

Prototyping C3 with 7scenes

“What 7scenes does wonderfully is to promote the design and development of game narrative. Within the constraints of the 7scenes game genres, the designer is allowed-and required-to focus creativity towards narrative and immersive content production.”

-Settlers of Manhattan team

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Introduction

Our approach in the workshop was to delve a little deeper into our idea of using 7scenes as a prototyping tool for the demonstration project.

7scenes was developed by the Waag Society after extensive experience with mobile games and activities. They broke down their observations into genres—styles of play that seemed to appear frequently. Think of them like design patterns.

We have identified a couple of genres that we think would work best for your project, plus ways of customizing those genres which we think are appropriate for your goals.

We need you to help us test our assumptions about these genres by helping us co-create the C3 experience. We did this in a theoretical way using text and photos during the demonstration.

This is just the beginning. In the coming weeks, if you'd like, you can send us some of the real text, photos, videos, or sound files for the activities we showed you. *Or* feel free to author the scene yourself. We've given you full access to the creation tools. We will then work them into our prototypes and begin testing them both with paper and on the phones.

You are the experts and our partners in content design here so we wanted you to be able to get a feel for the content and narrative possibilities of 7scenes and to help us create a small, initial data set that we can put to use and test, as well as inform us on your thoughts on the tool.

Also, we would love to hold a “play test” of the experience sometime between now and March 10th, so let us know what we can do to help you get that running!

7scenes
the world is a stage, you're the director

what is it? get it! blog help

What is 7scenes?



Welcome to 7scenes, we're a brand new GPS platform for games and tours! We're here for all organisations that want to deliver new mobile experiences to their audiences.

Interested in a new way of publishing content to mobile phones? You've come to the right place!

Consider the city an extension of your organisation, a fascinating place for you to publish and reach people in a different way. The city with all its (hidden) information is a beautiful stage filled with historic events, personal stories, cultural meaning, demographics, social relationships and much, much more. Something has occurred on every street corner and every brick can claim its own history.

Combining these surroundings, your content and phones that have made internet mobile and location aware (GPS), we can now interact with places in a whole new way! We are all about making these new experiences possible and offer a mobile and online platform that makes it easy to create, play and share GPS-based games and tours.

Imagine cultural city tours that allow museums and archives to reach beyond their exhibition walls, imagine an interactive festival tour playfully collecting your public's feedback, imagine an exclusive game that creates a new brand experience, imagine... Imagine your scenario, how would you like the city to be experienced?

These scenarios are created by linking locations to content - photos, videos, sounds and notes -, adding challenges and choosing from a range of (game) rules, together shaping what we call a *scene*. A location-based experience that lets people see their surroundings from a new point-of-view using their mobile phone.



What is 7scenes?
Take the Tour
Technology

What is 7scenes

What does it do?

7scenes:

- tracks player movements through an area
- allows players to encounter "places" on the map
- allows players to see and hear media in the places
- allows players to upload text and image data from the field

Why is it important (potentially)?

7scenes helps us:

- see what is good about the mobile experiences
- avoid activities that don't work in the field on a mobile device. For example, if the places are too close or too far away to keep the activity coherent, this will help us discover that.
- understand the technical limitations of mobile experiences in the city. For example, it would be difficult to place a lot of points near each other, if accuracy is a problem in a particular area.

What are the constraints of 7scenes?

Not all genres cover all the possibilities in your demonstration project, but enough is there to test what it is like to send youth into the field finding and creating content. And it allows you to prototype the experience quickly.

The number of users you can assign to teams in 7scenes is limited to how many we have created. We can add more if you need them, though.

For now, using 7scenes requires the Nokia phones, although iPhone and Android are coming. Let us know when you want to run a Scene for real, and we can work out the equipment and data plans.

In the genre we think would be best to work with, Collect and Trade, there are a limited number of objects and assignments (see below). It is important to remember, however, that this is a limitation in the software—you can and should feel free to augment the user experience prototype you make with maps, notebooks, scorecards, etc.

