



# Creating Successful Game Marketing Campaigns from Your Analytics

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE®

MOSCONE CENTER · SAN FRANCISCO, CA

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# Introductions...



**Neil McClarty**

**Marketing Director of RuneScape**

**7 years @ Jagex Games Studio**

**UK Developer and Publisher  
Based in Cambridge, England**

# What to expect...



## How to build successful marketing campaigns for your games

- My experience - Covering the good, the bad and the ugly
- Some data, but not loads
- Focused on “after the analytics”
- Tailored towards marketers and product managers

# What is RuneScape?



**RuneScape is a free-to-play MMORPG set in a medieval, fantasy world**

- Launched in 2001
- Over 234 million player accounts created
- Daily peak concurrent users - 75k – 130k
- 600k+ Subscribers
  - F2P + Optional MTX
- 2 million MAU
- \$750 million lifetime revenue



# RuneScape - Demographics



15%

85%



Aged 16 - 26



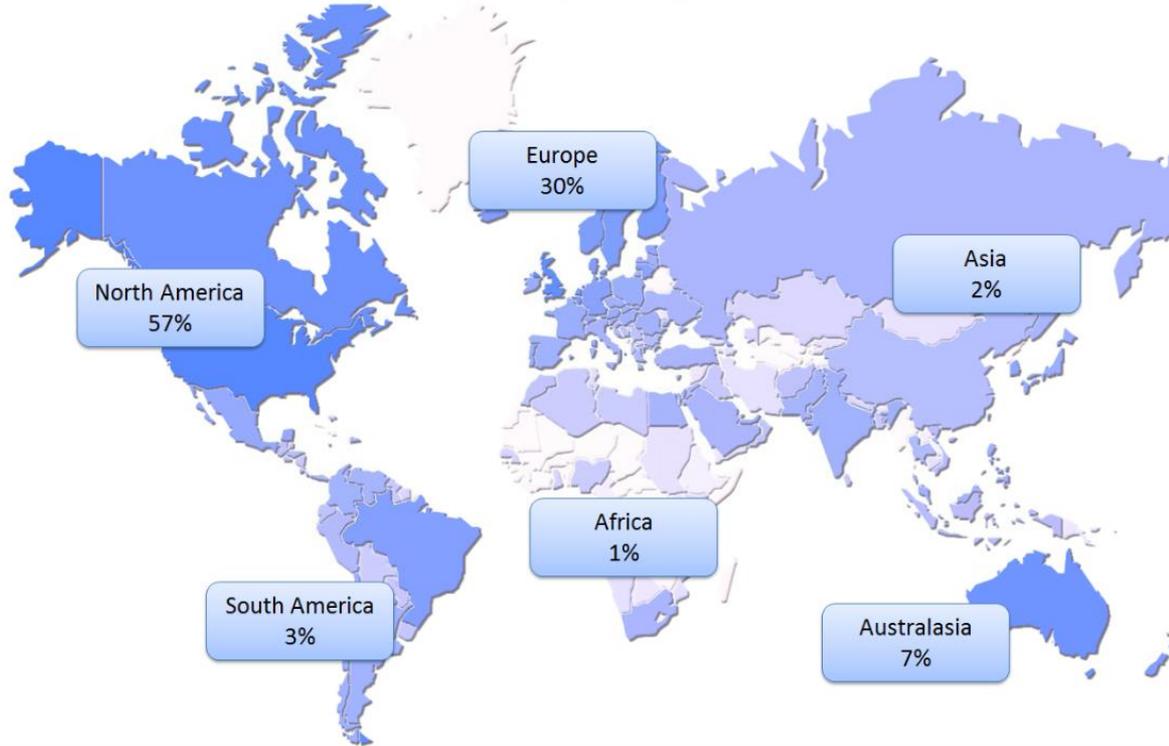
90 Minutes  
per session

Playing RuneScape for **6+ years**

