

Getting storefront placement for discoverability

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Today's Presentation

Disclaimer



Not a pitch

Not a validation of our
methods

Not a recipe

Main Point

Featured Placement results from a well executed marketing strategy



Curation Fundamentals

Decision Makers

Success Principles



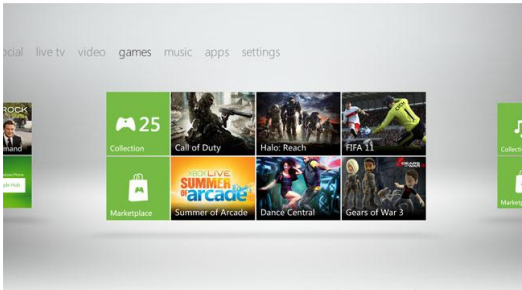

Curation Fundamentals

Perception vs. Reality

Perception	Reality
Build It & They will come	Never been easier to make a game, or get your game cloned
A Great Game Sells Itself	Many Games with 80+ metacritic have not sold well and have lost money as a result
You don't need marketing support	Someone is making decisions that can make your game successful

User Behavior

Majority of Digital Content Sales are thru Browsing on Xbox LIVE

Purchase	Purchase Mechanism	Elements	Content
Planned		Search	
Impulse		Curation RoboQueries Recommendations	

Placement is not a panacea

A low % of our featured content accounts for a very high % of our sales



Think of a Digital Marketplaces like retail

Retail 101

- Merchandising
- Shelving
- Promoting
- Pricing
- Assortment
- Flyers
- Seasonality
- Endcaps



Goal: Delighting customer so they come in, buy things and come back again.

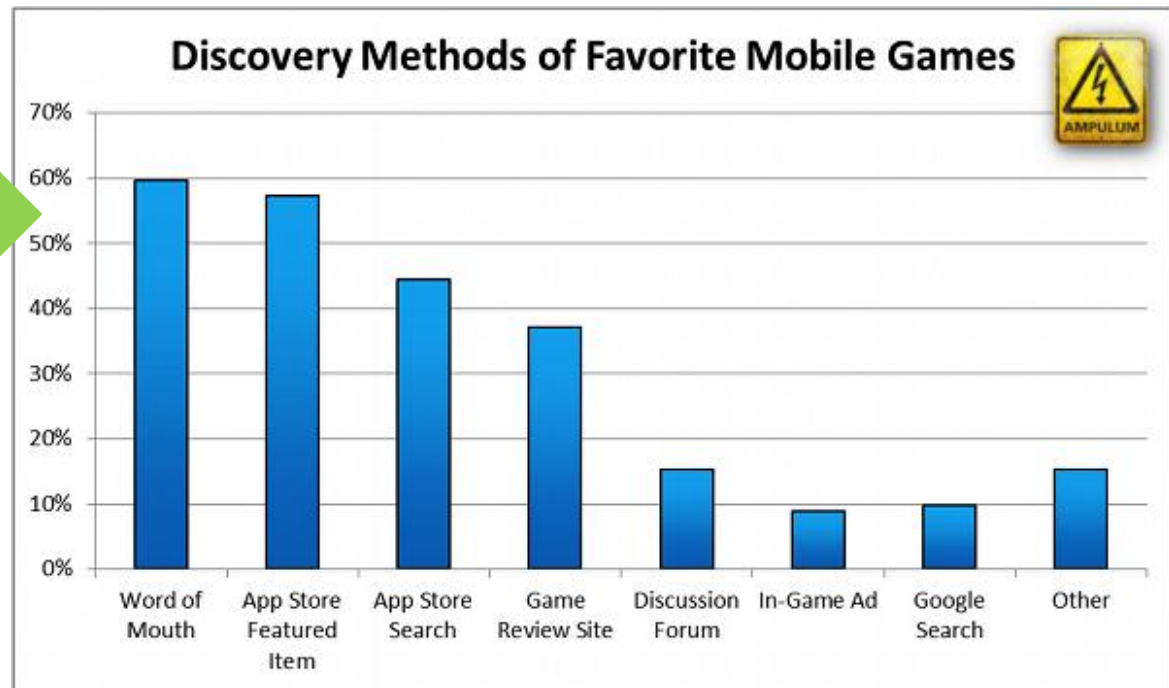
Unlike Retail...



