



# **“Changing Navigation Mid-flight” War Dragons a UX redesign on Mobile**

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## Overview

- Today we will cover how the team at Pocket Gems tackled updating the user experience on the live free to play mobile title “War Dragons”
- Topics discussed include:
  - Creating a vision to gain key stakeholder buy-in upfront
  - Establishing a clear design rationale via field studies and competitive research
  - Interacting with and listening to the player community
  - Utilizing a staggered phase rollout plan to release the product to players
  - Testing methods used and remaining data informed to assist in key decisions



Hello and good afternoon everyone, thank you for taking the time to attend this session.

I hope everyone had a great lunch and that you are enjoying this years GDC and of course San Francisco.

So I am here today to discuss how we devised and released the ux redesign for the live mobile game War Dragons last year.

During the session we will cover the importance of :

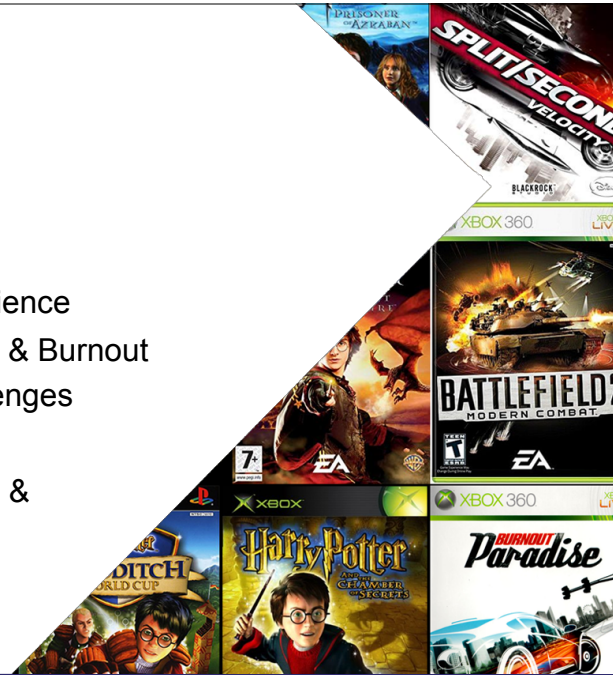
- Creating a vision
- Establishing a clear design rationale
- Community involvement
- Utilizing a phased rollout plan for changes to a live product
- Testing methods used and how we remained data informed to assist in key decisions

Hopefully this all sounds great, but before I launch into all of that, here is a quick bio so you know who I am too!



## About me

- Joined the industry in 2002
- 10+ years of AAA console development experience
- Worked on Harry Potter, Battlefield, Star Wars & Burnout
- Switched over to mobile looking for new challenges
- Director of UX at Pocket Gems
- Current games include War Dragons, Episode & Wild Beyond



I'm James, and I work at the **Pocket Gems studio** here in downtown SF as the **Director of UX**.

I joined the industry back in 2002, and I have been fortunate enough to work with some outstanding teams on awesome IP over the years.

I have worked at companies that include EA, Disney, LucasArts, Rumble Entertainment and of course Pocket Gems.

I switched focus to the mobile platform in 2013.

The **Pocket Gems** current stable of games include **War Dragons**, the **award winning Episode** and the recently launched **Wild Beyond** - needless to say without the great team over there, this talk wouldn't be possible.

So now you have a little more context about myself ... lets get on with the talk !

# War Dragons

- Launched in April 2015
- 3D real time PvP
- 27m+ installs and counting
- Active and passionate players
- Profitability still growing
- Not uncommon for players to spend 2hr+ a day on average in game



War Dragons was launched in 2015. It's a 3d real time pvp title and has had 27m and counting installs to date.

We are very fortunate to have a truly passionate player base in our game that interact with each other on a daily basis.

Just to illustrate how passionate the players are, here are some quick facts about them:

Typically players run over **20 battles per day on average** (3 minute battles)

**20%** of players in the top leagues have **never missed a war battle** for their entire time in the game

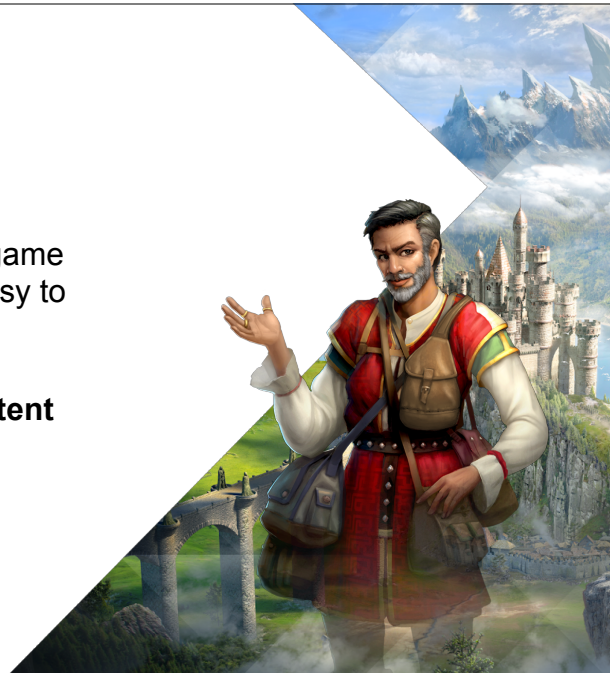
That's really quite incredible when you stop to think about it.

We have had **players that even married** one another who met through the games social features.

So it was evident that we **had a game people played and clearly loved**, then why did we want to redesign the ux ?

## Why redesign the UX?

- We discovered users held the belief that the game was **difficult to navigate** – and that it was easy to become disorientated.
- Many features were added over the years by multiple teams, these resulted in an **inconsistent navigation** method.
- We wanted to **reduce** and remove any extra **cognitive load** on our players.



We held stakeholder interviews and a common opinion we heard was that the game was inconsistent to navigate and in places complicated to understand.

