

# The Design and Business of Social Casino

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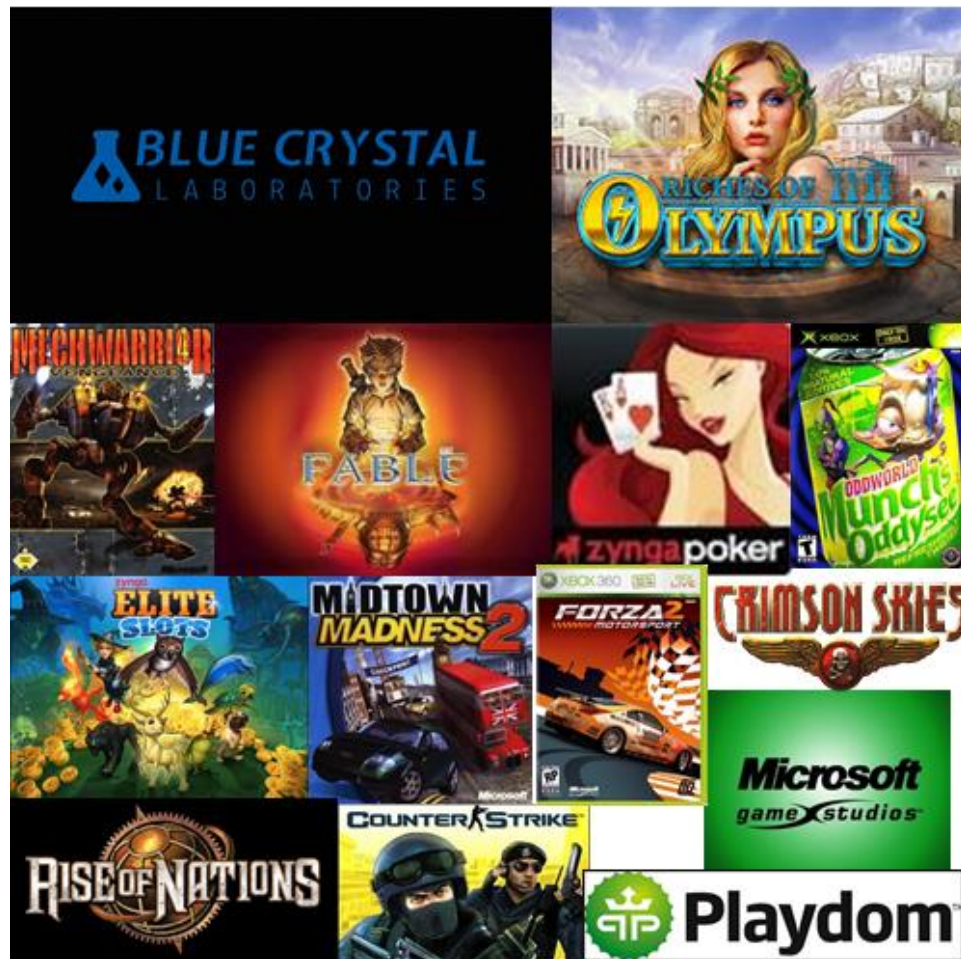
VP Product, Playdom

Lightspeed Ventures

Harvard University  
MBA

Microsoft Games Studios

University of Pennsylvania  
BSE CS Engineering  
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# Brian Mahoney

Senior Director of Game  
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Primary Game Designer  
for GSN Casino, #10 Top  
Grossing on iPad for 2013

Designer of 30+ Social  
Casino Games

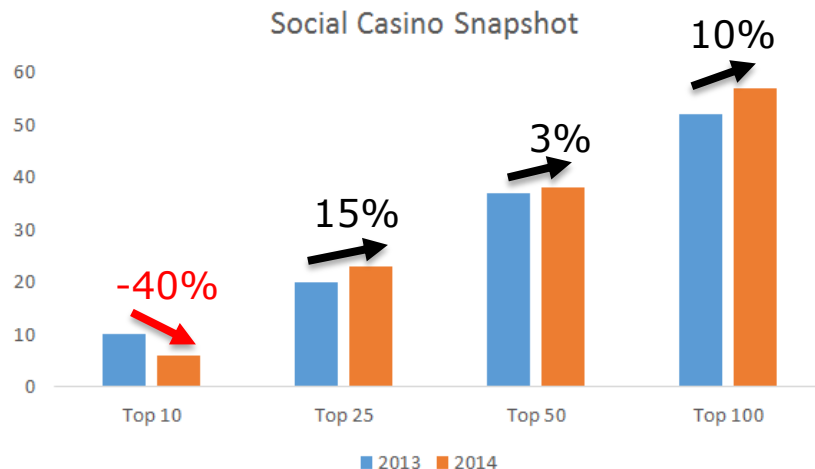
Previously at  
WorldWinner.com





# Social Casino Year in Review

- Large hits displacing top 10
- Battle fought on devices not FB
- Few new faces in top grossing



