

From Live to Sunset: Auto-Ops

Ignacio (Nacho) Abia
Live Producer & Ubisoft



The background of the slide is a vibrant, stylized scene from the game Trials Rising. It depicts a chaotic urban environment with a roller coaster track winding through the air. In the center, a motorcycle rider in a blue jacket and teal helmet is performing a stunt, with the bike tilted upwards. Other riders are visible in the background, also performing stunts. The scene is filled with debris, including pipes and mechanical parts. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall aesthetic is a blend of industrial and fantastical elements.

TRIALS[®] Rising

**FROM LIVE TO SUNSET:
AUTO - OPS**

Ignacio Abia - GDC 2021

PRESENTER



IGNACIO ABIA (aka NACHO)
Live Producer

AGENDA

- 1 PROJECT OVERVIEW
- 2 SUNSET THE GAME
- 3 TECHNICAL APPROACH
- 4 RECAP





GAME PILLARS - AND THE SERVICES AROUND THEM



COMPETITION

- Leaderboards (ghosts)
- Multiplayer



CREATIVITY

- User Generated Tracks
- User Generated customizations



COMMUNITY

- Track Central
- World Map
- Gear Central

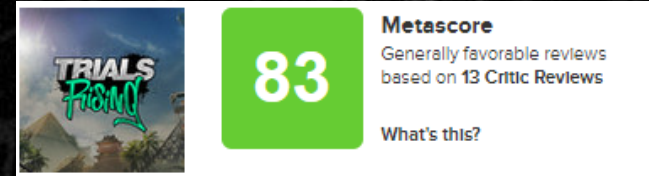
LIFECYCLE OVERVIEW

Title: Trials Rising

Release date: 26th of Feb, 2019.

Platforms: PC (UPlay, Steam, Epic), PS4, X1, Switch, Stadia

Metacritic score



12 PLANNED TU



**NEW CONTENT EVERY
OTHER WEEK**



2 DLCS



STADIA RELEASE



LIVE OPS AUTOMATION



TO SUNSET A GAME

WHAT "SUNSET" MEANS

SUNSET

Gradually stopping active Support of the game from the production side.

After that the title becomes a **back-catalogue title**.

REASONS FOR A GRADUAL SUNSET

FRANCHISE WITH 20 YEARS OF HISTORY! *Community Focused Brand*

1

Service features support the core of the game. Competition, Creativity and Community.

2

Preserve the brand's integrity. Pulling the plug too soon ignores core values & practices of the franchise.

3

Avoid negative impact on the reputation of RedLynx studio and Ubisoft.

4

Maintain the bond with the community.

SUNSET GOAL & APPROACH

GOAL

Keep the game service running for players when the game becomes a back catalogue title –no human input in the backend to provide the service.

APPROACH

Produce and **transition to automated services seamlessly** without impacting the players' experience in the game, while working on one last season of content in parallel.

SUNSET STEPS

STEPS

- List all the services in the game.
- Rank the services based on the value they add to the players' experience.
- Design an automation system for each service.
- Deploy and test each service individually.

HOW A WEEK OF SERVICES LOOKS LIKE

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

Weekend

UGC

Tracks Rotation
in World Map

Tracks Rotation
in World Map

Tracks Featuring
in Track Central

Tracks Featuring on Automatic Feeds in Track Central

UGC Moderation (shared Tracks and Cosmetics)

Content

Content Drop
(Outfit, Bike, Track Pack)

Bundle Offer
Rotation

Gear Crate Rotation

Events

Season/Event
Ends

Season/Event
Starts

Weekly Challenges

TWO SOLUTIONS TO AUTOMATION



SET OF RULES

UGC FEATURING
UGC MODERATION*
GEAR CRATES

MONITORING EMAIL
WITH A REPORT



SCHEDULE

MP SEASONS
EVENTS
BUNDLE OFFERS
CONTENT DROPS
IN-GAME NEWS

VALUE GAINED FROM THE AUTOMATION

KEEP THE PLAYERS' EXPERIENCE INTACT

Players keep all the services enabled and can enjoy the full game experience.

NO MORE PRODUCTION COSTS

We moved **from a team of 10-15 people** directly related to operating the game, to **one person spending 2h a month** to moderate the UGC that gets automatically removed from the game.

This presentation aims at sharing the best practices we found in the process of sunsetting a game to keep the live services running when the title is in the back catalogue.