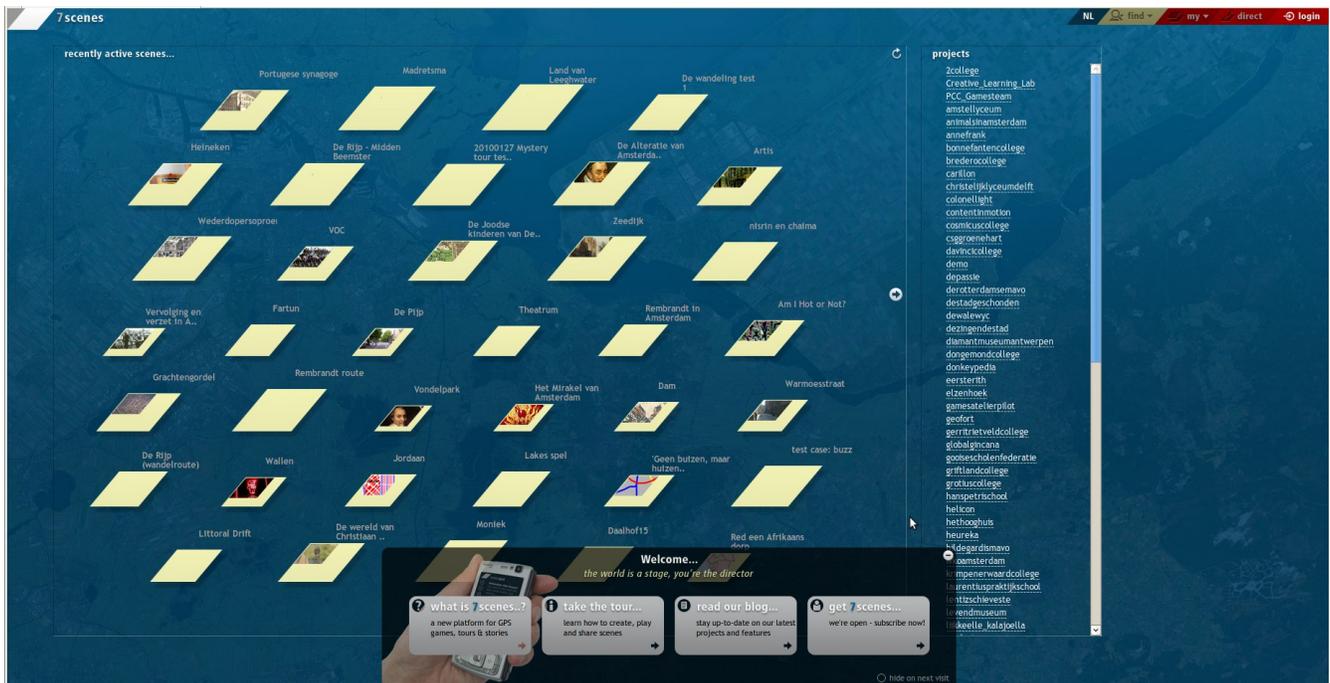
How does it relate to C3?

Your demo project is a locative mobile experience focused on structured data submitted by users with complex user interactions. It also has capacity for computer-augmented vision, and a social network component.

The demo focuses on:

- History
- Ecology
- Air quality

Because it has a narrative, team-based and role-playing elements, and because it involves some degree of monitoring of the players actions and input via a web interface, we have analyzed and selected several ways of using 7scenes that we feel are appropriate and useful for you. As always, however, feel free to explore the tools on your own—we'll be more than happy to help you adapt your demo to ways of using 7scenes.



Working with 7scenes

Getting Started

Go to this site

<http://live.7scenes.com>

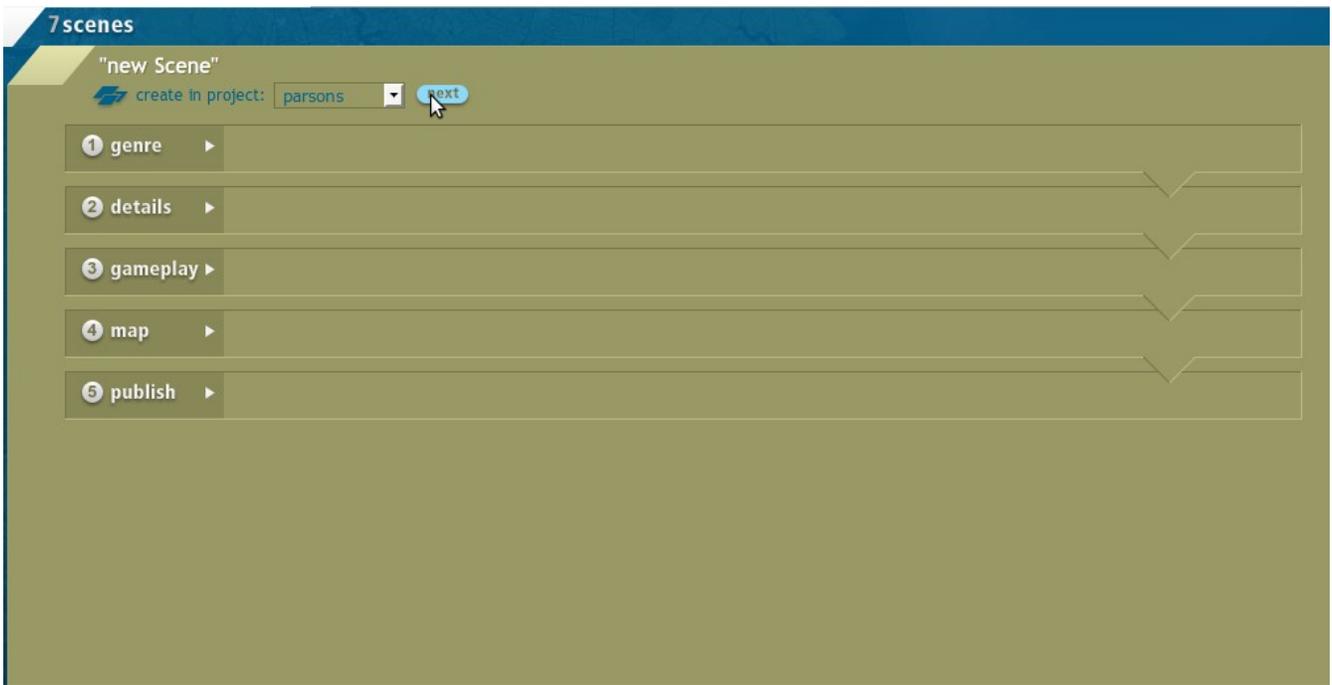
On the main page, you will see a list of games (games and scenes mean the same thing here). You will also see, at the top right, a login area. To log in:

- Username: c3
- Password: c3!

