

game developer conference online | oct 12

ethan levy | cofounder @quarter spiral | consultant @famousaspect

Game Design is Business Design

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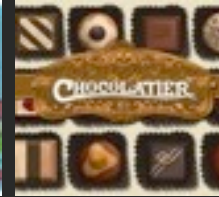
Wednesday, October 24, 12

A Brief History of Ethan

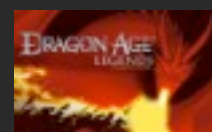
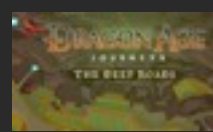
Intern & Test



Metrics & User Test



Game Design



Game Production

- 10 years experience as a game developer
- Core Competencies: Game Design, Presentations, Inappropriate Humor

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Our mission is to change game publishing



Quarter Spiral

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what do you want to get out of this session?

Desired takeaways

Katy Perry



Katy Perry's perfect year



Bad as MJ



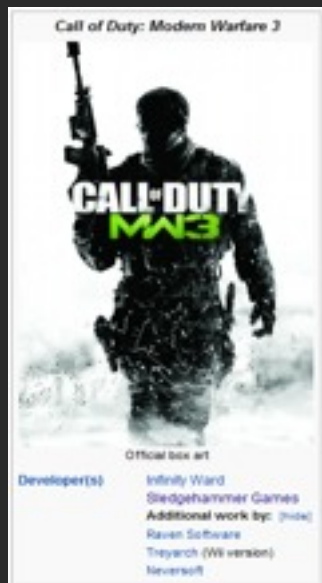
“As far as I know, yes...”

Greg Thompson (Capitol/EMI)

“I believe we did...”

Greg Thompson (Capitol/EMI)





GAMESPOT

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Related Game

Star Wars: The Old Republic



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Battlefield 3 could have \$50 million marketing budget - Analyst

July 13, 2011 11:34AM PDT

By **Brendan Sinclair**, Senior Editor

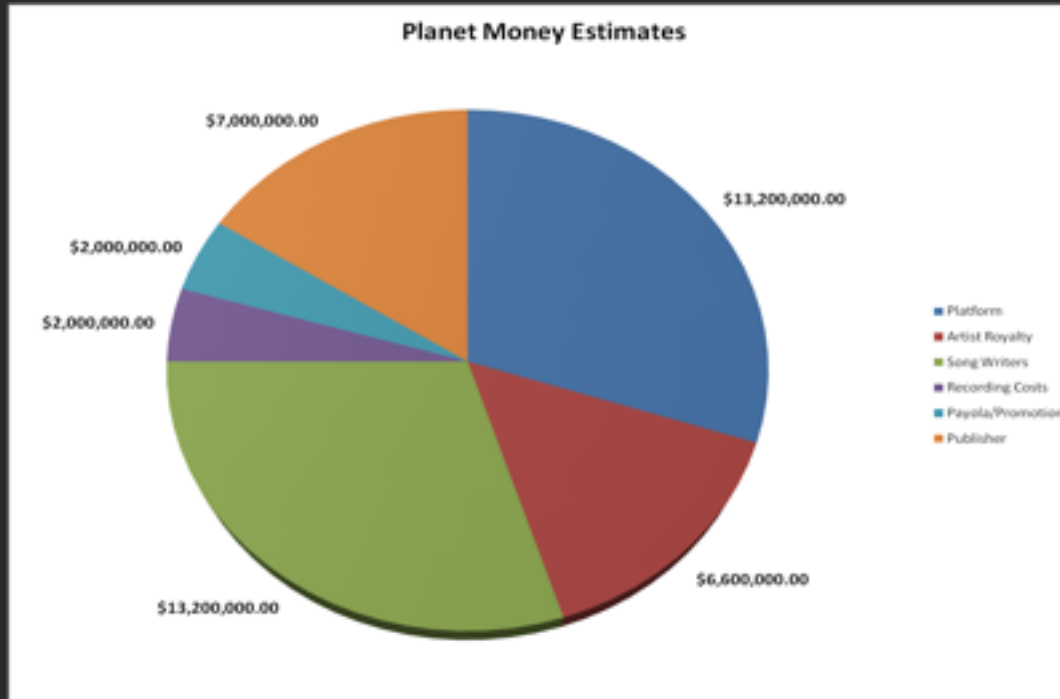
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Wedbush industry watcher estimates EA's push for Call of Duty competitor, projects 2 million sales for Star Wars: The Old Republic.

In April, Electronic Arts CEO John Riccietello said Battlefield 3 was **designed to take Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3 down**, adding gamers could expect "a couple hundred million dollars" would be spent marketing the two competing titles. The lion's share of that money may be spent on behalf of Activision's blockbuster first-person shooter series, if a new investor note from Wedbush analyst Michael Pachter is accurate.

- Electronic Arts
- Battlefield
- Role-Playing
- Release: Dec 20, 2011 (US)

How Quickly \$44 mil goes...