STAKEHOLDERS' COMMUNICATION PLAN

PLAYERS

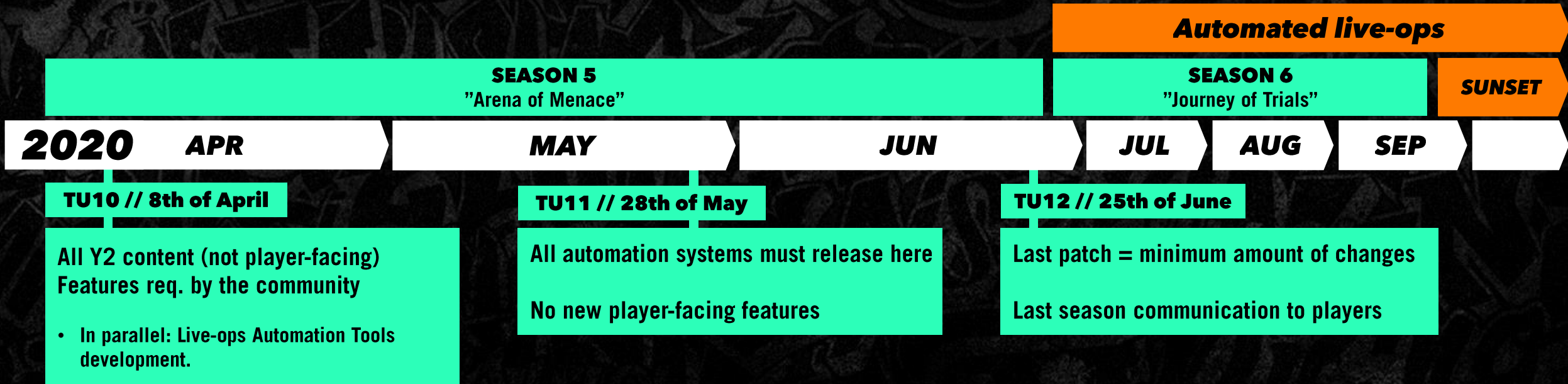
Communications were timed with the announcement of the last season.
Mitigate potential backlash as players have a whole new season of content.

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

All information about what will be happening in the game so that they can support players contacting us, and alert us if something is not working as expected.

Extensive sync with the community team on how to operate certain topics.

TIMELINE TOWARDS SUNSET MODE



- All service automation systems that will remain in the game **must release at least on the TU before the last TU** to mitigate risks of the systems not behaving as expected.
- The **automation systems** are kept independent and **enabled one by one to monitor their behavior**.