As I've explained the game had been created in 2015 which in mobile terms might as well have been from a **previous console generation** – and there was a real desire to **improve, simplify and standardize** how our players could access the game content.

**As we observed players interact** with the product in person it was like watching a **game of digital table tennis** as their hands zipped across the phone accessing numerous buttons placed in **varying** positions to navigate the screens. **It was tiring enough just to watch this happen, let alone do it.**

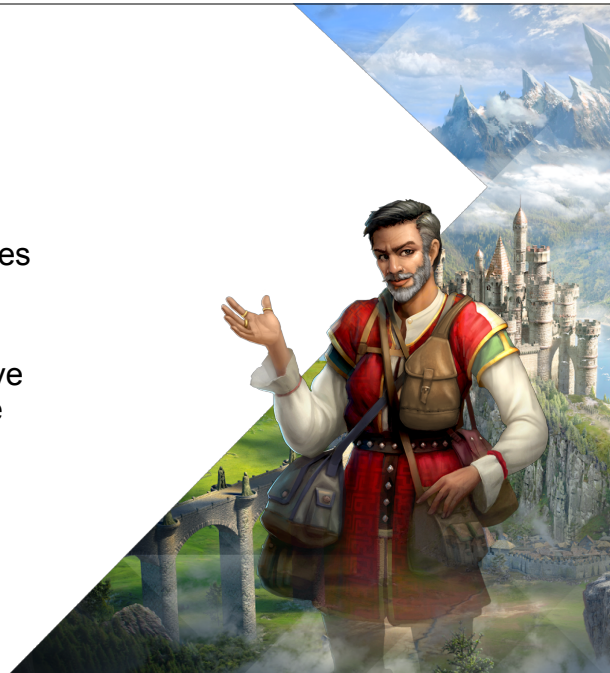
With the **addition of new features**, the original screens and flows had become, well, **muddled**.

If you have ever worked upon a live mobile product that has run for a few years then **this scenario is likely going to sound familiar to you**. Products **evolve** and systems that made sense at launch can lose their **cohesion and effectiveness** over time as content gets added.

Our testing confirmed that **it was** easy for **new players become disorientated**, and we wanted to help ease that burden.

## Why redesign the UX?

- Research identified successful competitive titles followed **consistent mobile design patterns** for screen layouts and interaction.
- We wanted to utilize more screen space to give **greater legibility** to certain content on mobile while **improving accessibility**.
- We believed these changes could **improve early player retention**.



Via competitive research we had identified common patterns in the most successful titles.

We realized they shared **consistent mobile design patterns especially in regards to their navigation**, and our product didn't do this in its current form.

The older screens we had in the game were often inefficiently using screen space, which in places resulted in barely legible content.

There was an over reliance on fixed width stacking pop ups and overlays that didn't utilize the full screen space available.

Applying the principles established by **Jakob Nielsen in Jakob's Law** we aimed to **simplify the learning process for our users by providing familiar design patterns in our suggested redesign**.

We believed that we could adopt and implement these proven mobile design patterns into our game and significantly improve the ux as a whole.

## Establishing the Vision.

- We identified the **key goals** we hoped to achieve with the redesign, these being:
  - More engaged players
  - Improved accessibility to core content
  - Structured and predictable navigation within the game
  - Performance improvements
  - An upswing in early player retention
  - A familiar yet enhanced experience for existing players



So we had identified **why** we believed a redesign was worthwhile and this allowed us to **craft a vision** that enabled the entire team to understand what we were hoping to achieve.

We wanted to have:

More **engaged players**, Improved **accessibility to core content**, **structured and predictable navigation** within the game, **performance improvements**, an **upswing in early player retention**, and a familiar **yet improved** experience for existing players.

This was a fairly compelling argument and there was **consensus buy in** across the team.

We felt that if we delivered upon all of these components, the product would be better and players would experience that too and would therefore accept them.

## What concerns did we have?

- Quite a few! Doing this included risk.
- We desperately did not wish to **alienate our existing player base** and lose them through changing what they had become familiar with over years of engagement.
- We were acutely aware of product horror tales where redesigns had taken place only to see a **disenchanted player base** exit en mass.



But first let's be clear – there was a **definite risk** involved with this.

Because the product was live and had been in operation for some years with a passionate player base we were very cautious not to do something that would result in elder player angst and eventual churn.

We wanted to make sure that the changes we planned made sense and were of value to the players, and that is why we targeted simple **Quality of Life improvements** alongside the **underlying navigation restructuring work**.

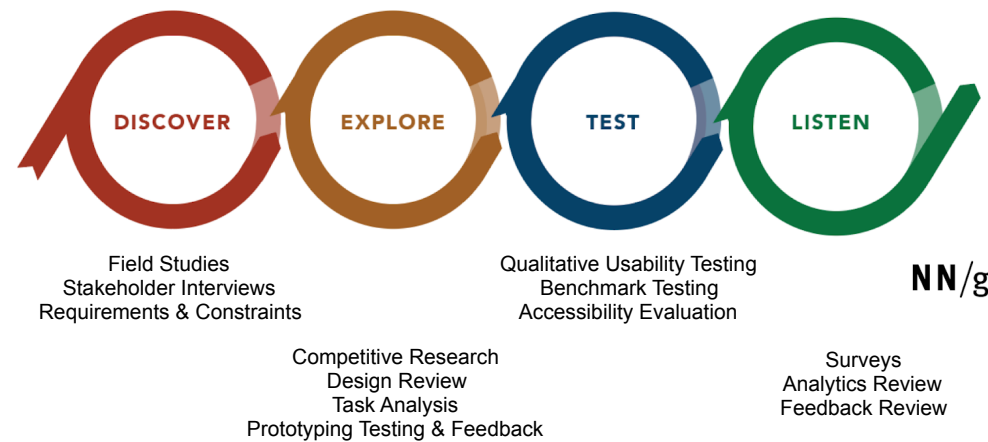
We equally wanted to make sure that we were **not changing the best parts of the game**, so as to lose our players.

