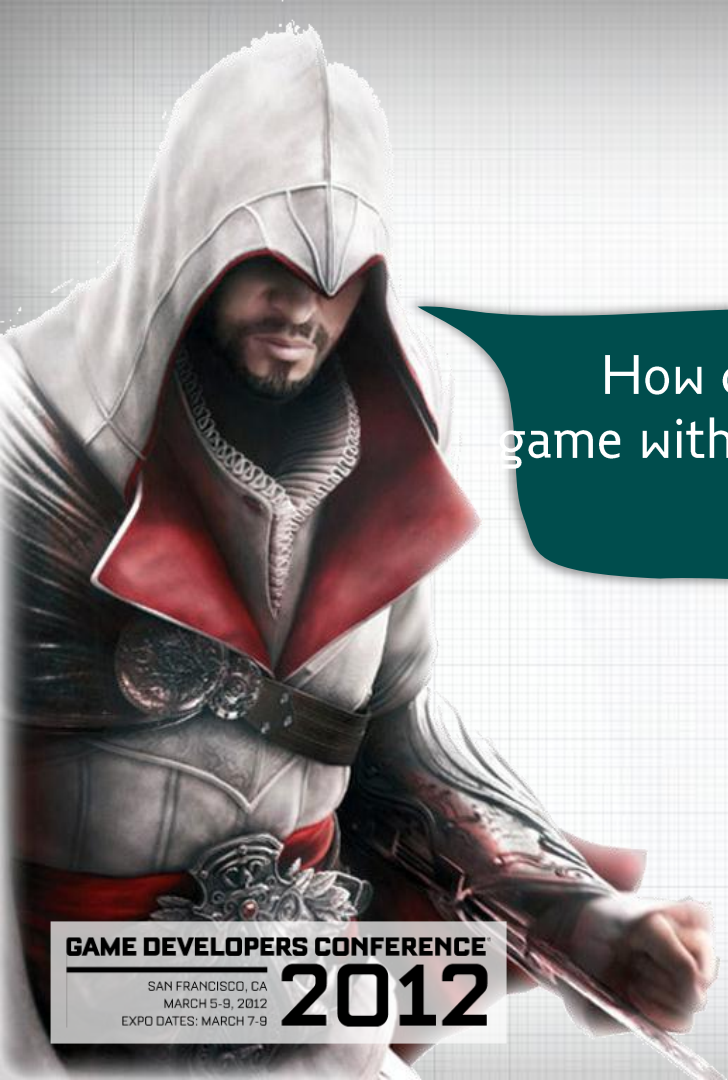

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
MARCH 5-9, 2012
EXPO DATES: MARCH 7-9
2012

GDC 12

...on the same day?

How can I ship my game with voices in 10 languages?

...while ensuring consistency?

Alexandre Piché, Eng.
Tools Product Manager
Technology Group, Ubisoft

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Game Voice Evolution

+2500 %

more words to record in just 7 years!

2005

2006

2008

2010

2011

2012

UBISOFT

Impact on job specializations

Challenges

- Localization
  - Performance of actors
  - "Culturalization"
- Uniformity
  - Studio / equipment
  - Recording session tracking
  - Post-production standards

