



Building For the Masses

How to Develop a Popular Game
In Today's Crowded App Market



Hi.

I'm Neil, VP BD @ GREE.



Let's talk about some vision.



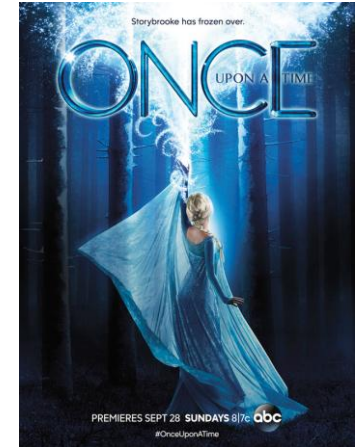
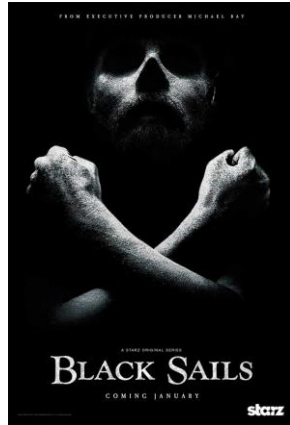
It's just like TV.



This is TV.



Full of great content.



Accessed through these 'stores'.



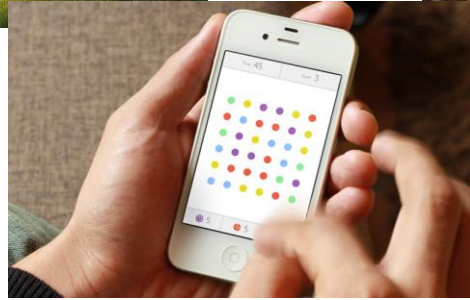
With the promise of weekly adventure.



These are Apps.



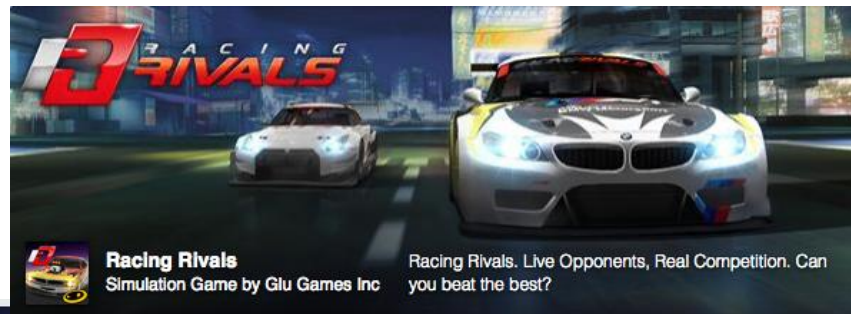
Full of great content.



Accessed through these 'stores'.



With the promise of weekly adventure.



It's amazing how similar things are.

TV gets a lot of things right.



Let's focus on three pillars that TV gets right.

- **Story** – Story in the game, story of the developer for PR, story for the platform
- **Technology** – client and backend
- **Platform** – UA, LiveOps, and those Hardware Guys

For software: Pick two to innovate on.



So, what's this story thing, anyway?



About In-Game Story

- *THOU SHALT NOT FORGET ABOUT STORY.*
- *But we kind of have. That sucks.*
- Story is the reason *why* the player *cares* to play the game and to keep engaging with it.
- Single Player, Multi Player, Guild / Alliances, FacePile / Friend Progression
- Why do you keep watching the next episode of *Once Upon a Time*?
- **SAME REASON**



How did we forget?

- *Focus on METRICS, forgetting some of our console past.*
- Process to go through. **Metrics are hard**, story long ago was always “tacked on”.
- But getting story right helps solve Activation, Engagement, and Retention.
- Console had to figure this out long ago from PC games days.
- We should try hard to remember those lessons.
- **A great story solves key KPI issues** in mobile games, especially for F2P.



Story 2: The Developer

- *Well crafted teams with exceptional talent **are rarely well-behaved.***
- We all have **battle scars, wounds, and lessons** learned.
- Don't hide this stuff – **embrace** it.
- Soldier's story. Publisher wants to know **you've been to war a few times and you keep coming back for more.**
- GREAT for PR, too. And for evangelizing with Platform AppStores.