# RuneScape – Region Breakdown



RuneScape Players - Region Breakdown



**OH GOD**

**WHAT AM I DOING HERE?**





10000

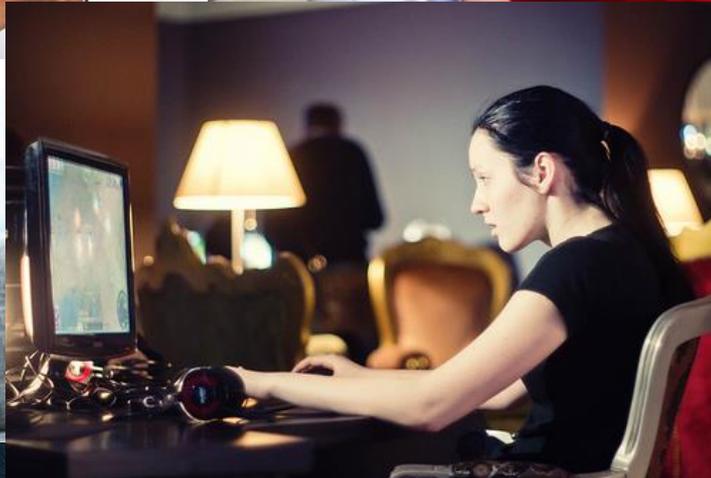


ACTION

1E



# Creating "Tailored Experiences"





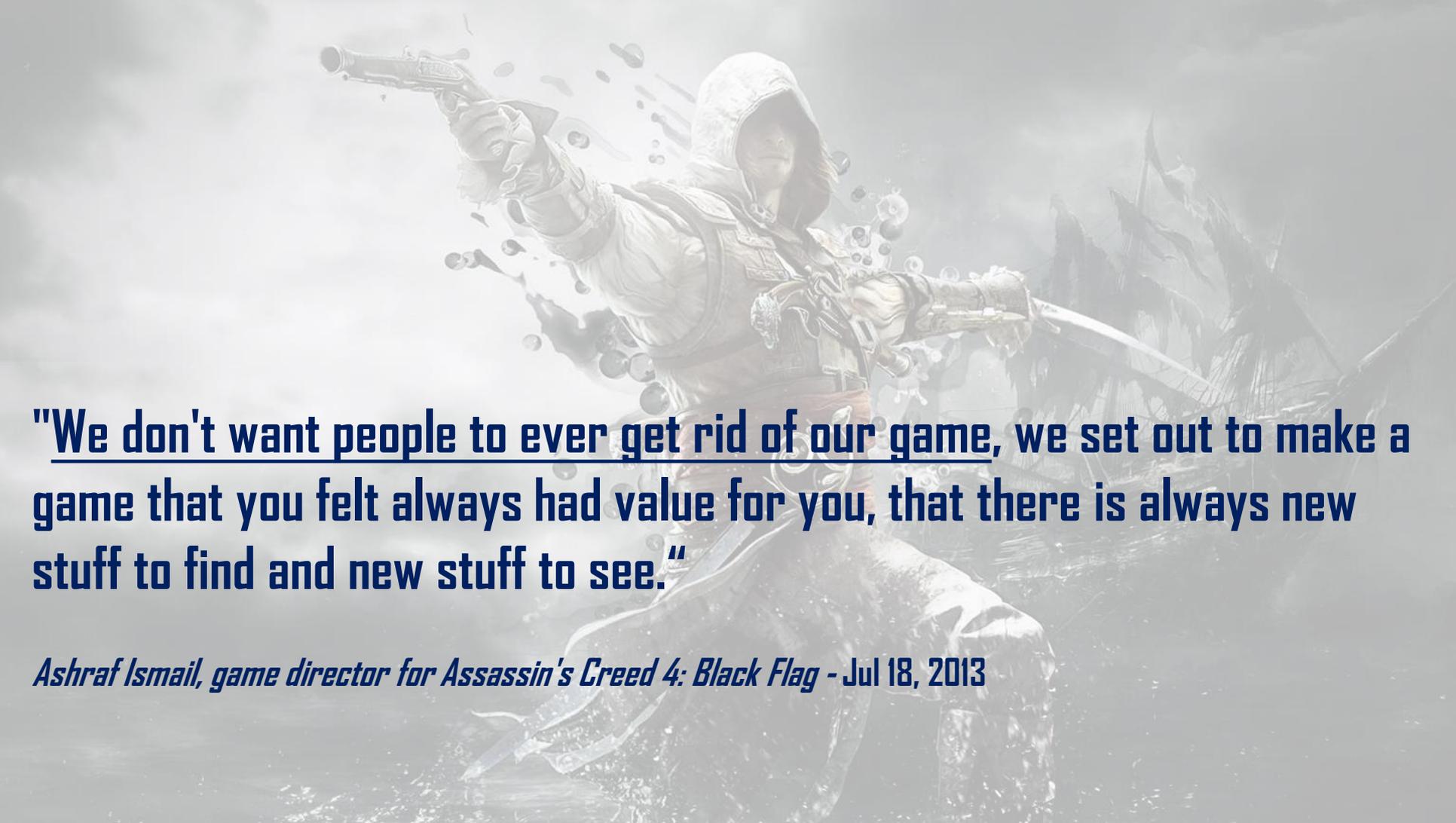
**We need to create  
tailored experiences  
with marketing too!**

# Changing landscape of Marketing



**Traditional “Boxed Product” approach is dead**

**‘Always on entertainment services’  
now dominate**



**"We don't want people to ever get rid of our game, we set out to make a game that you felt always had value for you, that there is always new stuff to find and new stuff to see."**

*Ashraf Ismail, game director for Assassin's Creed 4: Black Flag - Jul 18, 2013*



**Welcome To The Age Of  
Infobesity**

**Download  
this**

**Follow  
us**



**Play  
Now!**

**Tweet  
us**

**Buy  
Today**



**Click  
Here**

**We need to  
keep hold of  
what you've  
already got...**



**Getting  
started**





**What does  
success  
look like?**

# Channels to consider...

## 1. Social Media

### Twitter... Direct Engagement

- Consider unleashing your Developers!