360 Degree Deals



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Angry Birds toys to make \$400 million in 2012

By Matthew Handrahan

Recommend

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WED 08 AUG 2012 8:42AM GMT / 4:42AM EDT / 1:42AM PDT

RETAIL

Commonwealth Toy & Novelty Co. expects sales of Angry Birds plushies to double this year

Commonwealth Toy & Novelty Co., which manufactures toys for Rovio, expects to sell \$400 million worth of Angry Birds merchandise this year.

In an interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, the company's executive vice president, Lisa Shamus, claimed that the company will double the sales of Angry Birds products this year. It has also doubled its staff since signing a licensing agreement with Rovio in 2010.

"Plush was basically a dead category for the last few years," said Shamus. "It is the most spectacular thing I've ever seen in licensing and I've been doing this for 20 years."



Rovio
Entertainment

NPD finds 40 percent of freemium players pay for in-game features

By James Brightman

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MON 23 APR 2012 2:15PM GMT / 10:15AM EDT / 7:15AM PDT

#ONLINE #FREE-TO-PLAY

The conversion to pay usually happens within the first month

The NPD Group's latest report on the growing free-to-play games space, Insights into the Freemium Games Market, shows that 4 out of 10 players of freemium titles have reported paying for in-game features or items to extend or enhance a freemium game. These payments typically happen within the first month.

Additionally, NPD noted that females are "significantly more likely than males to



NPD believes that about 38 percent of the US population ... currently plays some type of freemium game.

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PRODUCT MANAGER

#partylikeaproductmanager



What my friends think I do



What my mom thinks I do



What society thinks I do




What my colleagues think I do



What I think I do



What I actually do



**YO DAWG I HERD YOU LIKE
MICROTRANSACTIONZ
SO I PUT TIMERZ IN YOUR
GAMEZ**





Emotion is the key to monetization

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Impatience



War Commander by KixEye

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Impatience



War Commander by KixEye

Impatience



War Commander by KixEye

Kixeye expects \$100m in revenue in 2012 - report

By Matthew Handrahan

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THU 19 APR 2012 9:27AM GMT / 5:27AM EDT / 2:27AM PDT

🔖 BUSINESS 🔖 SOCIAL NETWORK

CEO Will Harbin claims that its products make 20-times more money per day than an average social game

The hardcore social game developer Kixeye expects to make \$100 million in revenue this year, Techcrunch reports.

The figure, from an unnamed source familiar with the company's financials, is included as part of a [larger article](#) with input from Kixeye CEO Will Harbin. If accurate, it would represent a huge increase over the \$25 to \$50 million generated last year.

It would also vindicate the company's strategy of developing more engaging games aimed at a smaller number of core players, in the belief that they would be more willing to monetise the experience - Kixeye is currently ranked 72nd on the Facebook MAU leaderboard



