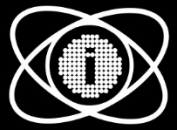
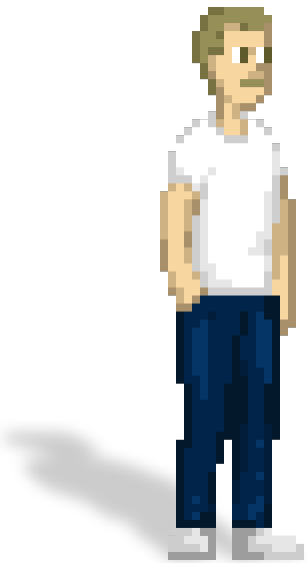


INDEPENDENT GAMES SUMMIT

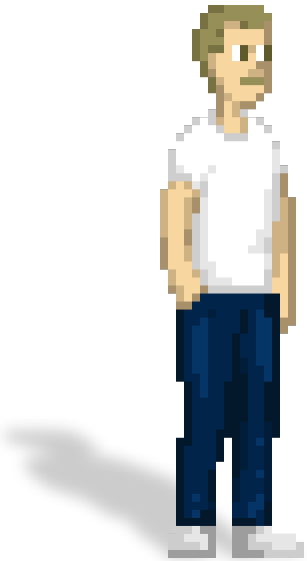
The Armello Postmortem: A Journey of Spirit & Peril

Trent Kusters
Co-founder & Director
League of Geeks

@TrentKusters

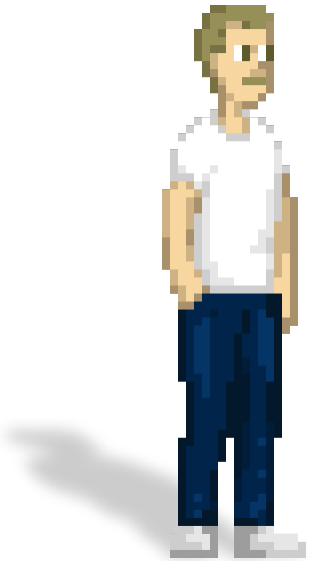


@TrentKusters



FREEPLAY

@TrentKusters



FREEPLAY

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE | VCA Victorian College of the Arts

RMIT UNIVERSITY

SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

LoG

LoG

Armello

Trent

Trent

Blake

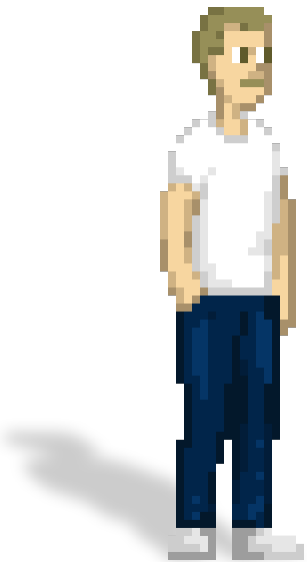
Ty

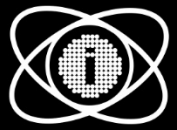
Trent

Blake

Ty

*white guy, etc**





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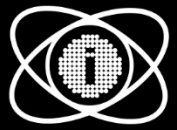

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The Armello Partmortem: A Journey of Spirit & Peril

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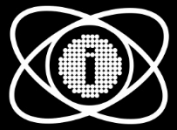
GDC GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE March 14–18, 2016 · Expo: March 16–18, 2016 #GDC16

UBM



INDEPENDENT GAMES SUMMIT

The LoG Partmortem: A Journey of Spirit & Peril

Trent Kusters
Co-founder & Director
League of Geeks

TALKING POINTS

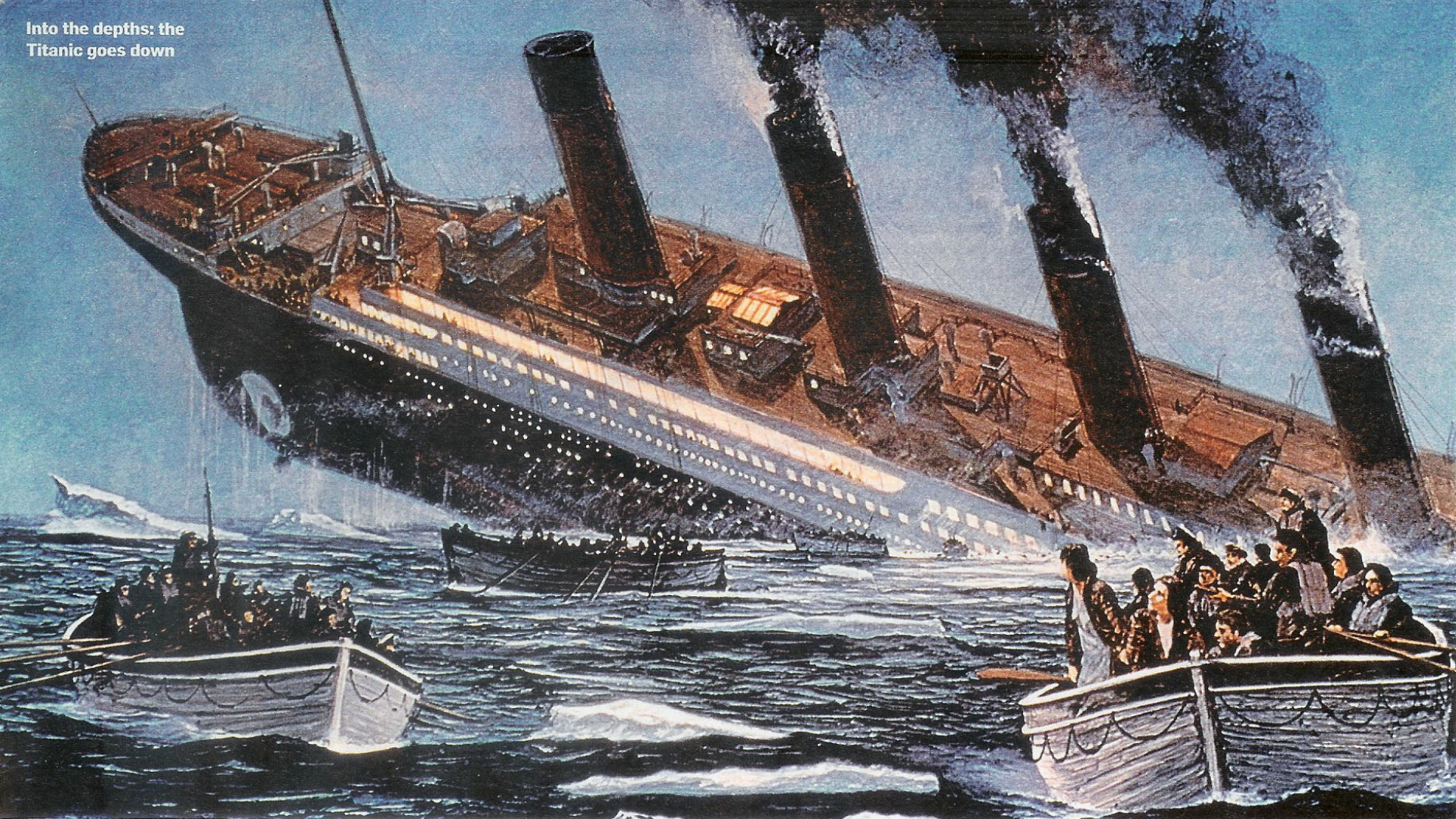
1. Five Years in Five Mins
2. Kickstarter
3. Early Access
4. Failures
5. The LoG Points System
6. Relationships

LoG

LoG's 5 in 5

LōG

TITANIC



Into the depths: the Titanic goes down

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gularly updated:

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ames Summit:

IGF NEWS

PRINT

« *Monaco, Shadow Physics*, Coconut Island Devs Leading GDC China Indie Game Summit | Main | 2011 Independent Games Festival Announces Nuovo Award Jury »

2011 Independent Games Festival Announces Record Main Competition Entrants

The organizers of the 13th Annual Independent Games Festival -- the longest-running and largest festival relating to independent games worldwide -- are proud to announce another year of record entry numbers for IGF 2011's Main Competition, following its submission deadline this week.

In total, this year's Main Competition took in just under 400 game entries -- many of them new titles from leading indie developers -- across all platforms.

This includes 150 entries for mobile hardware like the iPhone, iPad, DS, PSP and Android devices, with all mobile entries now eligible for all IGF 2011 prizes, including a unique Best Mobile Game award.

In-depth information and entrant-provided screenshots and videos on each of the

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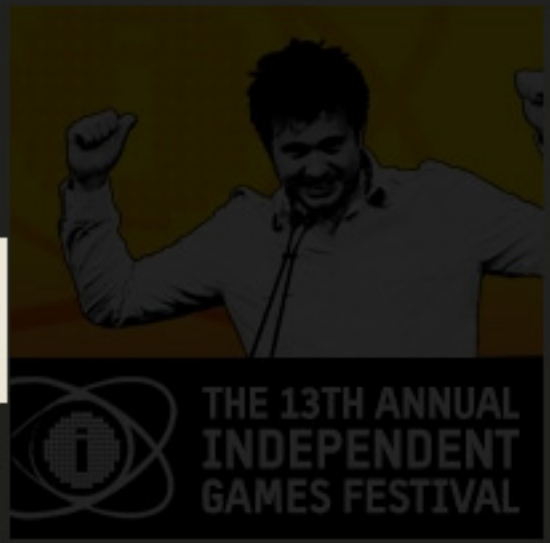