### Reddit... Dark Horse

- Our most active external RS community
- Responsible for 50% of our social referral traffic



# Channels to consider...

## 2. Video

### YouTube Channel

- Regular weekly content



### Twitch... Real Growth

- Biggest growth area for RuneScape in 2014
- Regularly ranked #Top 10 most watched games on Twitch

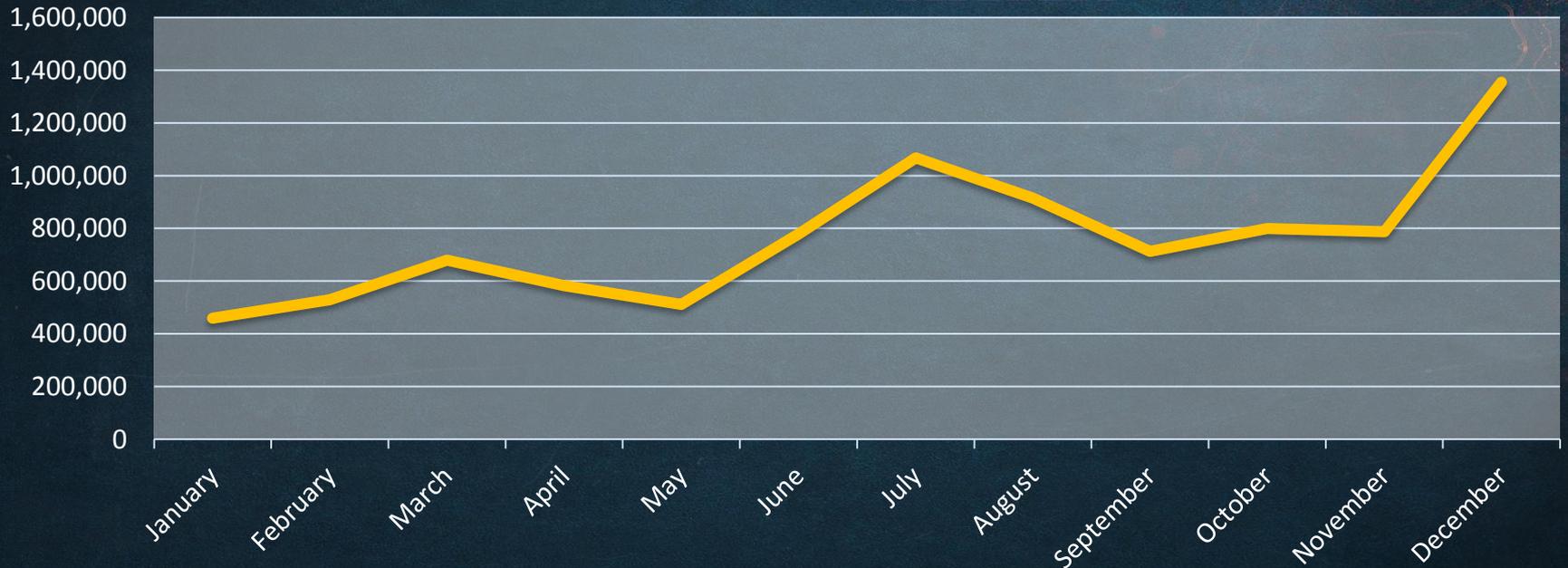


# Channels to consider...

## 2. Video



'RuneScape' 2014 Unique **twitch** Users



# Channels to consider...



## 3. Website

A screenshot of the RuneScape website's news section. It features a dark blue header with 'NEWS' and 'VIDEOS' tabs, and a 'Categories' dropdown. Below are several news items, each with a thumbnail and a title:

- IRONMAN & DROP TABLE REWORKS** (Game Updates | 13 October 2014)
- BTS VIDEO I22 - HALLOWEEN EVENT** (Behind The Scenes | 17 October 2014)
- COMMUNITY CHRONICLE 16/10** (Community | 16 October 2014)
- TREASURE HUNTER - RUNE ETHEREALS** (Treasure Hunter | 15 October 2014)
- GOLDEN GNOME AWARDS 2014 RESULTS** (Events | 15 October 2014)
- RUNEFEST 2014 - HIGHLIGHT VIDEOS** (Events | 14 October 2014)
- SOLOMON'S GENERAL STORE - MORE RESTING ANIMATIONS** (Solomon's Store | 13 October 2014)

## 4. Email

An email promotional banner for RuneScape. It features the game's logo at the top left and a character in a purple dress. The main text reads 'EXCLUSIVE OFFER Created just for YOU'. Below this is a smaller promotional box for 'DOUBLE KEYS' with a 'CLAIM NOW' button.

**EXCLUSIVE OFFER**  
Created just for YOU

On your next **Treasure Hunter** purchase, get **DOUBLE KEYS**.

**DOUBLE KEYS**

Double keys for you  
Purchase any Treasure Hunter package and you'll receive twice as many keys!

Act now to take advantage - this single-use offer is for you and you alone!

**CLAIM NOW**

## 5. In game

A screenshot of the RuneScape in-game lobby. The interface is dark with various navigation tabs and promotional banners.

**LOBBY**  
WELCOME BACK MAC  
You last logged in 8 days ago.

Player Info | World Select | Friends | Friends Chat | Clan Chat | Options

**LATEST CONTENT**

- DOUBLE XP WEEKEND** - 24 HOURS  
Starts 12pm Game Time 20th February
- TREASURE HUNTER** TIME TO TRAIN  
3 keys, 269 hearts
- DAILY DEAL** Runescape Through the Ages NOW ONLY 49 RuneCoins

**NEWS** (Show All)

- GameBlast15 | Friday 12:00 UTC | Live Stream & Double GameBlast15 starts Friday 12:00 UTC, with a Double XP Weekend and 24-hour charity live stream. Community | 17-Feb-2015
- Treasure Hunter Time to Train  
Get ready for some epic XP gains this weekend, with handy training items on Treasure Hunter. Treasure Hunter | 19-Feb-2015
- Ninja Update Return of the Wildywyrm  
The Ninjas have summoned the Wildywyrm, with new level 85 weapon modifications, and (...). Game Updates | 16-Feb-2015
- BTS Video GameBlast15

World 56 | **PLAY NOW**

# Time to Prioritise!



**Measure your 'operational' ROI**

# Choosing the right campaign...

## But which one?



### Acquisition

- Plugging the leakage points

### Conversion

- Pushing them over the edge

### Retention

- Providing **REAL** reasons to stay

### Winback

- Why should they return?