Understanding our players was imperative, as we were about to change their game, communication would be key both internally and externally in order for this to succeed.

But first we needed a plan.



## So how might we do this?



As this was a **financially successful live mobile title** there was a lot at stake should we not succeed.

This nature of the changes we had planned made the **logistics of delivering the redesign** into our players hands a **real challenge**.

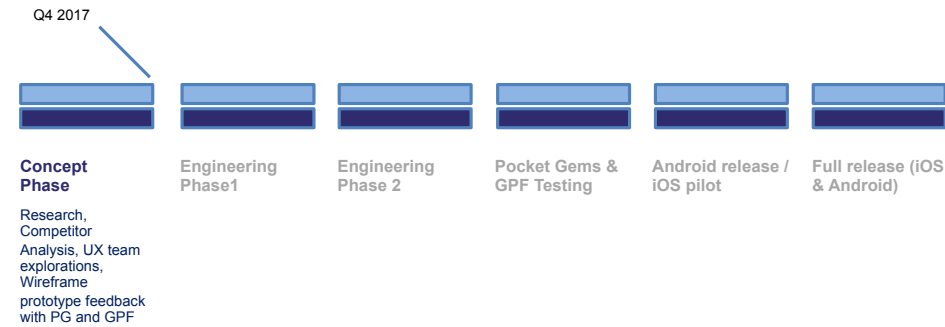
The team had **to balance** continuing to **support our existing players** in the live product whilst concurrently designing and building the redesigned screens in the background.

To best avoid player meltdown and a broken game we decided upon a plan utilizing the approaches of **Discover, Explore, Test and Listen** to help.

We identified key practices in each of these stages then **devised a phased rollout plan** that would enable us to receive player feedback at regular intervals.

If at any time it looked like we were in trouble, we had a collective understanding that we would try to address the issues first, and if all else failed, **we'd pull the plug on the redesign and focus elsewhere**.

## Timeline – Concept Phase



This slide introduces the phased rollout plan that we developed.

The phases included:

- Concept,
- Engineering 1 & 2
- Internal Pocket Gems & External testing
- Android release (iOS Pilot)
- Worldwide release to both iOS and Android.

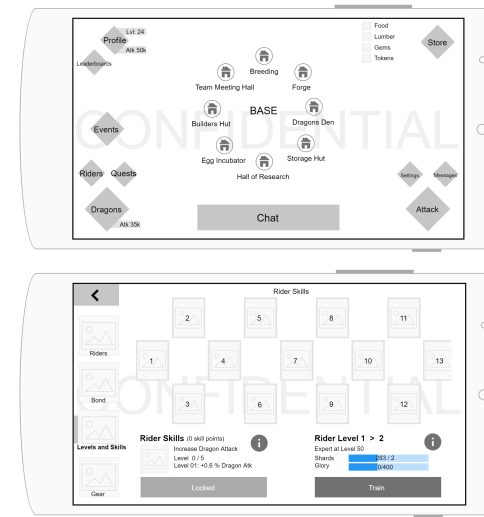
The **key idea of the rollout** was to allow us to get feedback on the planned changes at **multiple different stages of the development** and review it to catch any show stopping issues.

Each phase of the timeline saw an intentional increase in the amount of users / players that we would receive feedback from.



# Concept Phase

- Identifying core components
- Information architecture overhaul
- Establishing design patterns
- Wireframes / Prototype
- Guerilla testing in-house
- Unique password protected testing with our elder player community - GPF



It was in the concept phase that we began exploring and establishing the design patterns for the redesign.

We'd identified the existing product relied upon an overuse of pop ups and overlays as menus.

Our intention was to replace all of these with **full screen mobile design layouts** and implement a standard back button in the upper left of the screen. The goals here being to:

1) Address the issue of **player disorientation** we had seen in testing.

2) Then **to enable faster access** to content we restructured and **collapsed the Information Architecture** where it made the most sense.

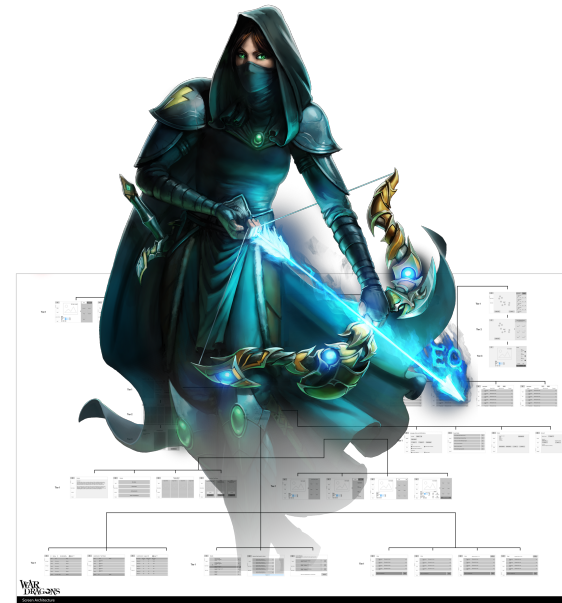
3) To improve the ergonomic design of the navigation and make it **more thumb friendly** we replaced the old filing cabinet tabs that had been positioned in the top and center of the screen. And we implemented a **new sub navigation menu**, situated underneath the back button positioned at the side of the screen.

Considering the game was played and held in landscape on phone these changes aligned well with the underlying principles described in **Fitt's Law**. i.e. We were making the navigation elements easily selectable and positioning them close to our users reach.

When we had a prototype that we felt was ready to share, we sent this out as a **password protected prototype** to the **GPF**.

## GPF - Player Feedback

- “I liked it! Haven’t had a chance to use something like that before and it was easy to envision how things were probably meant to look”
- “**I see no problems** with any of the functionality here... again, I like that there are **buttons on the side** instead of the “file cabinet” tabs”
- “This is a **MUCH better layout** for the skill tree... kudos on this”



**And what is the GPF I guess you are wondering?** Well this stands for the Gameplay faction – these are a group of our most highly engaged players. They are **forum moderators** and **social media influencers** that have the ear of many a War Dragons player. Hearing their opinions was **critically important** to us as we progressed with this redesign.