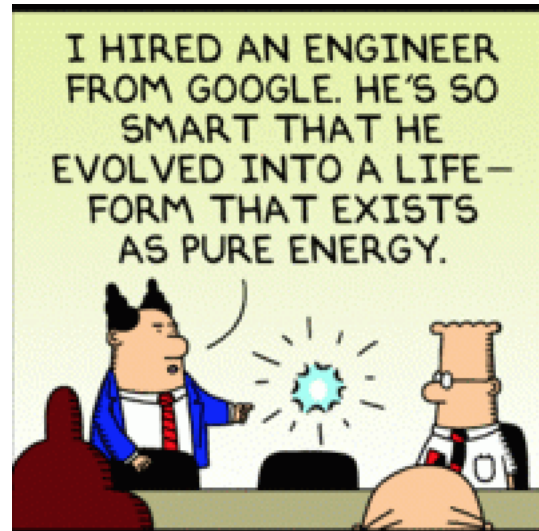


Story 2: Another beat

- *Platform AppStores. Their features are worth GOLD.*
- **Storied teams have the ability to make history with new platforms, new tech.**
- Platform AppStore is a *magazine* that users turn to *everyday*. The AppStores *editorial choices* influences downloads and 'what's hot'. **Like Vogue for Smartphones.**
- Publisher *wants* this edge. **What's your story?**



Technology



Technology, Take 1

- *#1 cost is labor. Most expensive labor are the engineers.*
- *THOU SHALT BE CAREFUL WITH EXPENSIVE LABOR.*
- TV gets this right. They don't 're-invent' film or magnetic tape for every new TV show. They use off-the shelf, usually veteran / proven materials and techniques in new ways to bring innovation.
- GTA3 didn't have the best 3D tech, but put it to use to tell a story.



Technology, Take 2

- Client technology is an old race, lots of engines.
- Filesizes (under 100MB, for goodness sake)
- Connectivity optimized for cellular connections
- Offline play mode
- Sync with server
- Anti-piracy and hacking tech
- This ain't console, don't invest in client tech like it is (yet).



Technology, Take 3

- F2P Server technology is a new race for games.
- Five-9's of reliability. Cloud. CDNs.
- Connectivity optimized for cellular connections
- Synchronous play. Video intro + cutscenes. Updated levels, art, and game balance.
- **Because this ain't console, this is where you should be investing.**
- HINT: Some of the best-grossing games have amazing server architecture.



Technology For Developers

- Your server technology should be awesome and future-proof.
- Large publishers with internal teams already build global, high-availability, high-concurrency architectures and have learned from their mistakes.
- A developer that says their server architecture is 'bulletproof' should...
- Embrace publisher's insights and learnings.
- **Server team should always be learning.**
- Be over-communicative with Publisher partners on reliability, uptime, and also be transparent when things go wrong.



Technology, and that's a wrap.

- Technology is the second largest risk component after your team.
- A publisher, after getting beers with you, wants to know: how about your tech?
- Be prepared to answer lots of invasive questions.
- This stuff is expensive and is evolving and is hard to figure out.
- So try hard to use off-the-shelf technology for the client, and lots of custom back-end for infrastructure.



Platform Stuff

(Ugh)



Platform is a lot.

- Hardware partner AppStore and OS Platform.
- Apple / iOS and Google / Android.
- **Apple AppStore and GooglePlay.**
- THOU SHALT DO WHAT THE OS OWNERS SAYETH.
- Publisher's Platform. UA, cross-promotion, metrics, and business intelligence, LiveOps!
- Hardware guys: Marketing / AppStore Features. **GOLD.**



Platform is also a pain.

- **Hardware partner needs increasing.** Special APIs, hardware acceleration, social features, auth procedures.
- **UA is increasingly confusing and expensive.** Where to spend the money?
- Great LiveOps is **super** hard.