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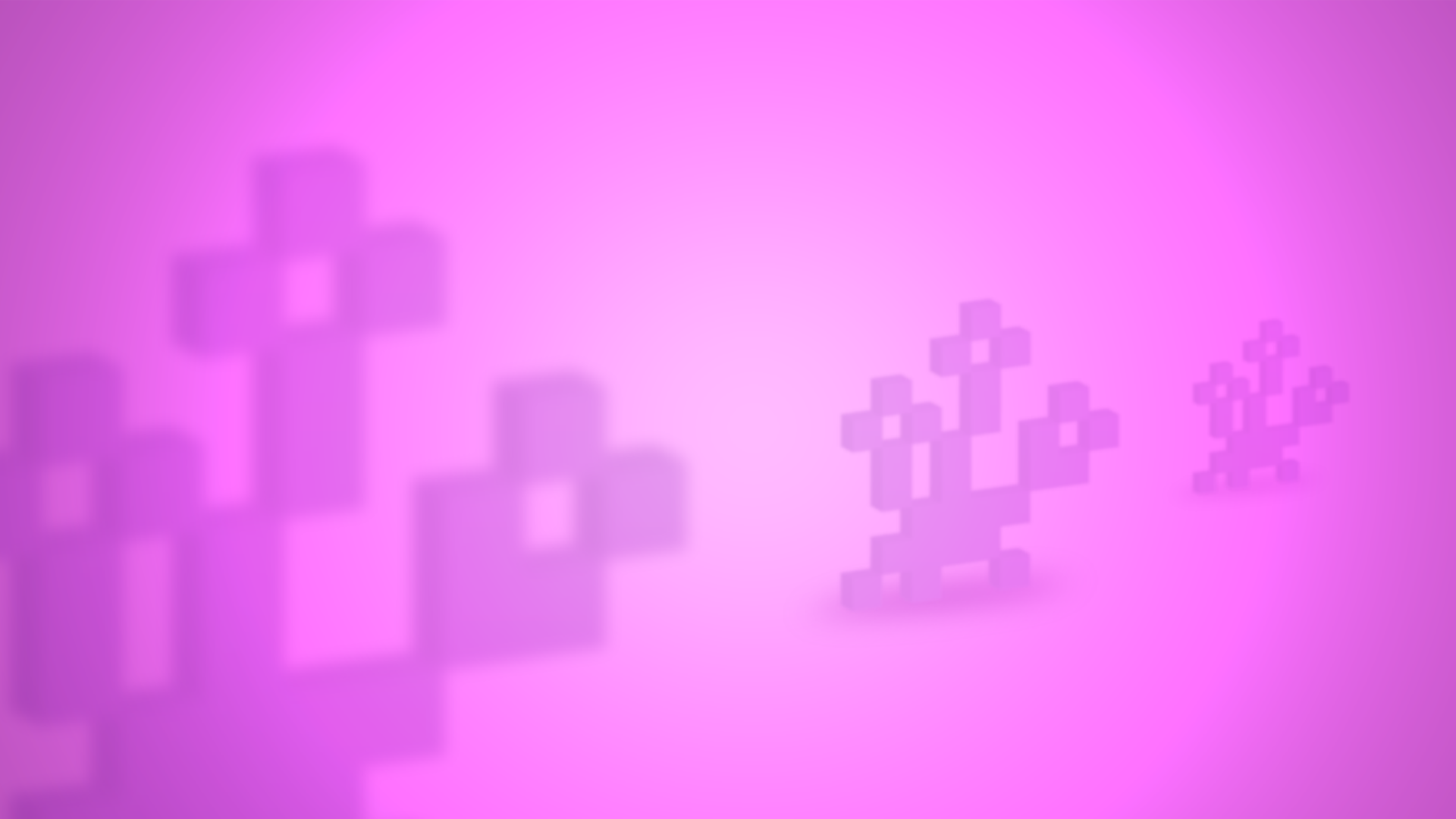
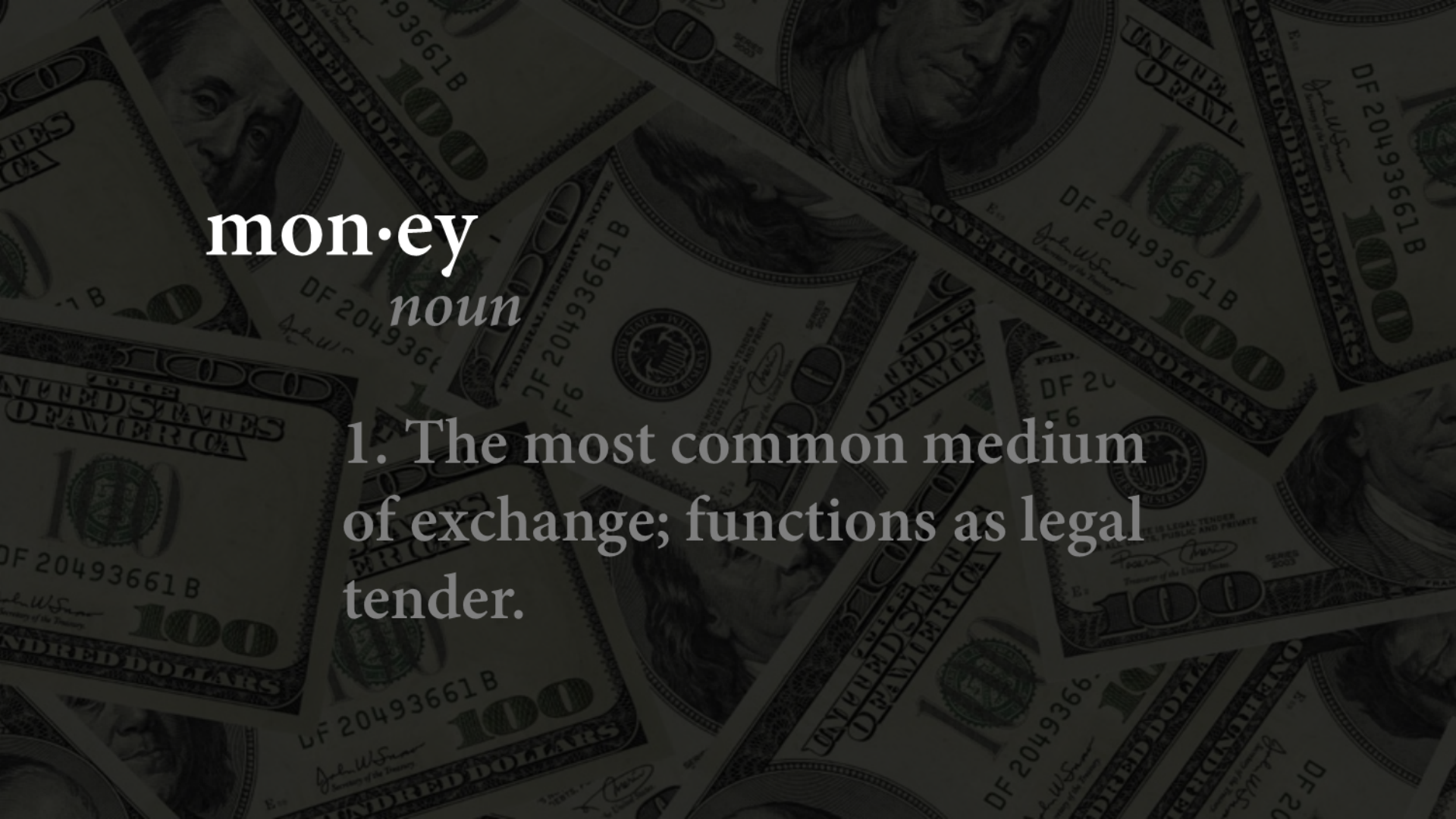
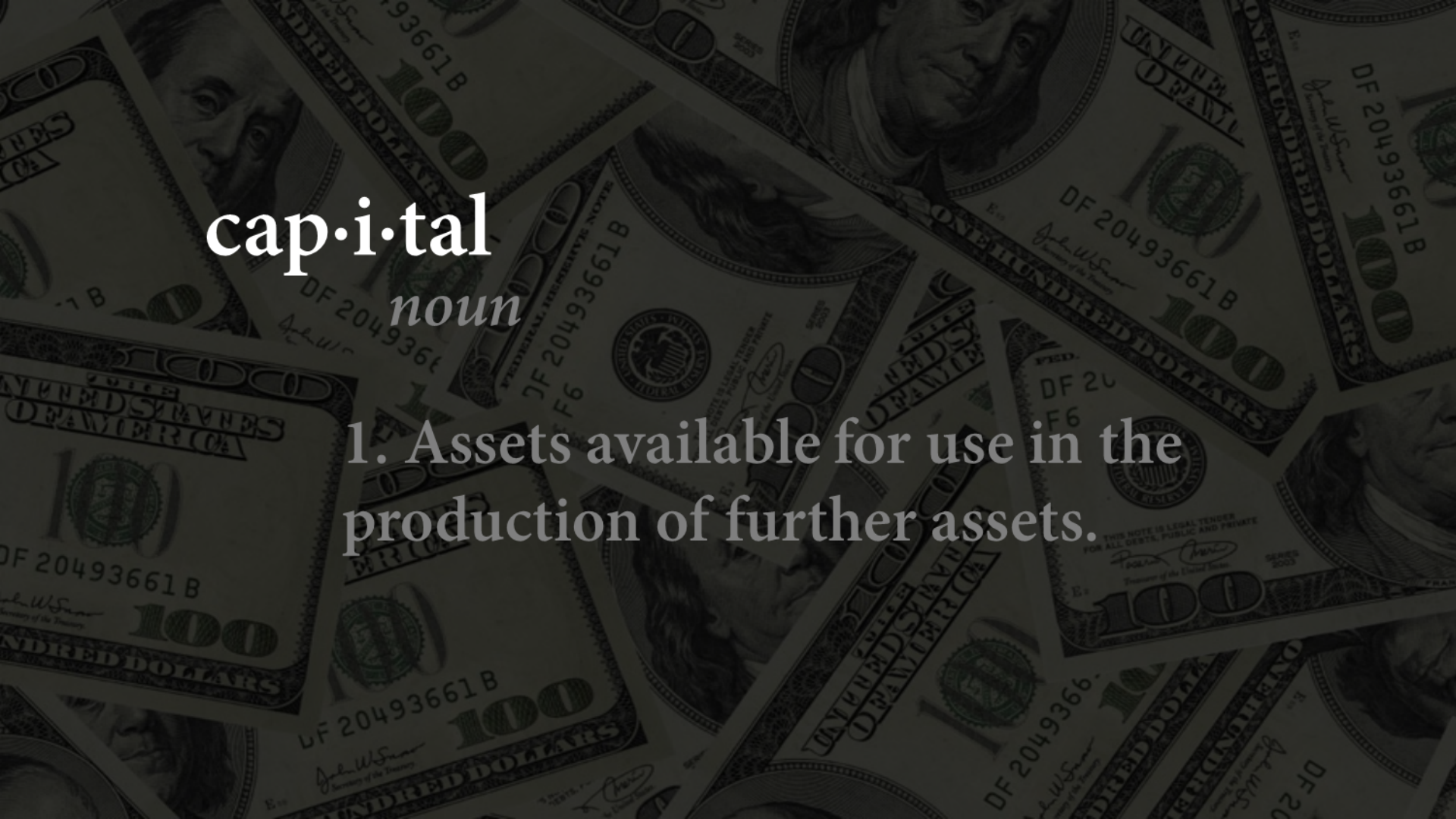




mon·ey

noun

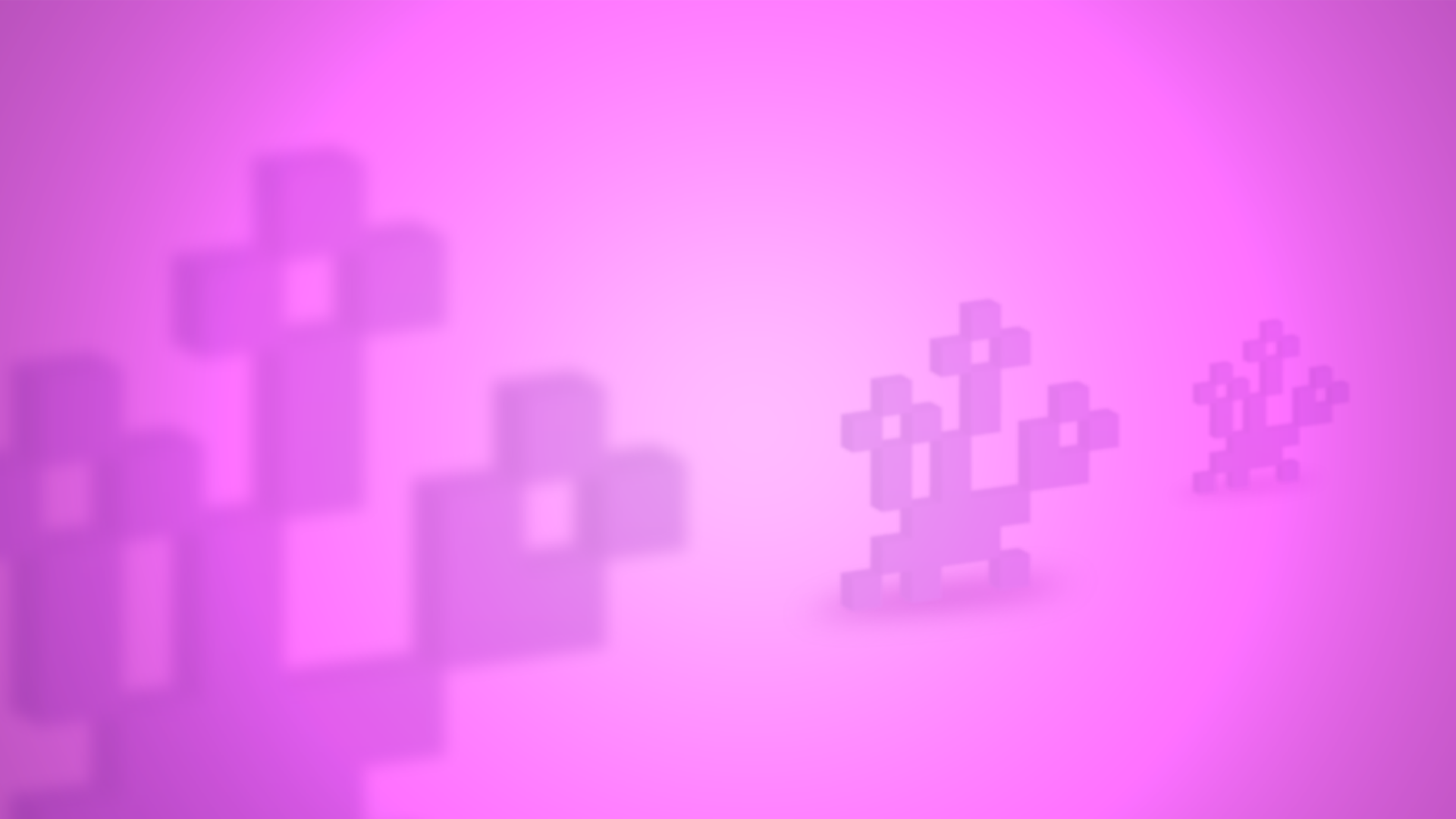
1. The most common medium of exchange; functions as legal tender.

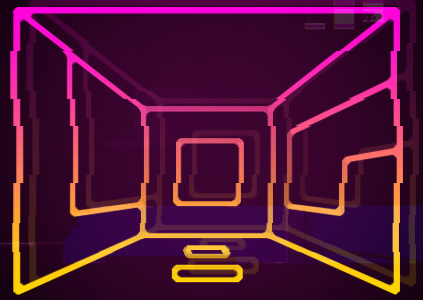


cap·i·tal

noun

1. Assets available for use in the production of further assets.





Remaining **INDEPENDENT**, whilst **OWNING EVERYTHING**, making your **DREAM GAME**, to the **SCALE YOU WANT**, at a quality level that's **WORLD CLASS**... and all the developers **SHARE IN THE PROFIT**.