World of Mouth

Word of Mouth -> Featured -> Top Downloaded
= Discoverability

Word of Mouth is the
#1 method of
discoverability

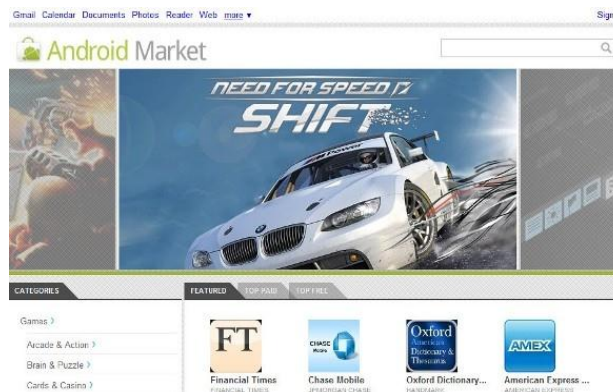


Word of Mouth is the holy grail - Curators use Word of Mouth to inform what to feature

Decision Makers

Curators

Someone is picking out and editorializing what content goes where



What Developers Think

Black Box



Random Exercise



Paid Advertising



Categories of Curation

New



Thematic Back Catalog



Discounts

THE STEAM HOLIDAY SALE

10-75% OFF EVERYTHING IN THE STORE

ENDS JANUARY 2ND

CALL OF DUTY 4	25% OFF
LEFT 4 DEAD	25% OFF
BIOSHOCK	75% OFF
CIVILIZATION IV SERIES	50% OFF
SPORE	25% OFF
DAWN OF WAR SERIES	50% OFF
S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: CLEAR SKY	50% OFF
AUDIOSURF	50% OFF

FILL UP YOUR CART
THIS SALE WON'T LAST

MEMBER'S CHOICE DEAL of the Week



Cast Your Vote
Which deal do you want to see?

View of the World by Platform Holder



Curator's job in parts

Judge



Air Traffic Controller



Analyst



What Curators think about

Goals

- Delighting customers
- Minimizing user friction
- Engagement
- Monetization
- Repeat
- Differentiating
- Partner Management

Pain Points

- Limited real estate
- Competing interests
- Content backlog
- Not always knowing if right
- Driving long term customer behavior

Old Selection Criteria...

Visuals



Game Genre

Game Genres in Order of Popularity What kinds of games do you play? Do you play...?	
Genre (examples)	% teens who report playing games in this genre
Racing (NASCAR, Mario Kart, Burnout)	74%
Puzzle (Bejeweled, Tetris, Solitaire)	72
Sports (Madden, FIFA, Tony Hawk)	68
Action (Grand Theft Auto, Devil May Cry, Ratchet and Clank)	67
Adventure (Legend of Zelda, Tomb Raider)	66
Rhythm (Guitar Hero, Dance Dance Revolution, Lumines)	61
Strategy (Civilization IV, StarCraft, Command and Conquer)	59
Simulation (The Sims, Rollercoaster Tycoon, Ace Combat)	49
Fighting (Tekken, Super Smash Bros., Mortal Kombat)	49
First-Person Shooters (Halo, Counter-Strike, Half-Life)	47
Role-Playing (Final Fantasy, Blue Dragon, Knights of the Old Republic)	36
Survival Horror (Resident Evil, Silent Hill, Condemned)	32
MMOGs (World of Warcraft)	21
Virtual Worlds (Second Life, Gaia, Habbo Hotel)	10

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project, Gaming and Civic Engagement Survey of Teens/Parents, Nov. 2007-Feb. 2008. Teens who play games n=1064. Margin of error is ±3%. Note: games listed in parenthesis were provided to respondents on an as-needed basis by interviewers; not every respondent received the prompts.

Game Developer



Publisher



...Has Changed

Visuals

Bar has raised. The visual gap has narrowed

Game Genre

Can't Predict anymore. How do you categorize a blockbuster like Minecraft, PvZ and Angry Birds?

Game Developer

Barriers to entry are lower than ever The top game developers today are ones that have emerged recently

Publisher

More and more games are being self funded and independently published

New Process

Part Art



- Customer Buzz
- Visuals & Flash
- Message Stickiness

Part Science



- Analytics
- Statistical Modeling
- Experimentation

New Process

Primary Criteria

- Will it showcase something new and different?
- Will it Sell?
- Will it Review well?

Secondary Criteria

- Is it good Value?
- Will it have a great trial experience?
- Is it accessible?