Kixeye

Revenge

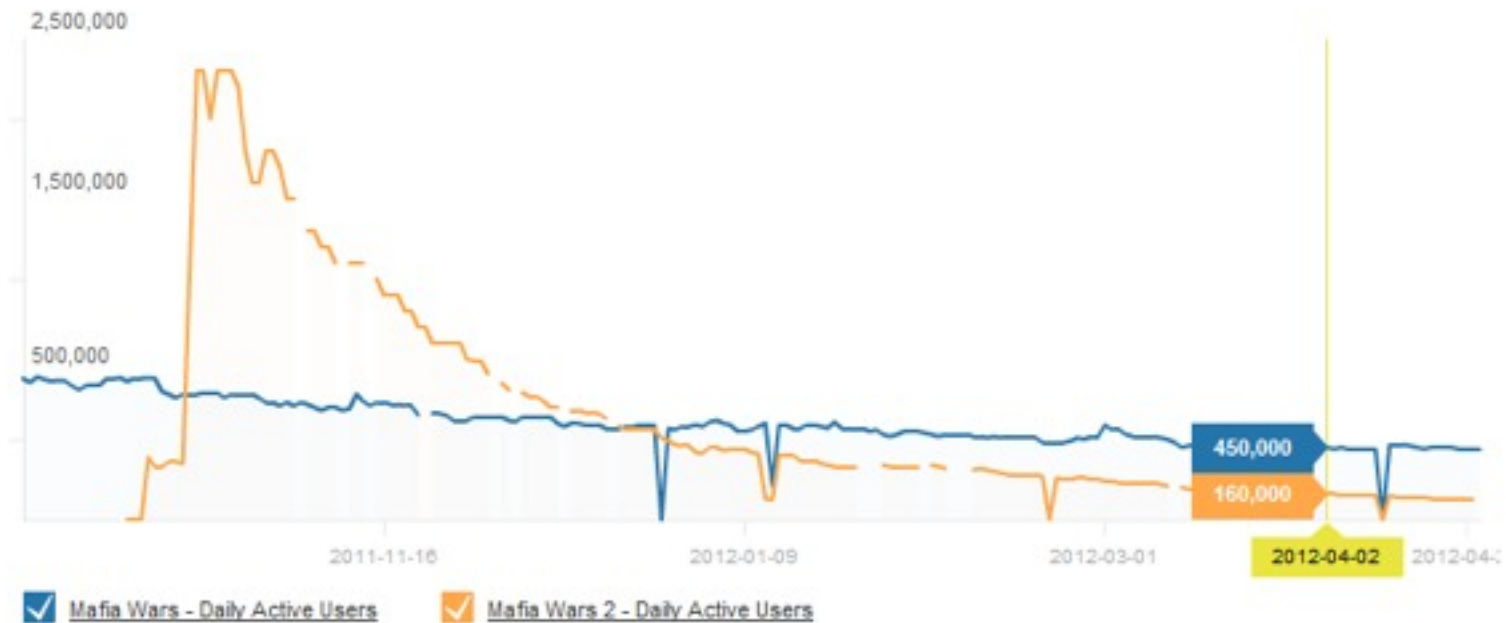


Mafia Wars by Zynga

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Comparison Summary Chart



Revenge

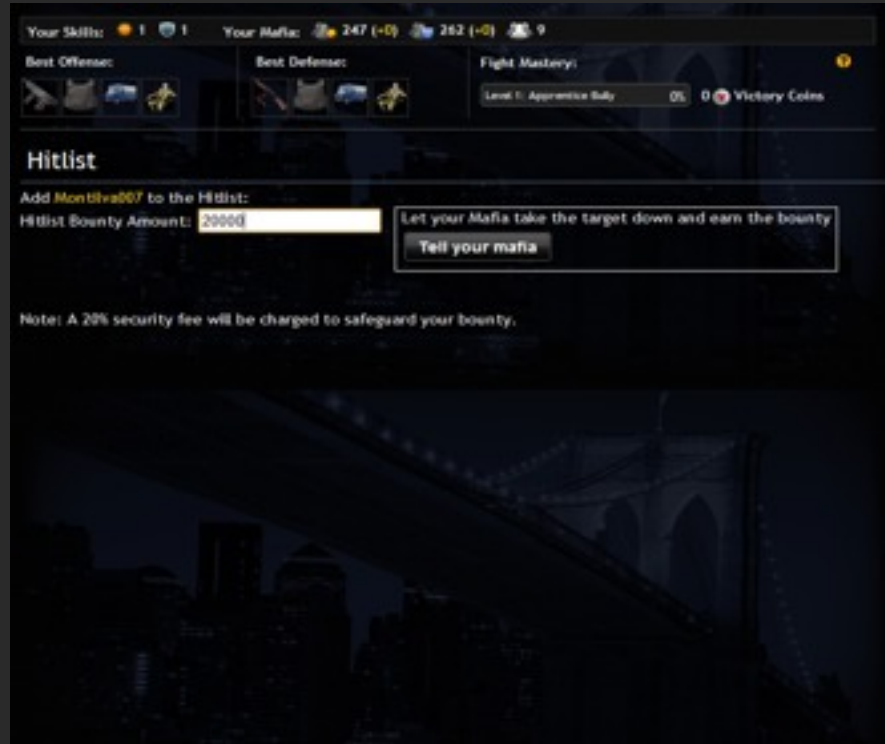
The screenshot displays the 'Hitlist' section of the Mafia Wars game. At the top, there are four tabs: 'Fight' (Take on other Mafias), 'Robbing' (Steal from Properties), 'Declare War' (Compete with enemies), and 'Hitlist' (Be a hired gun). Below the tabs, the player's stats are shown: 'Your Skills' (1, 1, 1), 'Your Mafia' (247 (-0), 262 (-0), 9), 'Best Offense' (three icons), 'Best Defense' (three icons), and 'Fight Mastery' (Level 1: Apprentice Bully, 0%, 0 Victory Coins).

A text block explains the Hitlist feature: "Looking for revenge? You've come to the right place. Put rivals on a hitlist and show 'em no one steals from you without suffering the consequences. Visit the offender's profile page and click 'Add to Hitlist.' Once you've set a bounty, anyone can attack your rival to earn extra cash and XP as well as victory tokens and fight mastery for taking out tough clients. Don't worry if you can't find your adversary on the list. There's many active hitlists to give everyone a chance to turn your rival into pulp."