There is a tour bar at the bottom in case you want to read more of the information provided by the Waag Society. You can also click the (-) icon on the top right of that box to remove it.

Your Project

- Scenes: As a director, you can make new scenes within the Parsons project
- Users: We can add other player users into your games later. Here, you will only be able to see who else is available



Create

To create a new scene, hit direct in the upper right corner of the screen. Then hit "next" within the "parsons" project.



Genres

Now it is time to pick a *genre*. You can only do this one time! If you pick a genre, then decide you would rather use a different one, you will have to create a new scene.

A genre is like a group of game mechanics or rules. The genre you pick will automatically add a set of rules that you can modify in the gameplay section (see below).

What can each genre do?

Narrative Genres

Mystery Tour, *Secret Trail*, and *Storyline* all have a linear structure—players begin at one place and the map, then travel to succeeding places until the last place is reached. *Secret Trail* introduces the concept of points into the game and has a kind of “treasure hunt” feel to it. *Storyline* allows the players to follow a story, but also to skip up to three points along the path.

Because of the fairly rigid structure of the narrative genres, these are probably not going to be the most useful for your user-experience prototype.

Exploration

The exploration genres, *Sightseeing*, *Free Play*, and *Collect and Trade*, do not have a linear structure. Instead, participants are free to wander to any place on a map in any order they wish.

Free Play introduces point scoring into the game.

Collect and Trade adds the ability to collect *items* as well as points. Teams can also receive *assignments*, which require them to collect a set number and type of objects.

We have found these genres useful for other projects, but these formats seem too unfocused for the demonstration project you have proposed.

Extra Passenger

The *Extra Passenger* genre is a car-based audio tour. While interesting, there seems to be little to recommend it for your project.

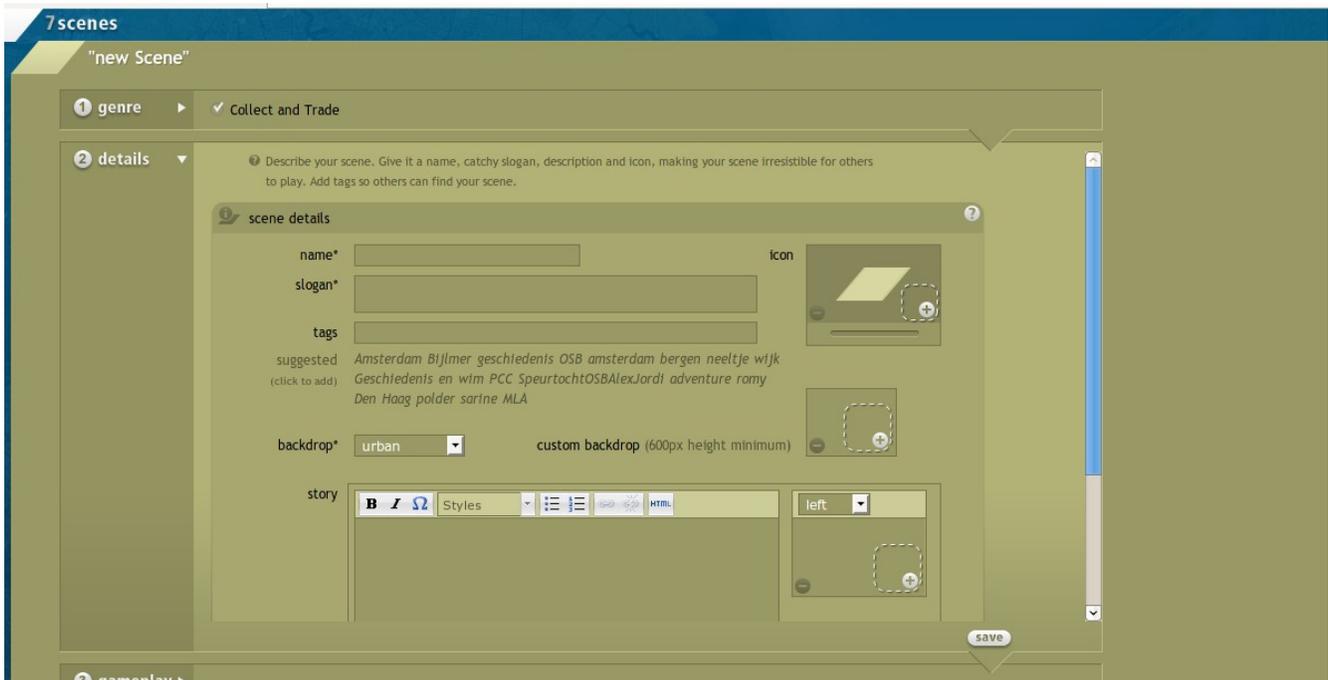
Role-Playing

The *Adventure* role-playing genre shares certain elements with the *Collect and Trade* genre (see below). It also introduces pre-determined *roles* where specific types of players are allowed to engage in certain kinds of challenges.