Analytical Tools



Comp Sales



Sales & Usage
Curves



All-Up Content
Schedule



Usage Scorecards



Growth Trends on
Platform



Portfolio
Balance

Success Principles

Key to Success



Be Seen



Timing

Marketing Plan 101

Be Seen		Timing	
	What	Where	How & When
Building a Game	Game Itself	Platform Distribution	Development Schedule
Marketing a Game	Logo Trailers Screens Messaging Press Release Advertising	Social Media, Developer Blog Events Online Sites	Marketing Calendar Pre Launch, Launch & Sustain

Be Seen - Marketing Collateral & Assets

- Show First, Tell Later - Screens and Trailers are how you introduce your game to the world
- Ensure it meets baseline of what people expect
- But think about what you want people to takeaway

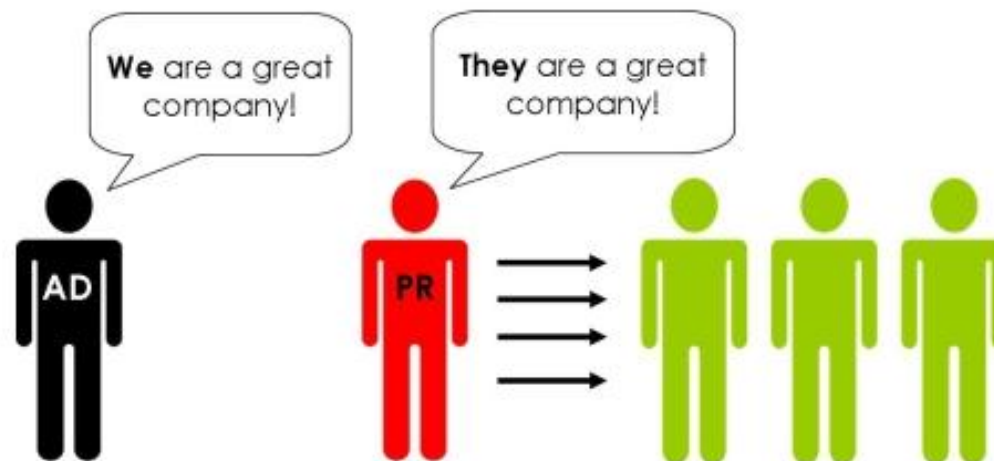


Dust: An Elysian Tale

Be Seen - PR Strategy

- PR is important but Press Release is not equal to a Marketing plan
- Target the sites where your audience is
- Bad PR is NOT better than No PR

Advertising vs. Public Relations



Source: John Moore, Brand Autopsy

© Mark Smicklas - IntersectionConsulting.com/Blog

Be Seen – But Be Careful

- You're always being Watched
- A beta or a pre-release trial is important
- Impress to build buzz, but buzz does have expiration



Opinion: When talking to the press too early can hurt you EXCLUSIVE

by Brandon Sheffield [\[Console/PC, Social/Online, Smartphone/Tablet, Indie, Production, Business/Marketing, Exclusive\]](#)

[17 comments](#)



August 3, 2012

Releasing trailers and expository information about your games too early can hurt your sales, says Game Developer magazine editor-in-chief Brandon Sheffield in this op-ed from the August issue.

I recently watched a trailer for a game by Diego Garcia and Emmett Butler called *Heads Up! Hot Dogs*. It's an amusing iOS game about dropping hot dogs on people's heads as they walk by at various speeds. Some of them bounce up and down, making it tougher for the dog to settle. Cops try to shoot your hot dog out of the sky.

The game has a nice art style, good music, and seems like quirky fun, if a bit light. As soon as the trailer finished playing, I thought "I reckon that's about 99 cents. I'll go buy it." I went to the App Store and found...nothing.