The Target	Paid By	Bounty Amount	Placed	Action
Night Club Marquis [TIA] JoeP [A] [K]	Seven bells	\$640,000,000	9 minutes ago	Attack
Night Club Marquis [P.A.F] PRICITY ICE	Short Stuff	\$8,000	10 minutes ago	Attack
Big Time Cowboy [BOY] HEALTHY MODO[K]	Short Stuff	\$8,000	11 minutes ago	Attack
Boss [I-I-I-MOVING-I-I-I]	[P.O.V] Blonde Bardley	\$8,000	20 minutes ago	Attack
Night Club Marquis [TIA] NINJA "THE CRAZIEST"	the Steve Capo di Tutti Catl	\$8,000	20 minutes ago	Attack
Street Thug [I] akalmeisters	[WT] YogiD	\$8,000	34 minutes ago	Attack
Thief [G.P] Fluowazy	[WT] YogiD	\$8,000	36 minutes ago	Attack
Night Club Marquis [S.C] MEAN LITTLE CISTER >	[WT] YogiD	\$8,000	43 minutes ago	Attack
Night Club Marquis [DOMINANT] DOMINANT	PUMP [MEMO] Sui QK	\$8,000	1 hour, 16 minutes ago	Attack
Night Club Marquis [G.W] SOSPANO	Wolven sir stole the drunken	\$800,000	1 hour, 16 minutes ago	Attack

Mafia Wars by Zynga

Revenge



Mafia Wars by Zynga

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Dominance



Bejeweled Blitz by PopCap

Dominance



Bejeweled Blitz by PopCap

Jealousy



The Sims Social by Playfish

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Jealousy



The Sims Social by Playfish

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Jealousy



The Sims Social by Playfish

Accomplishment








Pogo by EA

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Accomplishment

  Play To Win - 10 Challenges for \$5.99 - Rated Moderate			
Badge Image	Game	Badge Name	Challenge
	Yahtzee Party!	Yaht-put Badge	Roll 4 Yahtzees with 'fours' in 4 days! (Free Play and Super Yahtzees do not count)
	Trivial Pursuit	Highest Pursuit Badge	Correctly answer 100 questions in 1 day! (Daily, Calendar and Random questions all count)
	Crazy Cakes	Lacks Elf Control Badge	Serve 60 Trolls in 6 days!

Pogo by EA

Exhilaration



Combat Arms by Nexon

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Exhilaration

SUPPLY CASES [Home](#) • [Shop](#) • [Supply Cases](#)

Supply Cases are used by military personnel to transport weapons and gear for operations across the globe. They usually contain rare weapons, too valuable to just hand off to the average soldier. In some cases, they even contain money. Currently, there are 5 types of supply cases...

Supply Crate MYST-Alpha



[View Full Possible Item List](#)

MYST Supply Crates hold Rare, Epic and NX weapons of various durations, including permanent for Rare and NX. Epic weapons are MYST Crate exclusives. Weapons are updated regularly. To see the current set of weapons click the 'View Possible Item List' button.

- MYST Cases contain various exclusive Rare, Epic, and Permanent weapons. These are rotated on a regular basis.

Transport Locker



[View Full Possible Item List](#)

Transport Lockers contain rare weapons, gear, functional items, and mercenaries. Whoever opens a Transport Locker will receive a rare weapon, and another mystery item!

- Transport Lockers contain both Rare weapons and mystery items, and release one of each when opened.

Combat Arms by Nexon

Belonging

Auditorium 2: Duet
by CIPHER PRIME · You're a backer

Home · Updates 1 · Backers 2,037 · Comments 172 · Philadelphia, PA · Video Games

Funded! This project successfully raised its funding goal on March 30.

2,037 backers
\$71,061 pledged of \$60,000 goal
0 seconds to go

AUDITORIUM DUET [PLAY]

Project by **CIPHER PRIME**
Philadelphia, PA
Contact me

First created · 7 backed
William Stallwood (jms trex)
Website: <http://cipherprime.com>

