SCAN OR BE SCANNED

Goal of our project?

To test how psychological elements like pursuit, time pressure, and environmental cues affect engagement in a location-based game.

Context

Scan or be scanned is a game using QR codes for riddles to different key locations across wellington. However this isn't like any normal riddle game because as your trying to find your next QR code someone will be trying to hunt you down. The two roles are simple there's the hunter and the hunted the hunters goal is to find the other person while the hunted must survive.

Who the user is?

Our intended users are young adults or teenagers as the game requires you to do a lot of walking/running and we also want people to meet who are around the same age group and we want to target people from the university to play our game.

Development of Design

When developing our design we originally thought to do a QR code treasure hunt of sorts but we couldn't think of a real reason to get people into it. We then came up with the idea of a more competitive game which still uses the QR code system and would give people a better reason to try it out.

How Research Informed me?

- Looked at psychology concepts like time pressure, pursuit stress, and attentional focus.
- Research showed that uncertainty (not knowing where the Hunters are) increases tension and engagement.
- Studies on gamification and navigation highlight that giving different levels of information (clear vs cryptic hints) creates balanced challenge.
- This informed the design of easy hints for the Hunted and harder, cryptic hints for the Hunters.

Results

After simulating our design as best as we could we found our testing to be quite positive. We were able to get to multiple locations without someone being found to quickly or the riddles being to hard. Both testers had positive feedback and found the game to be fun. We ending the game with very positive energy between two people who have never even meet before and while testing there were multiple times someone could have been found.

Reflection/initial conclusions

- The game successfully created tension and excitement through chase mechanics.
- Hunted players reported urgency and pressure to move quickly.
- Hunters found the cryptic hints engaging but sometimes challenging to decode.
- Testing showed the design balances fun with stress, but hint difficulty may need fine-tuning.
- Overall, the experiment confirmed that psychological elements (time pressure + pursuit) can increase engagement in location-based games.

THANK YOU!