Turns out the game isn't due out until fall 2012. The trailer got coverage on a few major blogs, and for a game of this size, that's about all it's going to get. By fall, who will remember the little game about dropping hot dogs? Even if I do remember it, will I still want it then? Will Kotaku want to write about a game of this size a second time, no matter how quirky? With the press, your first shot is when you convey the excitement of a New Thing. After that, the thrill is gone, and at best you'll get a "remember that game? It's out now," if that.



http://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/175039/Opinion_When_talking_to_the_press_too_early_can_hurt_you.php

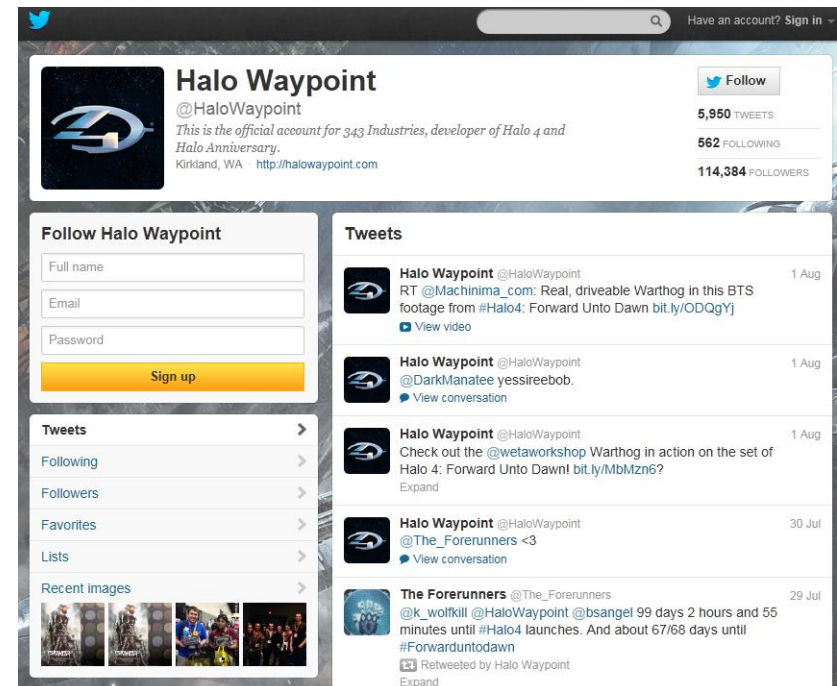
Be Seen – Be Engaging at Events

- Be friendly and have a plan
- Keep them in the Loop thru Social Media & Blogs
- Leave them with something...



Be Seen - Build a Community thru Social Media

- Post messages and assets regularly through facebook, twitter, pinterest and dot com and ensure to leverage your existing network
- Engage in dialog with your community
- Be likeable, honest and authentic



Be Seen - Where Curators go to get information

- Build Great Assets & Have a home so it can be linked back to
- Think about Messaging – Be open and available for interviews
- Places to get noticed

Consumer Sites



Industry Sites



Shows



Timing - Release Date

- The single most important factor that determines success – be flexible and probe with the platform if it's a safe date
- If you receive placement, windows is small
- Consider seasonality and other major gaming events as you pick a release date