We gave them about **a month** to play around with the prototype and provide feedback.

This seemed a fair amount of time given that they were players and were not contractually obliged to do so.

Here are some quotes from the initial early feedback we received.

Players stated that they **liked the prototype**, and overall it was **considered an improved** experience.

The key elements seemed to **resonate well** and the **redesigned navigation appeared accepted**.

The prototype was **serving its purpose** and was allowing us to **sound out and gauge any resistance** to the new designs. Plus we had provided our **elder most engaged players** with **full disclosure** and early **visibility** on what the team had planned for the game.

## More Feedback

- “I think the prototype could be a good addition. A lot of the minor **QOL changes make sense** and I would like to see them”
- “I was quite happy with the prototype, the interface seemed a little **more logical**, which is always a step in the right direction, **without seeming completely new and alien**”
- “This is **much cleaner**. Easier to look at and find what you need”



The players could see that the changes hadn't created **a new alien system**.

**The Quality of Life** changes that we had implemented in the prototype were **recognized and applauded**.

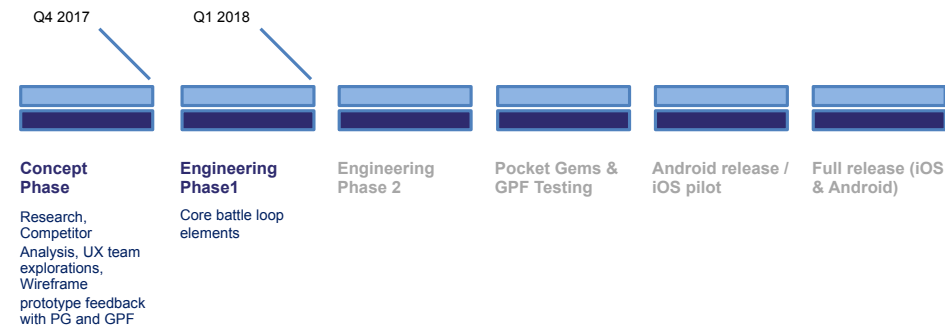
Now, one thing to note, was that we sent the prototype **out individually** to the elder players. The players had all signed NDA's so they **couldn't discuss with anyone** except ourselves.

**So conversations at this stage were siloed**, and we found this enabled us to elicit a good amount of feedback from them this way, and ensured we **kept conversations focused**.

That's definitely worth remembering for later on.

At the end of this time we collated their comments and reviewed, and it seemed we were hitting the right chords with our most dedicated players.

## Timeline – Engineering Phase 1



As we just discovered there were **no HARD no's** at this point and we deemed it safe to move from the Concept phase to the first Engineering phase and actually begin implementation.

The prototype **“felt” good to both ourselves and the GPF** players.

It's always easier to get a better read when designs are playable on the intended target device and in users hands right?

We were iterating upon the screens as we received feedback - but at this point that had only included some suggestions and minor tweaks here and there.

Certainly there had been no major objections that should derail us from forging ahead.

# Engineering Phase 1

- Core Battle Loop screens
  - Roster
  - Matchmaking
  - Swap
  - Equip
  - Train



Now we began to concentrate upon implementing our **core gameplay loop** screens.

These were the screens most touched by players and included the management and training of their Dragons, and how to initiate attacks upon other players. Tackling these **screens first** made the most sense.

We also didn't have a bunch of engineering resources available to us at this point, so we used the first engineering phase **as a yardstick to gauge** how long further screens using the redesign would take to implement.

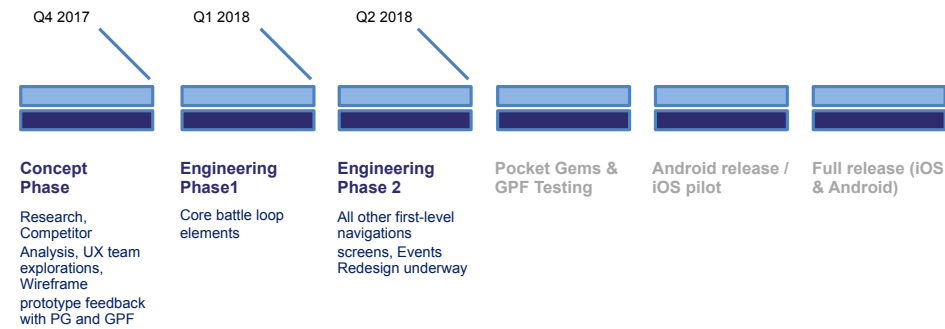
We definitely didn't want to overburden the engineering resources that we had available with a million and one changes right from the get go.

And consulting with the engineering team as to what was achievable in Q1 **helped define and focus the early redesign work**.

The backbone of the redesign components was really established within these core screens, the thinking being that once we had refactored the menus for these screens it would enable faster implementation as assets and modules could be shared across others.

Here was our **consistent navigation scheme, sub navigation, and full screen content mode beginning to take shape**.

## Timeline – Engineering Phase 2



AS we moved into Q2 for 2018 the core screens were completed.

The engineering effort shifted to the other **first level navigation screens and the Events screens**.

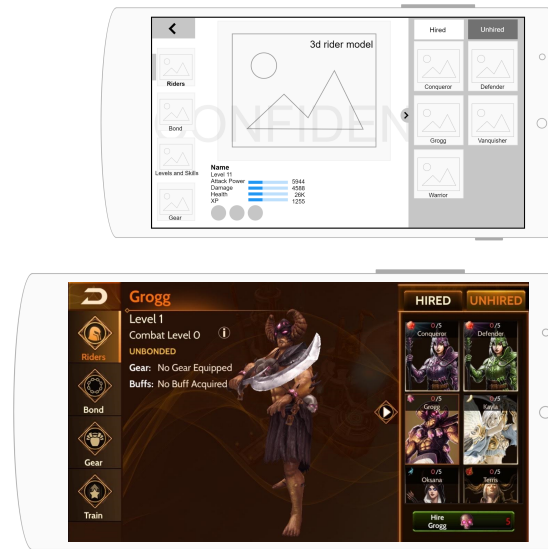
Understandably, we wanted to make sure that we were using our time effectively.

