PORTING ON A BUDGET:
“There and back again”

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COO @ DX Gameworks

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Why should you care?

GDC

Why should you care?

- Converting an experience to new platforms
- Reaching more people!
- Increasing your chances of success!

Why should you care?

The road so far

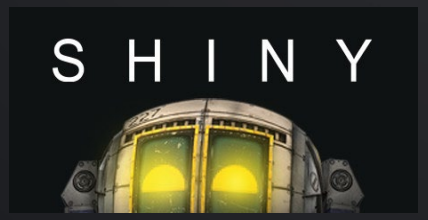
From Indie to Outsourcing, to LATAM Games Ecosystem

2014 → 2023

2016
First Game
PC, Xbox, PS4

2017
Outsourcing
Ports, Full Games

2021
Games Ecosystem
Dev, Publisher, Porting



GARAGE 227

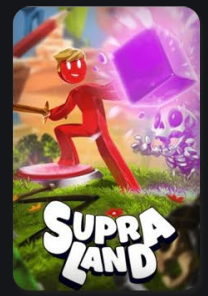
GAMEWORKS

Much More to Come!
Big Structure for
Small Developers

Why should you care?

The road so far

- Ported 20+ games, helping them reach more players!
- Helped 31 Game Developers (+ Publishers and Clients)



Rockhead GAMES

BOUNDING BOX

FRESHLY SQUEEZED

STRAY FAWN STUDIO

PIXEL PUNK

SECTOR D2

krillbite STUDIO

SUPRAGAMES

TRIANGLE STUDIOS
GAME DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

Bad Minions

GameOlic

DOUBLEHIT GAMES

FLUX GAME STUDIO

ROGUE

Humble GAMES

FULCRUM PUBLISHING

PLUG IN DIGITAL

SUPER GOOD GAMES .COM

Magalu games

LUDIC studios

GIXER ENTERTAINMENT

Why should you care?

- **Save Money!** – If you follow these tips, it will be cheaper and faster to port, either with Porting Houses or Doing yourself.

- **Proven Porting Process** – Get an insight to a process that ported about 20 games so far.

  On Budget and On time.

Thank you Xalavier Nelson for the help and meme <3

Challenges

Challenges

- **Always a new adventure** – New platforms, new generations, new technologies, new source, new plugins.

- **Dealing with somebody else's precious** – Some things need to change, but everything should be about converting what's already there.

- **A wizard is almost always late** – It's very likely will be dealing with a very tight schedule.

Improving your chances

Improving your chances

1. “One source to rule them all”

UNREAL ENGINE

unity

Improving your chances

2. The Fellowship of the Porting

- **Original Dev** – Double-check with people who already know the code!
- **The Publisher** – Good communication with the people in charge of the platform portals, age ratings, localization, store front etc.
- **The QA** – Good communication with the people helping ensure your quality and success.
- **The Platforms** – Good relationship with the platform holders, so you learn how to navigate the process.

Improving your chances

3. Plan Ahead

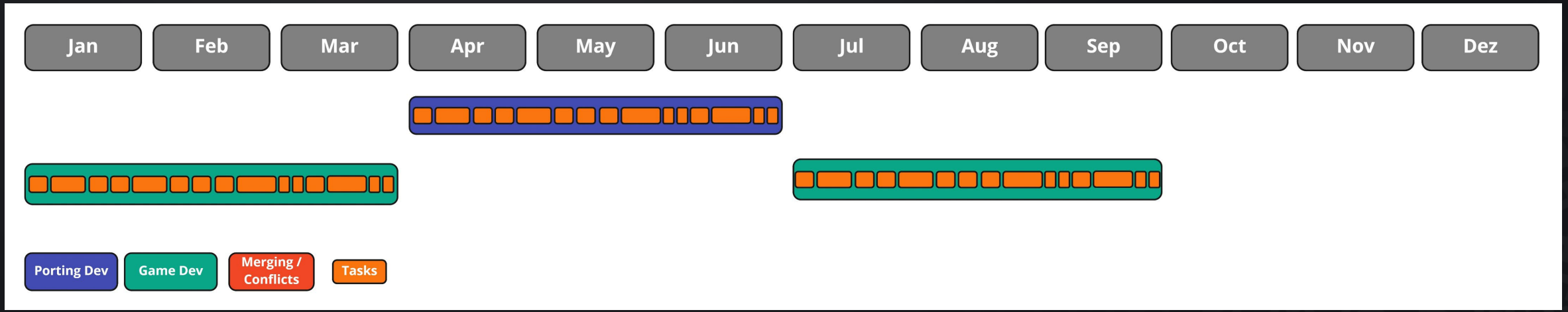
- Engine Version
- Third-Parties and Plugins access
- Controller Support
- Age Ratings
- Localization
- Portal Configuration
- Achievements
- CQA
- Unity Key!

Improving your chances

4. If you can, freeze it first

Always easier to shoot a still target.

