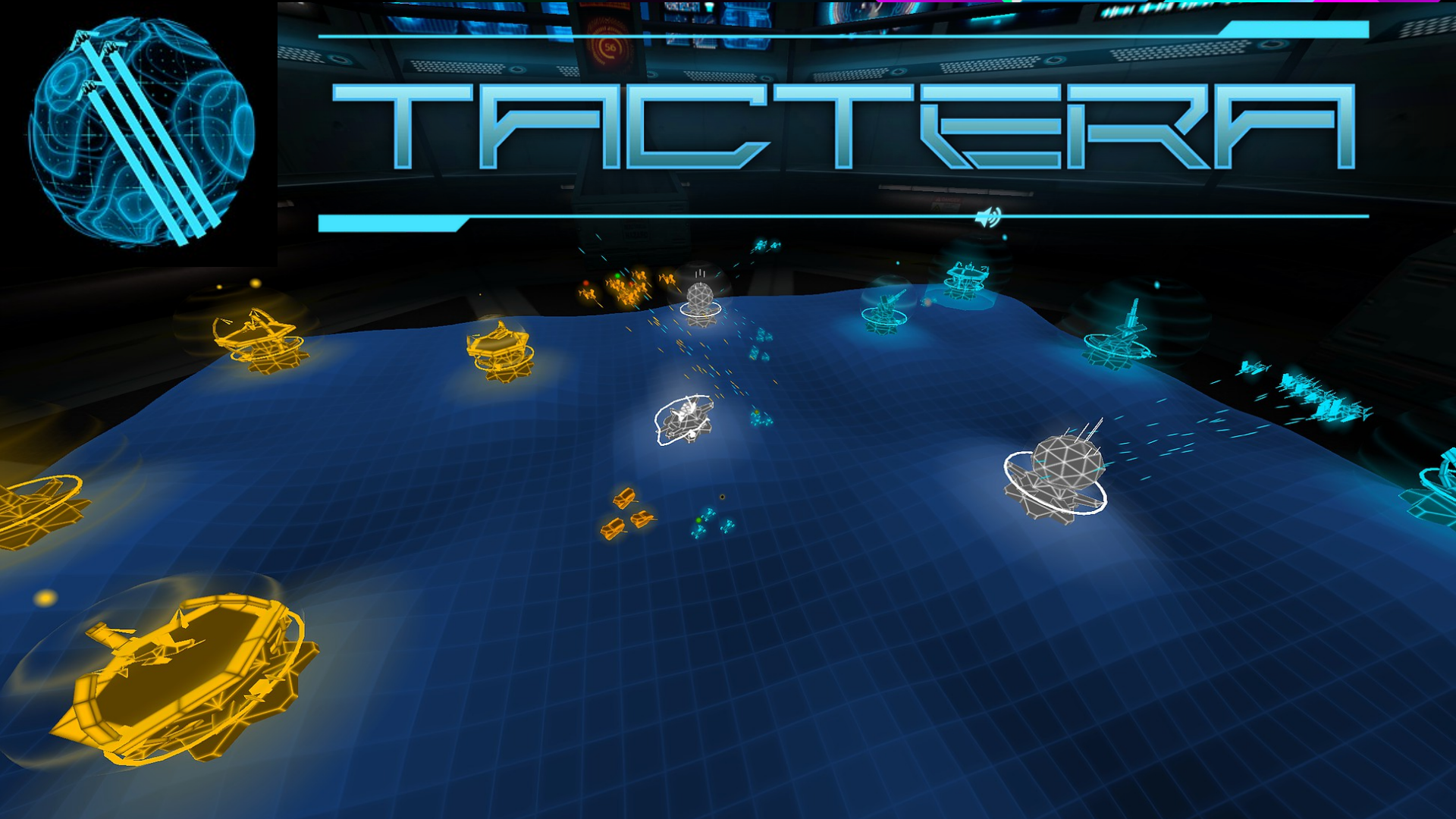
Two Games, Four Platforms: A VR Platform Comparison