The Three Cs.

Cultural

Furthers videogames as an art form and creative medium.

Cultural

Furthers videogames as an art form and creative medium.

Critical

Well received, by our peers, audience, and the gaming press.

Cultural

Furthers videogames as an art form and creative medium.

Critical

Well received, by our peers, audience, and the gaming press.

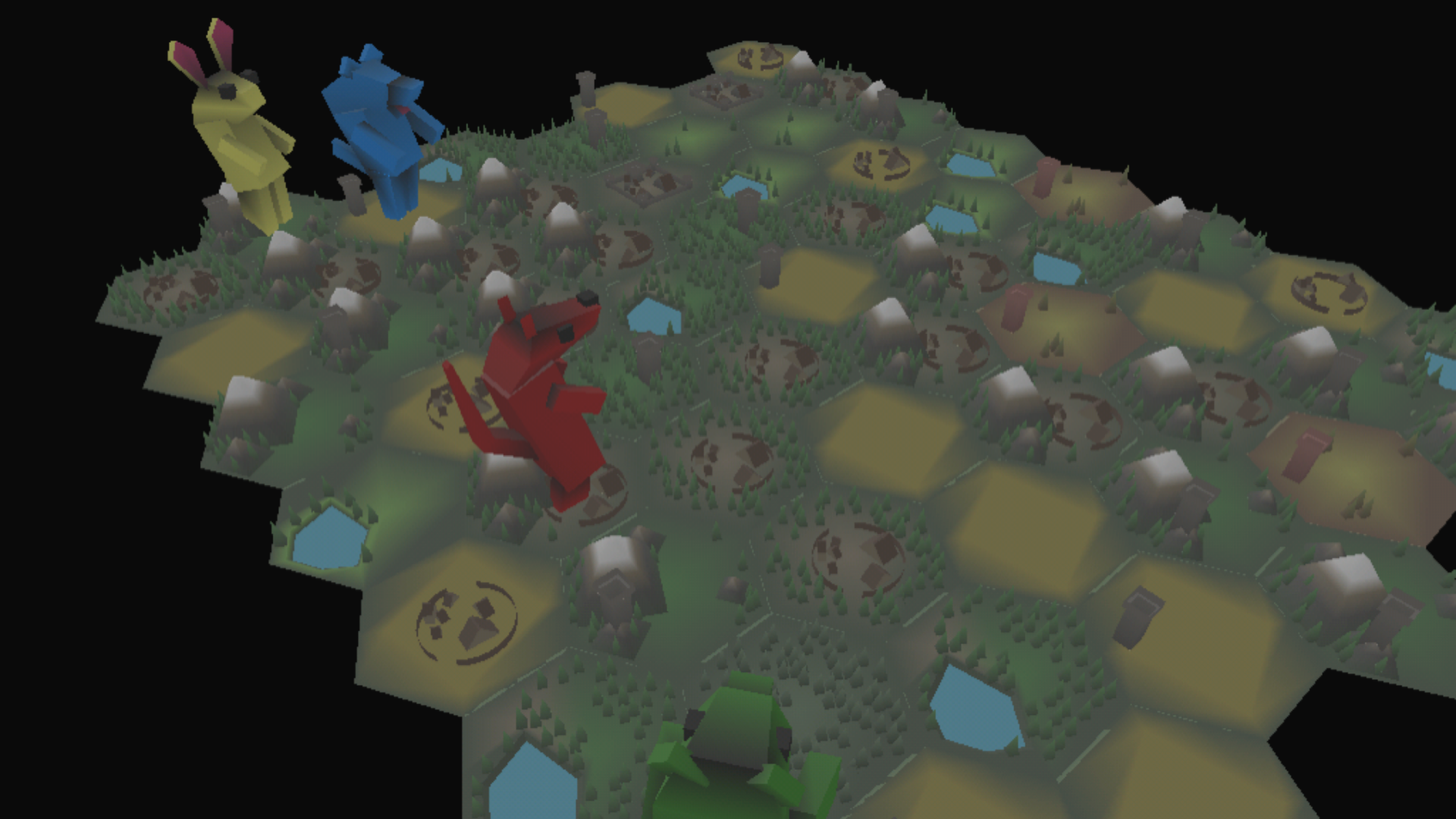
Commercial

Not only financially viable, but perpetuates financial independence.

3
5
2
14800

DIVI G

Armello



FILM VICTORIA
AUSTRALIA

Victoria

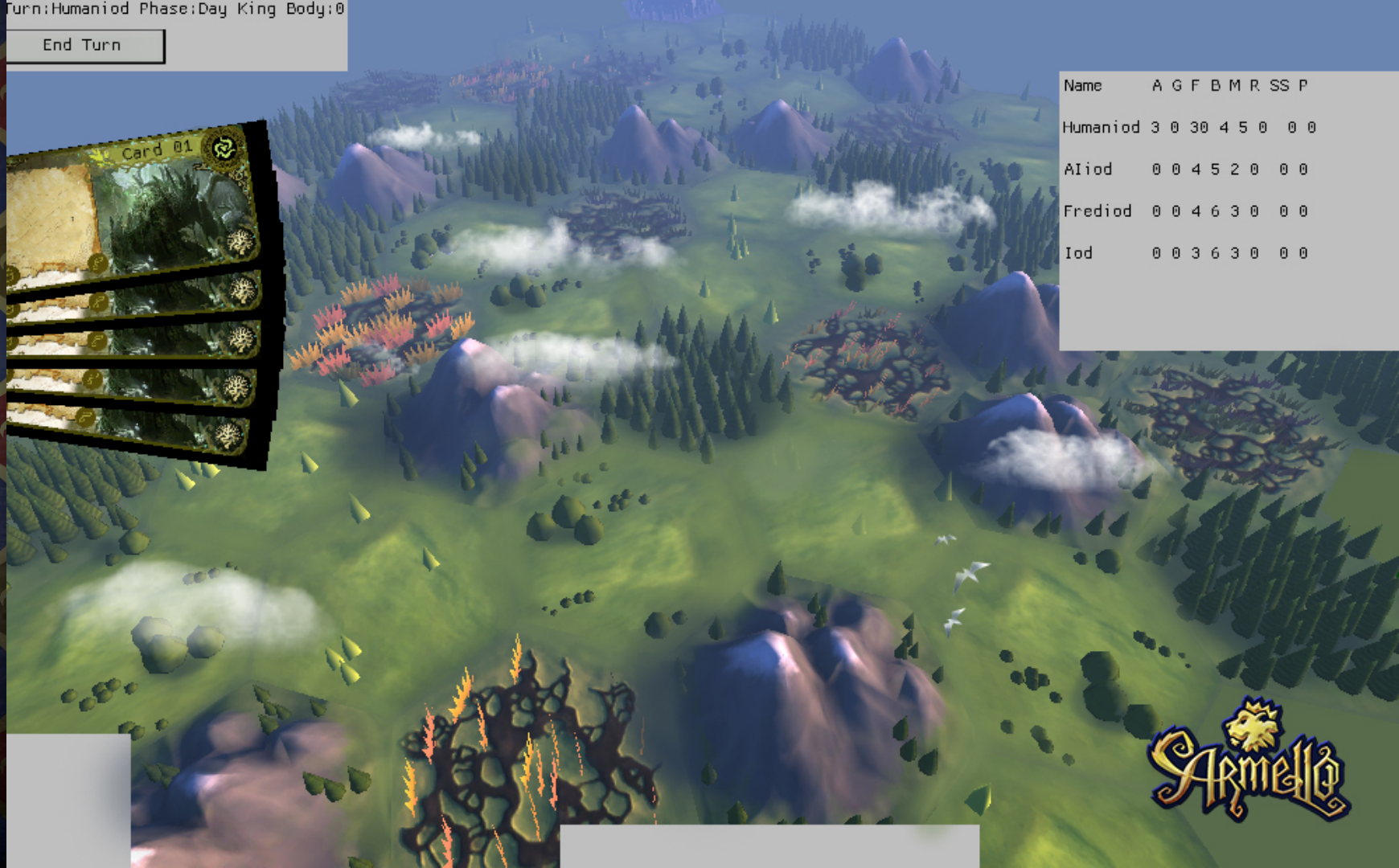
Australian Government
Screen
Australia

12 field

It's Like *Game of Thrones*, Only With Animals. I Think.

Luke Plunkett
9/20/12 2:30am · Filed to: INDIE

11.2K 21


Turn:Humaniod Phase:Day King Body:0
End Turn
Card 01
Name A G F B M R SS P
Humaniod 3 0 30 4 5 0 0 0
AIiod 0 0 4 5 2 0 0 0
Frediod 0 0 4 6 3 0 0 0
Iod 0 0 3 6 3 0 0 0
Armello

KOTAKU

Log in / Sign up

It's Like *Game of Thrones*, Only With Animals. I Think.

Luke Plunkett
9/20/12 2:30am · Filed to: INDIE

11.2K 21

"Right at the top of my iPad gaming radar."

- *Luke Plunkett*
Kotaku

COWBOYS
LA

Quit
Ap
3
enturer's Armour
Battle Axe
In Battle +1 Fight
2
0
ar Hammer
rowing Axe
yldsap
End Turn
Armello
Pre-Alpha Build
4
3/3
5
2
2
2
1
0

"The dice are rolling in Armello's favor."

- GameInformer

“The dice are rolling in Armello’s favor.”

- GameInformer

“Armello Is One Of The Prettiest (And Most Interesting) Games Of 2014.”

- Kotaku

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- Eurogamer

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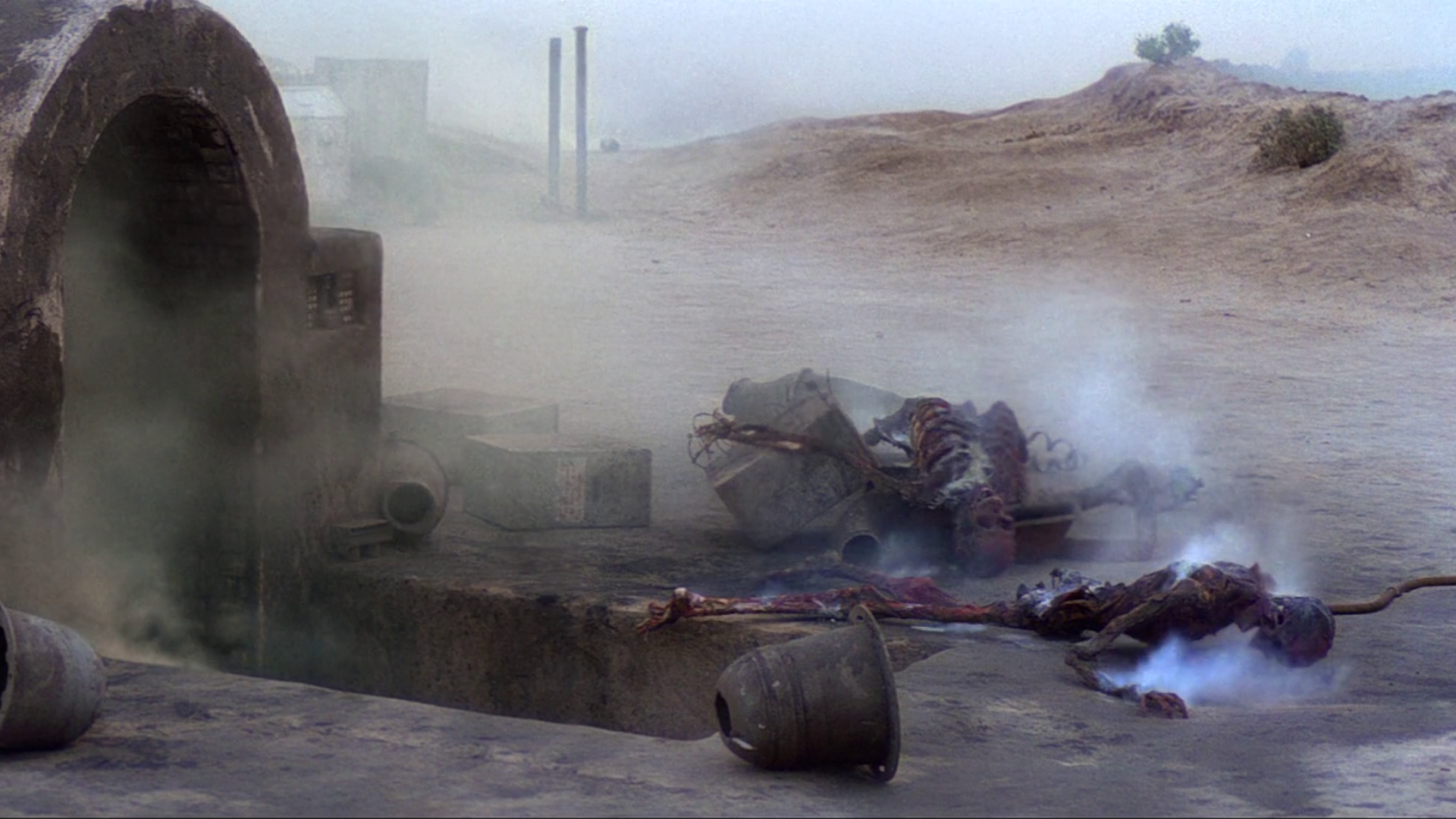
- Rock Paper Shotgun

"A complex and colourful creation."