TECHNICAL APPROACH

OUR GOALS & DESIGN DIRECTION FOR AUTO-OPS

1

No human touch but
run same as before

2

Build on top of
manual operation

3

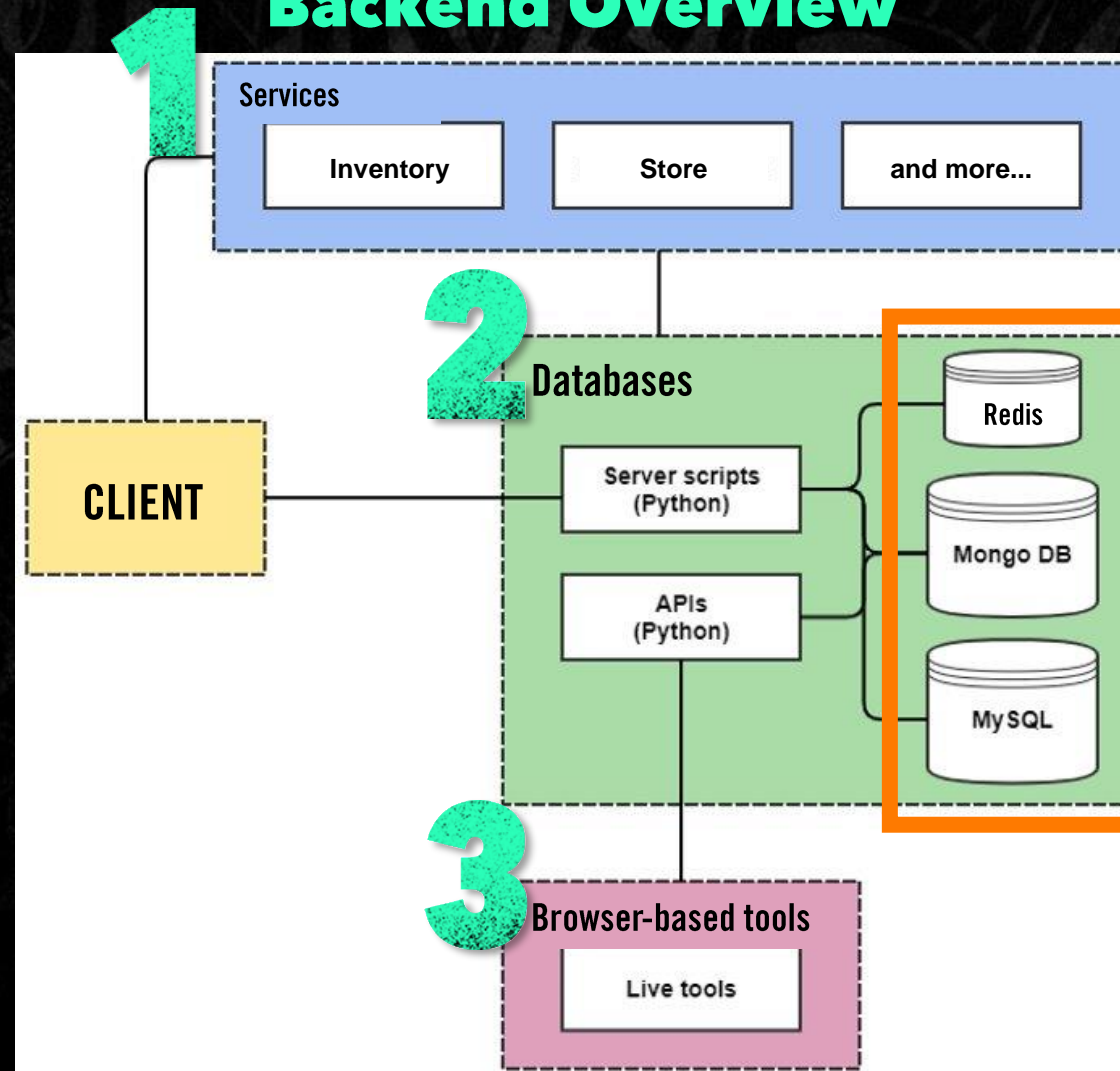
Live forever and
reduce any
future risks

BACKEND ARCHITECTURE: STARTING POINT

1. Trials Rising is **not a full-time online** game.
2. All servers are **stateless**.
3. Server only runs when it is contacted by client.
4. All UGCs (User Generated Contents) are shared in game **without any pre-filtering**.