E McNeill
Indie Game Designer

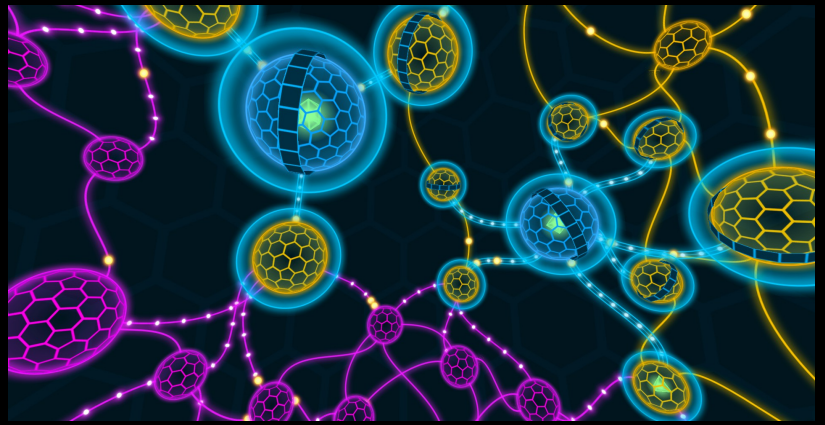
GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE March 14–18, 2016 · Expo: March 16–18, 2016 #GDC16

UBM


TACTERA

DARKNET

- Oculus/IndieCade VR Jam Winner
- Best Gameplay – 2014 Proto Awards
- 2015 IndieCade Finalist



"The best Oculus Rift game I've ever played"
Dennis Scimeca, The Daily Dot

"My longtime personal favorite"
Adi Robertson, The Verge

"Closest thing the Gear VR has to a 'must download'"
Jeff Dunn, Business Insider

"A ton of fun, and perfectly suited for the medium... It's just a blast."
Ben Kuchera, Polygon

"Darknet was what I was excited to play every time I put the Gear VR on"
Kyle Orland, Ars Technica

//JOB SIMULATOR
the 2050 archives

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the 2050 archives

htc

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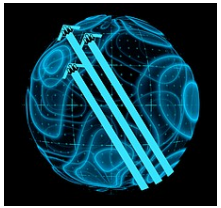
oculus

htc



oculus

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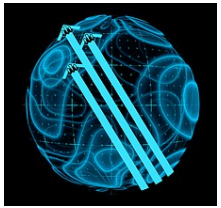
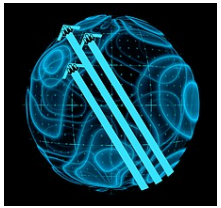
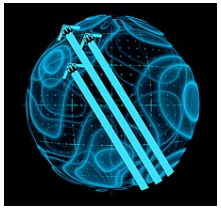
Gear VR