# Acquisition

Plugging the leakage points



## Potential Campaigns

- Email Validation
- Created Account but never logged into game
- Nursery Program



# Conversion

Getting players off the fence



WELCOME BACK CCRM\_3

You last logged in earlier today.

Player Info World Select Friends Friends Chat Clan Chat

LATEST CONTENT



TREASURE HUNTER



SOLOMON'S STORE



World 80

PLAY NOW

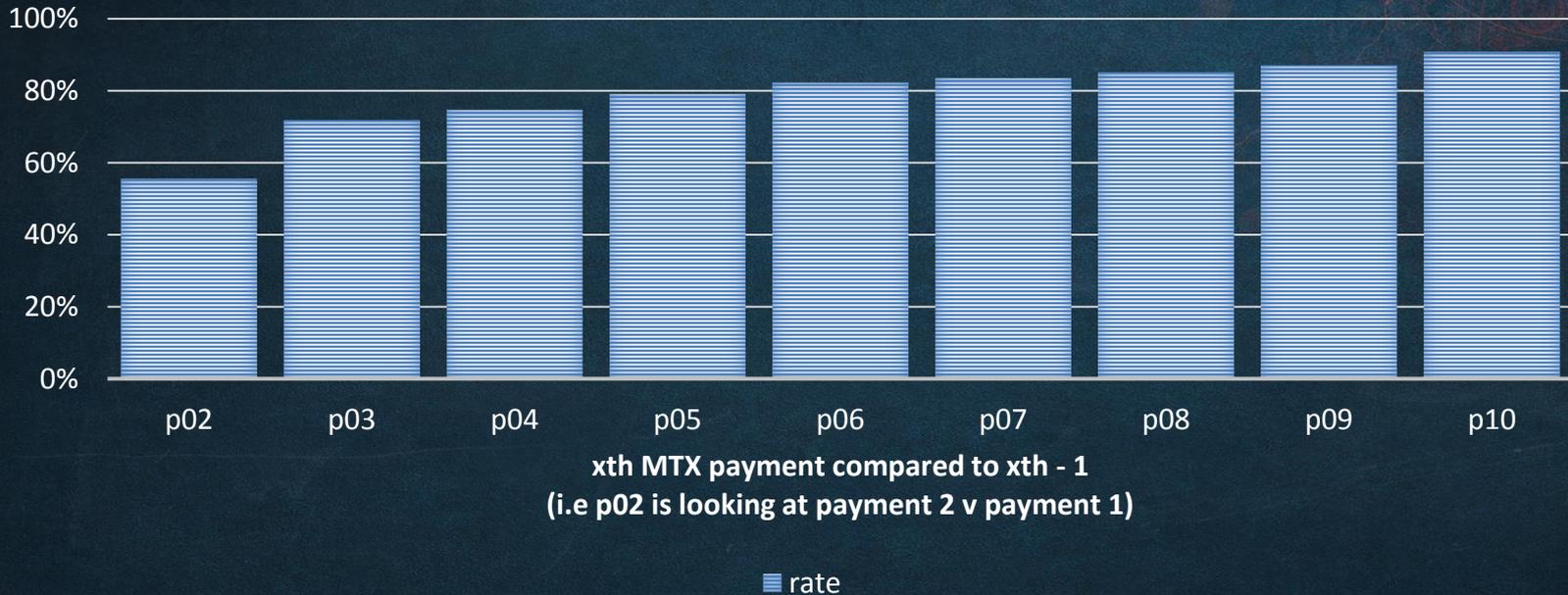
## Potential Campaigns

- 1st Payment
- 2nd Payment

# The important 2<sup>nd</sup> payment...



## PAYMENT SEQUENCE ANALYSIS



# Conversion

Getting players off the fence



## Potential Campaigns

- 1st Payment
- 2nd Payment
- VIP Conversion
  - Bronze > Silver
  - Silver > Gold

WELCOME BACK CCRM\_3  
You last logged in earlier today.

Player Info World Select Friends Friends Chat Clan Chat

### LATEST CONTENT



### TREASURE HUNTER



### SOLOMON'S STORE



World 80

PLAY NOW

# Retention

Provide **REAL** reasons to stay...