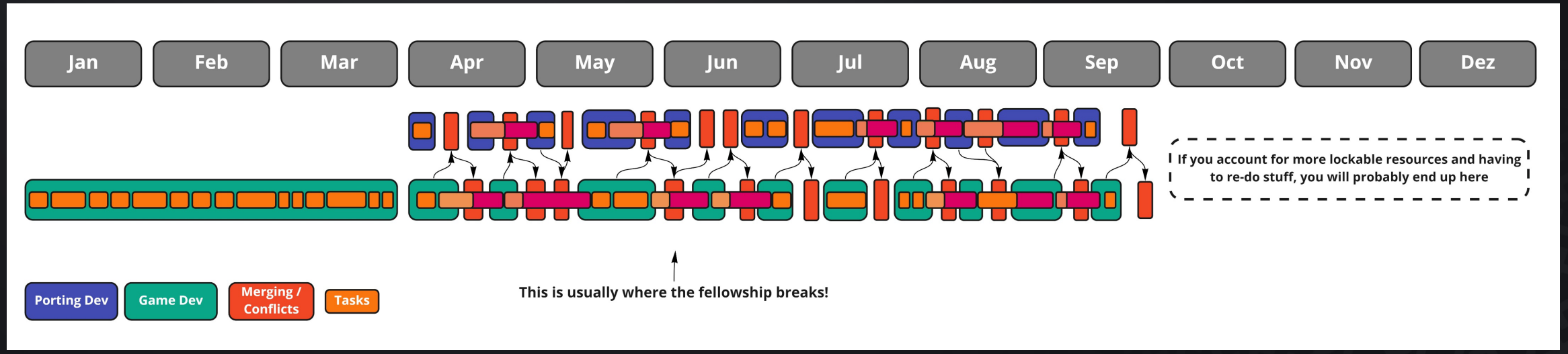
This is what a “freeze-port-continue” scene looks like.



Improving your chances

4. If you can't

- Two different teams, one source.
- It will probably take the same time, much more stress.



Improving your chances

4. Really! Still wanna try?

Nope

Welcome to Hotel California:

You can check out any time you like, but you may never leave!

It can be done, but it's not cheap, and rarely faster.

Process

Process

- 0. Base-Reference
- 1. Ported Version
- 2. Enhanced Version
- 3. Certification Candidate
- 4. Certification!
- 5. Post-Launch Support

Process

0. Base-Reference

Never follow your nose

- **Original Dev Build -** Ask for a build from the original dev team for the original platform.
- **Your own Build -** Make sure you can get the same build for the original platform on your side and compare.
- **Compare -** This step is all about proving to yourself that you have all the materials needed.

Process

1. Ported Version

Not beautiful yet, but at least is something

- **Compatibility –** Fix all compiling issues, shader issues, materials and things missing.
- **Input -** Make sure you have input working enough to play, any core UI changes should also be handled here.
- **Ugly but Full Content –** You will still have blockers and crashes, but it should be possible to complete the game, even if you must reopen the game.

Process

2. Enhanced Version

Make it run!

- **Performance –** Make sure all the content hits at least the agreed target average framerate.
- **Stability –** Get rid of all crashes and blockers.
- **Fix it –** Get rid of all known “porting” bugs, test against the base-reference to separate porting bugs from game dev bugs.
- **QA** - Good time for a QA run.

Process

3. Certification Candidate

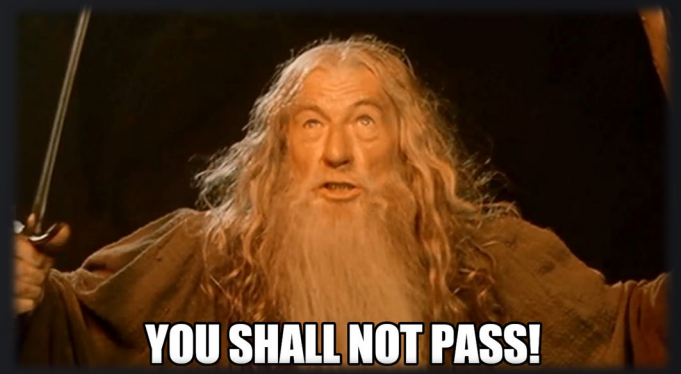
For Frodo!

- **Platform Integration –** Integrating achievements, cloud-save features, active-user management, stats and many more…
- **QA Fixes –** Get rid of all bugs risen by QA.
- **Localization –** Latest localization should be in.
- **Prepare to ship** – Authoring, credits and meta, such as Age Ratings, localized logos, splash screens etc.
- **Ready for Cert** - Good time for internal Certification tests, make sure you don’t mix up button images etc.

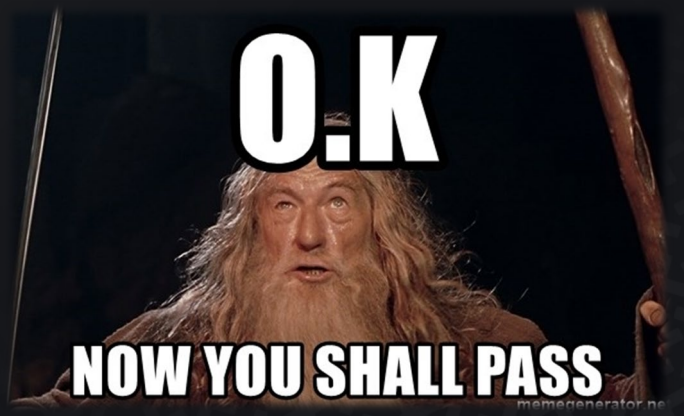
Process

4. Certification

Cast it into the fire!



Fix any Certification issues



Process

5. Post-Launch Support

Give it back!

- **Fix it and patch it –** No matter how good the QA, no one can find bugs like players.
- **Merging Back –**Make sure all changes are integrated with the original platform so the game can live on.
- Be thankful for the journey!

Thank you!

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