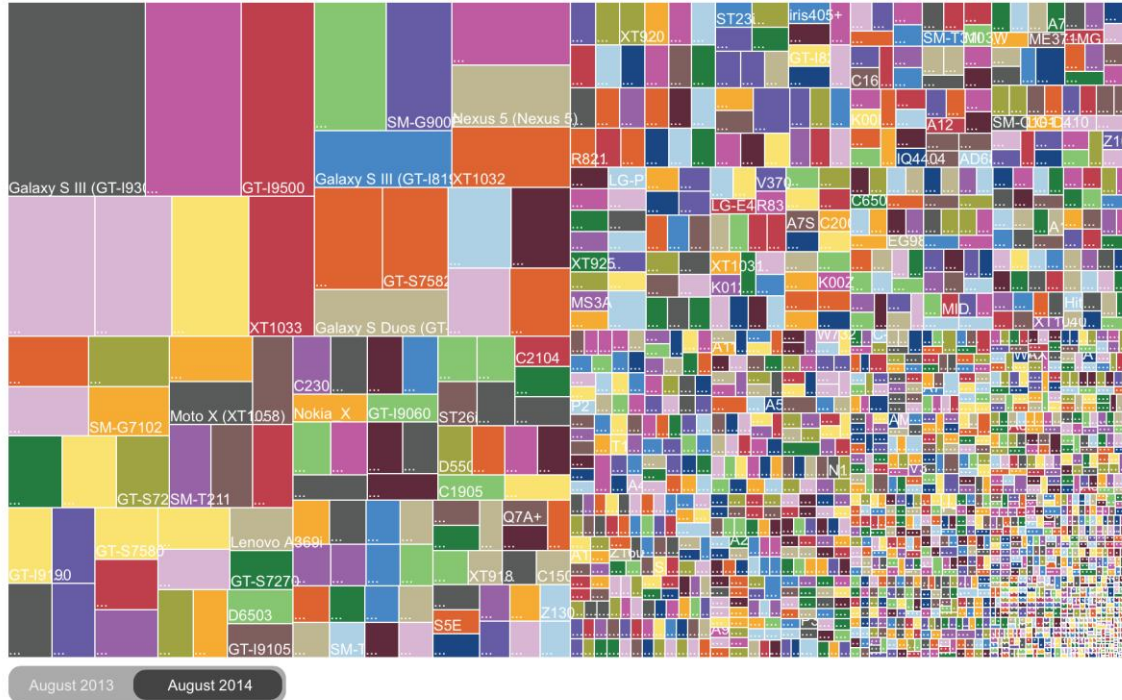


Platform

- Hardware guys slowly driving a wedge in the market among OS's.
- *Yes, this was always going to happen.*
- *It will get even worse.* ☹️
- Embrace it. (And stop building client engines.)
- Soon, may need totally separate iOS and Android teams for the same game.
- **Fragmentation makes life suck.** (another nail in the homebrew engine coffin).



Fragmentation



<http://opensignal.com/reports/2014/android-fragmentation/>



Publisher's Platform

- Let's start with the costly stuff. UA, UA, UA.
- Transparency, Attribution. CPI / CPA? FB?
- The internal platform publisher uses for UserAcq should be awesome.
- The Consumer Ops piece should be amazing.
- Metrics dashboard ([x] per DAU/paying customer/event, etc.) should be WOW.
- LiveOps knowledge and infrastructure should be incredible.



Publisher's Platform 2

- How much of this stuff should you care about?
- Well, kind of all of it .
- How much do they share with you?
- How much of this do they teach you or show you?
- How much of this can you replicate in house, given time?
- How much should you have to?



LiveOps

- You should care a TON about this.
- **LiveOps solves MANY KPI issues. This will sink you or keep you afloat.**
- ARPDau, Organic Installs, LTV prediction, all important.
- Given: A game with avg 10 days retention. 100k user base.
- How many days until **you have many new users** playing your game?
- How many days until you have **long-term players**?



LiveOps is hard.

- Onboarding for newbs versus lots of levels for growth of veterans.
- Every new swatch of UA brings new and different users.
- How they play will be different.
- What they like to spend on will not be the same.
- QED: to make it fun for new users AND to get them to spend money you have to change some of the game in LiveOps.
- But not so much as to alienate your existing audience.
- Trial and Error. Good publisher knows the ropes and can help give guidance.



AppStore Features are GOLD.

- How do you get them?
- Start with your **story**.
- Embrace new technologies from each platform and integrate it **meaningfully**.
- Keep the AppStore contact person (or publisher person) **enriched**.
- Ask for feedback, ask for them to contribute.
- **LOCALIZE and TRANSLATE.**
- It's a process and it's work. **Expect it to take time.**

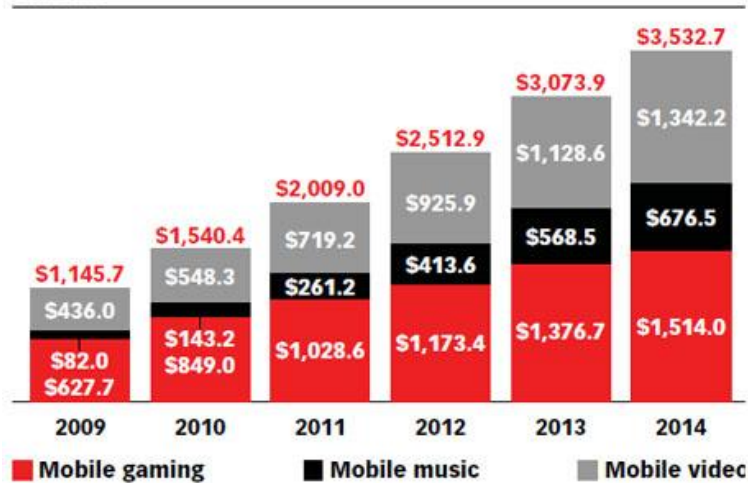


Why do we do all this crazy stuff?