## Potential Campaigns

- “Cannot miss” seasonal events



# United for Wildlife

## Charity In Game Event



**226,300** digital 'Royal Rhinos' were adopted by players

**58%** of our active paying players took part!



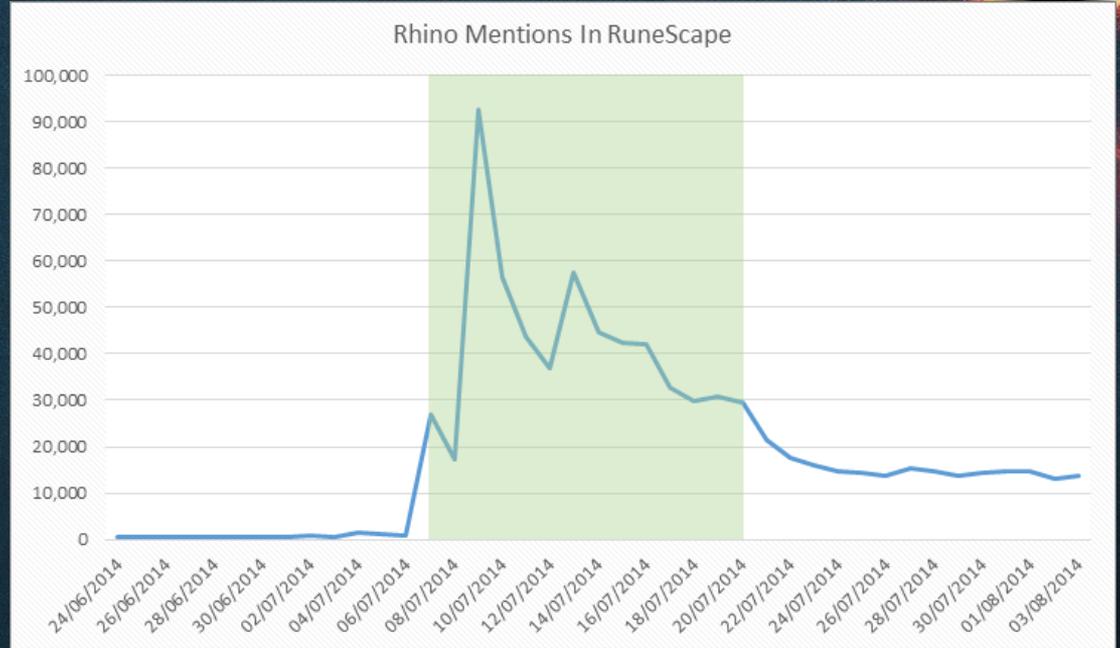
**One of the highest content engagement % in 2014**

# United for Wildlife

## Charity In Game Event



On a daily basis we had **41,700** mentions of Rhinos in game throughout the highlighted two week event



# Retention

Provide **REAL** reasons to stay...



## Potential Campaigns

- “Cannot miss” seasonal events
- Behind the Scenes preview
  - Monthly Video + News post
- Mid/Long term Lock in
  - Keep your seasonal players for longer



RuneScape BTS 128:  
December Updates Comin...

by RuneScape ✓  
59,668 views • 2 months ago

CC



RuneScape BTS 133:  
January Updates Coming ...

by RuneScape ✓  
55,346 views • 1 month ago

CC



RuneScape BTS 137:  
February Updates Coming...

by RuneScape ✓  
63,709 views • 3 weeks ago

CC

# PREMIER

Club

in partnership with  **PayPal**

Pay with **PayPal** & get exclusive **Samurai Outfit** & **Kirin Pet**

▶ JOIN NOW ▶



# Winback

Why should they return...



## Don't miss out!

Hi %%cf\_displayname%%,

We sent you an email last week about your membership, but it doesn't look like you've seen it.

There's loads of amazing member content still to come this year! With the high level paradise that is Elf City, plenty of brand new quests, as well as awesome improvements and updates there's never been a better time to be a member.

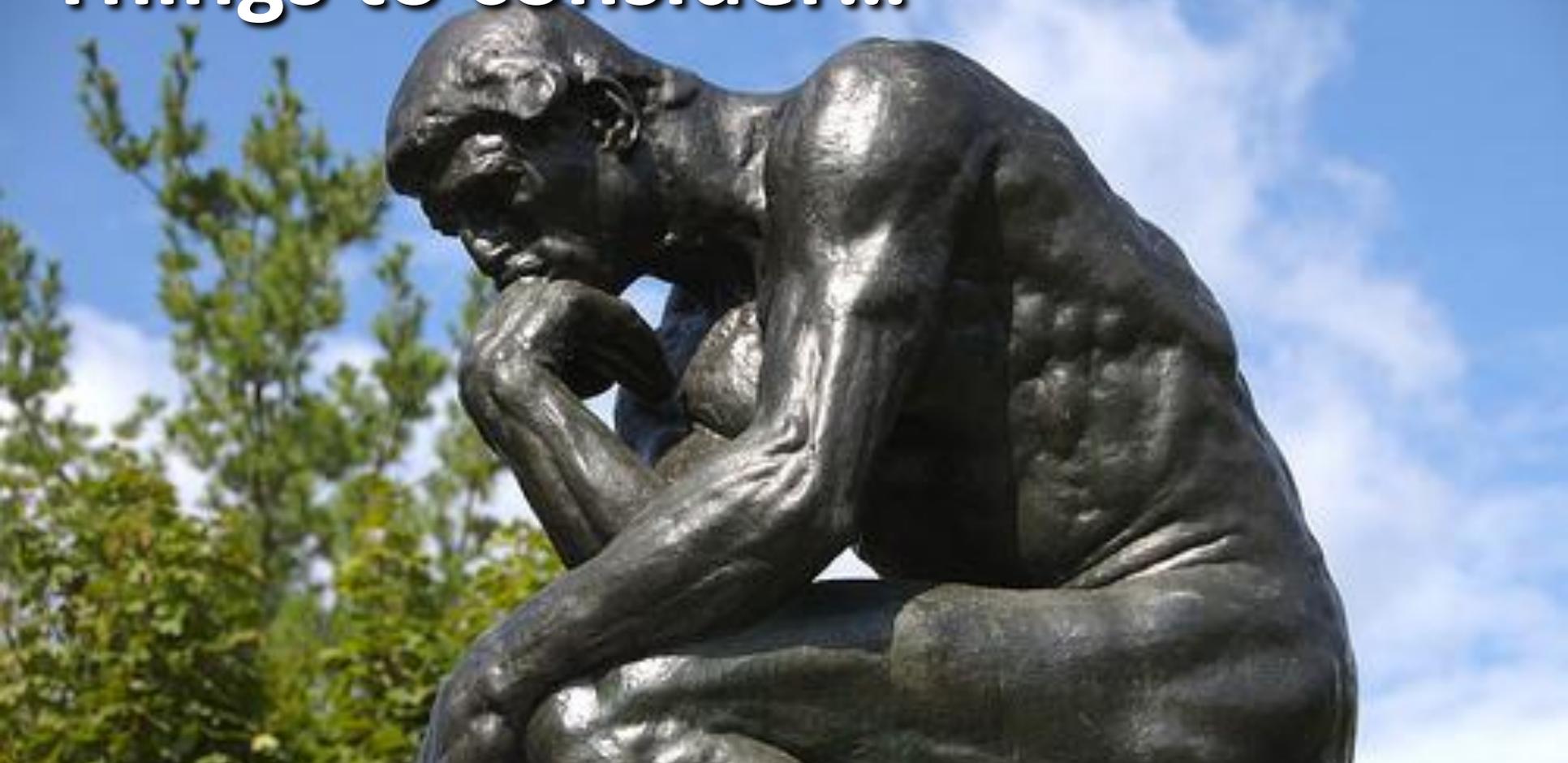
[Renew Now](#)