Challenges

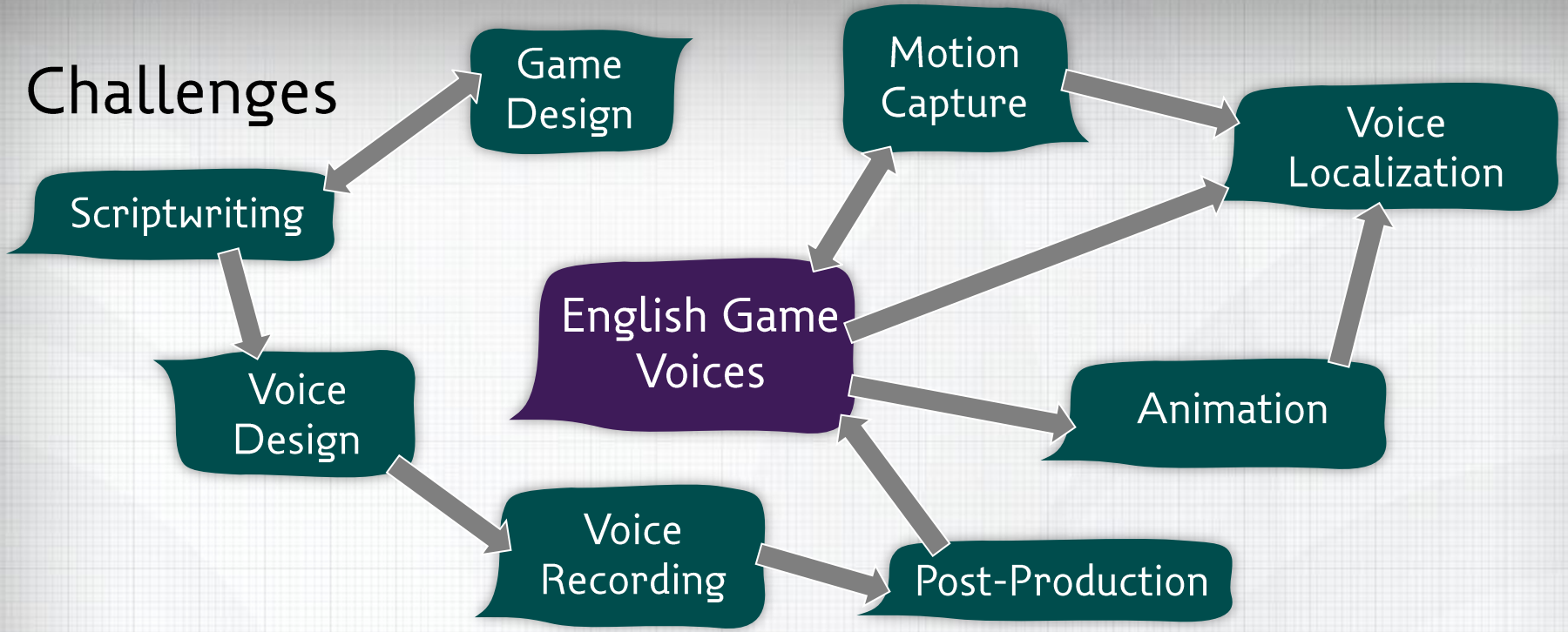
- Gameplay events are not equally important
- Strict AI structure not really inclined to changes
- Impact on voices (diversity, management)

Challenges

Quantity

- In 7 years:
  - From 2000 spoken lines to 30 000
- In less than 15 years:
  - Up to 10 voice languages
  - Up to 18 subtitle languages
- A lot more voices to record
  - More and longer recording sessions
  - Need to optimize planning

Challenges



Agility

- Strong dependency on other assets
- More content ≠ More production time

Facing these voice challenges…

- Organizational changes
- Best practices
- Tool dedicated to voice management

Some simple and
concrete solutions…

Best Practices

Organize data in a logical hierarchy

- Map
  - Mission
    - Scene
      - Dialogues (E.g. Word documents)

Game structure

- 2011-04-23
  - Audio Files
- 2011-07-04
- 2011-07-18
- 2011-08-12

Recording session dates

Best Practices

Have a bulletproof **audio file naming convention**

- A descriptive identifier

AI_SCR_BARTO_ENT_FGT_BARTO_001	“ Finally things get interesting! ”
AI_SCR_BARTO_ENT_FGT_BARTO_002	“ Come! Let's see what you can do! ”
AI_SCR_BARTO_ENT_FGT_BARTO_003	“ [Laugh] What fun this will be! ”

- A static identifier → 482643, 482644, 482645

AI_SCR_BARTO_ENT_FGT_BARTO_001@482643.wav

AI_SCR_BARTO_ENT_FGT_BARTO_002@482644.wav

AI_SCR_BARTO_ENT_FGT_BARTO_003@482645.wav

Best Practices

Organize data in a logical hierarchy

Have a bulletproof **audio file naming convention**

Add **more contextual data** to spoken lines

- Voice intensity/projection
- Parenthetical
- Action description

Best Practices

Organize data in a logical hierarchy

Have a bulletproof **audio file naming convention**

Add **more contextual data** to spoken lines

Be ready for last minute changes

- Have reference & last minute recording documents
- Have a reliable change tracking system
- Have a flexible gameplay structure
- Identify and understand the potential impacts upstream

Best Practices

- **Organize data** in a logical hierarchy
- Have a bulletproof **audio file naming convention**
- Add **more contextual data** to spoken lines
- **Be ready** for last minute changes

Track voice usage upstream with **statistic tests**

1. Use text-to-speech voices
2. Play and record the events triggered
3. Adjust AI variations following the feeling and the statistics

Best Practices

- **Organize data** in a logical hierarchy
- Have a bulletproof **audio file naming convention**
- Add **more contextual data** to spoken lines
- **Be ready** for last minute changes
- Track voice usage upstream with **statistic tests**

Improve **communication** between people

Good communication between the teams impacted by voices is imperative

- Scriptwriters
- Audio/Voice Designers
- Localization Experts
- Animators
- Programmers

Best Practices

- **Organize data** in a logical hierarchy
- Have a bulletproof **audio file naming convention**
- Add **more contextual data** to spoken lines
- **Be ready** for last minute changes
- Track voice usage upstream with **statistic tests**
- Improve **communication** between people

Have a **Voice Designer** position!!!