There may be interesting uses of this genre as far as creating an incentive structure around the completion of challenges based on role and skill. For example, one team of users could be assigned a “Citizen Scientist” role and engage in only science-base challenges. Or no roles would be assigned, but players would compete to get equally high scores in “scientific”, “journalistic” and “design” skills.

Let's use Adventure!

The *Adventure* genre seems to have most of what you need to test the user experiences. We want you to know, however, that you should feel free to experiment with *any* genre that you think is interesting! You may find affordances in another genre that we missed, so let your creativity be your guide!



Details

Fill in title, slogan, and tags text fields. None of these are important at this stage, and they all can easily be changed later.

You will see several areas in which you can add images. Click (+) in those areas to see the *Media Library* if it is not visible already.

The Media Library has all of the media that you have uploaded as a director *and* all the media that players in the field have uploaded for you. To upload new media, click the (+) button. You may also click (-) to delete media.

Media may be

- Photos
- Audio (music, sound files, etc.)
- Video (*keep these small! Video files can reach a large size very quickly and are difficult to download in the field.*)

Once media is uploaded, drag into the image boxes on the form (anywhere there is a (+) on the page). See *Illustration 1*.

The icon image will appear on the main page with all the other scenes, so it's a good place to establish the visual identity.

The backdrop can be generic or you own image. It will appear behind the description and other material on the scene's home page.

Multiple image and text blocks can be added by clicking (+) next to "add more story content" below the story editing box.

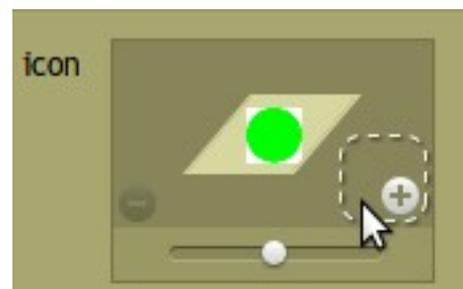
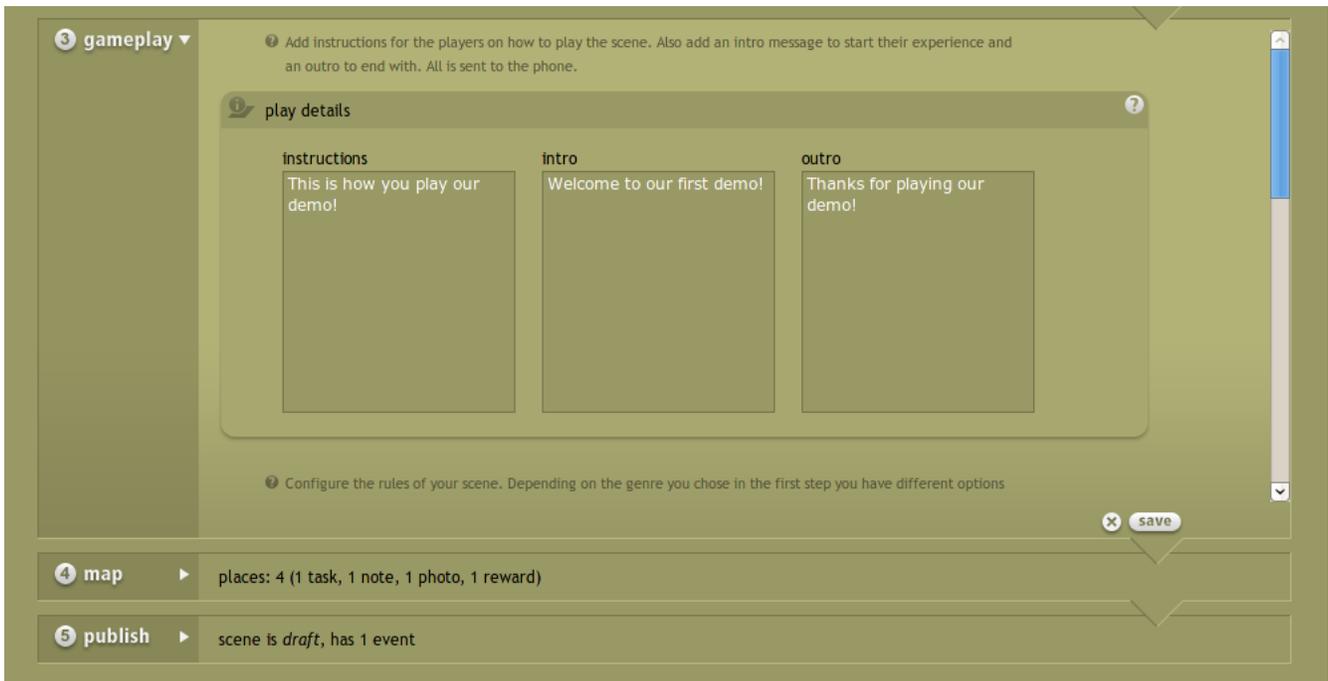


Illustration 1: A green circle image has been dragging into the image box for the icon.