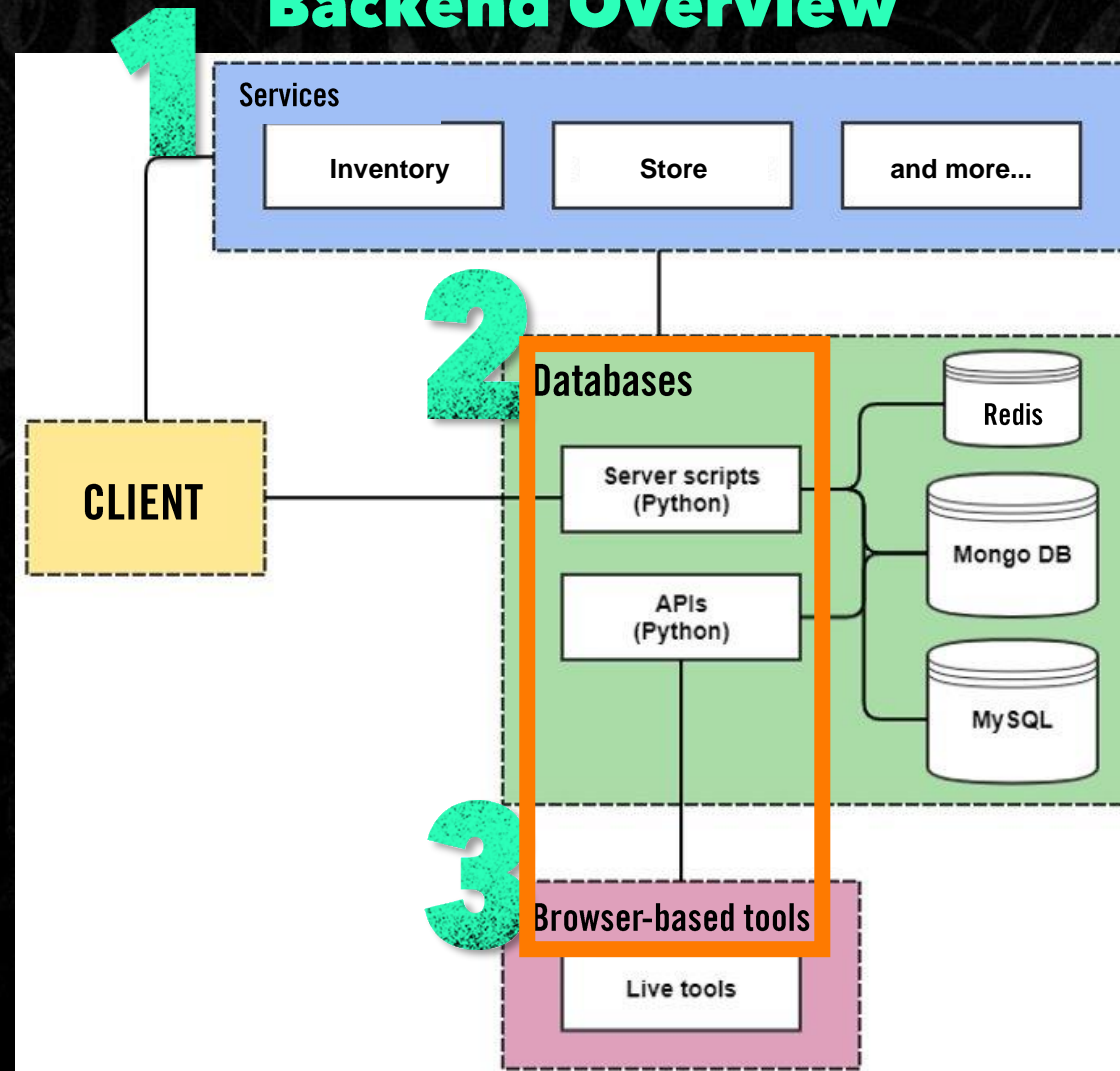
BACKEND ARCHITECTURE: STARTING POINT

Backend Overview



BACKEND ARCHITECTURE: STARTING POINT

Backend Overview



TWO SOLUTIONS TO AUTOMATION



SET OF RULES

UGC FEATURNG
UGC MODERATION*
GEAR CRATES

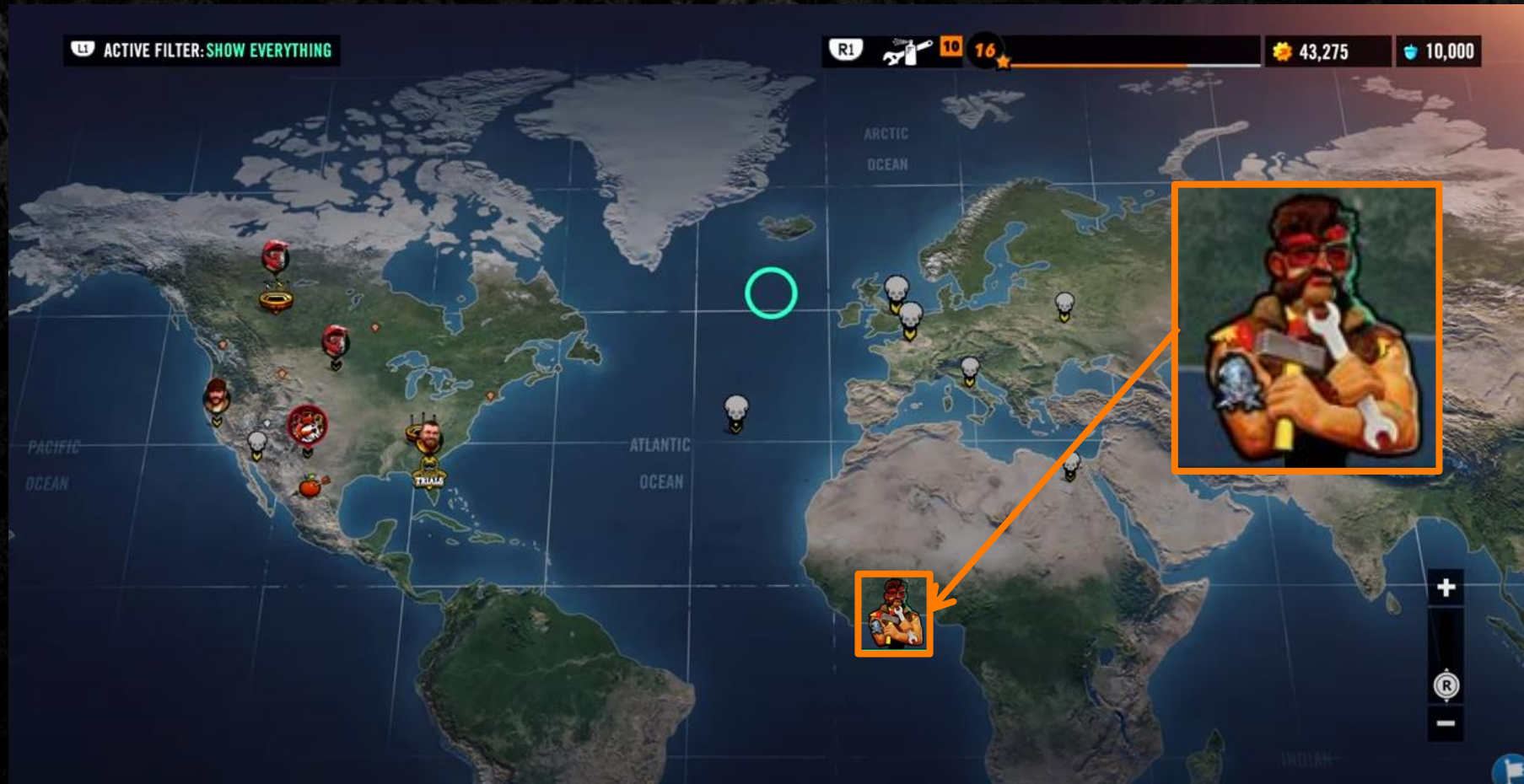
MONITORING EMAIL
WITH A REPORT



SCHEDULE

MP SEASONS
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BUNDLE OFFERS
CONTENT DROPS
IN-GAME NEWS

UGC TRACKS FEATURING



UGC TRACKS FEATURING

UGC Tracks Design

- 3 featured tracks twice a week
- No repeated tracks
- Ensure quality of the tracks
- Different difficulties.



Uploaded UGC tracks



Review Popularity Data



Enqueue Tracks



Display on the Worldmap

UGC MODERATION

UGC content

- Tracks.
- Customized gear.

UGC Content Moderation Flow

- Criteria: number of reports.
- Prevent trolling in the game.
- Automatic email.

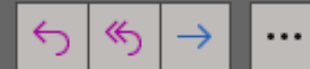
UGC MODERATION

Automated UGC Banned Email Sample

[TWT][MODERATION] Banned content for date 2020-12-24 21...



TWT-Moderation@ubisoft.com
To TWT-Moderation



2020-12-24

track

ID: 5ef205ccd1f5f06ed49a0d23, NAME: [REDACTED], OWNER:

ID: 5f9e1dc935f1f011745043fd, NAME: [REDACTED] =- _<369,
OWNER: [REDACTED]

gear_set

ID: 5fe208a861f6f024987e4003, NAME: [REDACTED], OWNER:

AUTOMATION OF GEAR CRATES DROPS



Gear Crates Overview

- Low impact on player experience (only cosmetics).
- We were stopping the production of new gear sets.
- Pre-configured table for the gacha system.