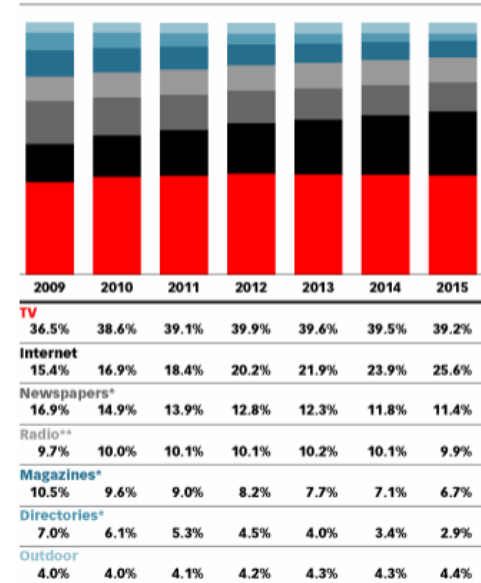
The money is real.

US Mobile Content Revenues, by Segment, 2009-2014
millions



eMarketer: Mobile Content:
Games, Music and Video Take
to the Cloud (Kotaku)

US Major Media Ad Spending Share, by Media, 2009-2015
% of total

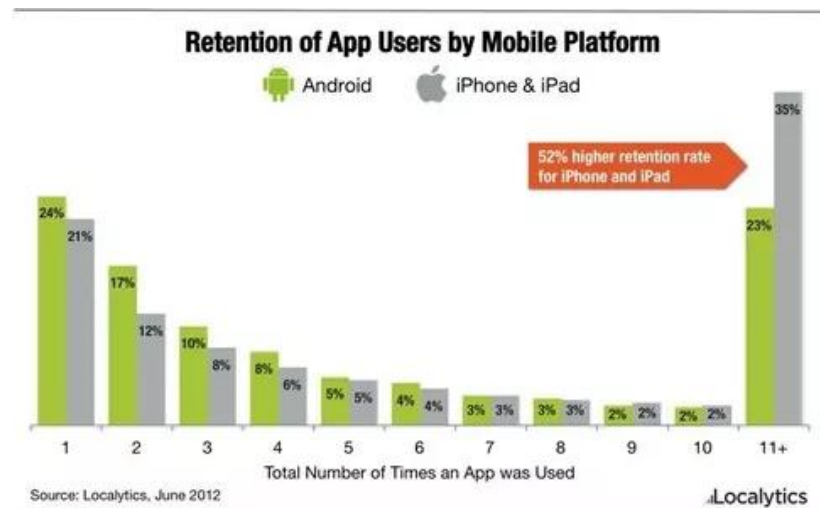
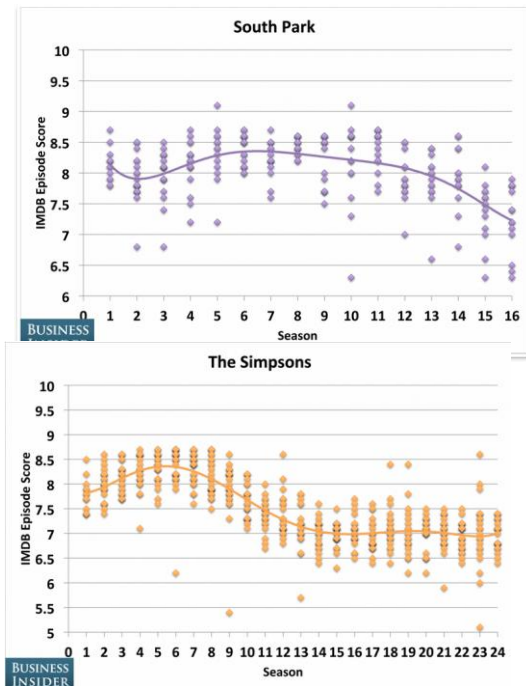


Note: *print only; **excludes off-air radio & digital
Source: eMarketer, March 2011

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www.eMarketer.com

Reality: The audiences aren't durable.



Sources:

<http://idlelive.com/2013/heres-the-season-when-your-favorite-tv-show-peaked/>

And

http://qph.is.quoracdn.net/main-qimg-b754002a48e6e3887788c8eb3d6da10e?convert_to_webp=true



The eyeballs are growing.