Gameplay

Play Details

Users will receive the *intro* text on their phones when they begin the game and the *outro* when the game ends.

The *instructions* text will appear on the phone when you click on the info button on the phone during play.

Gameplay time

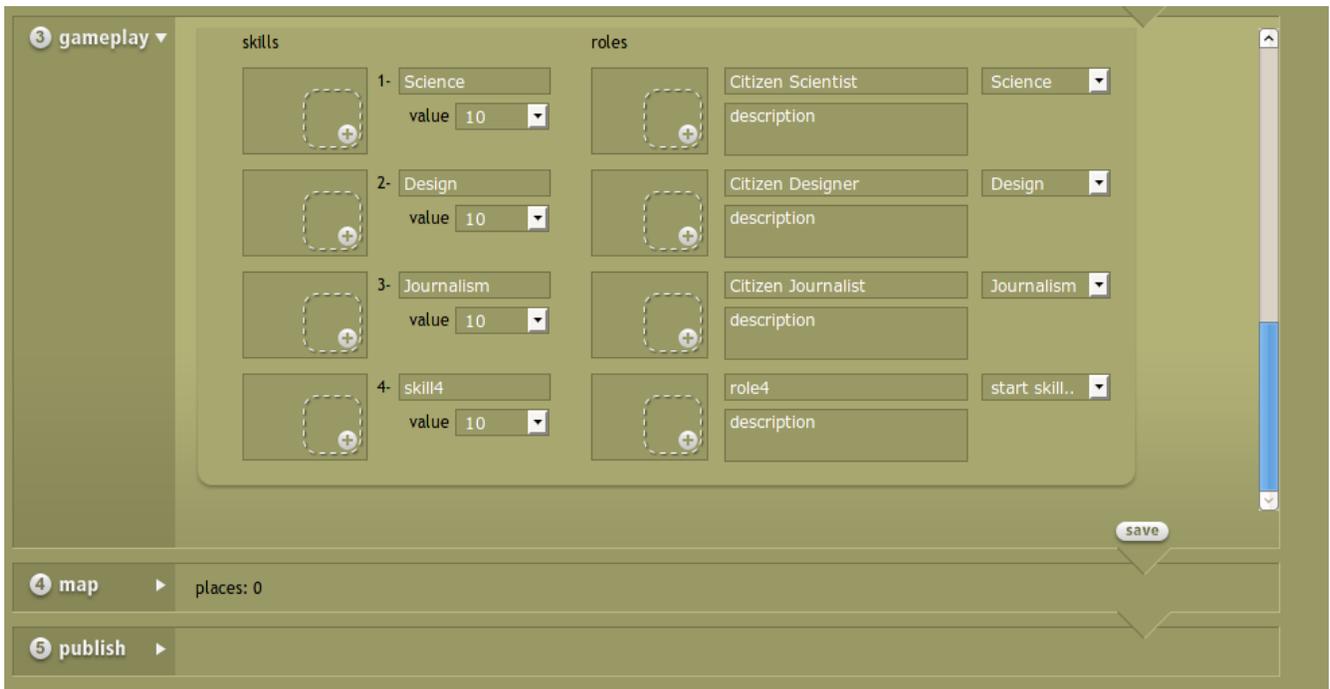
Game play may be restricted to a limited period. While this does not seem to be necessary for your demonstration project, it may be useful for running user-experience prototypes that have a limited run.

Download media

With the option checked, some media will be downloaded on the phone beforehand. This will make the initial installation of the application on the phone take longer, but won't require downloading during play. We have found that this is not necessarily true for video, so try to keep video files small regardless.

Web player

The developers of 7scenes had enabled an option where a player could participate in a game from a web interface. It has since been disabled as a feature, but may be re-enabled in the near future.

