



# The Turning Tide: Independent Game Sales in 2015

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**GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE®**

MOSCONE CENTER · SAN FRANCISCO, CA

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# Welcome to digital game sales in 2015

- Making a great game is only half the battle
- You need to know how, and where, to sell it
- How do you decide which digital platforms will work for you?





# Let's look at digital sales figures for...

- Nintendo eShop
- PC (Steam vs GOG, Humble etc)
- Mobile
- PlayStation Network
- Xbox Marketplace



# Omissions

## Xbox 360/PS3?

- Barely any indie titles on 360/PS3 in 2014
- PS3 now folds into Cross-play

## Free-to-play?

- Difficult to quantify in terms of sales
- Barely any real data out there for indies
- Crossy Road talk tomorrow at 4:30pm!



# Wii U eShop - overview

- Nintendo Wii U – 9.2m units worldwide
- Around 80 indie games released in 2014
- Prices tend to range from \$3 to \$15
- Nintendo may feature on front of store
- Cut-price sales are uncommon



# Wii U eShop – sales figures

Low-end: 300 to 1,000 sales

Poorly rated, no marketing, Wii U only

Mid-end: 1,000 to 10,000 sales

Multiplatform, marketing presence

High-end: 10,000 to 60,000 sales

Massive success on other platforms



# Wii U eShop - notes

- Can provide a great launch if featured...
- But sales peter out quickly
- Needs more discount opportunities
- Sells less than other platforms...
- But devs say it's worth the port



# 3DS eShop - overview

- Nintendo 3DS – 50.41m units worldwide
- Around 15 indie games released in 2014
- Prices tend to range from \$3 to \$15
- Nintendo may feature on front of store
- Cut-price sales are not common





NINTENDO 3DS™

# 3DS eShop – sales figures

Low-end: 1,000 to 5,000 sales

Poorly rated, no marketing

Mid-end: 5,000 to 50,000 sales

Decent exposure, possibly multi-platform

High-end: 50,000 to 200,000 sales

Big exposure from Nintendo, multi-platform



# 3DS eShop - notes

- Even barebones marketing can yield thousands sold
- Provides decent long-term sales tail
- Japanese versions regularly exceed expectations
- Porting work can be costly



# PC - overview

- Steam – over 125 million active accounts
- Over 4,500 games in total
  - Around 1,850 in 2014
  - Estimated 2,500 in 2015
  - That's 7 games released every day
- Cut-price sales can lead to big spikes



# PC – sales figures

Low-end: 1,000 to 10,000 sales

Poorly rated, no marketing, unknown

Mid-end: 10,000 – 100,000 sales

Press/YouTuber exposure, well reviewed

High-end: 100,000 to 3 million sales

Popular genres, big with YouTubers, critically acclaimed



## PC - notes

- Possibility of massive sales, but more noise
- Possibility of being bundled
- Biggest spikes come during Steam sales
- Possibility of Early Access
- GOG/Humble make up 0-10% of sales



# Mobile - overview

- 800m iOS devices, 130m new iOS users in 2014
- 1.43m apps on iOS, 1.21m on Google Play
  - Around 500 games per day on iOS in 2014
  - Around 250 games per day on Android in 2014
- Android is rapidly growing, but iOS still contributes highest % of sales



# Mobile – sales figures

## Low-end: 0 to 2,000 sales

No exposure at all, no dialogue with platform holders

## Mid-end: 2,000 – 30,000 sales

Apple/Google Play feature, decent exposure

## High-end: 30,000 to 2.5 million sales

Big push from Apple, multiple features, tons of exposure



# Mobile - notes

- Huge success stories, but fewer of them
- Vast majority of games are lost in the noise
- Must take lower price points into account
- Requires constant attention – updates, content packs, price drops
- Amazon makes up <10% of Android sales





# Xbox One - overview

- Xbox One – 10m units shipped worldwide
- Around 20 indie games released in 2014
- Prices tend to range from \$7 to \$25
- Self-publish through ID@Xbox program
- Parity clause is still putting some devs off



# Xbox One – sales figures

Low-end: 1,000 to 5,000 sales

Poorly rated, no marketing

Mid-end: 5,000 to 20,000 sales

Prominent featuring on dashboard, decent exposure

High-end: 20,000 to ? sales

Highly rated, tons of exposure, big Microsoft push



# Xbox One - notes

- It's still very early days for Xbox One...
- So there isn't much data out there yet
- Potential for big successes in 2015 onwards...
- Perhaps for exclusive Xbox One games?



# PlayStation - overview

- PS4 – 19m units worldwide
- Around 60 indie games released in 2014
- Prices tend to range from \$7 to \$20
- Self-publish through PlayStation
- Potential for Cross-Buy, PS Plus



# PlayStation – sales figures

Low-end: 1,000 to 10,000 sales

Poorly rated, no marketing

Mid-end: 10,000 to 30,000 sales

PS Blog, decent exposure

High-end: 30,000 to 200,000 sales

Big PS push, big exposure, multiple price drops



# PlayStation - notes

- Massive PS4 Xmas sales = bigger 2015
- Possibility of PS Plus launch deal
- PS Plus can give big exposure boost later
- Plenty of price drops to get involved with



# Takeaways

- May well be worth porting to Wii U
- The 3DS is worth considering
- Mobile is risky, but yields big successes
- This year will determine the success of indies on Xbox One and PlayStation...
- But PlayStation looks on top right now



# How can you raise your chances?

- “How to talk to the video game press” on Gamasutra
- “How to get your game covered by YouTubers” on Gamasutra
- “How YouTubers and Twitch Streamers Can Help Sell Your Games” – Wednesday, Room 2020, West Hall





Thanks for listening!  
Any questions?

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