And our engineers identified ways to bring **marked improvements to the performance** of the games user interface screens in relation to their **code structure**.

We were testing internally and all roads pointed to a good place.

## Engineering Phase 2

- Riders - flattened IA
- Surfaced access points
- HUD revisions
- Social features
- Events screens - design and visual reboot



As we tackled other key menu screens, the team was really gathering momentum.

Our **Dragon Riders screens were now** far more accessible as we had surfaced their access points to the top level of our HUD by reworking the IA.

In addition we positioned the **Rider models front and center** in a much **more prominent** manner, so players could now clearly **enjoy their aesthetic designs**.

In house guerrilla testing of the latest builds confirmed these that changes to the **Dragon Riders** was well received.

We also began to update **the chat screens**, making sure that they adhered to the new navigation design principles.

## Events

- This feature was a key revenue driver
- Events ran for 3 months
- Mistakes here were costly
- Discoverability and Accessibility issues were fairly widespread



Now, as the engineering phase two continued we were **allocated a few additional resources**.

So we took to addressing one of the key collections of screens accessed in game, that being the **events system**.

This aspect of the game featured time based events that **players really got into** with the aim being to win new Dragons and other awesome prizes.

Our **events are a key revenue driver** for War Dragons, & each event runs for a time period of three months.

When we ran **design reviews and heuristic evaluation** for the old design we observed that it was designed using non mobile friendly patterns, as can be seen in this slide.

We identified that it was plagued by **discoverability, sequential content and accessibility issues**

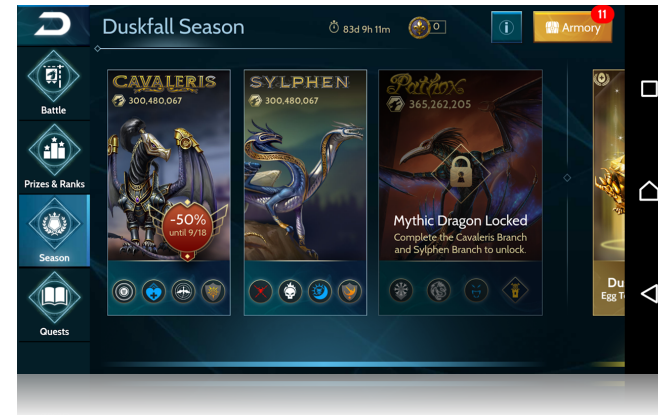
It was extremely **easy to lose track** of which branch of rewards a player was in whilst navigating through the content due to **poor formatting**.

A redesign was long overdue.



## Events

- Switched to a Carousel
- Prioritized item content
- 2 swipes only to view everything
- Limited number of elements
- Discoverability addressed via the illusion of continuity
- Half images, color cues & information scent



So first we applied the **core navigation structure** that we had deployed elsewhere to these screens.

We took a step back and **reviewed our earlier competitor analysis again and leveraged this learning** to reach our design solution.

Removed were the undersized and awkward to navigate windows previously used to display multiple collectible content in branches, and we instead messaged this via a carousel.

We **took care to limit the number of elements** for use in the carousel, so as not to create unnecessary scrolling and to **avoid causing player interaction fatigue**.

And we addressed discoverability issues via the **illusion of continuity, half images, color cues and information scent**.

We used large phone friendly panels with clear imagery depicting which prizes were available, all aimed to drive player engagement here.

And to inject **personality and visual interest** into the top panels of each branch **we used branded imagery**.

## Events

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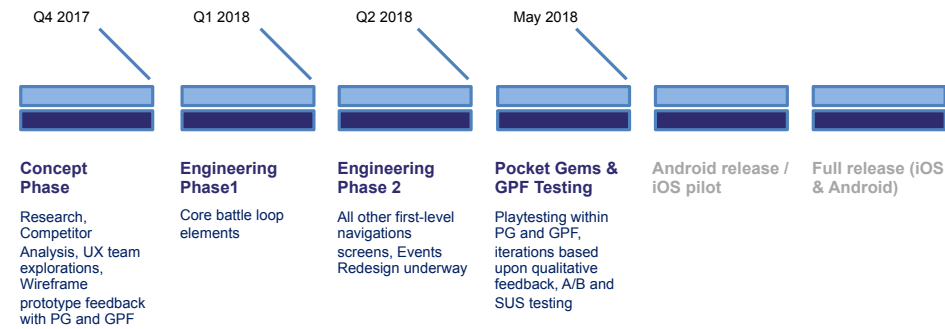
Content that was once **spread across 18 screens** could instead now be **viewed and accessed in just 2**.

And we created the icons for the branches at an **increased size for easier interaction** than before.

To reduce further clutter, we displayed **details and information for the individual prizes** placed in a small pop up which was dismissible via a close button.

This set of screens **elicited some of the most positive responses** from onsite testing to date.

## Timeline – Internal & External Testing



Alright then, now it was time to **get the build into players hands** again.  
We were so eager to hear their thoughts having received such encouragement previously.  
So we excitedly **began the 4<sup>th</sup> phase**, that featured some heavy amounts of testing.

## Onsite User tests

- Onsite A/B testing of the old versus new navigation resulted unanimously in the new version being chosen and preferred
- System Usability Scores looked solid
- Players were consistently scoring high
- Facebook live streams introducing previews of the new screens were received extremely well by the community

A/B testing  
results

100%

SUS Average  
score

74/100

We ran **onsite A/B testing** during which we gave the testers the old and new versions of the game to interact with. These testers were mobile gamers but they hadn't yet played War dragons.