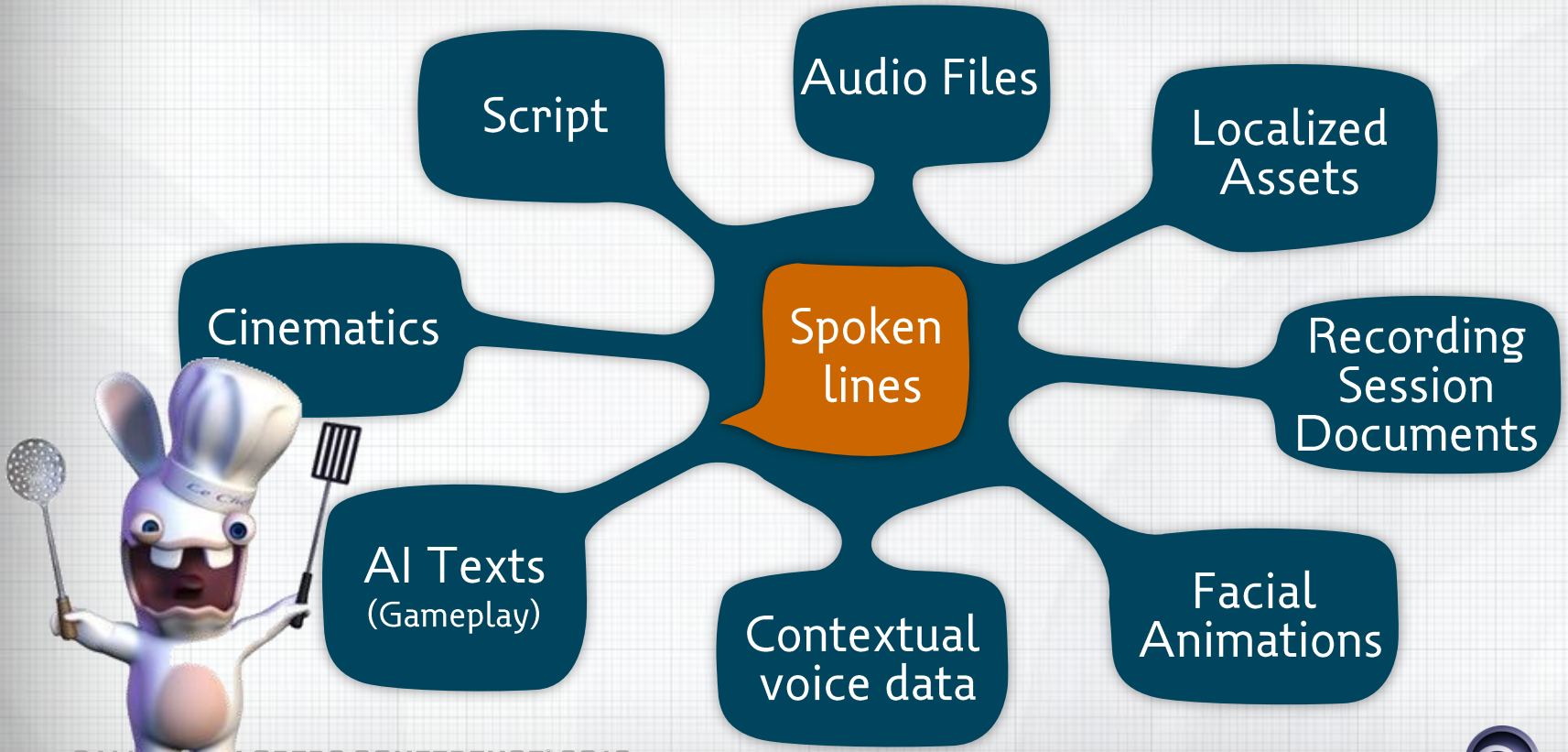
- Design and follow game play vocal feedback systems and features
- Design or adapt batch integration and synchronization pipelines
- Record and track sound studio deliverables
- Data organization and follow-through
- Test, polish, mix and close

"*Voice Design* is the design and synthesis of character voices and voice systems, enhancing the gameplay experience."

- Richard Calamatas was Ubisoft's 1st Voice Designer

Next step:
A voice management tool

The Idea of a Voice Management Tool



Ubisoft Voice Management Tool…

Demo

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vCUwGbAiYk&feature=player_embedded

The Benefits…

OASIS

- Collaboration / Unique Access Point
- Better Data Management
- Easy Tracking / Review

Future possibilities

OASIS

- Be part of other voice related tool pipelines
- Localization in-game & voice timing validation
- Improve multi-site support

Voice challenges in today's games…

Ideas to overcome them:

- **Organize data** in a logical hierarchy
- Adopt a clear **audio file naming convention**
- Add more **contextual data** to spoken lines
- **Be ready** for last minute changes
- Improve **communication** between people
- Track voice usage upstream with **statistic tests**
- Have a **Voice Designer** position!!!
- **Dedicated voice management tool**

Any Questions?

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