Auditorium 2: Duet

Case Study - DragonVale

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The paragon of success



DragonVale by BackFlip Studios

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DRAGONVALE

iTunes - Free - by Backflip Studios

App Details

Market: iPhone ▾

Daily Ranks

Ranks

Grossing

Highest Ranks ⓘ

Highest Grossing ⓘ

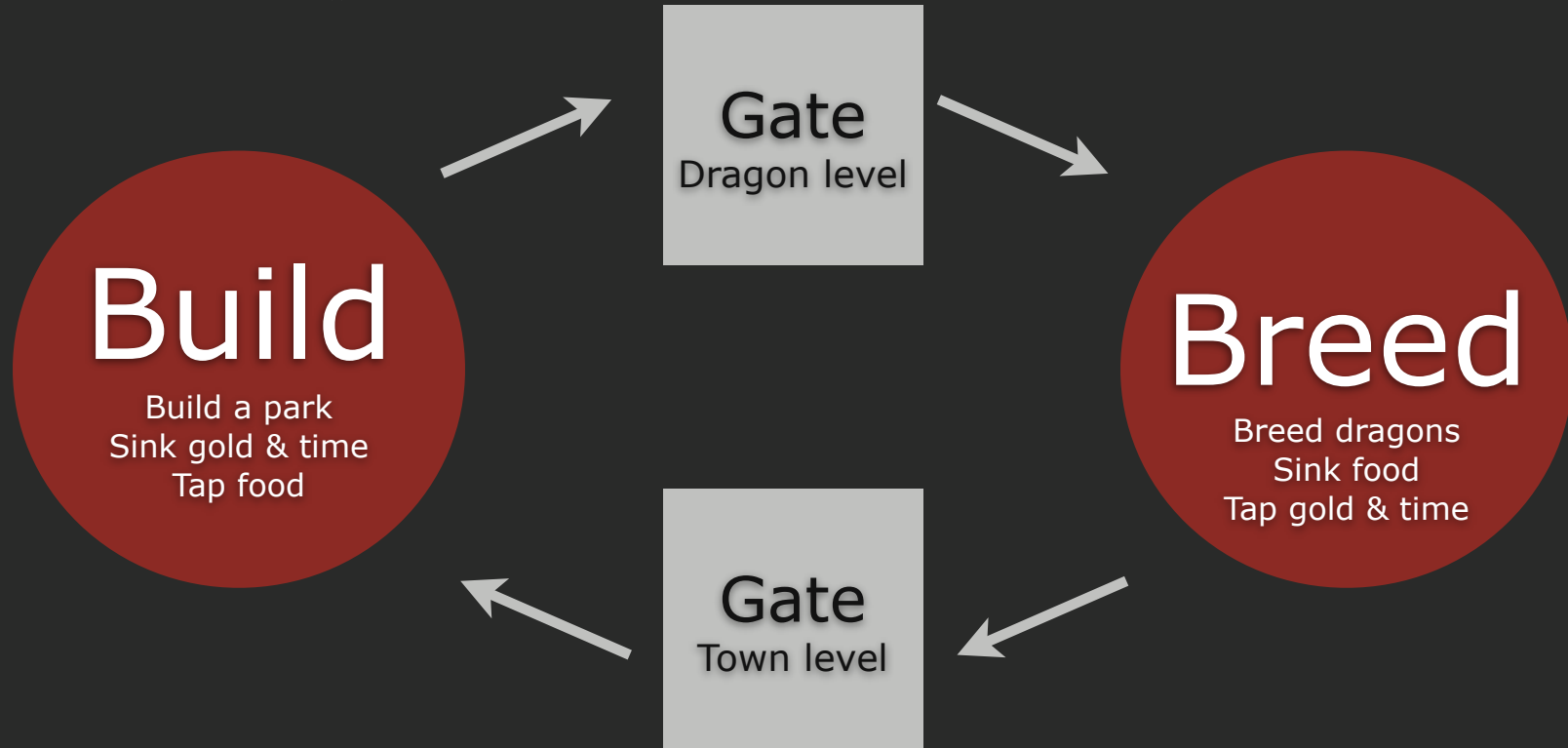
Rank History

Features

Ratings

Country	Overall	Games	Role Playing	Simulation
# of countries - rank 1 reached	71	87	106	104
# of countries - rank 5 reached	99	106	109	108
# of countries - rank 10 reached	105	107	110	111
# of countries - rank 100 reached	111	111	111	111
# of countries - rank 500 reached	111	111	111	111
# of countries - rank 1000 reached	111	111	111	111

Core loop



Impatience



DragonVale by BackFlip Studios

Exhilaration



DragonVale by BackFlip Studios

Events



DragonVale by BackFlip Studios

Control



DragonVale by BackFlip Studios

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Needed



DragonVale by BackFlip Studios

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On accessibility of monetization

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Integrity



Integrity



Integrity



Integrity

En choisir une :

Points BioWare	Prix
1600	€ 13,94
800	€ 6,97
560	€ 4,88
1200	€ 4,88
400	€ 3,49

Continuer vers les options de paiement >>

Choisir un pack de points BioWare

En choisir une :

- ☒ 1600 Points BioWare € 13,94
- ☐ 800 Points BioWare € 6,97
- ☐ 560 Points BioWare € 4,88
- ☐ 400 Points BioWare € 3,49