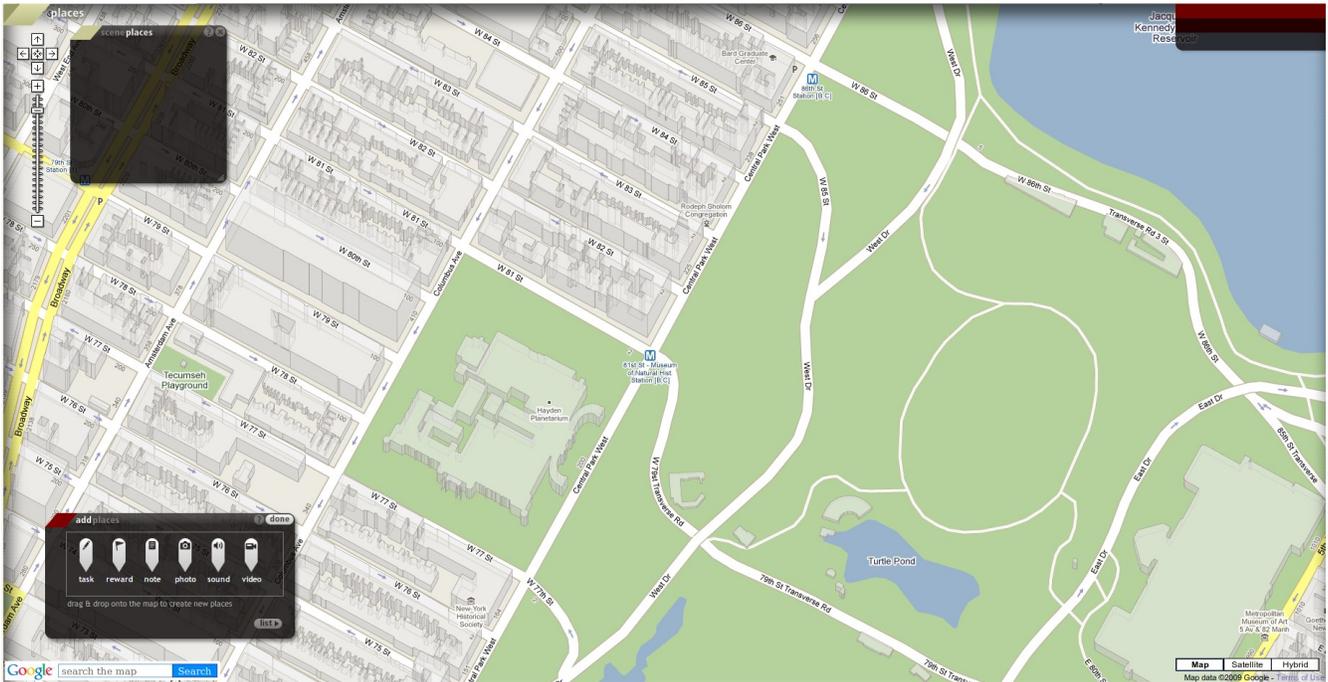


Skills

Each skill represents an area in which users can score points. For example, in a scene, a user may run across *Tasks* (see below) that grant them points in a specific skill area once they complete it. Or tasks could be created that required students to have a skill before they are able to even engage a task.

Roles

Roles represent a player type that is able to participate in a certain set of specific challenges. Each role can also be assigned a skill, based on the set of skills created on the left side of the interface.



Map

Click "add places" to begin working with the map. This is the first place where you will start to do the serious design work.

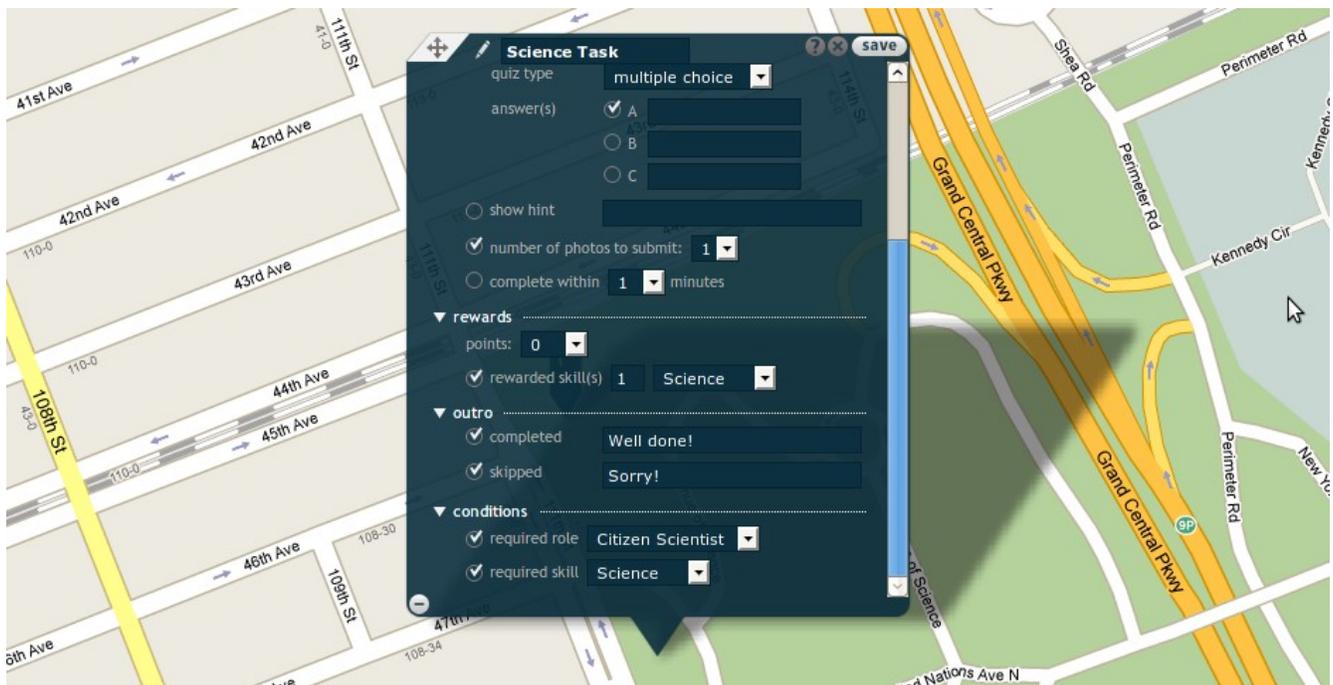
To add a place into the scene drag the different places markers from the palette on to the map in the locations near which you want the players to find them.