If you need a helping hand [click here](#) to get in touch with us.

## Potential Campaigns

- **Survey them!**
  - Need to find out why they left first
    - Too Expensive?
    - Bored?
    - Peer Pressure?
    - Rage Quit?
- **Give them a Cuddle**
- **Incentivised Promotion**
  - Don't over-discount (short term boost could hurt in the long run)

**Things to consider...**



# The importance of... **Creative**

## **Be bold and radical**

**Refresh and test your creative as often as possible.**

## **Slicken your paid acquisition funnel**

- Marry up ad creative with matching website/game creative.

## **Tailor to your audience**

- Custom audience lists allow you to synchronise your campaigns



# The importance of... **Timing**



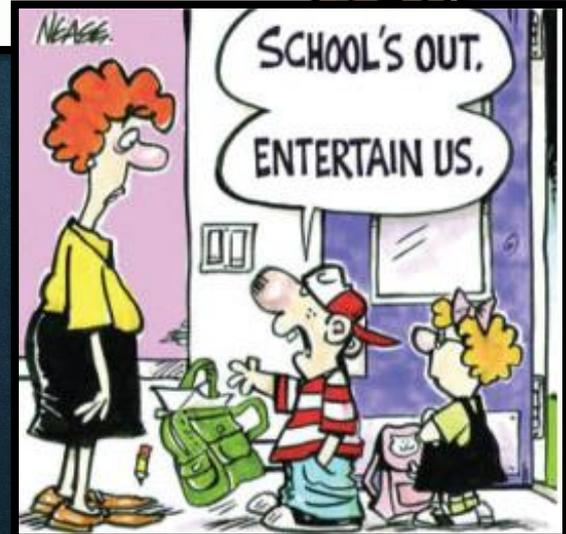
## **Seasonality is a big deal...**

- Be sympathetic to IRL factors
- Summer – lots of free time to play
- May/September – less free time



## **Think about frequency...**

- How many times have you contacted them in the last 30 days?
  - Are you harassing them?
  - If you have been a stranger, start gently



# The importance of... **Testing & Control Groups**



*“There are only two rules in direct marketing.  
Rule 1: test everything. Rule 2: refer to Rule 1”*

- **Test, Review and Test again**
- **Always use control groups**
- **Don't over segment**
  - will increase set-up / admin costs
  - increases the likelihood of 'decision-paralysis'

The screenshot shows the 'MEMBERS BENEFITS' page for Runescape. It features several promotional banners and buttons. Yellow circles highlight specific elements, and percentage changes are noted next to them:

- A banner at the top says "90% OF PLAYERS ONLINE RIGHT NOW ARE MEMBERS!".
- Three membership options are shown: 1 MONTH (\$7.95), 3 MONTHS (SAVE \$1.90, \$21.95), and 12 MONTHS (SAVE \$20.45, \$74.95). Each has a "CONTINUE" button.
- A purple button offers "14 DAYS WITH BONDS USING IN-GAME GOLD".
- A banner below says "NEVER MISS OUT ON THE LATEST CONTENT" and features the "RUNESCAPE LOST CITY OF THE ELVES" update.
- A banner below that says "EXCLUSIVE TO MEMBERS ONLY! OVER 160 ADDITIONAL QUESTS, 10 SKILLS, 37 MINIGAMES AND MORE!".
- At the bottom, there are four smaller banners: "OVER 160 EXTRA QUESTS", "MASTER AN EXTRA 10 SKILLS", "EXCLUSIVE MEMBER MINIGAMES", and "3X LARGER WORLD TO EXPLORE".