The results **unanimously** pointed towards the new design **being preferred** by the testers.

We were hearing comments like "this just feels more modern and better suited for a phone" and "this is just easier to understand" That was awesome.

We had also been running **system usability tests** during the onsite testing which resulted in solid scores it was clear what we had done **wasn't breaking the game**.

Also as a further means of informing and **preparing the community** of the incoming changes we presented the screens via a **live demo** on our Facebook stream, and this was also received very positively.

What could stop us now? I mean clearly we were in the home stretch .... Right ?

## Winds of change

- Although they had liked it initially in the wireframe phase, now the elder players in the GPF didn't approve.
- The very same people that liked it before now voiced disapproval and rejection
- This situation wasn't ideal
- Confidence was rocked
- How could we navigate this scenario?



### **Actually no.**

Although they had liked it initially in the wireframe and prototype phase, when we gave them access to a restricted build **now the GPF didn't approve.**

This was by far the **most difficult phase** to get through

We **clearly reminded** the players that they had all **participated in the feedback loop** months earlier.

We explained that our goal was to improve the game for **everyone**, including new and old players alike.

And we wanted them to help us **understand** exactly what they now disliked.

But first we just wanted them all to **calm down.**

The key thing here was that we wanted the community to see and understand that we were really listening and valuing their input.

But just to illustrate the level of disdain that we witnessed in the comments we received .... Well here it is on the next slide.

## Community reaction

- “Honestly, It looks incredibly messy, chunky, and like all the buttons are made massive and the screen space is used unnecessarily”
- “I HATE that my screen is not centered. Hate hate hate hate hate”
- “The off-center chat would literally kill me. I cannot even describe how uncomfortable this off center screen makes me feel”
- “... it’s a pain for the eyes to zigzag through without pretty much retraining yourself to start scanning vertically instead of horizontally”
- “I’ll start prepping my team for a shift in leadership now”



This was really worrying to us as these players were hugely invested in the game, and most had been playing it since it first came out in 2015

They were **rejecting the designs in high fidelity**, now that they had it in their hands.

They were rejecting the **buttons, layout changes, full screen content** and in places the change from **horizontal to vertical** roster selection.

As you can see from the quotes, some elder players were **threatening to quit** if we released it.

**This was what we had wanted to avoid at all costs** – our elder players walking away due to the planned changes. It was tough reading, and it had the potential to become a dark time.



Not quite **this** dark ...  
But you get the picture right ?

## So now what?

- We listened hard to the elder players – hearing is believing
- We wanted to understand why they had changed their opinions
- We noticed a subtle difference in how we had shared the updated build with them – we'd shared it to them as a group this time
- This group dynamic definitely played an effect in the emotion of the feedback we received



**But the rejection was worrying.** Were we really going to have to drop the redesign after so much work and effort? **Well, not so fast, we clearly had to evaluate the feedback we were receiving.**

If you remember I explained earlier that during the initial prototype testing this had been carried out in **siloed discussions** with individual players.

Now the elder players were testing the **new build as a group**, and as such this enabled closed forum discussions to take place between themselves. This yielded **very different results** (VERY different from the individual conversations we had had at the early prototype stage). Having the product in their hands with these new designs was suddenly perhaps too real for some.

We wondered if we were having to deal with a pack mentality - **and the trick was trying to decipher what might be subjective** as opposed to objective feedback that we could use to improve the product. I mean there's absolutely no point in testing if you don't listen and act upon the feedback right.

Well there was a LOT of back and forth and we intentionally gave them **time to adapt to the design**.

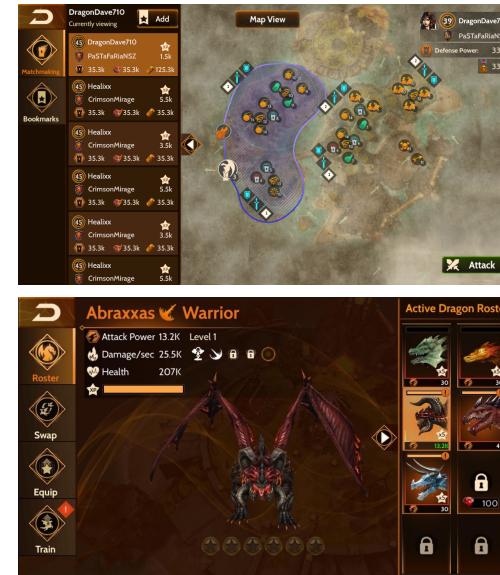
One of our awesome product managers (thanks Justin) was involved in direct communication via the closed forum group and he spent time repeatedly explaining why we made the choices we did, and backed it up with examples and research.

Whilst **some players began to soften their dislike** through time using the build, others continually threatened to rage quit the game if we persisted with the launch of the redesign.



## Changes included

- Condensed size of matchmaking rail and moved it to the left-hand side of the screen
- Reverted to a horizontal menu in the attack loop, moving the Dragons to the bottom of the screen
- Roster/rider screens keep active context on top and stats on left



But of course we REALLY WERE listening – it wasn't just lip service.

The switch from a **horizontal to a vertical selection roster** for the time sensitive pre-attack screen was a consistent source for complaints from our elder players and it seemed to be the **one main change** that they **absolutely refused to entertain**.

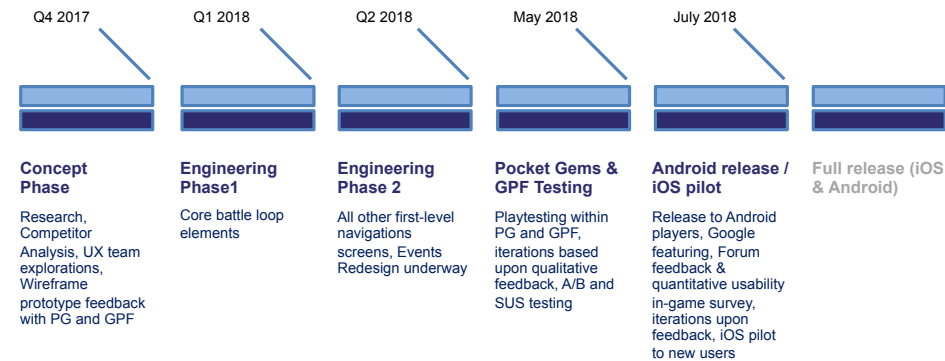
Our elder players had explained that as a **horizontal selection** it was easier to **scan and parse** the roster information **quickly**, which is what they had to do on this screen, and that now they were **incorrectly selecting dragons** in the new vertical scheme - We listened, **evaluated their feedback** and in recognition of the elder player feedback we reverted this.

