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REAL TIME ONLINE SCREENPLAYS

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REAL TIME ONLINE SCREENPLAYS

ABSTRACT

A system and method are proposed to help authors in writing an online screenplay or script. The tool allows the author to create a script with named characters and locations. The tool also automates the technical work of assigning the characters phone numbers/instant message handles. The tool allows the author to write lines in a format that combines screenplay and subtitles that are timestamped. The timestamp could be relative to the beginning of a scene or to the beginning of the entire play, and the messages with the dialog would be automatically delivered using the instant message handles according to the timestamped order. The system and method makes theatrical plays accessible to mobile users and provides an enhanced experience.

BACKGROUND

There are many software applications/online tools available for real-time screenplay writing and production. The application or service presents real-time text-based productions. The user purchases the production software or accesses an online production tool. The application/tool will deliver the lines to the user in real-time and the author of the work will specify the content and timing. The user may provide a phone number or instant message handle to enable delivery of content. Different characters within the production environment may send or be sent information/content at certain times. This allows the user to get immersed in the universe of the production and let the story play out in smaller increments, similar to the interactions in an alternate reality game. An advanced version of the application/tool allows the user to respond with certain predetermined phrases (similar to a text adventure game) and further helps in shaping the outcome of the story.

DESCRIPTION

Disclosed herein is an application that is equipped with a tool to allow an author to create a script with named characters and locations, that will be automatically sent to users. The tool also automates the technical work of assigning characters phone numbers/instant message handles.

Within the script, the author may write lines in a format that combines screenplay and subtitles as given below:

Sender (Recipient 1, Recipient 2; HH:MM:SS): Message content

The timestamp could be relative to the beginning of a scene or to the beginning of the entire play, and the messages with the dialog would be automatically delivered using the instant message handles according to the timestamped order.

An example horror/thriller screenplay is given below (timestamps are from the beginning of the play, which the user specifies):

Dramatis Personae

Jane (25): The user's friend, a bit uptight

John (23): Jane's brother, also your friend

Sam (24): Mutual friend

Jane (User; 00:00:00): Hey, have you heard from John? He didn't show up to work, and I called his cell a few times.

Jane (User; 02:00:00): Weird, still no answer. We were supposed to grab dinner after work, oh well, guess he's just in one of those moods again lol.

Jane (User; 04:00:00): Has he texted you? I'm starting to get worried, he usually checks his fb or email or something. :(

Sam (User; 04:05:00): has jane been bugging u all day too

Sam (User; 04:06:00): i told her to chill out but it didnt exactly work haha

Sam (User; 04:07:00): im sure john is fine, probably playing xbox with his phone off again

Jane (User; 24:00:00): Ok, wtf, he's not home and nobody has heard from him since yesterday. Please let me know if you find out anything, I'm seriously about to file a police report.

John (User, Jane, Sam; 25:00:00): PAY VERY CLOSE ATTENTION. We have your friend. follow our instructions exactly and we will return him to you in his original condition.

Jane (User, John, Sam; 25:01:00) John, this is so not funny! I was really worried about you! >:(

Sam (User, Jane, John; 25:02:00): lol john, i knew u were camped out watching law and order

John (User, Jane, Sam; 25:03:00): THIS IS NOT A JOKE. do not contact us again until you are prepared to discuss the terms.

John (User, Jane, Sam; 25:03:30) : <picture message/mms of "John" being held by masked kidnappers>Jane (User, Sam; 25:05:00): ...what are we going to do?

The disclosed application could make theatrical plays more interesting by offering an enhanced experience for the user. It will also help young people or others who rely mostly on

mobile technologies adapt to appreciate written theatrical works in a new way. The tool attempts to standardize a format for a new entertainment medium that has not yet been explored.

The disclosed system and method is not expensive to produce and incurs no film schedules or production issues. It also demands very little cast and crew. The tool could be potentially free since all that the user needs is an existing messaging system, such as SMS or any web or telephone-based chat application.

The system and method could be implemented alternatively by creating content in the style of existing alternate reality games, where the user seeks and finds the content, and not having it sent to them.