AURALUX
CONSTELLATIONS

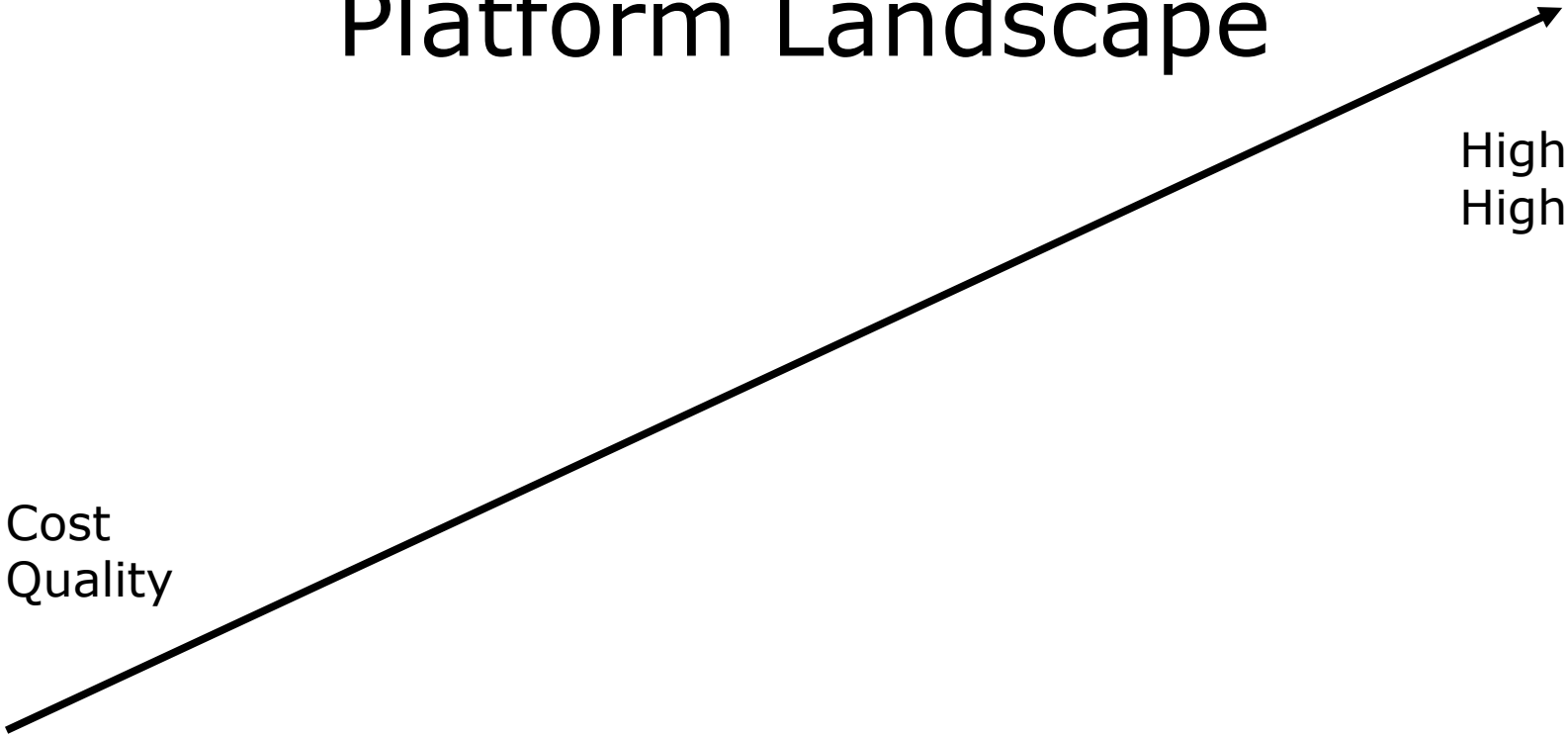


LESSON 1: This is stupid. Don't do this.

AURALUX CONSTELLATIONS

Platform Landscape

Platform Landscape



Gear VR

htc

Gear VR

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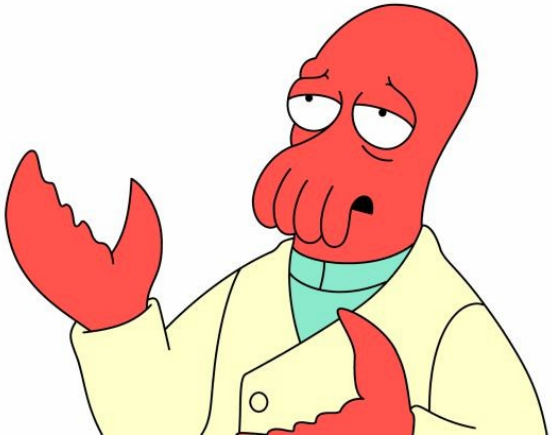
Gear VR

Gear VR

htc

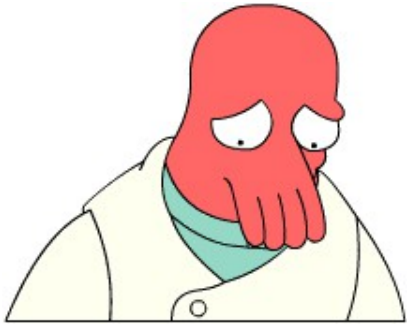
Google Cardboard

- Why not?