- Eurogamer

"Looks gorgeous and plays really well."

- BoardGameGeek



Google wave

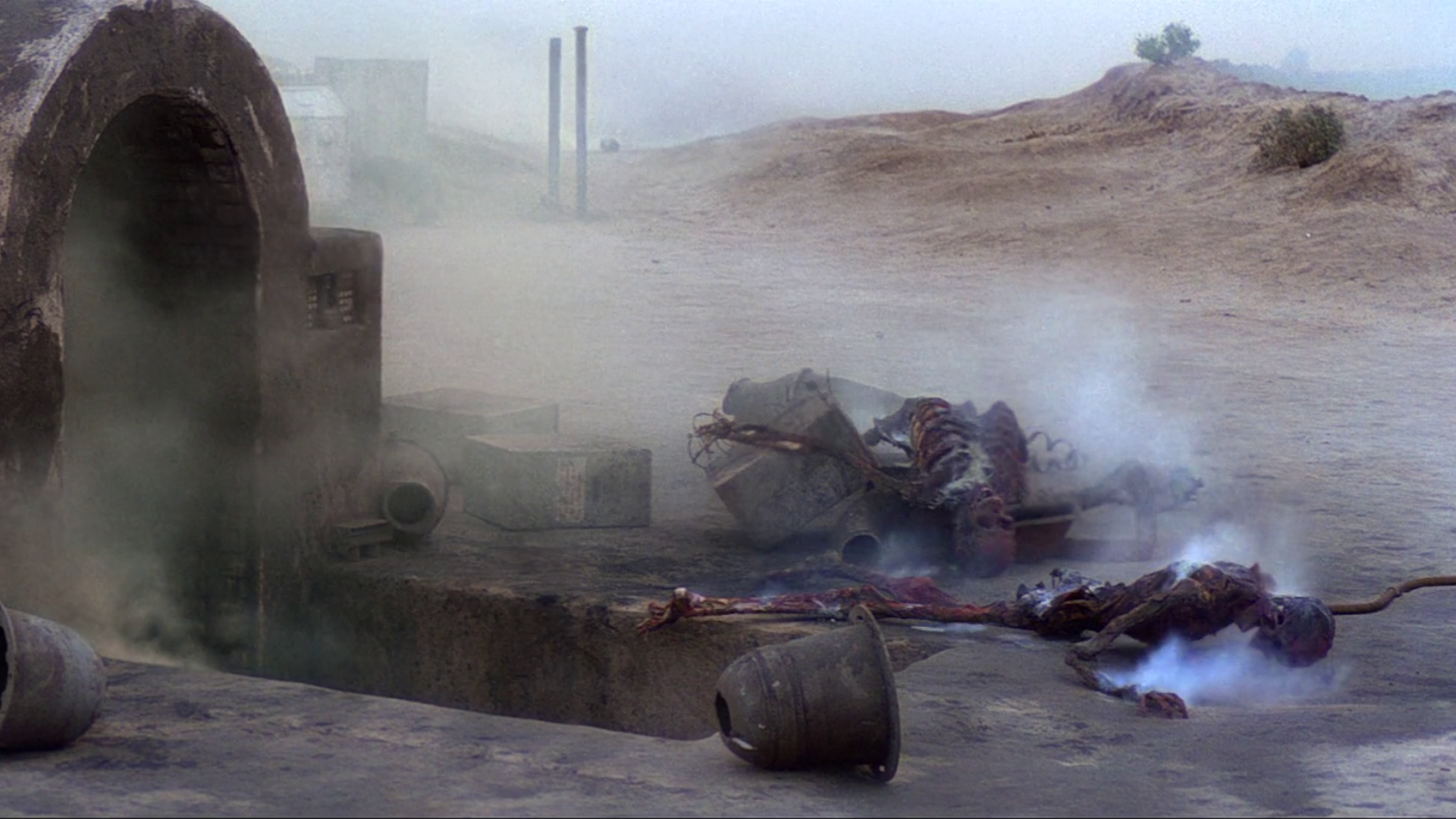
PIVOTAL TRACKER

Google wave

PIVOTAL
TRACKER

John Sietsma
@JohnSietsma
Following
Today's office, the Hanoi Swing Club.
#vietnam #gamdev #armello #rubbingitin
pic.twitter.com/vCVC1b9Sht
Reply
Retweet
Favorite
More

INDIE
MEGA
BOOTH



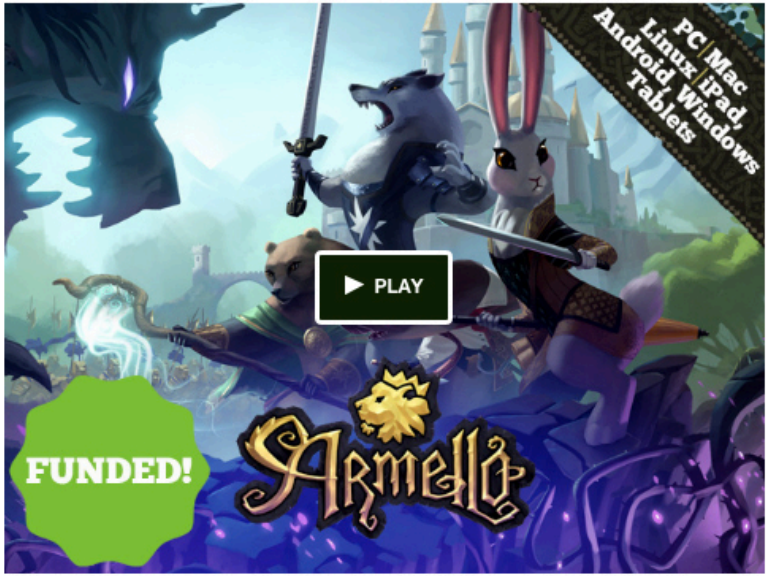
THE
ARCADE
MELBOURNE

FILM VICTORIA
AUSTRALIA
Victoria

Armello - Bringing Tabletop Adventures to Life

by League of Geeks

Funded! This project was successfully funded on May 9.



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6,213
backers

$305,360 AUD
pledged of $200,000 goal

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seconds to go

Project by
League of Geeks
Melbourne, AU

First created · **22 backed**

Has not connected Facebook

leagueofgeeks.com

See full bio | Contact me

A digital card and board game of heroes and high-adventure set in the fairy-tale animal kingdom of Armello!

“…a common tactic of publishers was to drag out negotiations until developers ran out of money.”

“…a deal signed under those circumstances will result in very unfavorable terms.”

“We didn't have to take the first deal that publishers offered. Eventually, Microsoft tired of negotiating and gave us the deal we wanted.”

“We didn't have to take the first deal that publishers offered. Eventually, Microsoft tired of negotiating and gave us the deal we wanted.”
- Tony Goodman
Founder, Ensemble Studios

indie
FUND

AP
1
Vile Official
Throwing Axe
Tanglevine
Incite Revolt
Life's Blanket
Forest
Provides Stealth at Night.
River captured a settlement.
Our King creeps closer to death.
All heroes have received dawn income from Settlements.
END TURN

Kickstarter

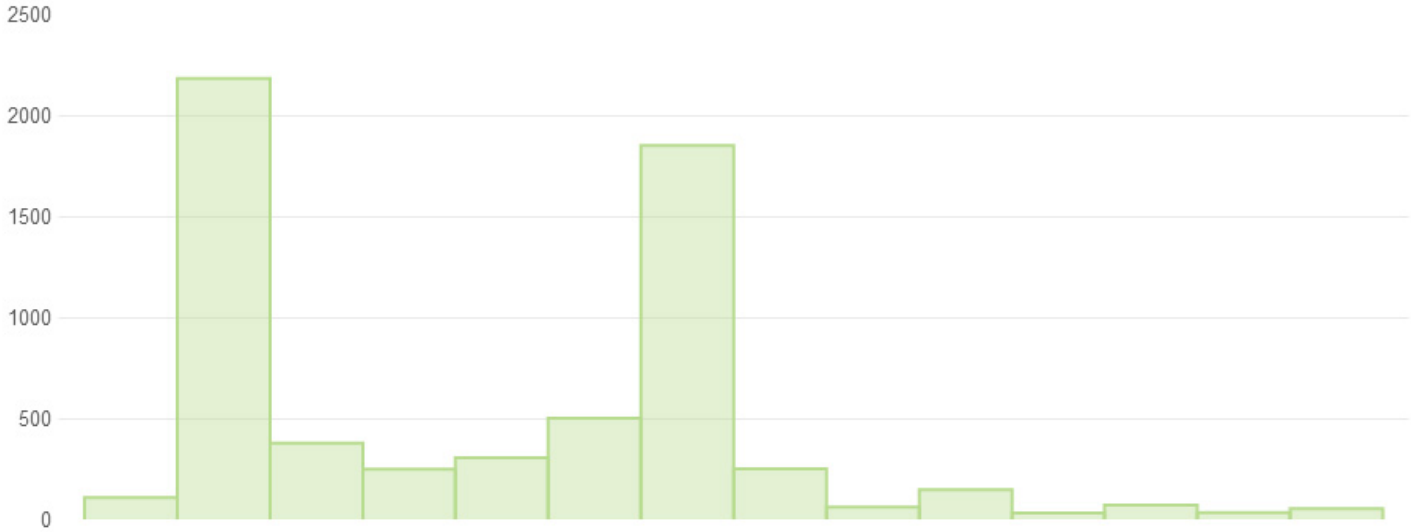
LŌG

THE ART OF ARMELLO
Armello
BUILDING HEROES

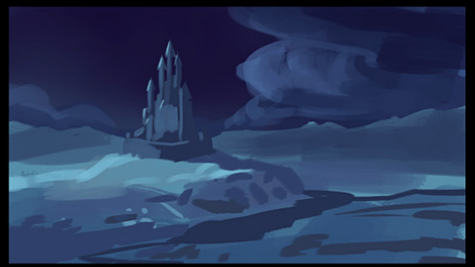
ARMELLO COINS NOT PICTURED
INDICATIVE OF QUALITY ONLY

Bandit Clan
EXCLUSIVE TO BACKERS!