\* Source: Appannie.com Data shows US 1/25/13 vs. 1/25/14 combined iPhone, iPad, Android

# Social Casino Metagame Formats



Progression System  
With Unlocks



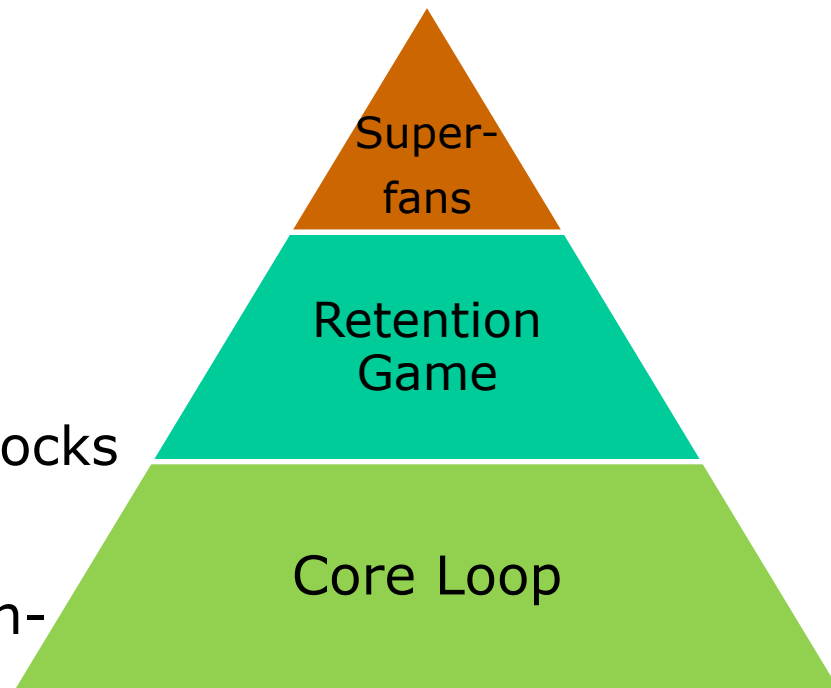
Multiplayer Lobbies



Virtual Casino

# Pyramid of Free-to-Play Design

- Core Loop
  - Slots / Bingo / Poker etc.
  - Addictive, repeatable play
- Retention Game
  - Progression, level-ups, achievements, content unlocks
- Superfan Game
  - Hobbyism, spectating, high-level competition



# Building A Core Loop

- There are three things casino players want:
  1. A variety of wins and near-wins
  2. A chance to get ahead
  3. A satisfying amount of play time



# Optimizing the Core Loop

- Familiarity
- Emotion
- Avoid player fatigue
- Avoid negativity
- Monetization





# Layer On A Retention Game

- Retention design begins where the core loop ends
  - Here's what is next
  - Multiple ways to play
  - Reasons to come back