Continuer vers les options de paiement >

Ease of Access



Ease of Access



Be Present



War Commander by KixEye

Show me the money



Zuma Blitz by PopCap

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Show me the money



Zuma Blitz by PopCap

Show me the money



Zuma Blitz by PopCap

Show me the money



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Show me the money



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Show me the money



Zuma Blitz by PopCap

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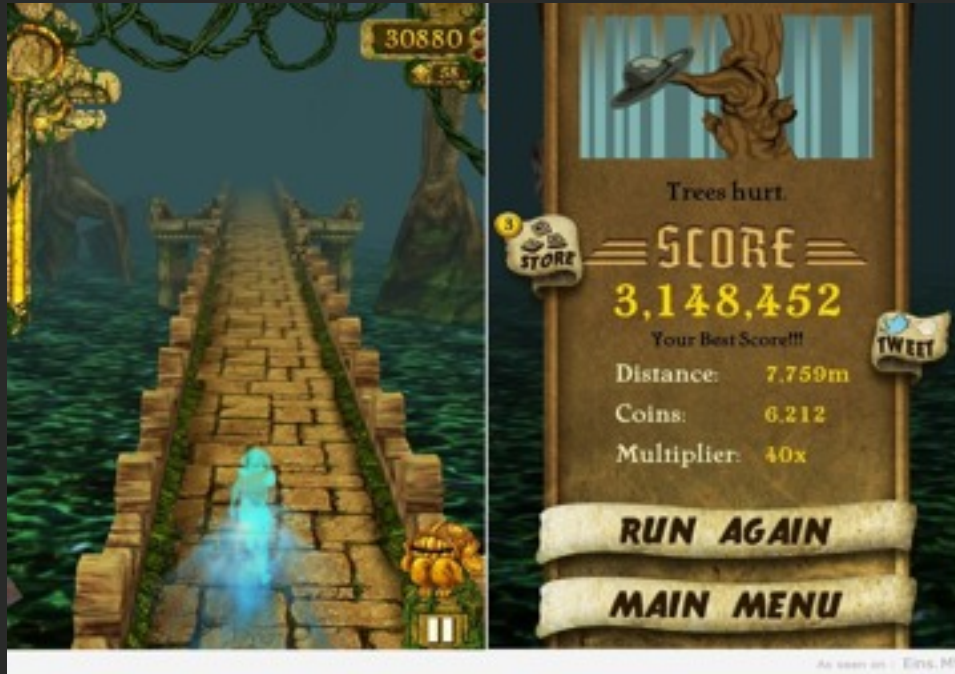
Whale hunting

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Possibility of Infinite Monetization



Temple Run by Imangi Studios

TEMPLE RUN



ONE YEAR
100 MILLION+
DOWNLOADS!

10
BILLION
sessions played

54,000
YEARS
spent playing

05/25/2012

LAUNCHES ON AMAZON APP STORE

Amazon

06/14/2012

TEMPLE RUN: BRAVE LAUNCH

07/27/2012

100 MILLION DOWNLOADS

RANKINGS

- ◆ TOP FREE APP, 30+ DAYS
- ◆ TOP GROSSING APP, 30+ DAYS
- ◆ TOP FREE APP, ALL PLATFORMS
- ◆ TEMPLE RUN: BRAVE, TOP PAID APP, 14+ DAYS
- ◆ TOP 50 FREE APP, 9+ MONTHS



Make the Rich Friend Share



Realm of the Mad God by Spry Fox/Wild Shadow/Kabam

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What is your favorite website?

Facebook and Realm of the Mad God.

What are your top 3 hobbies?

1. Basketball

2. Video Games

3. Food/Reading at some time.

Weekly Events




Fifa Ultimate Team by EA



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Player Ecosystem

**Ethan Levy**
August 1 · 🌐

Astound Broadband's cable guy called when he was on his way, arrived exactly on time, was friendly, and quickly set up our cable and internet. I cannot wait to return Comcast's dvr tomorrow and cancel that service. Lesson: quality customer services creates evangelists, terrible customer service losses more in revenue than whatever was "saved" in operating costs. Farewell Comcast, you were truly a horrible service provider.

Like · Comment · Share

👍 Brian Tholen, Danielle Cortijo and 3 others like this.

**Greg Bliss** is that a local ISP? Cause I'd love to tell comcast to kiss my ass in hell.
August 1 at 8:29pm · Like

**Ethan Levy** Yes, they provide cable, internet and telephone. You can go here to check if they are available in your zip: <http://www.astound.net/>

**Bay Area, CA | Cable TV, Internet, and Phone Service | Astound**
www.astound.net
Astound delivers high-quality cable, internet, and phone services. Order now for the best broadband in San Francisco, Concord, and the Bay Area, CA!

August 2 at 1:00am · Like · Remove Preview

**Greg Bliss** They are about to get a new customer... thanks for the tip!

Player Ecosystem



Team Fortress 2 by Valve

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Key takeaways

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Emotion is the Key to Monetization

- Impatience "I want this now."
- Revenge "I want payback."
- Dominance "I want to be the best."
- Jealousy "I want what he has."
- Accomplishment "I want that medal."
- Exhilaration "I want to open another pack."
- Belonging "I want to be part of something."

Accessibility of Monetization

- Integrity – don't violate the player's trust
- Accessible – make it clear where the player spends
- Present – show monetization options frequently
- Clear – teach the how and why of spending

Whale Hunting

- Consumables – don't cap the potential to spend
- Social – allow non-spenders to benefit friends
- Events – pair engaging events with new items
- Player Ecosystem – players are the lifeblood of your game. Community and customer service will keep them engaged.

Putting theory into practice

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Sample game: Smash TV Saga



- Classic score based arena shooter re-imagined for FB
- Bite sized levels played for high score
- Compete against friends' scores, earn achievements and medals

X statement

- Single sentence that describes the essence of the game
- “Razor” used to make decisions
- Punchy & memorable

Meaningless X statement

Return of the arcade classic

Meaningful X statement

Compete and cooperate in an over the top, reality TV shooter.