Reward popularity



12 field

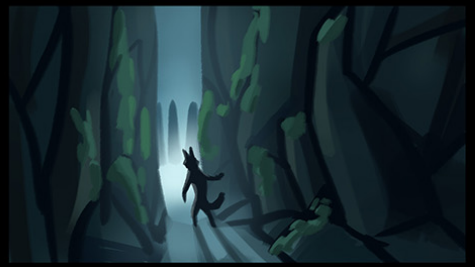


17 Alt castle.

18

19

20



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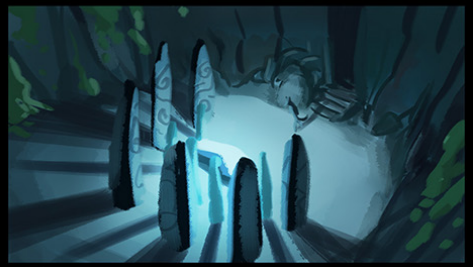

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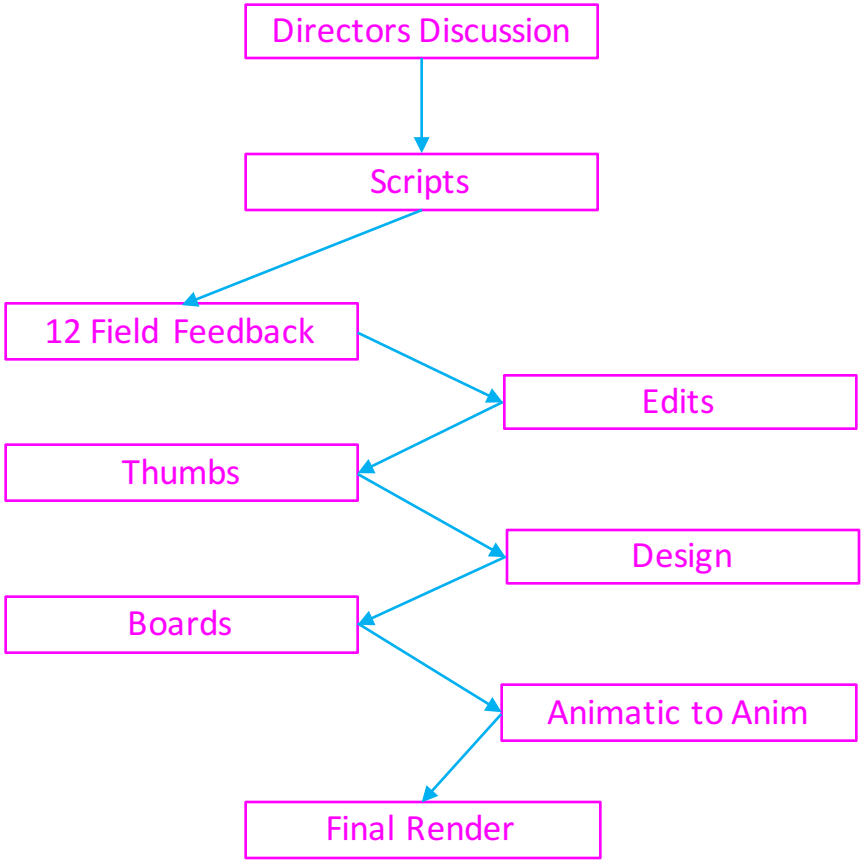
Directors Discussion
Scripts
12 Field Feedback
Edits
Thumbs
Design
Boards
Animatic to Anim
Final Render

“Welcome to the thirty days of despair.”
- Alex Schwartz
Owlchemy Labs

SARMELLI EUCLED

Stretch Goals
FUNDED
FUNDED
RAT ASSASSIN UNLOCKED!
ALL BACKERS RECEIVE NEW HERO!
FUNDED
FUNDED
RABBIT SAPPER UNLOCKED!
ALL BACKERS RECEIVE NEW HERO!
FUNDED
FUNDED
FUNDED

Hi REDDIT!
WE'RE LEAGUE OF GEEKS
ASK US ANYTHING!

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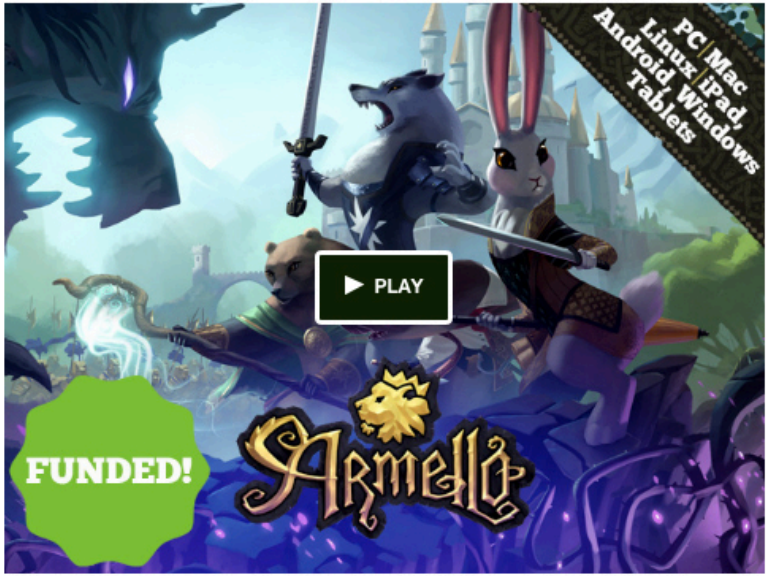

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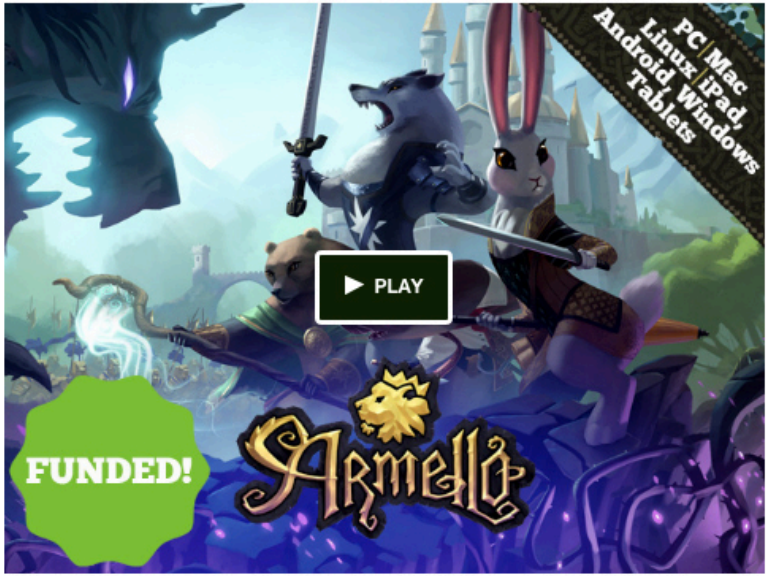

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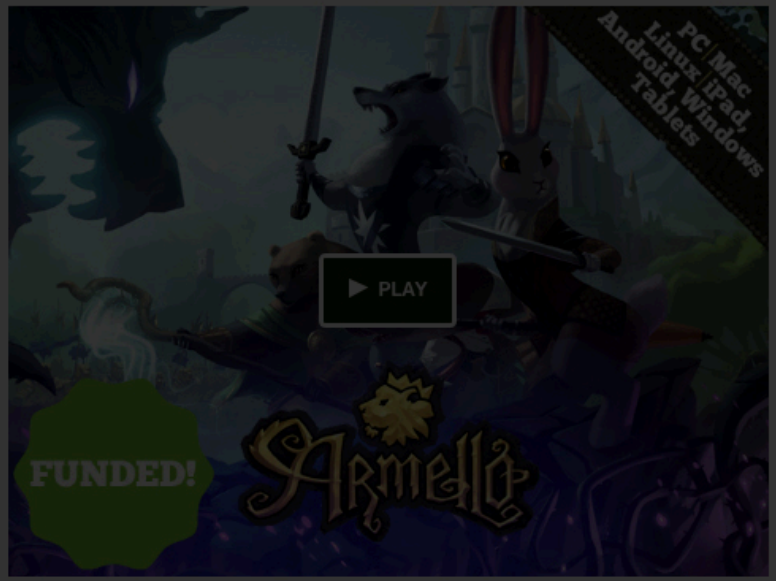

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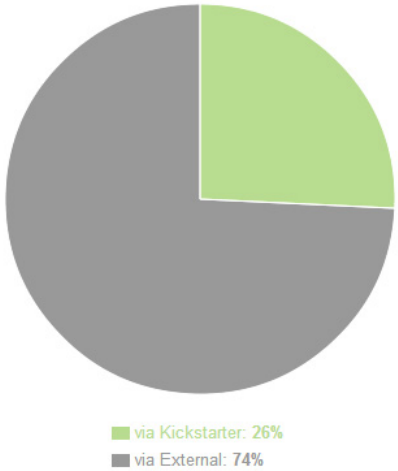
Referrers



Pledged via Kickstarter

$78,625 AUD

Pledged via external referrers

$226,734 AUD

Average pledge amount

$49.15 AUD

Marketing

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IGN

gameinformer

BoardGameGeek

Kotaku

INDIE
GAMES

Polygon

GAMESPOT

gamesradar

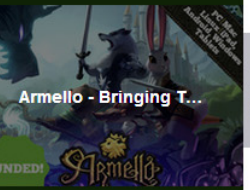
HYPER

PocketTactics

THE VERGE

EASTS OF
BOARDGAME:
THE STORY
OF ARMELLO
JAMES O'CONNOR says
...that he isn't a furry...
ARMELLO
PLATFORM: iOS (tablets), Android, PC (later)
CATEGORY: Digital Board Game
DEVELOPER: League of Geeks
PUBLISHER: League of Geeks
SIZE: "When it's done"
In a market where indies have excelled, blossomed, died, been bought, been absorbed, become zombies and fantastic on toys by others, the standard development story of success to 50 or one that was funded by who have taken on all costs associated with the project, and a flawless team of artists, programmers, sound engineers, and various others – all specialists, professionals within their industries, all employed elsewhere – who have moved into it gastic on a new working on it right now, no one knows if this project has any chance of success. There's not one single person I've not chatted with about this project who doesn't think it's pretty cool, and they've been with it since the start. Armello's head team is formed by founder Trent Kusters in Sydney, Australia, and Sweden, shortly after the initial trailer was released, and moved in April this year, after its return from GDC in San Francisco
Warlock
FOLLOWER
Plague Bearers
"CAST ON ANY MEE"
4 Rot
1 Wound
2
3
THE INEVITABLE PC VERSION
THE MARKETING PLAN
APRIL 2015
Are you still looking for investment?
Are you still looking for investment?
Are you still looking for investment?

KICKSTARTER



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Post update Last: 5/22/2014
Check dashboard
View backer report
View messages
Manage surveys

Referrer	Type	# of Pledges	% of Pledged	Pledged
Direct traffic *(no referrer information)*	External	1293	22.79%	$69,582.29 AUD
Facebook	External	501	8.84%	$26,996 AUD
Search	Kickstarter	400	6.53%	$19,940.66 AUD
Advanced Discovery	Kickstarter	389	5.81%	$17,749.01 AUD
Twitter	External	312	4.87%	$14,868 AUD
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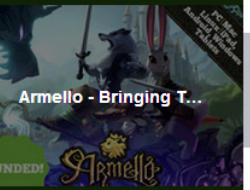
furaffinity.net	External	58	1.54%	$4,701 AUD

KICKSTARTER



Hide

Post update Last: 5/22/2014
Check dashboard
View backer report
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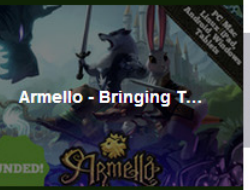

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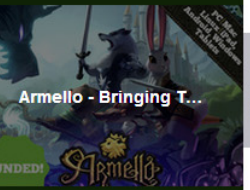

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1. Pick Your Guardians

1. **Pick Your Guardians**
2. **Face to Face is Always Best**

1. Pick Your Guardians
2. Face to Face is Always Best
3. Be Bold

BOSTON, MA

1. Pick Your Guardians
2. Face to Face is Always Best
3. Be Bold
4. Collaborate

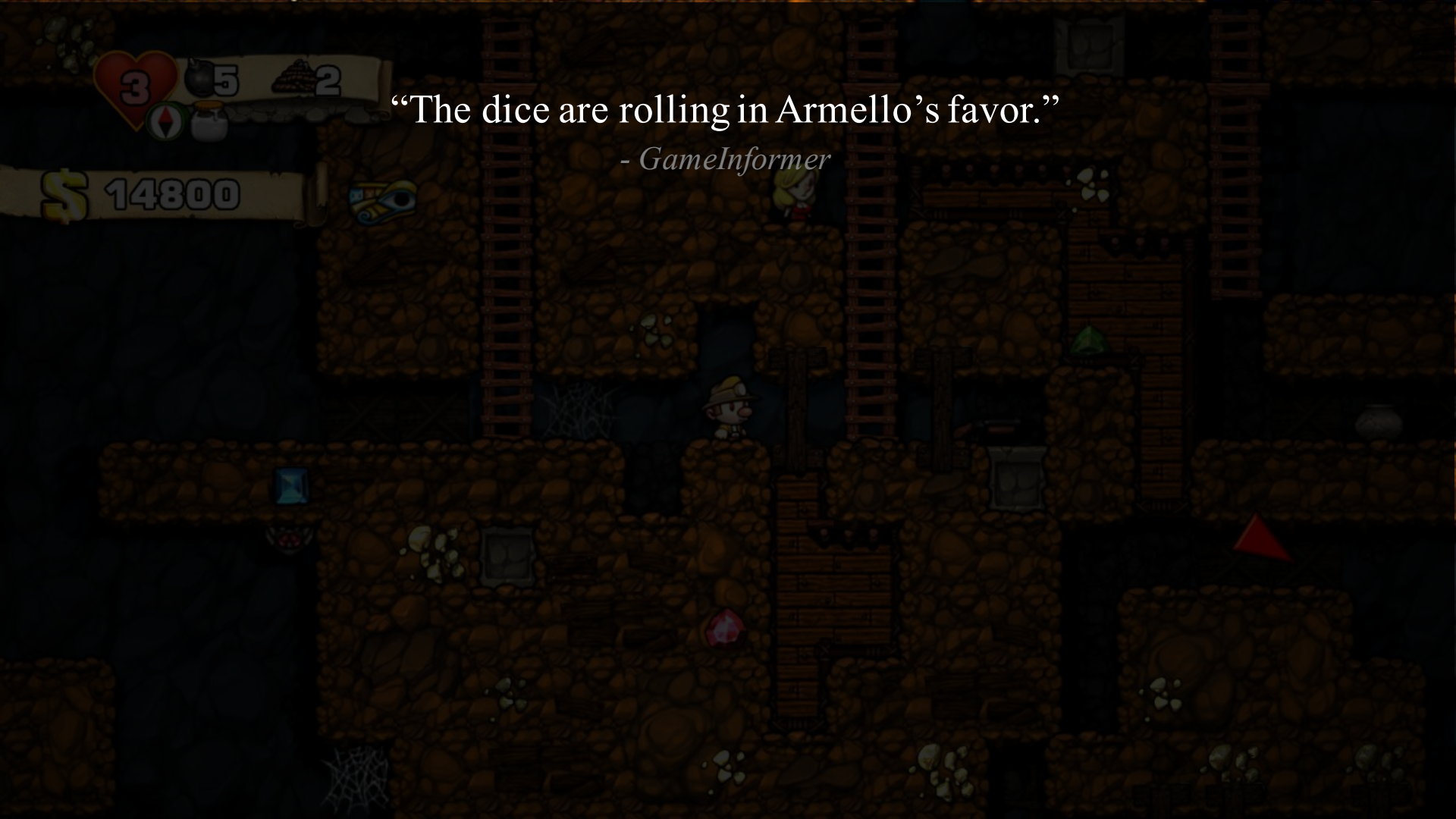
1. Pick Your Guardians
2. Face to Face is Always Best
3. Be Bold
4. Collaborate
5. Don’t waste people’s time

...this will get you press.