# Retention - Progression Systems



Slotomania



Pharaoh's Way



Riches of Olympus

# Retention - Competitions

Tournaments  
provide new goals  
and new ways to  
play



# Figure Out Your Superfan Game

- High Rollers
- Hobbyists
- Socialites

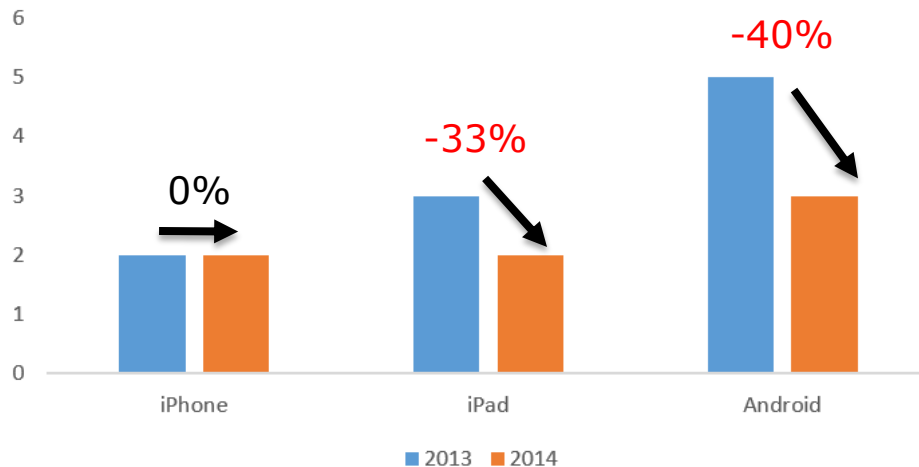


# Poker



- Naturally 'Winner-Take-Most'
- Managing a real economy
- Same issues with social as RMG: Fraud, Laundering etc...

Poker Snapshot



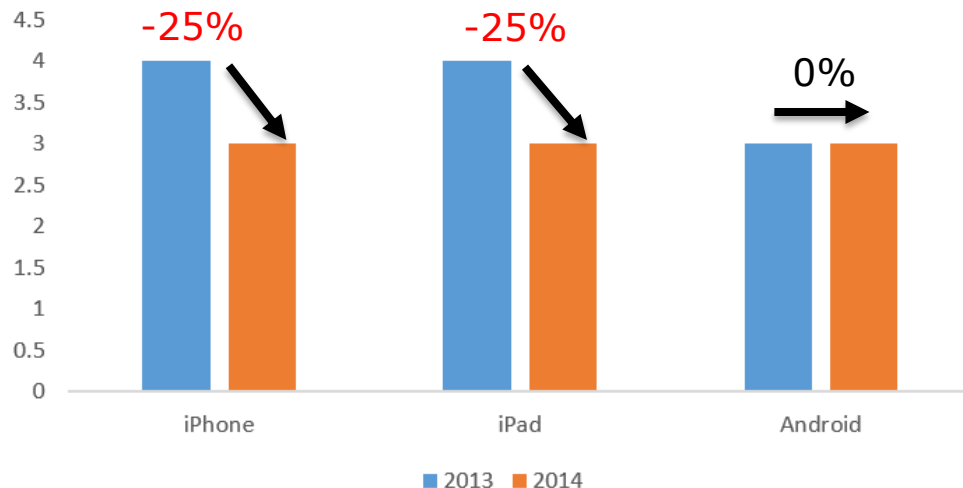
\*source: Appannie.com – Data show #of top grossing in top 100 grossing delta between snapshots



# Bingo



Bingo Snapshot



- Sticky Community
- Easier to manage than poker
- Worst \$ unit economics in category

\*source: Appannie.com – Data show #of top grossing in top 100 grossing delta between snapshots

# Bingo

## Use of Licensed IP



# Bingo

## Power-ups, Doobers, and Collectibles



# Bingo

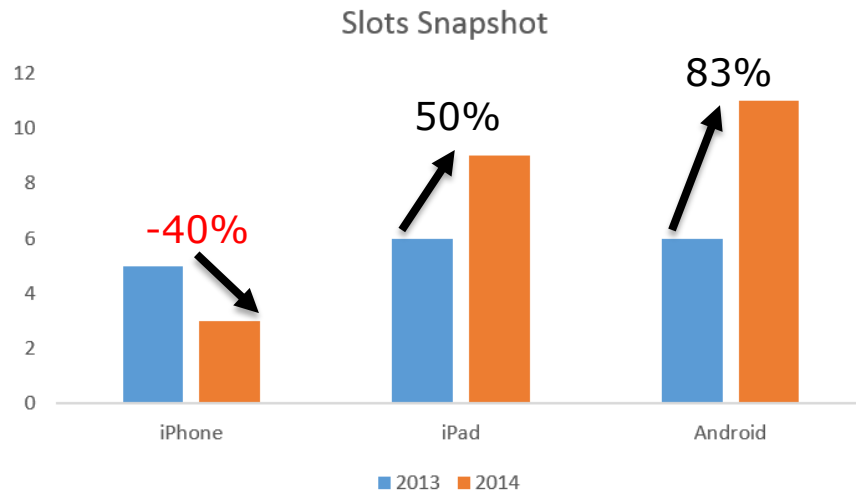
## Side Games



# Slots



- Least Network effects
- Natural Chip Sink- no economy
- Nobody has cracked social yet