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Analogs, antilogs and leaps of faith

- Idea taken from [Getting to Plan B](#)
- Analogs: successful games you want to be like
- Antilogs: similar games you want to avoid
- Leaps of faith: elements unproven in the marketplace

Smash TV analogs

- Ratchet and Clank
 - ✦ Leveling weapons
 - ✦ Fast and furious gunplay
- Bubble Witch Saga
 - ✦ Short, rewarding levels
 - ✦ Leader board competition
 - ✦ Earned currency and boosts



Smash TV antilogs

- Smash TV Arcade
 - ✦ Don't be a quarter monster
 - ✦ Engagement not frustration
- Simcity Social
 - ✦ Social network integrity
 - ✦ Multiplayer not friend gating



Leaps of faith

Social network gamers
CRAVE
synchronous multiplayer.

Monetization philosophy doc

- Identify player types
- Identify a small # of monetization emotions (2-3)
- Don't try and do everything, make a small number of distinct choices
- Each emotion should be a razor you use in the future to evaluate monetization moments
- Razors are used when writing feature briefs
- Define core loop, sinks and taps

Dominance

Smash TV Saga is a score based game where each level is a unique leaderboard that the player competes to dominate against his friends. Leaderboards are heavily emphasized in game: they are shown before and after levels, in-game notifications show when you've passed a friends score and the game encourages you to brag on your friend's wall after topping his score.

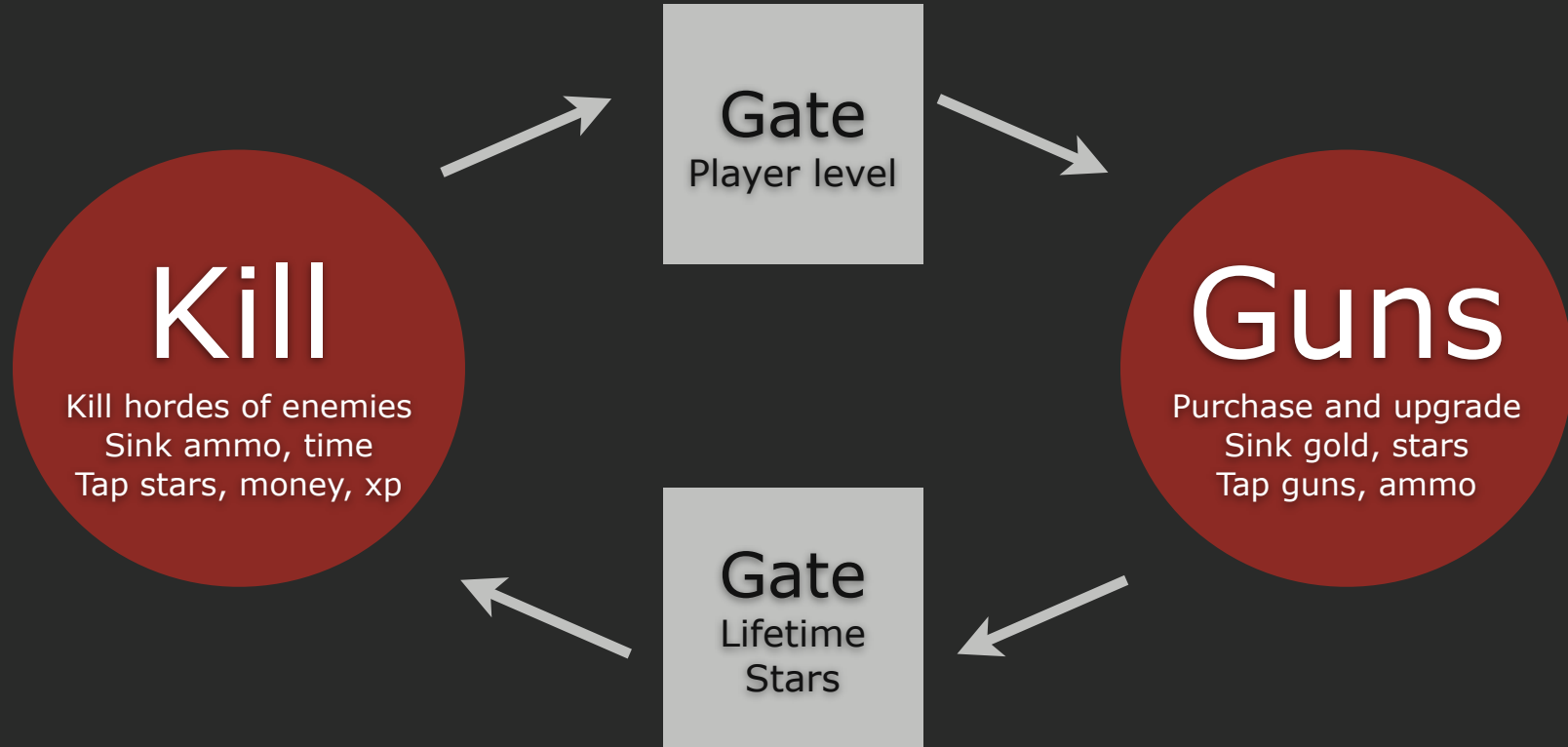
Achievement

Smash TV Saga has multiple achievement systems to entice the player. Each level, he can earn a number of predetermined levels. In addition, there is a global achievement system similar to XBLA. Points earned by completing achievements and earning medals are used to purchase powerful weapon upgrades.