Armello

3
5
2
14800

3
5
2
$ 14800



“The dice are rolling in Armello’s favor.”

- GameInformer

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- Eurogamer

"Looks gorgeous and plays really well."

- BoardGameGeek

Early Access

LOG

0.3.2
ENGINES OF FATE
UNLEASHED THURSDAY 26TH MARCH PST
Combat, Peril Peeking!
Tension is ratcheted to new heights as you watch your opponents' combat and peril rolls!
Sleight of Hand
Fool your opponents with 11 new Machiavellian cards and 7 new King's Declarations!
Storytime
Weave your own hero's journey and be master of your destiny with the ALL NEW quest system!
CLICK TO READ DETAILS ON THE FORUMS!

1. **Polish.**
2. **Language.**
3. **4-6 week drops.**
4. **Be there.**
5. **Weaponise them.**
6. **Don’t listen. Think.**
7. **Mic drops.**

“Doing early access **RIGHT**”.

Failure

LOG

F#%k Ups

LOG

1. **Failed to act on scale issues with points system.**

1. **Failed to act on scale issues with points system.**
2. **Announced way too early.**

1. **Failed to act on scale issues with points system.**
2. **Announced way too early.**
3. **Localisation costs.**

1. Failed to act on scale issues with points system.
2. Announced way too early.
3. Localisation costs.
4. Missed polish pass. Missed brains trust.

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6. Press tour jetlag.

LoG

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2. Announced way too early.
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6. Press tour jetlag.
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8. Slow to follow up launch.

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7. **Fumbled launch.**
8. **Slow to follow up launch.**

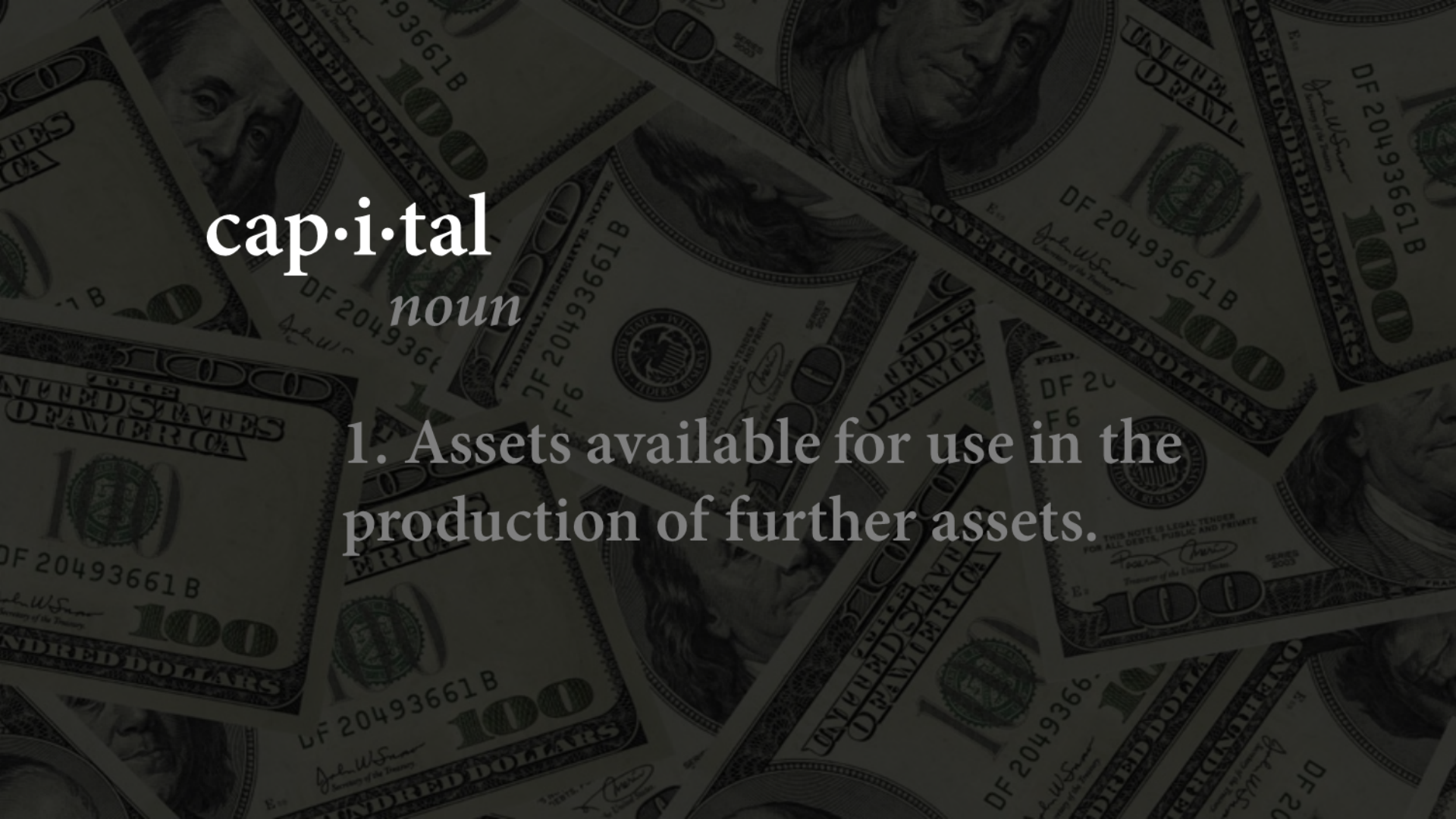
...all of this was **OUR FAULT**.

LoG

LoG Points

LōG

Remaining **INDEPENDENT**, whilst **OWNING EVERYTHING**, making your **DREAM GAME**, to the **SCALE YOU WANT**, at a quality level that's **WORLD CLASS**... and all the developers **SHARE IN THE PROFIT**.



cap·i·tal

noun

1. Assets available for use in the production of further assets.

Hey [INSERT NAME]!

We've prepared this little intro pack to help you understand how we work.

You can expect to find everything here that you need to know about us, in a very simple and easy to understand manner. It's basically 'LoG for Dummies' (no insinuations there). But! If you want to know more about anything, or if we've missed something, you're in luck, because one of our biggest values is transparency in everything we do. So, if curiosity should ever come-a-callin', just reach out to one of the directors and we'll fill you in.

Without further ado, prepare to be schooled on four things...

What LoG is. Who LoG is. The LoG model. What we're up to.

Sorry we kind of spoiled the last one for you already.

Alright! Turn the page, get to it.

But most importantly of all you, LoG's friends, are what makes LoG!

We're not lying when we say that we specifically designed the LoG model to be able to work with incredible people such as yourself.

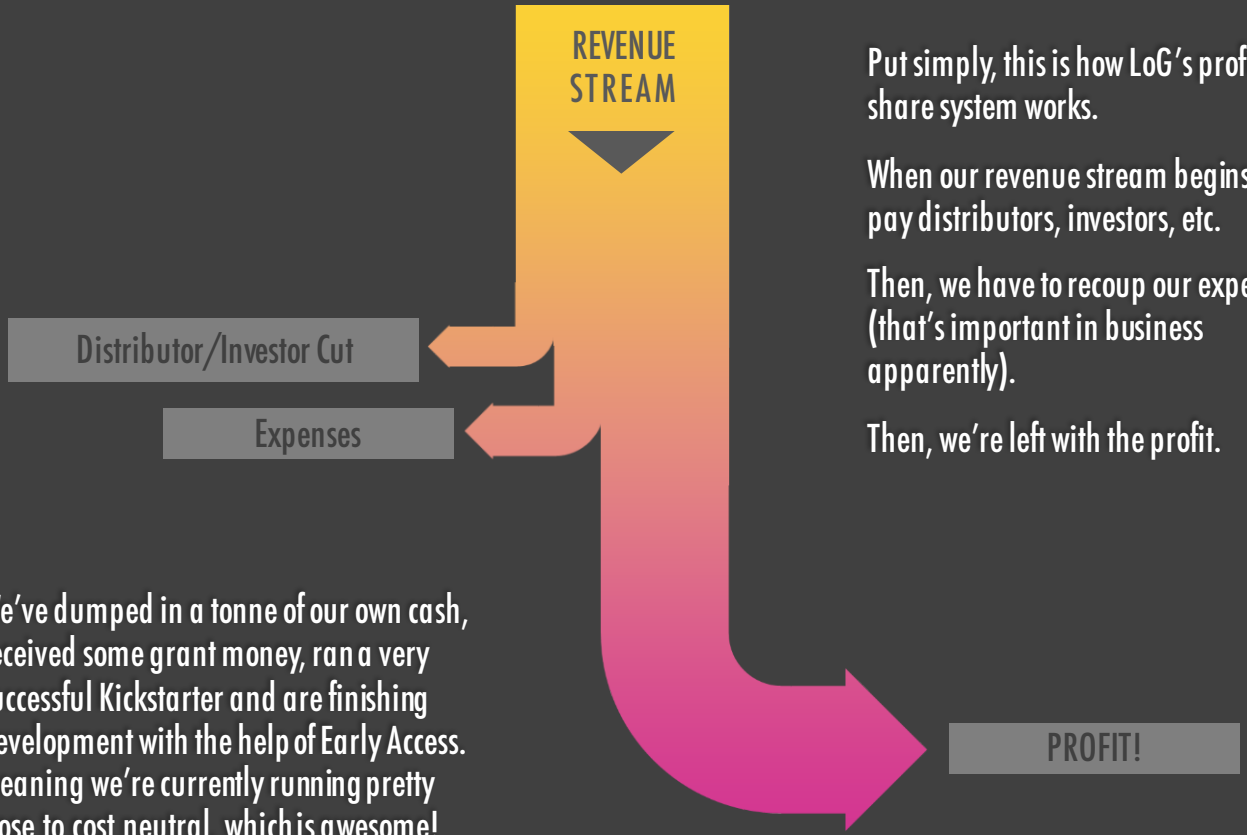
We want you to have a financial stake in a commercially and creatively brilliant indie project.

We want to help facilitate your growth as a creative, as a professional, and as a person.

We want you to have fun and have an experience you'll never forget.

We want you to be heard and recognised as a key part of this project.

...and if we can accomplish all that, our job is done.



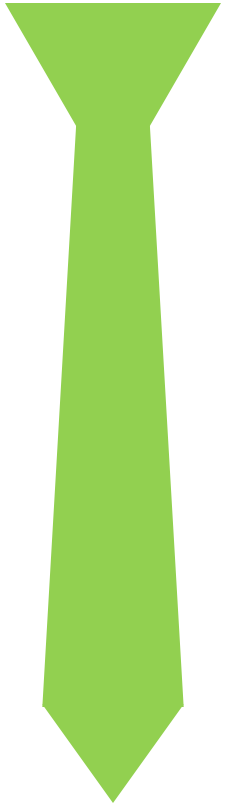
Put simply, this is how LoG's profit share system works.

When our revenue stream begins, we pay distributors, investors, etc.

Then, we have to recoup our expenses (that's important in business apparently).

Then, we're left with the profit.

We've dumped in a tonne of our own cash, received some grant money, ran a very successful Kickstarter and are finishing development with the help of Early Access. Meaning we're currently running pretty close to cost neutral, which is awesome!



