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Same Game, Think Different

Michael Zhu
Vice General Manager, Shanda Games

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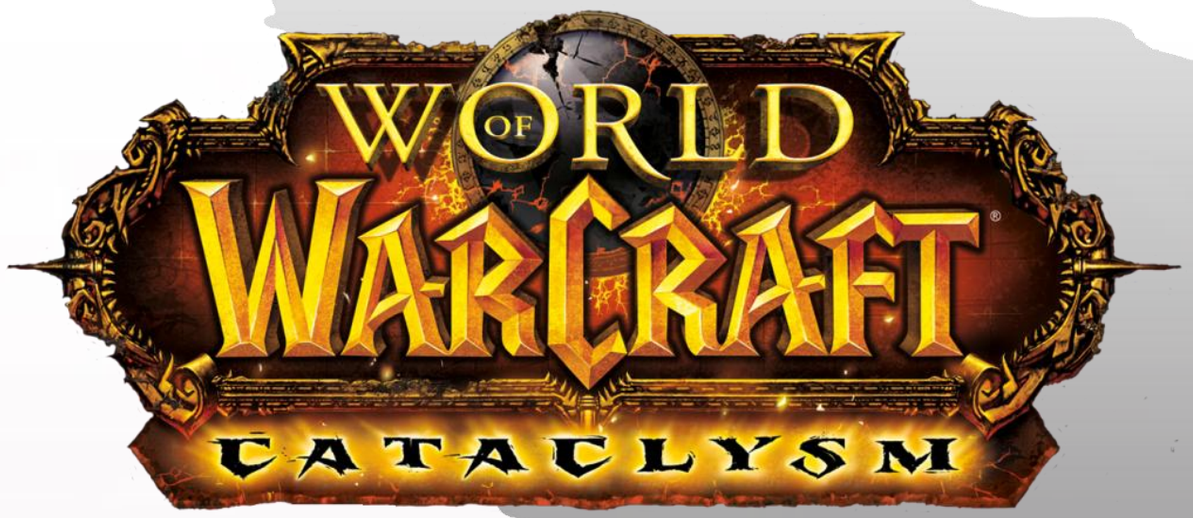
Vice General Manager, Shanda Games


WORLD OF WARCRAFT
CATACLYSM

AION
ASSAULT ON BALAUREA

Culture

First Impressions Matter

- Our goal is to **bridge cultural gaps** and create a game world users can accept, embrace and find a sense of belonging inside of

- **Pick** and **Remix** marketing materials according to the values and tastes of Chinese users

First Impressions Matter

Choice 1

Elyos

First Impressions Matter

Choice 2
Asmodians

First Impressions Matter

Choice 3
Balaur

Less is More & Easier to Understand

The West

Less is More & Easier to Understand

China

Less is More & Easier to Understand

- When we first launched AION – we told users our game has ‘Two Races, Eight Classes’
  - No in-depth details about differences between races, classes, backstories, …

- We introduce the **core components** of the game world and expand their understanding of it **step-by-step**

Localized/Custom Content is Key

Cheongsam

Panda

Localized/Custom Content is Key

- **Satisfying tastes and preferences** AND showing Chinese users that '**We care about you**'.

- **Taking the best** Western game dev ideas and **adding** the right Chinese/Asian elements to create the **perfect blend**.

Gameplay

Driving Engagement

- In year 2010, 204 online games rated by government launched in mainland china.

- For whatever type of online game, you will find countless similar products in the market.

- If a game cannot attract people in its beginning stages, it then has inherent disadvantages in china.

Driving Engagement

- We beta-test extensively before commercially launching an online game.
- Our goal is to maximize user engagement and retention through deep analysis of Chinese user behaviour.

Driving Engagement

Losing Rate

Hard ?

Boring ?

Unreasonabe ?

Bug ?

Translation ?

Driving Engagement

- We design beginners guide systems that zero-in on specific in-game hurdles
- Teaching users exactly what they need to move onto the next challenge; **nothing more, nothing less**

Driving Engagement

Guiding System

Maximizing Retention

- Players tend to leave because there aren't any worthwhile **"carrots"** or because the **"chase"** has become boring.
- How do we create in-game targets?
- How do we empower users to achieve those targets?

Maximizing Retention

- For Chinese users “fun” is the cherry on top.
- More importantly, users must **get-back** something **proportional** to what they **put-in**

Maximizing Retention

Targets

= Time + Technique + Money

Maximizing Retention

Returns

Maximizing Retention

Bonus

Maximizing Retention

- Many tools/paths for users to achieve a unique target
- During operation, we push activities designed to incentivize users and **expand # of ways** users can achieve their targets.

Maximizing Retention

Events

Maximizing Retention

- In China, there is a segment of **"super whales"** that are willing to spend **$$$$$$$** in game
- Time, player skill level, ability/willingness to pay can all be converted to different in-game advantages that target different user segments.
- In most Chinese online games, **10% of users generate 90% revenues**
  - The subscription-based model does not effectively incentivize, engage and monetize this demographic

Justice

Adjusting for Regional Differences

- For a long lifespan, developers must listen to player feedback and tweak game content accordingly
- However, gaming habits and content expansion schedules vary across all markets

Adjusting for Regional Differences

Lv 50-55

Korea: 19 Hours

China: 10 Hours

Adjusting for Regional Differences

- Most game developers pay more attention to the preferences/expectations of users from their respective markets
  - **Overseas users** are frequently ignored and regarded as a secondary priority
- Different regions require different game balancing.

Adjusting for Regional Differences

Adjusting for Regional Differences

- Chinese dev teams often employ a special '**value engineer**' to deal specifically with game balancing differences across regions
- We learn about users through data mining
- Data in hand, we work with developer partners to make adjustments and better satisfy Chinese user preferences/expectations

Defeating Bots and Hacks

- Vicious third-party plug-ins are capable of modifying local files, intercepting data packets and uploading fake data onto servers
- In China, such cheats are popular with many players
- Any online game company interested in the China market must overcome these issues

Defeating Bots and Hacks

SNDC

Provide additional protection

Economics

The Invisible Hand

- Managing game balancing and controlling cheating bots are key responsibilities
- However, the most important is the **supervision** of the in-game economy
- The total amount of currency circulating in a game will inevitably rise.
- Therefore, we must pay attention to the ratio between items purchasable by in-game currency and hard currency.
- **Hard currency items** are important to a game, they can be armor, weapons, or items to be traded; they are equivalent to gold in the real world.

The Invisible Hand

200 Platinum Medal/Day

Korea: 🧍🧍🧍🧍

China: 🧍🧍🧍🧍🧍🧍🧍🧍🧍🧍

The Invisible Hand

- In conclusion, our operating policy is to maintain inflation at an appropriate level, resulting prosperity of all players.

- We hope that players will notice the increase in their wealth obviously.

- Healthy development of the game's economics will be realized by minimizing polarization of players properties.

Investment and Loyalty

- Users want to keep gaming with “old” gaming partners.
- The departure of gaming partners is a common reason for players to leave a game
- The more invested a user is, the more likely they will remain.
- According to our statistics, the retention rate of *paying users* is **3X** that of *non-paying users*

Contact Me

MSN

zxjsh@
hotmail.com

Mail

Zhuxiaojing@
shandagames.com

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Thanks