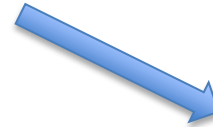
US Total Media Ad Spending, by Media, 2011-2017
billions

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
TV	\$60.7	\$64.5	\$66.4	\$68.5	\$70.0	\$73.1	\$75.3
Digital	\$32.0	\$36.8	\$42.3	\$47.6	\$52.5	\$57.3	\$61.4
—Mobile	\$1.6	\$4.4	\$8.5	\$13.1	\$18.6	\$24.7	\$31.1
Print	\$35.8	\$34.1	\$32.9	\$32.2	\$31.6	\$31.3	\$31.2
—Newspapers*	\$20.7	\$18.9	\$17.8	\$17.1	\$16.6	\$16.2	\$16.1
—Magazines*	\$15.2	\$15.2	\$15.1	\$15.1	\$15.1	\$15.1	\$15.2
Radio**	\$15.2	\$15.4	\$15.6	\$15.9	\$16.0	\$16.0	\$16.1
Outdoor	\$6.4	\$6.7	\$7.0	\$7.2	\$7.4	\$7.6	\$7.8
Directories*	\$8.2	\$7.5	\$6.9	\$6.4	\$5.9	\$5.5	\$5.3
Total	\$158.3	\$165.0	\$171.0	\$177.8	\$183.4	\$190.9	\$197.0

Note: eMarketer benchmarks its US newspaper ad spending projections against the NAA, for which the last full year measured was 2012, and its US outdoor ad spending projections against the OAAA, for which the last full year measured was 2011; numbers may not add up to total due to rounding; *print only; **excludes off-air radio & digital
Source: eMarketer, Aug 2013



TV: \$75.3 billion




Mobile: \$31.1 billion




Think Global Day One.

Clash of Clans is on all the top grossing charts; Puzzle and Dragons is not


UK

TOP GROSSING APPS >	
1.	 Clash of Clans Games
2.	Candy Crush Saga Games
3.	Game of War - Fire Age Games
4.	Match.com - Find your match o... Social Networking
5.	Kim Kardashian: Hollywood Games
6.	Spotify Music Music
7.	Zoosk - #1 Dating App Social Networking
8.	Farm Heroes Saga Games
9.	Hay Day Games
10.	Skype for iPhone Social Networking


Germany

TOP GROSSING APPS >	
1.	 Clash of Clans Games
2.	Empire: Four Kingdoms Games
3.	Candy Crush Saga Games
4.	Game of War - Fire Age Games
5.	LOVOO - The New Free Chat Ap... Social Networking
6.	Hay Day Games
7.	Boom Beach Games
8.	Farm Heroes Saga Games
9.	Heroes of Camelot Games
10.	BILD News App: Aktuelle Nachri... News


Japan

TOP GROSSING >	
1.	 Puzzle & Dragons Games
2.	モンスターストライク Games
3.	ラブライブ！スクールアイドル... Games
4.	LINE：ディズニー ツムツム Games
5.	LINE Social Networking
6.	白猫プロジェクト Games
7.	Clash of Clans Games
8.	戦国武将 - KIZUNA Games
9.	ドラゴンクエストモンスターズ ... Games
10.	パチスロ 押忍！サラリーマン番長 Games

China

TOP GROSSING APPS >	
1.	 刀塔传奇-剑圣的觉醒 Games
2.	雷霆战机 Games
3.	天天爱消除 Games
4.	天天酷跑 Games
5.	Clash of Clans Games
6.	Boom Beach Games
7.	天天富翁 Games
8.	全民飞机大战 Games
9.	主公莫慌 (网易) Games
10.	天天炫斗 Games

Korea

TOP GROSSING APPS >	
1.	 Clash of Clans Games
2.	모두의마블 for Kakao Games
3.	웅패천지 Games
4.	몬스터 길들이기 for Kakao Games
5.	세븐나이츠 for kakao Games
6.	Summoners War: Sky Arena Games
7.	별이되어라! for Kakao Games
8.	쿠키런 for Kakao Games
9.	멜론(MelOn) Music
10.	카드의 신 삼국지 Games



Best Practices – How to get a publisher's attention!

- Global content creation and truly global LiveOps
- Bigger, fewer games
- *Localize at every opportunity*
- Listen to the data with a mind towards the experience
- We need to spend more time in PR and hyping ourselves
- This isn't about one game, but about franchises
- Embrace off-the-shelf tech for all but the most premium of experiences



Thanks.

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