\*source: Appannie.com – Data show #of top grossing in top 100 grossing delta between snapshots



# Slots

- Variety and differentiation
- Math
- Choreography

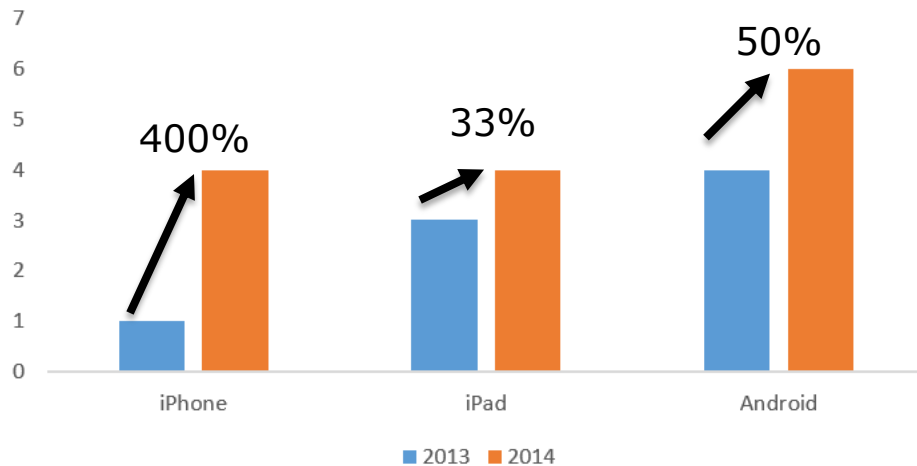


# Other



- Most of these are slots
- Some 'other' games
- Big Established Players

Other Snapshot



\*source: Appannie.com – Data show #of top grossing in top 100 grossing delta between snapshots

# Other Gambling Games

Table Games



Scratch Tickets



Casual Adaptations

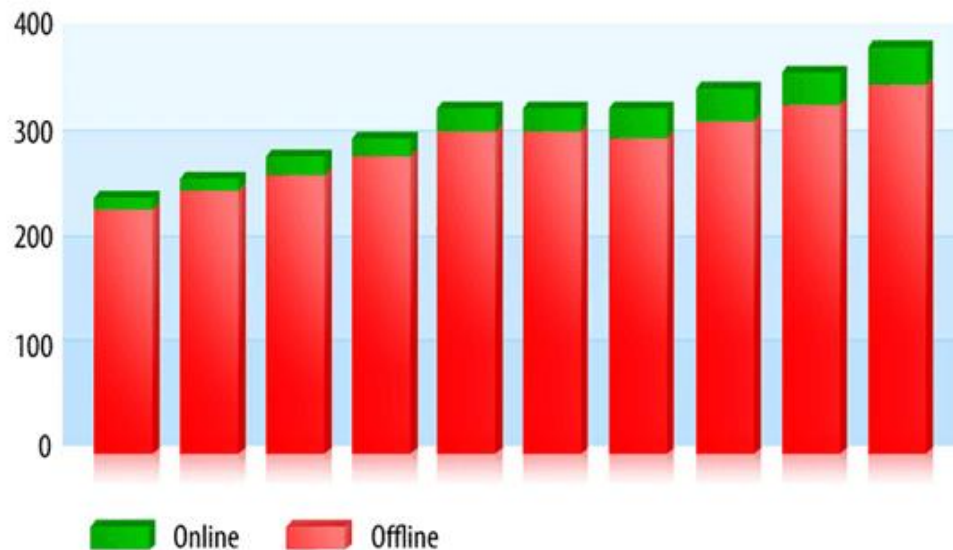


Sportsbetting

# Social Casino vs. Real Money?

Gross gaming yield globally online vs 2003-2012

USD billion



# Social vs. RMG: Differences

- Acquisition costs



- Differentiation



- Physical vs. Virtual



- Regulation





# Social Casino vs. Real Casino

- Social players can't withdraw their winnings
- It's not really gambling



# Social Casino vs. Real Casino

- Major differences in engagement and retention
  - Switching casinos is easy
  - Long-term retention is key
  - Get players to come back daily



# Social Casino vs. Real Casino

- Social has the advantage of much less regulation
  - Scripted FTUEs
  - Currency bonuses
  - Fast iteration and innovation
  - New game mechanics



# The Future of Free to Play...

- Innovation?



- Domination??



- Regulation???



# Q & A

