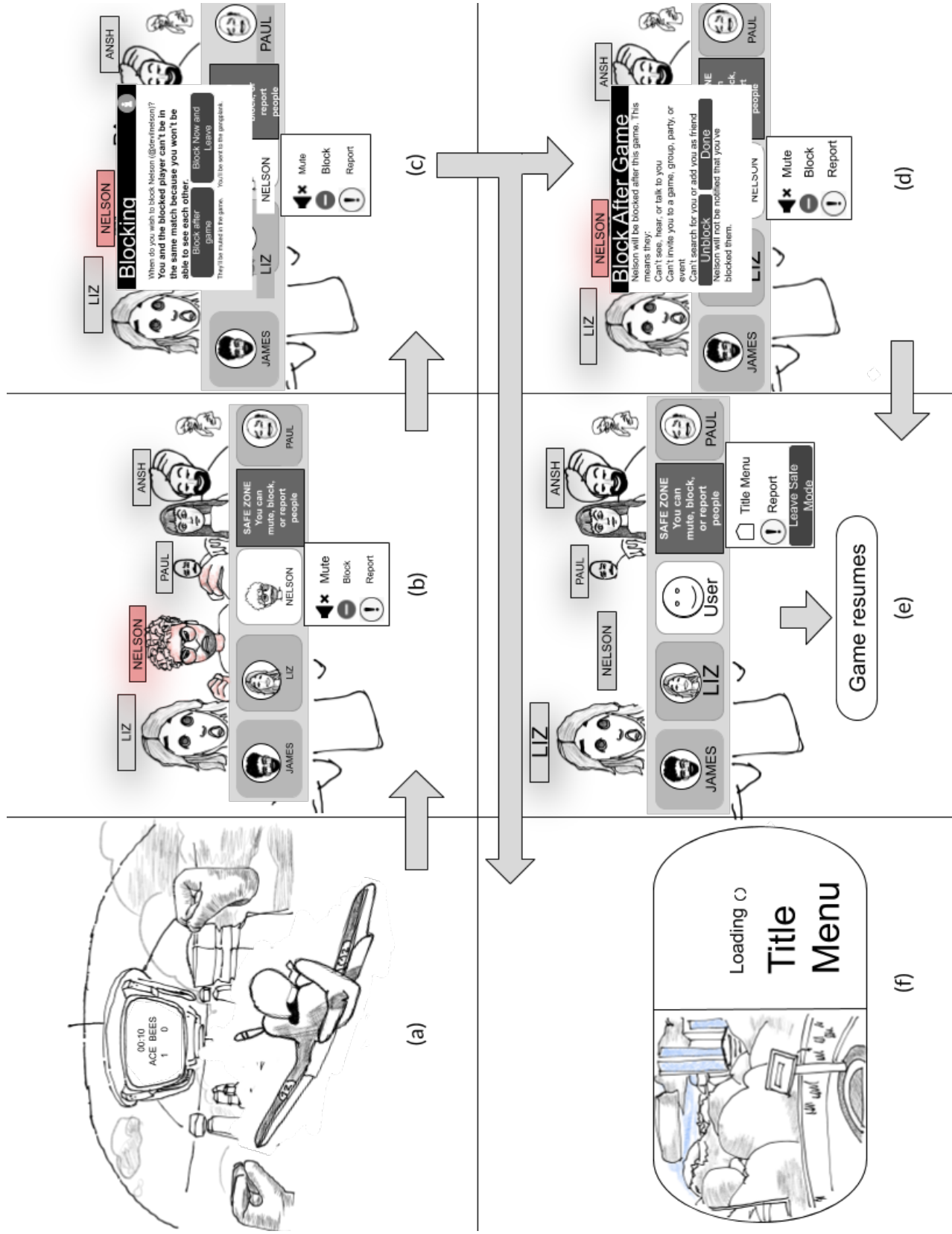


Fig. 1: Safe zones in virtual reality

Fig. 1 illustrates safe zones in VR, per the techniques of this disclosure. Fig. 1(a) illustrates a multiplayer VR game, in which one of the players, Nelson, violates the spirit of the game. Another player, Liz, can activate a safe zone, as shown Fig. 1(b), in which she is given the choice to mute, block, or report the offending player.

If Liz chooses to block Nelson, she is given a choice to enforce the block after the game, enforce the block right away, and/or to leave the game, as shown in Fig. 1(c). If the user chooses to leave the game, she is returned to the title menu, as shown in Fig. 1(f). If the user chooses to enforce the block right away, Nelson is removed from the game immediately.

Once blocked, the two users Liz and Nelson will not be in the same game, unless Liz specifically unblocks Nelson. If Liz chooses to block Nelson after the game, as shown in Fig. 1(d), Nelson is muted (to Liz) for the remaining duration of the game. For the remaining duration of the game, the VR environment is rendered such that the user Nelson is unable to see, hear, or talk to the user Liz. After the game, Nelson is restricted from being able to invite Liz to a game, group, party, or event on the VR platform. Further, the user Nelson is also restricted from other activities on the VR platform such as searching for Liz, adding her as a friend, etc.

Further, regardless of whether the block is enforced during or after the game, Nelson may not be notified that Liz blocked them. Liz can confirm that Nelson is blocked by examining the list of avatars of the game players, as shown in Fig. 1(e), which shows that Nelson has been removed from the game. Liz is given a choice to return to the title menu, to report Nelson, or to leave the safe mode (in which the block is enforced) and rejoin the game.

The techniques provide tools that enable players of a game to enforce constraints to respect the intent of the game, and also give a choice to offending users to stay in the game with improved behavior.

CONCLUSION

This disclosure describes techniques that enable players in a virtual reality (VR) game or environment to create safe zones. Per the techniques, once a user activates a safe zone, they can block another user who violates the terms or spirit of the game. Users are given the option to leave the game. A blocked user can be blocked right away or at the end of the game, in which case they are muted in the interim. The techniques provide tools that enable players of a game to enforce constraints to respect the intent of the game, and also give a choice to offending users to stay in the game with improved behavior.