GDC

Narrative Breadcrumbs:

Guiding the player journey through story-driven events

Abigail Rindo
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Candy Crush SAGA

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Live Games are a Journey

Lore & Story Bible

Character backstories and conflict

Beloved IP that is immensely popular

9 years of legacy

Baking + Journey = Breadcrumbs

What is the trail our players have been following?

We live in a whimsical Candy world!

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…with baby animals!

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And… um, robots, I think. That looks like a robot head.

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And…
Wait, is that a whale… in space?

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And… I guess there are pirates also, because why not?

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Okay, just a minute. Is that space whale?

But dressed up as cupid?

With a Dolly Parton wig?

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Where am I?

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Story became arbitrary, characters became decorations

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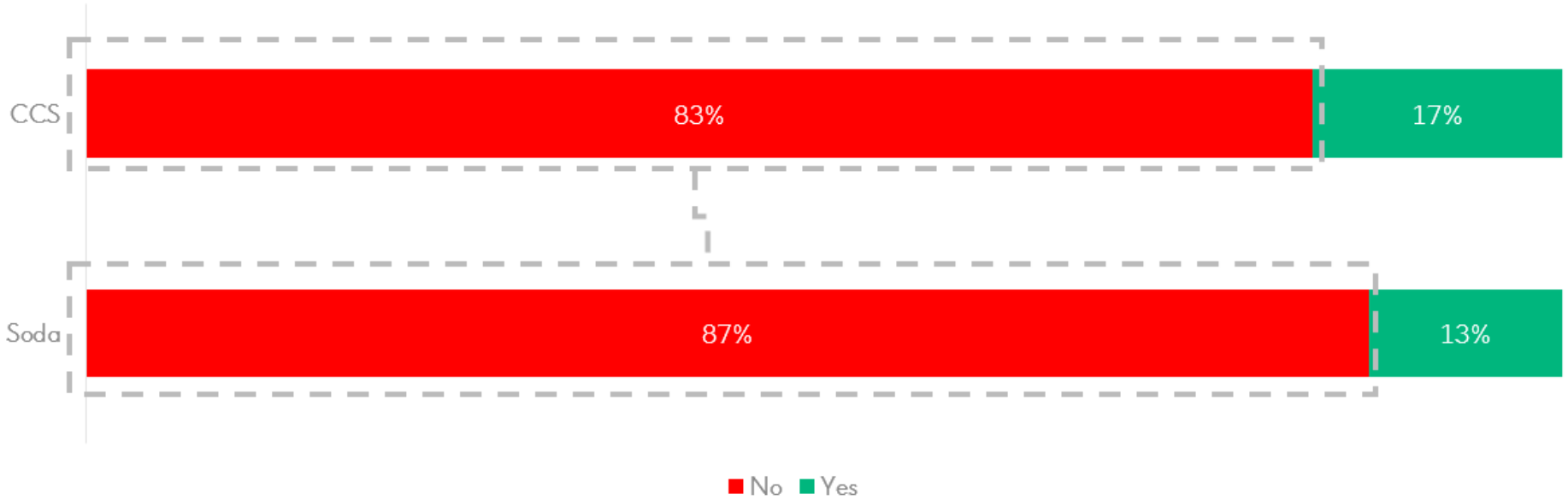
Very few players have awareness of any detail around the characters

"Aside from their name do you know anything else about these characters? That could be what their history in the game is, what they are trying to achieve or whether they are connected, anything at all!"



In 2018 players were tested on awareness around characters. We saw the results as a challenge and opportunity.

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Some stats and facts

- **King had 258 million monthly active users for the quarter (Q1 2021)**
- **Candy Crush** was once again the top-grossing franchise in the U.S. mobile app stores (Source: App Annie monthly ranking for first quarter 2021)

Millions of players around the world

Candy Crush Franchise bookings grew Y/Y and Q/Q

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Find the recipe

Simple but hard to master

Core ingredients

Masterful technique

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Recipe

Narrative Breadcrumbs

SERVINGS | PREP TIME | COOK TIME

INGREDIENTS

DIRECTIONS

Context
Characters
Conflict

Blend narrative core ingredients with gameplay mechanics to create seamless integration and meaningful play

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The right blend of ingredients and technique will raise the dough!

So far in 2021 we've seen an increase in both player engagement and spend

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Context

Characters

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Characters

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Characters

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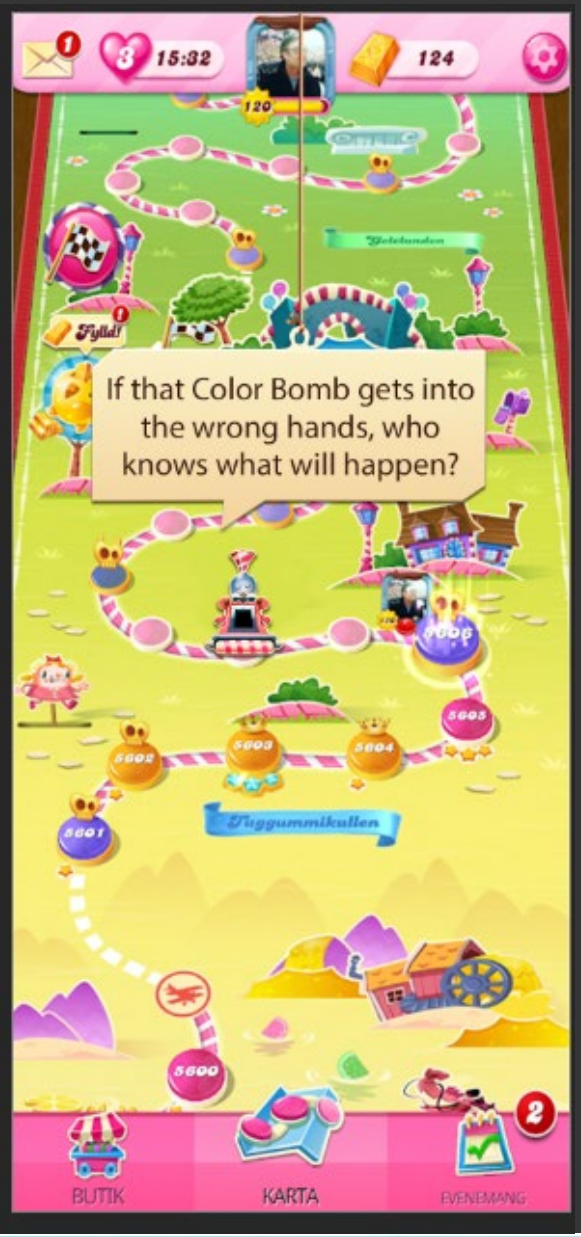
Conflict



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Candy News

SALTNADO!

Candy Town crystallized

Candy News

TOFFEE FREED!

Sweetonium saves the Mayor.

Candy News

OUT OF CON-TROLL!

Bubblegum Troll trying to take over!

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"My favorite was the Purple heart candy event, even though it broke my heart to see Misty crying when I lost a level." –*Player feedback*

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Live Games are a Journey

Narrative Events= Breadcrumbs

What trail do you want to leave your players?

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