LAW STUFF

...and all the other things that should matter.

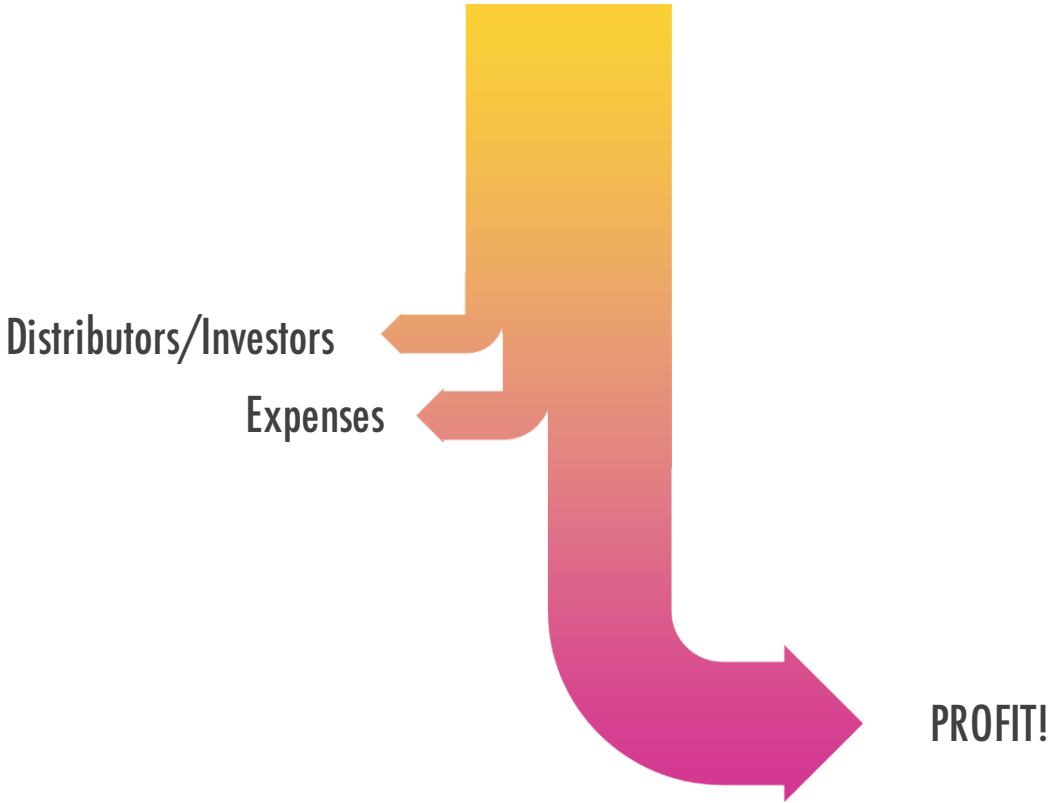
“Hey, work on my awesome soon to be successful mega game...

trust me, it’s cool.”

SECURITY

"Hey, work on my awesome soon to be successful mega game...

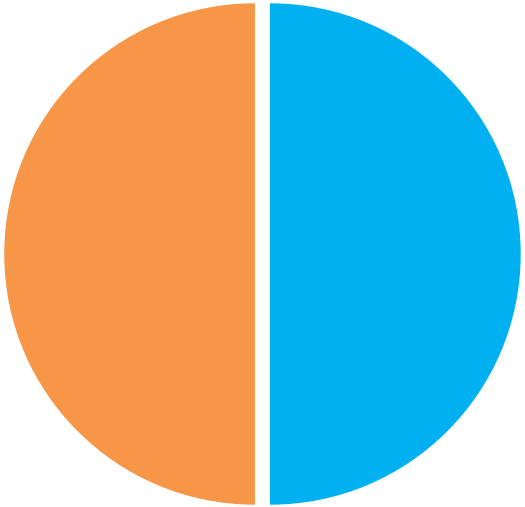
here, look, it's cool."


Distributors/Investors
Expenses
PROFIT!

15% LoG

35% Directors

50% Pool



50% LoG

50% Pool

TASK assigned ‘points’

COLLABORATOR consulted

DIRECTOR assigns task

COLLABORATOR finishes task

DIRECTOR approves work

CONTRACTOR receives ‘points’