Use your creativity and your goals to shape the activity. This is by far the most customizable (and fun) part of 7scenes. Also bear in mind that, while the *Collect and Trade* genre may have a specific set of rules that can be helpful to employ, you are in no way restricted to setting down tasks and rewards to collect items.

Types of places

By default, you have access to four different types of places:

- **Note:** Notes are text data that appear on the player's phone. Enter in your text in the dialog when it appears on the map.
- **Photo:** An image, plus a textual description. Images should be dragged in from the media library.
- **Audio:** A sound, plus a textual description. Sounds should be dragged in from the media library.
- **Video:** A video, plus a textual description. Videos should be dragged in from the media library. Remember to keep these small!



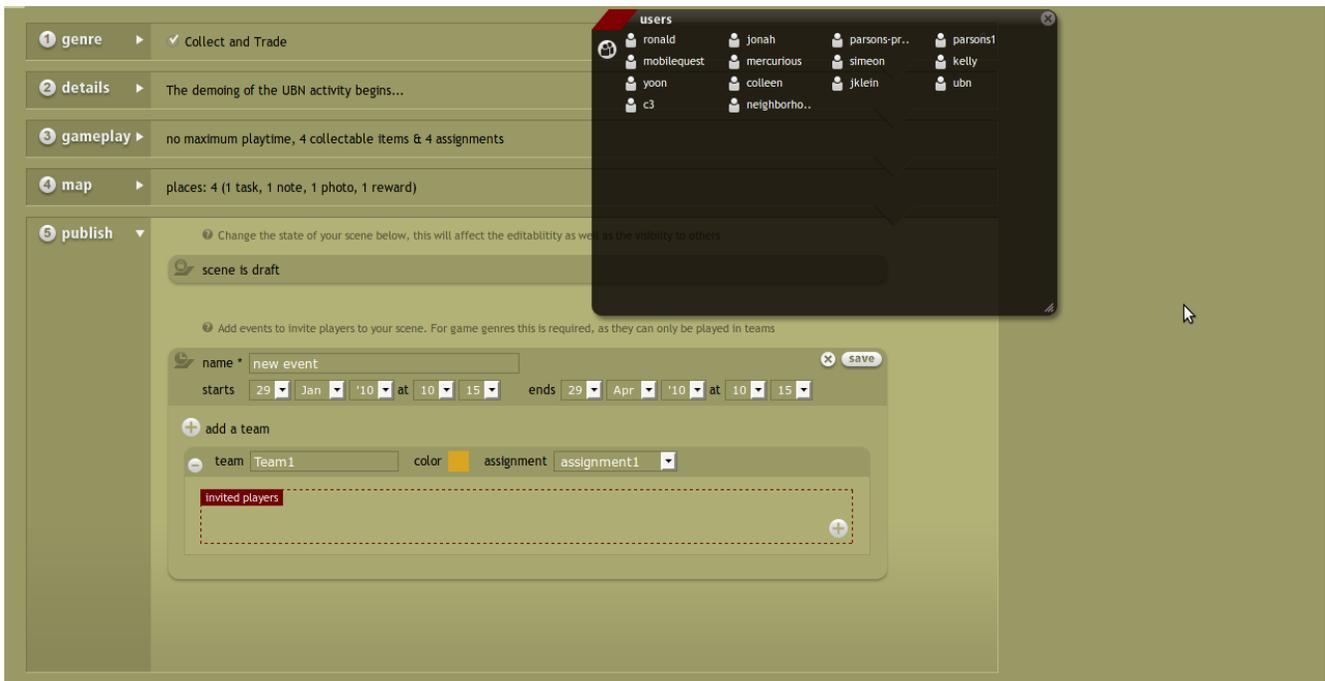
More Types of Places

- Task: There are several options for tasks.
 - Quizzes
 - Open answer
 - Multiple choice
 - Tasks allow can show a hint
 - Tasks allow for photo challenges. Players can be required to upload a number of photos that you specify.
 - Players can earn points for correct answers and/or uploaded photos
 - They can also earn skill points.
 - Conditions:
 - The task can be restricted to players who have been assigned a specific role.
 - The task can be restricted to players that have a particular skill.
- Reward: A reward adds skill points to the player's total when the player is in proximity.