Core loop

- Simple diagram that lays out core experience
- What are the sinks (player spends consumable)?
- What are the taps (player earns consumable)?
- What are the gates (what gates progress in each section of the game)?

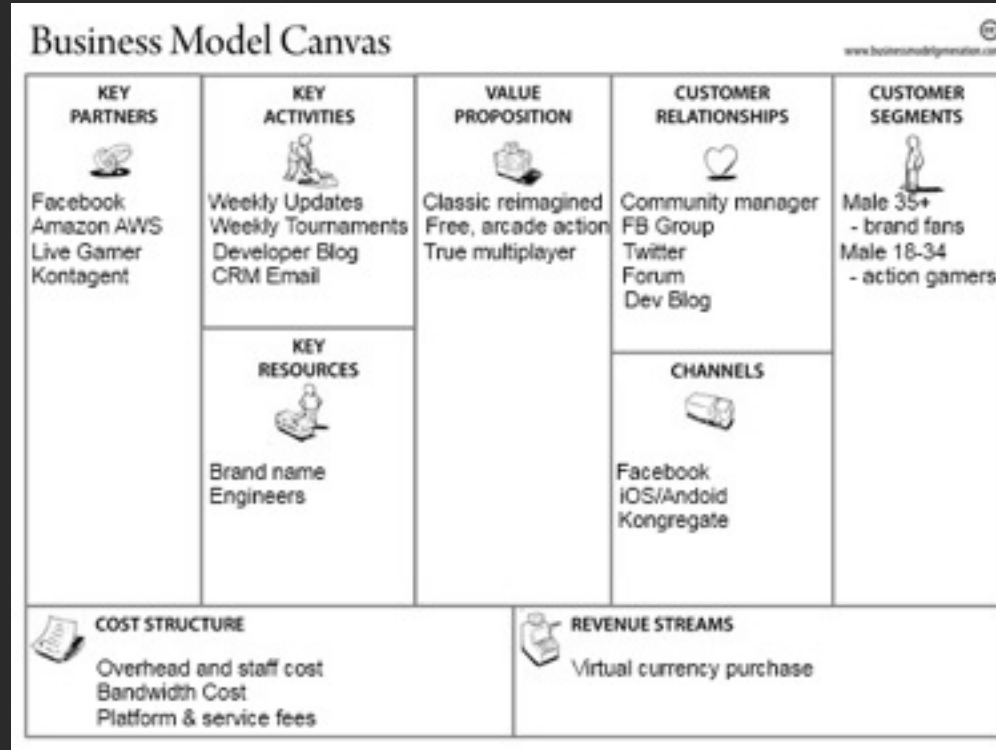
Smash TV Saga



Business model canvas

- Created by Alex Osterwilder
- Interesting tool for business model innovation
- Helps imagine all the factors of a business model simply on a single page
- Holistic view of your service
- www.businessmodelgeneration.com/canvas

Canvas for Smash TV Saga



Provides insight and value very quickly

Feature brief

- High concept
- Success metric
 - ✦ Monetization, engagement, virality, retention, quality
- Single screen mock up
- Sinks and Taps
- Description

Proposed feature - smash pad

- During each round the player picks up money and home goods
- In between levels, the player can visit his SmashPad to decorate it with items earned
- The player's friend can visit his SmashPad, choosing to "Bro Out" or "Blow Out"
- Monetization: The player can buy premium home goods using the game's purchased currency.

Using our razor

- Feature rejected!
- Proven mechanic – houses in Sims Social
- Based on emotion – Jealousy/Vanity
- Social interaction with “Bro Out” vs “Blow Out”
- Does not map to our key emotions.

Proposed feature - phone a friend

- In level, there are buttons to "Phone a Friend"
- Each type is a super ability with a cooldown time
- Example: "Lifeline" fills you to 200% health
- Using "Phone a Friend" costs a Smash Token
- Smash Tokens are earned on level up, but can also be purchased in large quantities

Using our razor

- Feature accepted!
- Super abilities will help the player earn high scores
- Super abilities will help the player earn medals
- Super abilities are consumable based
- Super abilities are available to free and paying players

Closing thoughts

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New Legends



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Crime City





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Gree acquires mobile game maker Funzio for \$210M



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Gree acquires mobile game maker Funzio for \$210M



GB Unfilter

These are unfiltered
community posts.
Thank you for the feedback.

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Three book
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by Mark Purc

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