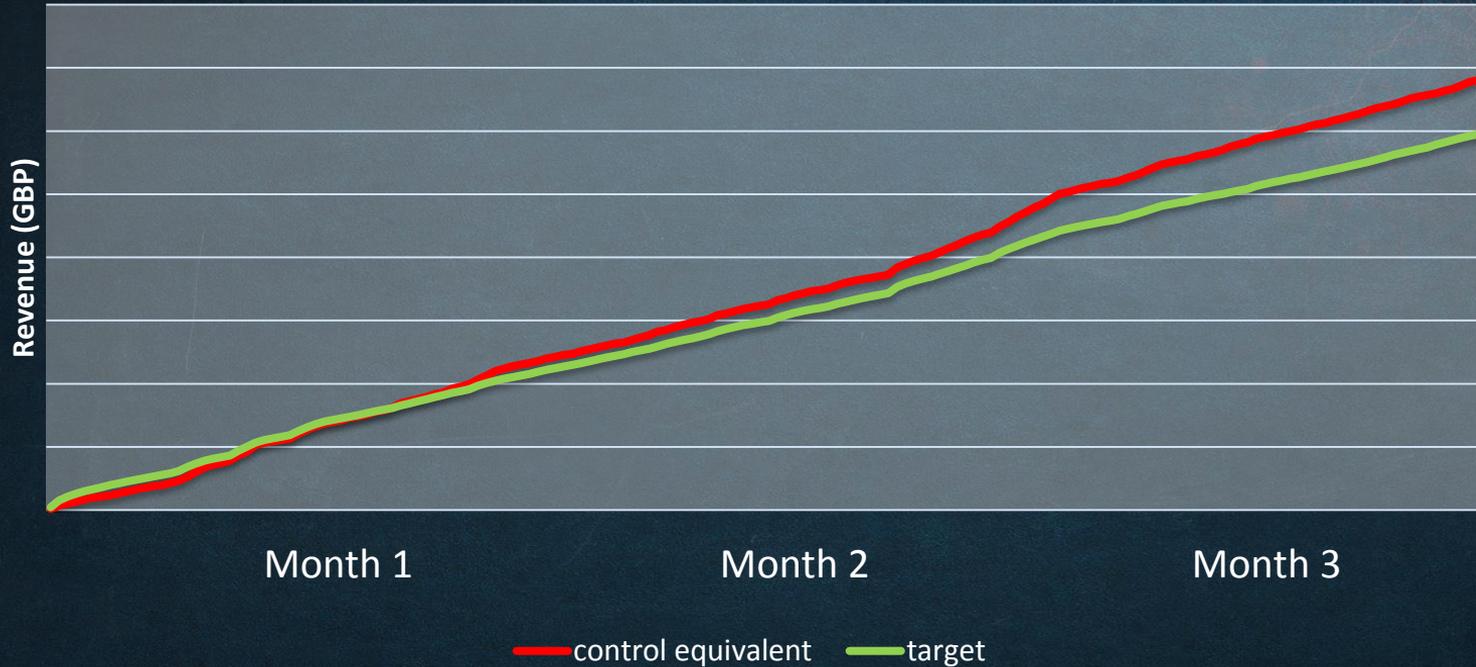
Percentage changes indicated by callouts:

- 0.2% (near the top banner)
- 0.0%\* (near the 14 Days button)
- +0.3% (near the Runescape update banner)
- 2.0% (near the Exclusive to Members banner)