SCHEDULED LIVE-OPS



SCHEDULE

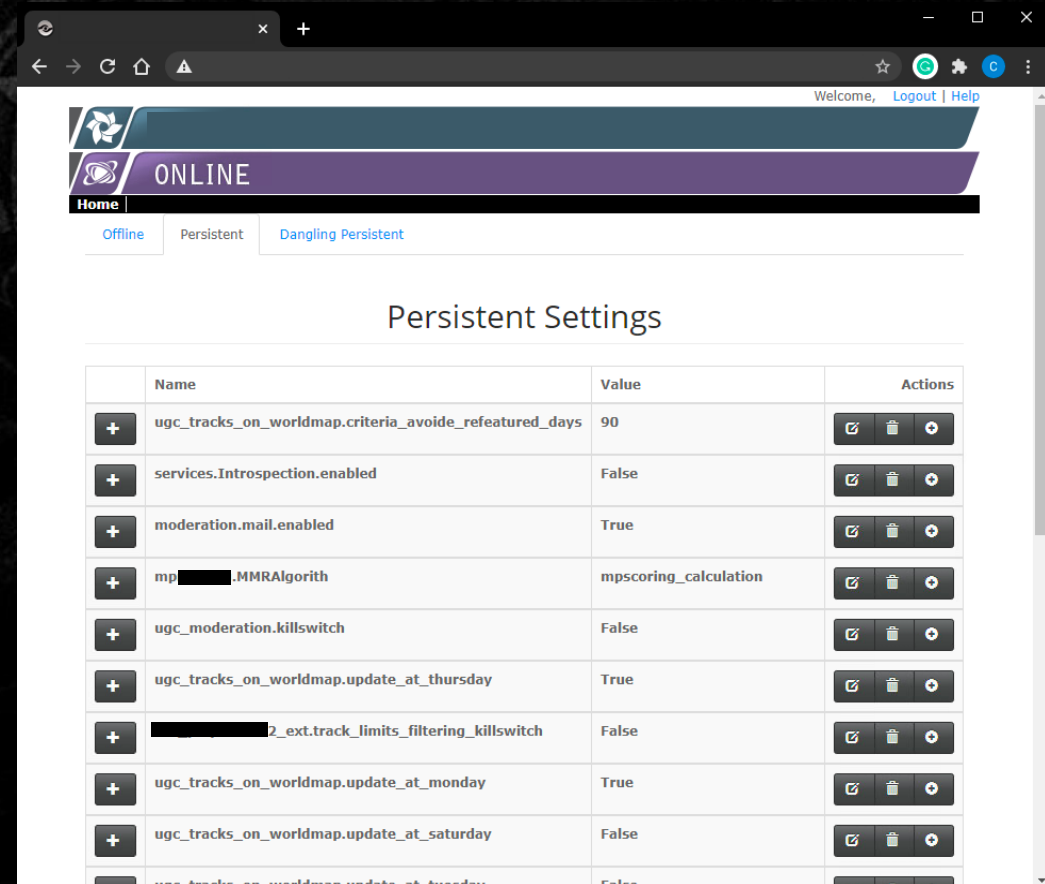
MP SEASONS

EVENTS

BUNDLE OFFERS

CONTENT DROPS

IN-GAME NEWS



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL 'Welcome, Logout | Help'. The page title is 'ONLINE'. Below the title, there are tabs for 'Home', 'Offline', 'Persistent', and 'Dangling Persistent'. The 'Persistent' tab is selected. The main content area is titled 'Persistent Settings' and contains a table with columns for 'Name', 'Value', and 'Actions'.

	Name	Value	Actions
+	ugc_tracks_on_worldmap.criteria_avoide_refeatured_days	90	
+	services.Introspection.enabled	False	
+	moderation.mail.enabled	True	
+	mp[REDACTED].MMRAlgorith	mpscoring_calculation	
+	ugc_moderation.killswitch	False	
+	ugc_tracks_on_worldmap.update_at_thursday	True	
+	[REDACTED]2_ext.track_limits_filtering_killswitch	False	
+	ugc_tracks_on_worldmap.update_at_monday	True	
+	ugc_tracks_on_worldmap.update_at_saturday	False	
+	ugc_tracks_on_worldmap.update_at_tuesday	False	



RECAP

WHAT'S UP TODAY

LIVE BACK-CATALOGUE TITLE

- Services around the game pillars remain intact for players
- Usage KPIs around the automated features remain the same as when the game was manually managed
- Almost 0 running costs to keep the player experience as a back catalogue title

UGC SUCCESSFULLY MODERATED

- Over 100 customizations banned
- Tens of UGC tracks banned
- Only eventual active monitoring needed
- Our robust tools allow us to be very reactive

KEY TAKEAWAYS - WHAT MADE THIS PROCESS A SUCCESS

- **Back Catalogue titles are worth automating** to make the full service experience last longer, and expand the title's retention potential.
- Conceive simplified **systems that can last forever** from the design stand point.
- **Isolate for the win: deploy** all automation systems individually **before the last patch** to minimize risks.
- **Communication is key:** internally with the team, and with stakeholders.
- Be transparent with players, and **have more content to be released** after announcing the sunset.



**THANK
YOU**

THANK YOU