1000 points total

10 tasks @ 10 points

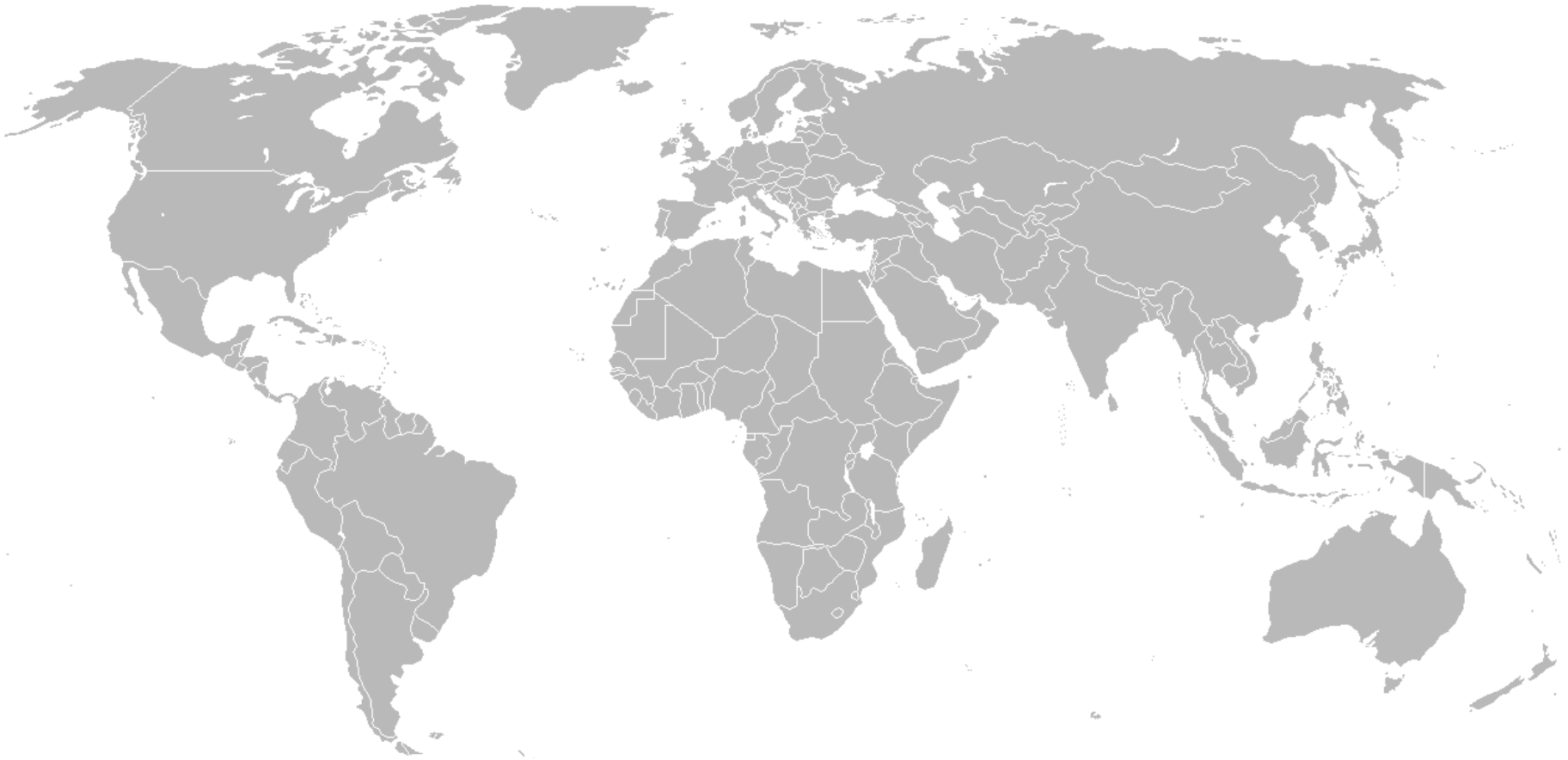
100 points

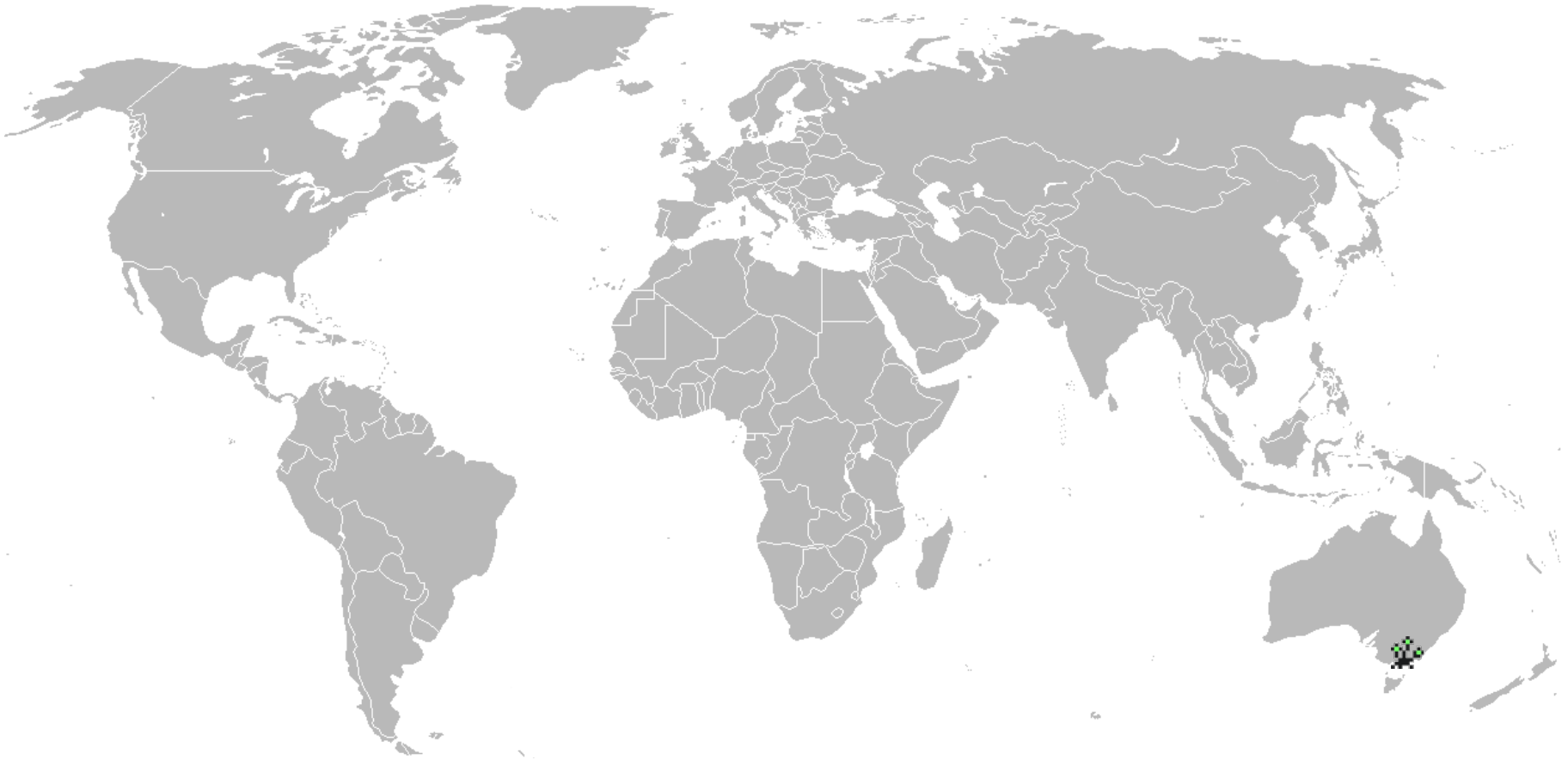
10% profit share

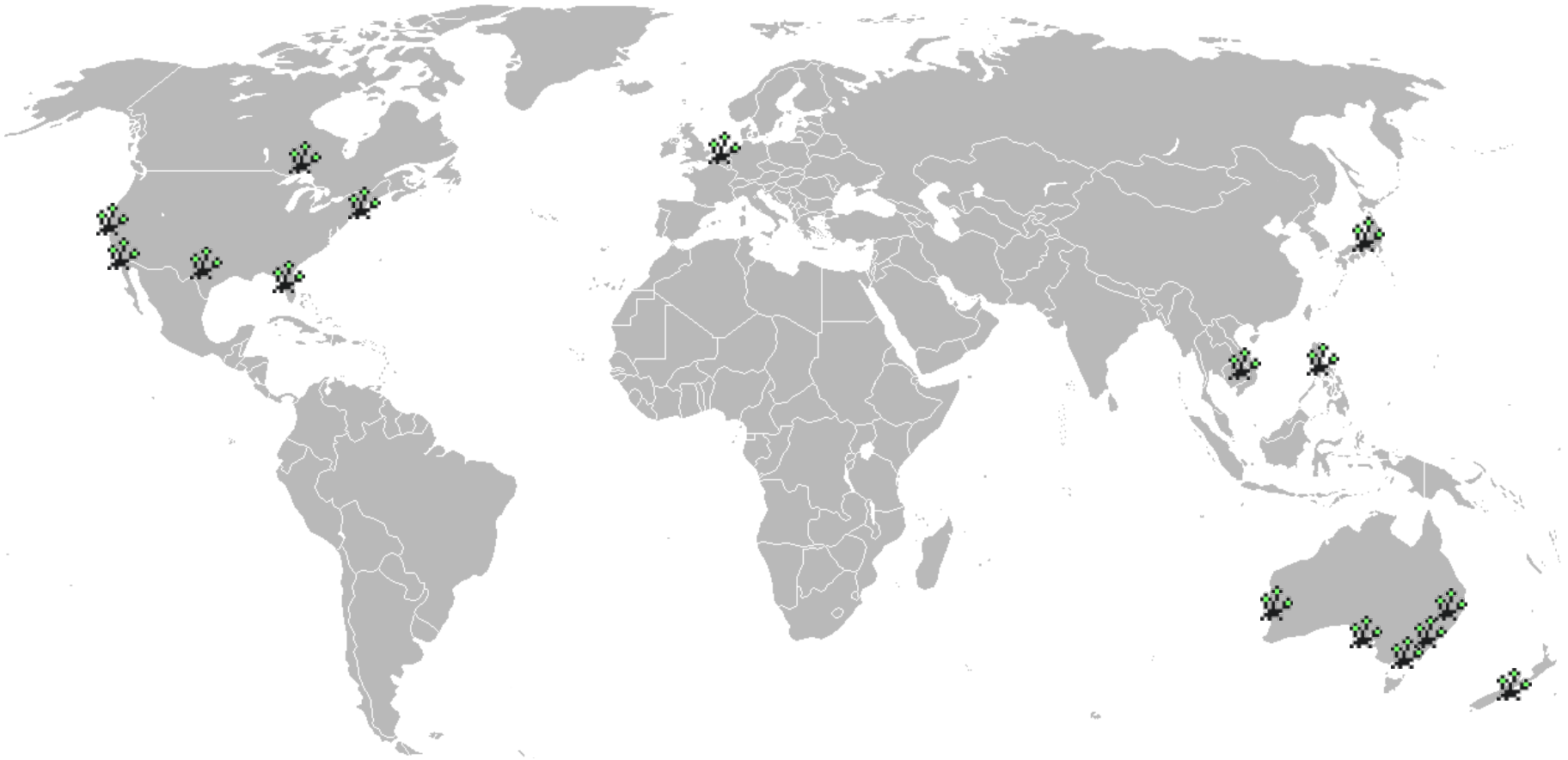
YES!

EMMET

05.6
03.4
19.3
WINNER!







1
DOLLAR

x 1,450,000

- 1,450,000

- 1,450,000

+ 1,950,000

- 1,450,000

+ 1,950,000

$ 500,000

- 1,450,000

+ 1,950,000

$ 500,000

250,000

12,000 points total

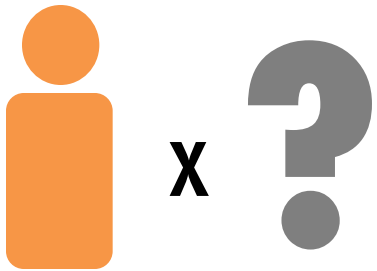
12,000 points total

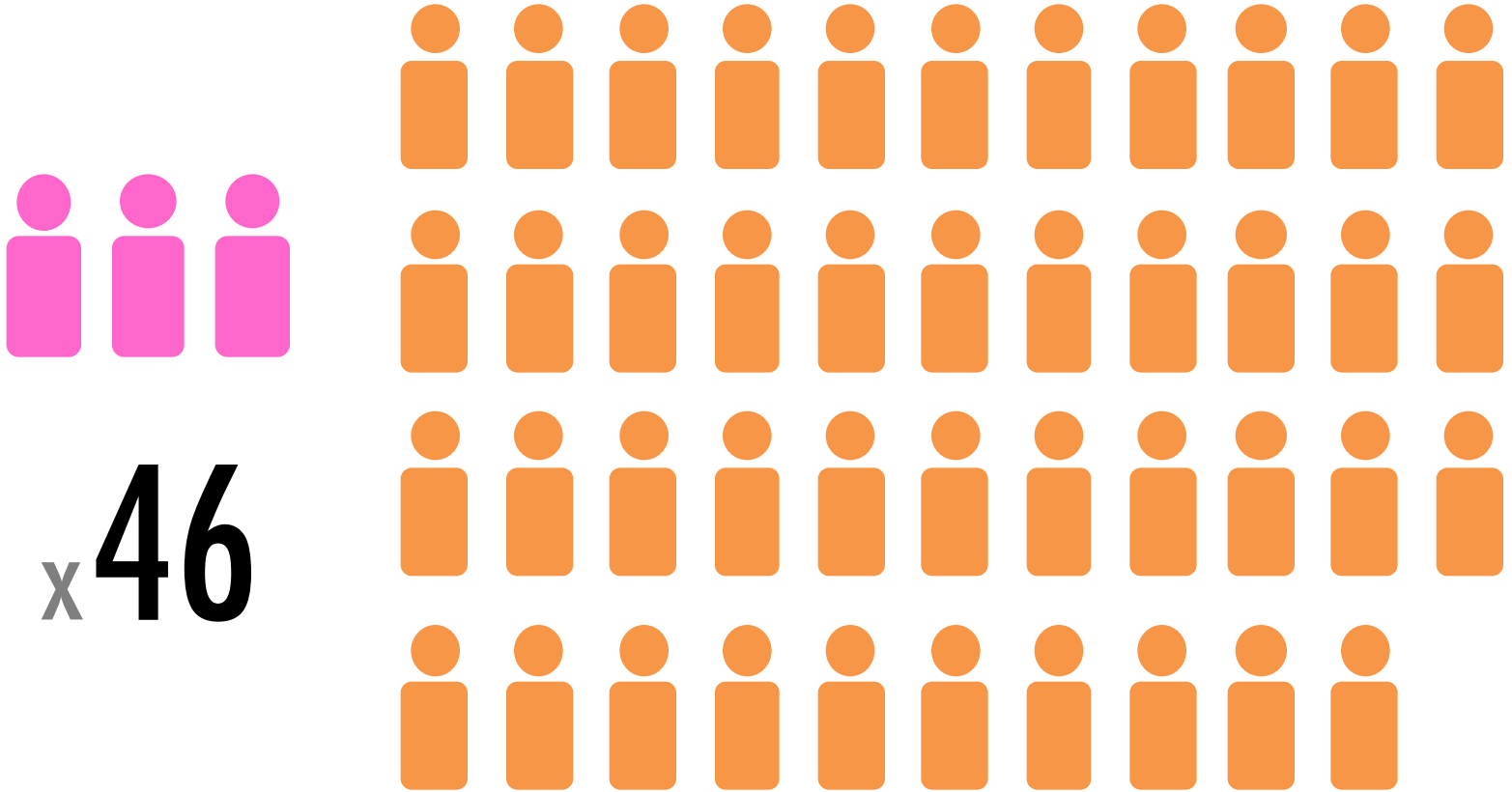
$250,000 profit

12,000 points total

$250,000 profit

$20 per point

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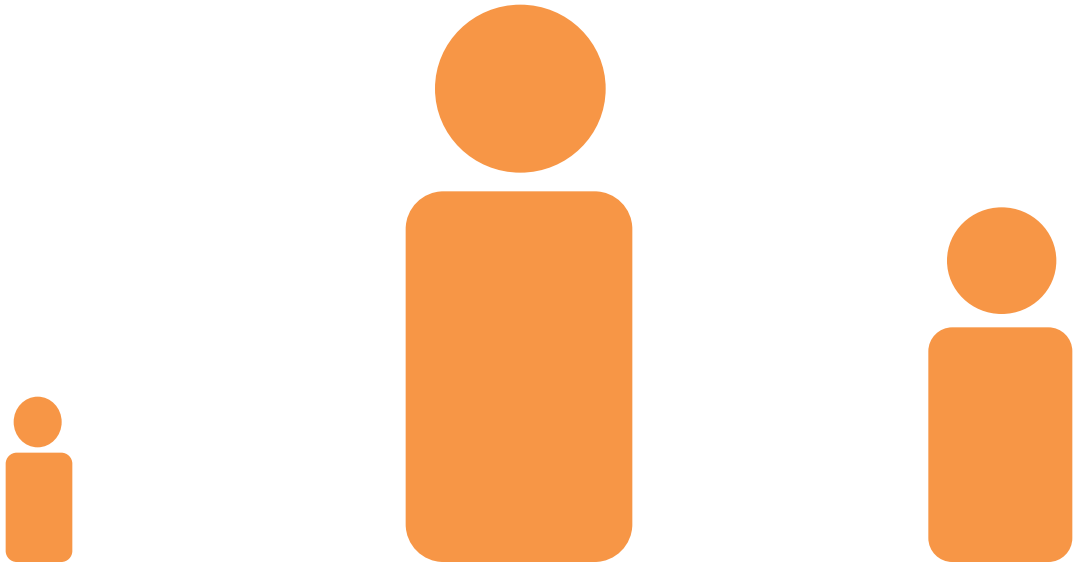


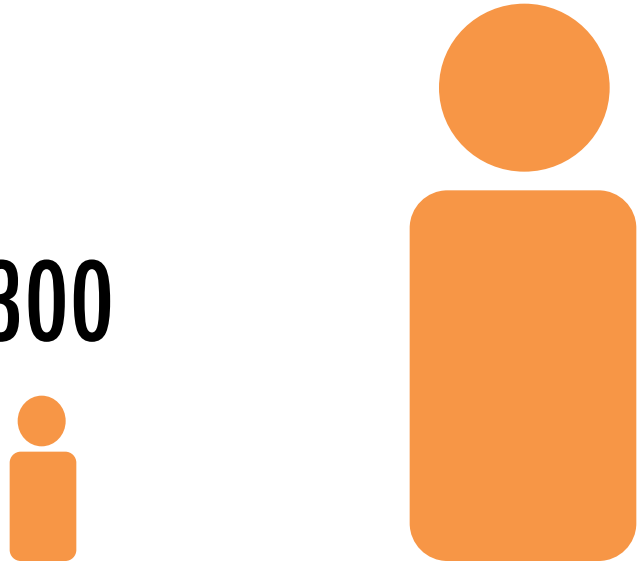
$300

$ 18,000
$ 300

$ 18,000

$ 300

$ 5k-10k



Relationships

LOG

:DeNA

Google play

the Humble Bundle

XBOX

unity

OUYA

PlayStation

KONGREGATE

SEGA

KICKSTARTER

STEAM

“…a common tactic of publishers was to drag out negotiations until developers ran out of money.”

“…a deal signed under those circumstances will result in very unfavorable terms.”

“We didn't have to take the first deal that publishers offered. Eventually, Microsoft tired of negotiating and gave us the deal we wanted.”

“We didn't have to take the first deal that publishers offered. Eventually, Microsoft tired of negotiating and gave us the deal we wanted.”
- Tony Goodman
Founder, Ensemble Studios

TAKEAWAYS

1. **Relationships.**

TAKEAWAYS

1. **Relationships.**
2. **Language is everything.**

TAKEAWAYS

1. **Relationships.**
2. **Language is everything.**
3. **Make the experience of others your own.**

TAKEAWAYS

1. Relationships.
2. Language is everything.
3. Make the experience of others your own.
4. Ownership amongst team.

TAKEAWAYS

1. Relationships.
2. Language is everything.
3. Make the experience of others your own.
4. Ownership amongst team.
5. Leverage your strengths.

LoG

TAKEAWAYS

1. Relationships.
2. Language is everything.
3. Make the experience of others your own.
4. Ownership amongst team.
5. Leverage your strengths.
6. Pay attention.

TAKEAWAYS

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3. Make the experience of others your own.
4. Ownership amongst team.
5. Leverage your strengths.
6. Pay attention.
7. Understand every failure.

LoG

TAKEAWAYS

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3. Make the experience of others your own.
4. Ownership amongst team.
5. Leverage your strengths.
6. Pay attention.
7. Understand every failure.
8. Celebrate every victory.

LoG