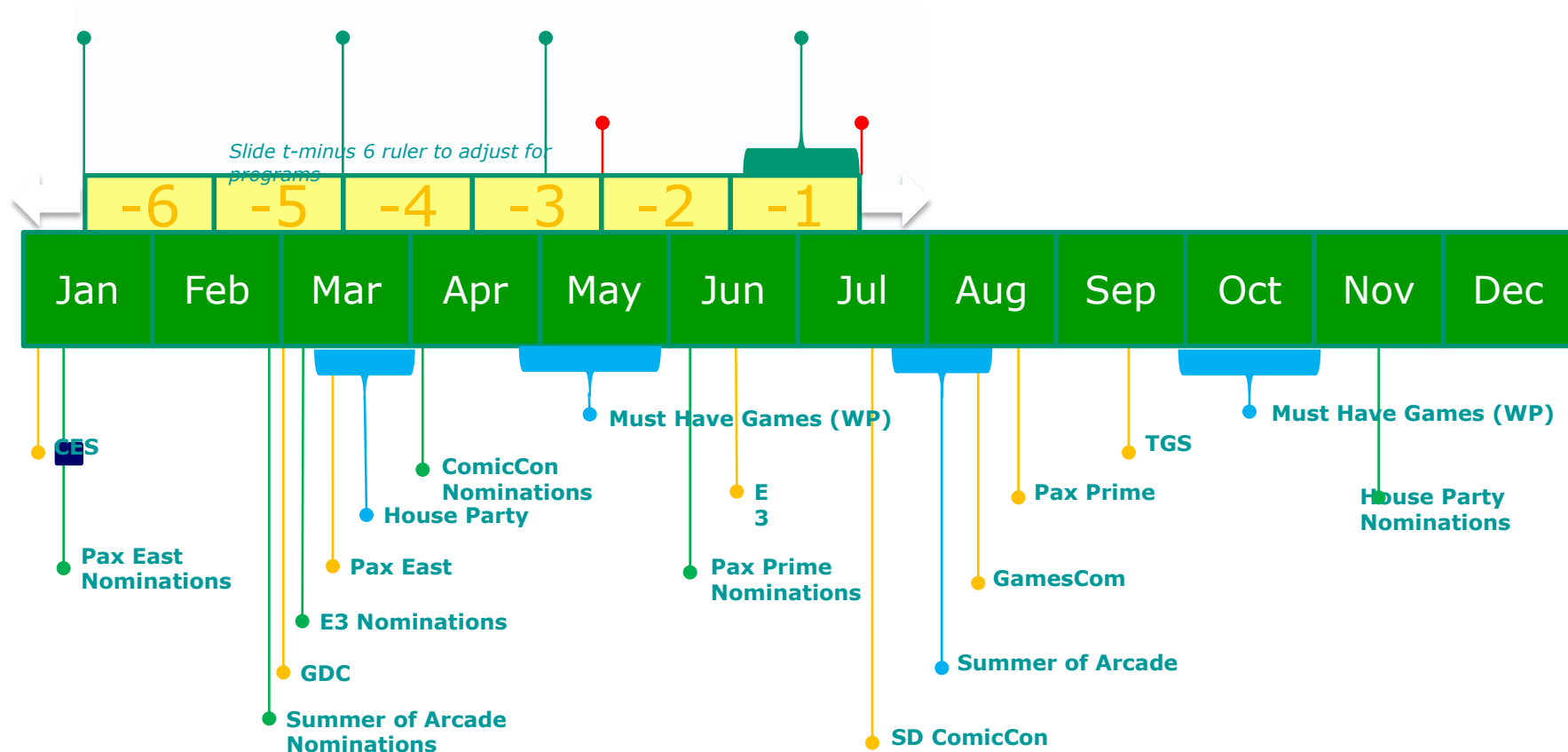
Timing - Building out your Calendar

- Although digital is flexible vs. retail, rules may have changed, but principles still apply
- Be intentional in you want to show, and when and where you want to show it from no more than a year out.
- Think of every time there is a consumer event, a product update or something new asset to show, a potential marketing beat.



Source: How to Market Digital Games – Steve Fowler [a]listgames

Timing – Ex. of Xbox LIVE Marketing Calendar



Timing – Constructive questions You Should ask

- What does your marketing calendar look like? OR What's the best time to release my content?
- What assets can I provide you with?
- How can I build a game that really pushes your platform?



Closing

How does this apply beyond XBLA?

July 05, 2012 | Author: Neil Long

Upwardly Mobile: How to get noticed

How do you stop your mobile game being swept away by the flood of new releases? Neil Long investigates.



...they have dedicated people at Apple who love to find great-looking new games, and they're who you need to get the game exposed to....



How does this apply beyond XBLA?

Ex-Apple Employee: Here Are 5 Things Developers Should Do To Get Apple Interested In Their Apps

Seth Fiegerman | Jul. 7, 2012, 11:13 AM | 🔥 6,822 | 💬 1

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Any developer can get Apple to pay attention to their app early on and perhaps even have it featured in

A billion thanks.

The key is just to know what Apple employees look for in new apps and how they discover apps in the first place

company's developer relations team, offers up the following five tricks that developers can use to get their apps noticed by Apple employees:



Putting it into Action: Checklist



Lead with
Visuals

- Logo
- Screens
- Trailer
- Advertising



Follow up w/
Strategy

- Messaging
- Positioning
- Marketing Strategy & Calendar
- PR Strategy



Show your
Marketing
Tactics

- Social Media
- Event Plan
- Press Releases
- Websites & Blogs
- Paid Media



Share any
Results

- Press Coverage
- Facebook Fans/Twitter Followers
- Customer Verbatims through Social Media
- Youtube Views



Identify a
range of dates
for release

- Earliest & Latest dates to Launch
- Preferred Range

Summary

1. **Understand approach to platform curation and marketing**
 - Not unlike retail
 - There is a thorough process to how content gets selected
2. **Understand those who make decision and the things they deal with**
 - Be familiar with their goals, pain points & view of the world
 - Leverage this to your advantage
3. **Principles you can apply to maximize your chances of getting favorable exposure**
 - Be Seen
 - Timing

Thank you!

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