This was a **crucial moment** as the players could now see that we were **not ignoring them**.

We also switched the matchmaking base selection over from the right to the left after hearing lots of opposition to the initial design, this particular complaint seemed more about change resistance, as it had been previously located on the left – however once again we accommodated these requests in a further iteration.

As we evaluated the other requests they were making we had to **balance these against development time** and ask ourselves if we truly believed that these were **game breaking issues for the other players** at large or perhaps a **set of personal dislikes**.

## Timeline – Android release



So once again our phased release plan came into play.

Although there were **some emotionally fueled points** being **argued** from the elder players, we had to consider that the previous **internal testing** had gone well, the **onsite A/B testing** and **SUS scores** all pointed to a **more usable and improved product**. We had done our homework and based everything on best practices and established design patterns.

Our research had led us to these solutions.

So was this just a storm in a teacup, and should we abandon the whole redesign now?

Well, we still **unanimously believed as a team** in the steps we had taken to measure our changes and we decided to release to Android and **get more data points**.

# Android Release Iteration

- Asynchronous loading on dragon & rider screens for performance
- Chat fixes for attack, context menu positioning, RSS sharing messages
- Left-side matchmaking content tweaks on attack screen
- Crucially, we included **in-game surveys** to enable quantitative usability testing



Let's remind ourselves that this was positioned as our Android test and iOS Pilot prior to releasing to worldwide, so this was an **important gate** that we had to pass through on the way to our **worldwide launch**.

Once it was released to the Android community we observed the **anticipated change resistance** that we had expected – but the key thing to note here was the actual level of resistance was far less than we had been preparing for. The much **feared wash of total rejection didn't appear**.

Anything but that actually – sure there **were folks that didn't like it** – but it didn't mirror the level of rejection we had just been going through from the elder players in the GPF. And before we knew it, a few days passed, **the forums** had reacted – and then **moved onto another topic** to debate.

## Surveys - Feedback

- We were still anxious due to the elder player feedback we had received
- We hoped to avoid a wash of rejection again and hoped that the changes we had made were received well in the Android community
- So a lot was riding on the results of the in game surveys ... a lot ...
- When we first read the in game survey data it was interesting



There was still an **air of anxiety** amongst the team due to the level of emotion in the **elder player feedback** we had received. Although the android release feedback **contained some negativity** toward the changes we were still seeing our players **continuing to engage** with the game using the new designs.

Why wasn't **EVERYONE rage quitting** as had been forewarned?

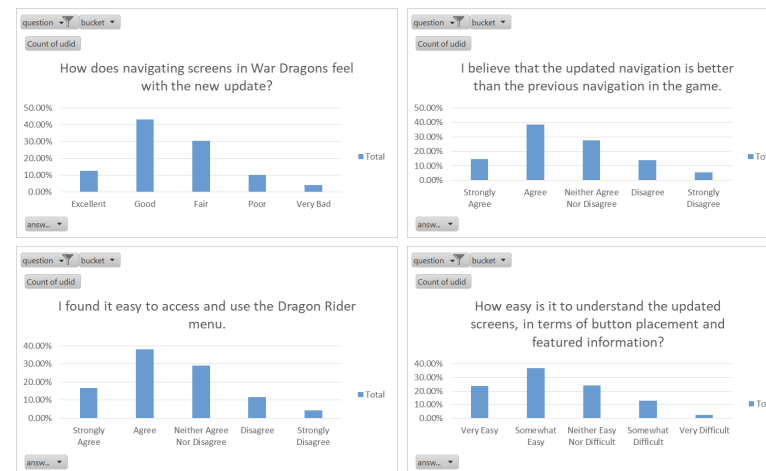
And then it started getting super interesting.

We switched on the **in game surveys**.

Then we started to receive the results of these surveys and began to eagerly review them to find out what a **mass volume of players** thought of the work we had done.

# Surveys

- Hugely increased sample size
- Yielded extremely positive results
- Removed any concerns to proceed with the worldwide release
- This was really compelling data



Talk about a **feel good factor** .....

They weren't quitting they we telling us **they actually appreciated the changes** we had made.

**Respondents were in the thousands** – they were overwhelmingly telling us that they **liked the feel** of the new design.

They told us they believed it was **better than the previous one**.

And they were here confirming that access to otherwise buried content had now been surfaced and **made easy to get to**.

Suddenly the positive news was flowing again, here was **hard quantitative data**, from our Android community, the survey results filled the team with confidence as we **assessed the proportion of users** that were **encountering problems with the new design**.

If I could stay on this slide all day I would ....

## Cleared for take off

- And breathe ....
- Our amazing PX team worked tirelessly capturing more community feedback
- We continued with further optimizations



The anxiety we had experienced previously was **becoming just a memory**.

We still had work ahead of us, but we really had **hard data from our community** to back us up.