Places In General

Players tend to "hit" places within 5-10 meters of them, although this is more accurate in open spaces and sometimes much less so among tall buildings.

To move places on the map once they have already been positioned, open them up and drag using the four-arrows icon.



Publish

Draft

This allows you to keep editing your scene.

If you want to play the game publicly, it must be set to "Public". This is probably unnecessary for the moment, though.

Public

Selecting this make the scene publicly viewable.

Closed

Once you wish to "retire" the game, set it to be closed.

Events

With the event, you can choose a set of times during which an invited team player may being the game. Each event will specify a set of teams and team members. While, there can be multiple events over time, it is probably best for now to just set one event with the generic user accounts we will provide as team members and with a range of dates spanning a month or so.

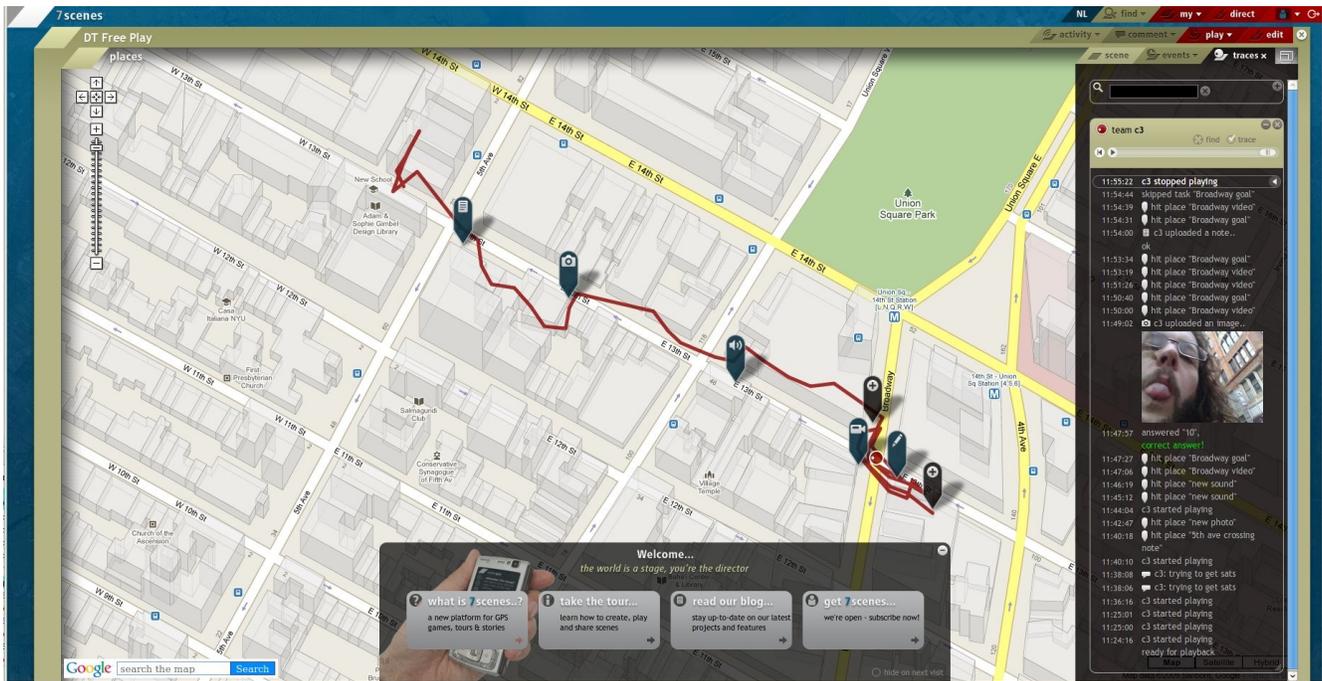
Teams

Each event will need to have teams assigned to it. Teams will have colors assigned to them, an optional specific role, and will need to have players assigned to it.

To add players, drag the user into the team box. We will have a list of generic players created for each project as soon as you are ready to begin. We will send you the usernames and passwords of the users well in advance of the event.

Editing

To edit any section, click on the red area to the top right of that section.



The Web View

Traces

To see the results of a game that has already been played, open up the scene. Click on the *activity* tab—you will see a panel that contains a list of the “latest traces.” Click on one of the traces, and you will see a map and a player and log interface to the right. If you click the play button, you will see the play of the game mapped out for you. You will also see the activity of the game in the log interface.

Log

In the log, you will see all the events that transpired during the experience. You will see the answers to questions, the text that has been uploaded and all of the photos that have been submitted.

It is worth noting that any of the photos that user contribute will stay in your *Media Library* for use in future scenarios. We are currently looking into ways that we can get the logs in a raw format, so that you will be able to extract and keep records of all the activities and text uploads outside of 7scenes, too.



Play

We will be there to help get the game up and running, so there is not much you need to do to prepare for that as far as the phones' software is concerned.



Where to go from here?

Try logging in as a director and making your own scenes. Work a lot with the map and places, since this is the heart of your experience in the neighborhood.

Contact us as soon as you feel you can try out the experience in your neighborhood.

Have fun!

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