# The importance of... **Control Groups**



## Lapsed VIPs Cumulative GBP

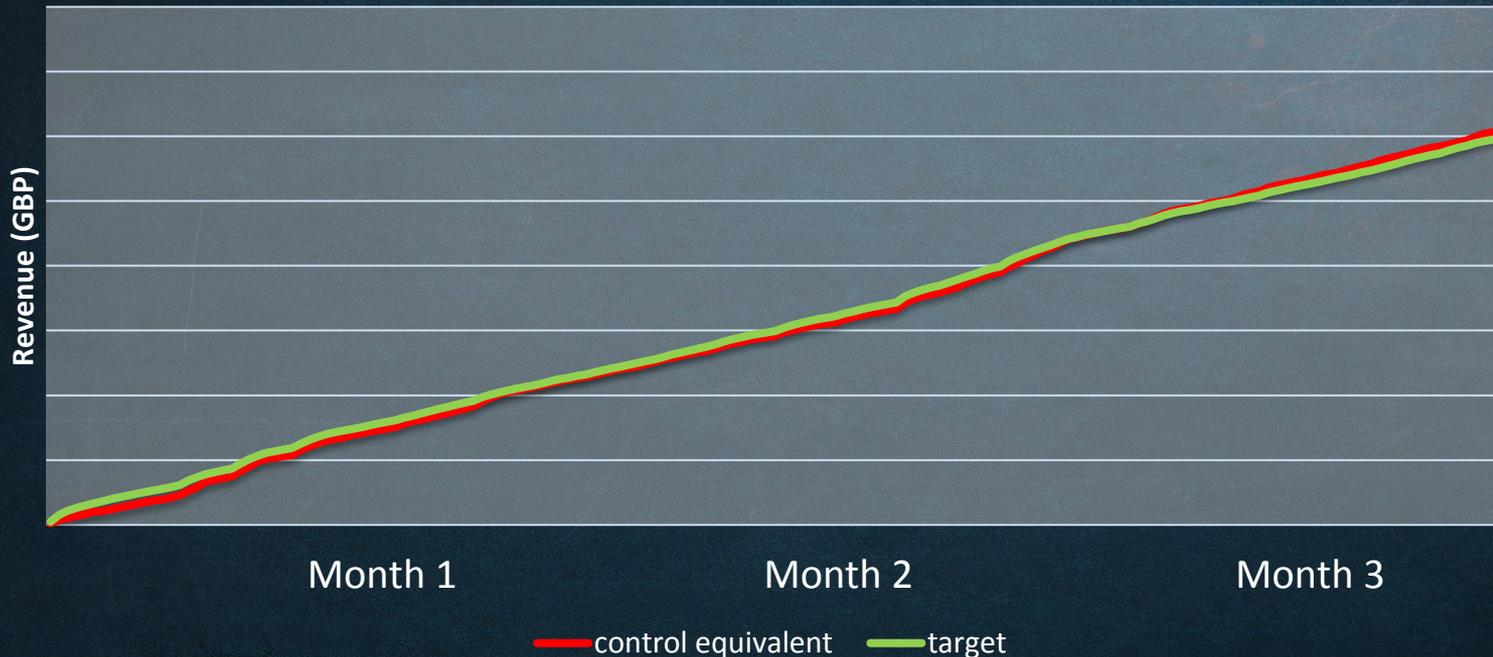


# The importance of... **Control Groups**



**2 biggest 'VIPs' in the control group!**

Lapsed VIP Cumulative GBP (Excluding outliers)



# The importance of... **Testing**

## Analyse at the top and bottom of your funnel



**RuneScape**  
Sponsored · Like Page

After 10 years, the crystal gates to the Lost City of the Elves have opened!  
Come in and explore Prifddinas in all its glory



**Prifddinas - Lost City of the Elves**  
The biggest RuneScape update of the year!

RUNESCAPE.COM [Learn More](#)

Share · 12 · 9 · 1

**CTR = 2.27%, CPP = £1.74**

**RuneScape**  
Sponsored · Like Page

After 10 years, the crystal gates to the Lost City of the Elves have opened!  
Come in and explore Prifddinas in all its glory



**Prifddinas - Lost City of the Elves**  
The biggest RuneScape update of the year!

RUNESCAPE.COM [Learn More](#)

Share

**CTR = 1.09%, CPP = £0.98**

**RuneScape**  
Sponsored · Like Page

After 10 years, the crystal gates to the Lost City of the Elves have opened!  
Come in and explore Prifddinas in all its glory



**Prifddinas - Lost City of the Elves**  
The biggest RuneScape update of the year!

RUNESCAPE.COM [Learn More](#)

Share · 40 · 10 · 1

**CTR = 1.33%, CPP = £0.63**

**RuneScape**  
Sponsored · Like Page

After 10 years, the crystal gates to the Lost City of the Elves have opened!  
Come in and explore Prifddinas in all its glory



**Prifddinas - Lost City of the Elves**  
The biggest RuneScape update of the year!

RUNESCAPE.COM [Learn More](#)

Share · 11 · 6

**CTR = 1.45%, CPP = £1.03**

**CTR = Click Through Rate**  
**CPP = Cost Per Payment**

# The importance of... **Testing**



## Email Subject Lines...

Open

Click

1. *Decide the fate of Legacy Mode*

2. *{DISPLAYNAME} - Your Vote Counted!*



1. *Can you win the Clan Cup?*

2. *It has begun...*



1. *{DISPLAYNAME}, soon it will all be gone*

2. *Treasure Hunter - Extra bonus Offer*



# The importance of... **your Community**



- **Too good to be true?**
  - Players might think it's a hoax or scam

# The importance of... **your Community**



## Too good to be true?

  11  ? Anyone else receive this "Exclusive Offer" in a Runescape email? (i.imgur.com)  
submitted 2 months ago by Garwald  Pureiron man  
16 comments share

 [-] rubxium  RSN: MachV 2 points 2 months ago  
So this is actually legit? It kind of screams malicious email to me.  
permalink

2   0  Is this offer exclusive to me only?! Or was it offered to 1000 people? (imgur.com)  
submitted 7 months ago by Meet\_Dave  Goooooold!  
10 comments share

# The importance of... **your Community**



- **Too good to be true?**
  - Players might think it's a hoax or scam
- **Consider the non selected**
  - "I deserve this offer!"
- **Fansites can amplify your message**
  - Provide them the creative and watch them go!
- **Players talk... and are increasingly savvy**
  - If its not exclusive don't say it is!



# Our Biggest Successes



- **Biggest wins for us...**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Payer, Lapsed Whale, VIP Club Lock in
- **Identify easy wins and repeat the winning formula**
  - Make regular, minor adjustments
- **Always Nudge**
  - Adds urgency
  - Can add another 20-30% to your results
- **Retargeting yields more than fresh acquisition**
  - Find out why they left and use to your advantage

# Our Biggest Pitfalls



- **Don't scrimp on agility**
- **Know when to sell and when to help**
  - Players are people too!
- **Customers don't know what they don't know**
  - Educate them on the possibilities, don't assume they know what we do
- **Waking up Sleepers is sacrilege**
- **Don't disrupt your VIPs**
  - Don't try to adjust their payment patterns
  - Instead provide more content to consume

In Summary...



**Test** everything

**Creating an experience** is crucial

Make the move from  
**attention grabbing** to **attention holding**

Do not miss...

## Returners and Retention

*How to win back lapsed players*

Phil Mansell – Head of Studio, RuneScape

Thursday 10am, Room 3016, West Hall

+ ADD



# Thank you!



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