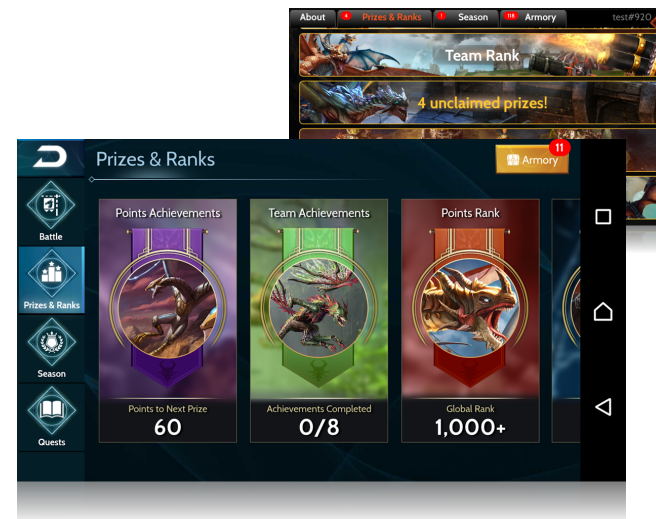
This was such a turning point for the team – and we were **grateful that we had held firm** in our belief that we **needed more data** from a wider number of players.

We **relayed the findings** back to our elder players – and it was really pleasing to see that they on the whole accepted this.

We gave them full disclosure into the questions we had asked and the level range of players that we had asked these to.

# Optimizations

- Implemented a new framework
- Loading times improved by 40-60% depending upon caching
- 3.5s load time down to 1.5 – 2 s
- Lazy loading implemented – prioritized items loaded first
- iOS and worldwide player base, here we come



As we approached the full worldwide release we tackled some last remaining issues.

We were really aware that the **loading times** for certain sections were too long

So we targeted this as an area to improve.

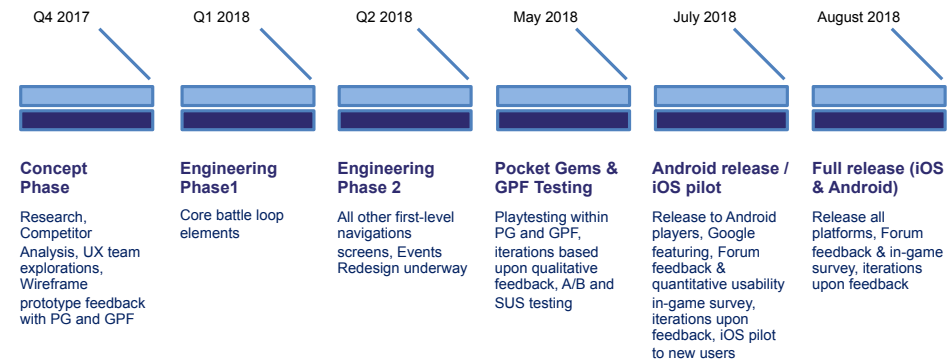
Additionally we refreshed the **Prizes and Ranks** screens with a new visual direction and continued the roll out of the sidebar navigation.

The community reaction to these changes were unanimously positive.

Even the **key elder players got on board** with this.



## Timeline – Full release

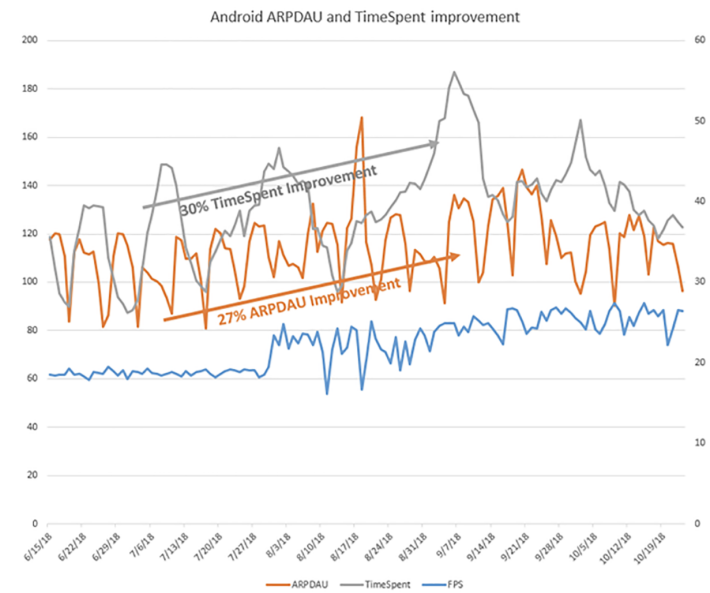


So we moved into full release phase and **let it run in the wild.**



## Metrics

- We saw a significant improvement to time spent in the game by our players.
- An increase of 30%.
- And our ARPDau increased by 27%.
- We also increased early player retention by 10%
- Frame rate improved significantly



We are of course a **free to play game** – and that means that we aim to do things that can help improve our metrics from a business perspective.

Well, the improvements we saw in our metrics were fantastic.

30% increase in player time spent in the game

27% ARPDau increase

10% early player retention increase.

Frame rate improved significantly, **kudos to our engineers** they had done a great job refactoring the screens and it really paid off here.

**Reasons to celebrate.**

## Closure?

- The team continue to bring improvements to the existing features
- As the game evolves over time, so do the players and their needs
- Supporting a live product is like running a marathon not a sprint

So were we finished?

Well, today there is a dedicated and active worldwide community, **including those same elder players**, that are still playing **War Dragons**.

The team **continue to bring improvements** to the existing features on a regular basis, and we **listen and refine** as we can.

It's certainly true that as a game **evolves over time** so do the **players and their needs**.

And we have the belief that in regards to supporting live products, **it's a marathon and not a sprint**.

# Learnings

- Establish a product vision to enable key stakeholder buy in



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- Identify fundamental design patterns to be implemented early – for team unity



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**Researching** and **Identifying the design patterns** to use made achieving **team alignment a lot easier** and helped **focus** our workload.

## Learnings

- Establish a product vision to enable key stakeholder buy in
- Identify fundamental design patterns to be implemented early – for team unity
- A staged rollout enables a team to constantly receive validation - from prototypes to full worldwide release



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A staged rollout enabled the team to **constantly receive validation** - be that from the prototype stage to full worldwide release - it was a plan that allowed us to execute with no issues.

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# Questions?

- Thank you for attending the session.



Thank you for your time everyone.