Google Cardboard

- Cheap
- Bad



Google Cardboard

- Low-quality player experience

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- Lack of features (input, headstrap)

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- However...

TECH

Google Developing Stand-Alone Virtual-Reality Headset

More advanced version of cardboard viewer wouldn't rely on a smartphone, PC or game console

February 7, 2016 6:43 pm

Google pushes further into virtual reality with new headset

Tim Bradshaw in San Francisco

SAMSUNG
Gear VR
Gear VR
Oculus

oculus

htc
htc

1) Design Implications

2) Developer Experience

3) Business Stuff

1) Design Implications

Commonalities

Commonalities

- Good engine support

Commonalities

- Good engine support
- It's VR!
  - Nausea
  - UI
  - 3D
  - Etc.

SAMSUNG
Gear VR
Gear VR
Oculus

Gear VR

- No positional tracking
- No wires

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- No positional tracking
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- Built-in touchpad
- Gamepad optional

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- 1440p, stereoscopic 3D, 60fps, on a cell phone

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  - wtf

3:45
25 50

oculus

Oculus Rift & PlayStation VR

- Positional tracking (not room scale)

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- Input fragmented
  - Gamepad / Tracked controllers

Oculus Rift & PlayStation VR

- Positional tracking (not room scale)
- Input fragmented
  - Gamepad / Tracked controllers
- Consistent high-end performance
  - “Oculus-Ready PCs” and PS4

htc
htc

HTC Vive

- Room-scale tracking

HTC Vive

- Room-scale tracking
- Tracked hands for all

HTC Vive

- Room-scale tracking
- Tracked hands for all
- High-end recommended PC specs
  - + Steam VRPerformance test

	Performance	Input	Pos. Tracking
Gear VR	Low	Touchpad / Gamepad	None
Oculus Rift	Very High	Gamepad / Hands	Small
PS VR	High	Gamepad / Hands	Small
HTC Vive	Very High	Hands	Room-scale

Darknet

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(Plus AR!)

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Aperture Robot Repair Demo

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2) Developer Experience

GOOD NEWS EVERYONE!

Commonalities

- Generally dev-friendly!

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- High demand for games

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- Everything is better if they like your game

Commonalities

- Generally dev-friendly!
- High demand for games
- Everything is better if they like your game
  - Demos are the currency of the realm

oculus

SAMSUNG
Gear VR
Gear VR
Oculus

Oculus (Gear VR & Rift)

- Publicly available dev hardware
  - Oculus still providing some too

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- Funding available

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  - Still money available!

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- Best approach is to have a demo

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- Dev relations: Great! Lots of support!

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- Funding available
- Dev relations: Great! Lots of support!
  - If you get their attention

Sony (PlayStation VR)

- Gotta go through Sony to get a dev kit

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- Dev relations: Also good!
- Funding available
    - Best if you use unique PSVR features

htc
htc

Valve (HTC Vive)

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  - Once rare, but not anymore

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  - Greenlight

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  - Once rare, but not anymore
- Loose publishing requirements
  - Greenlight
- Dev relations: Also good!
  - Generally more hands-off

3) Business Stuff

Commonalities

- “The future is unknowable, but the past should give us hope.” - Winston Churchill, probably

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Gear VR
Oculus

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- Innovator Edition sales started early, but small
  - Estimate: 100k before consumer launch

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- ~200 apps in the store so far
- Apps priced at $0-10, average paid app ~$5

DARKNET

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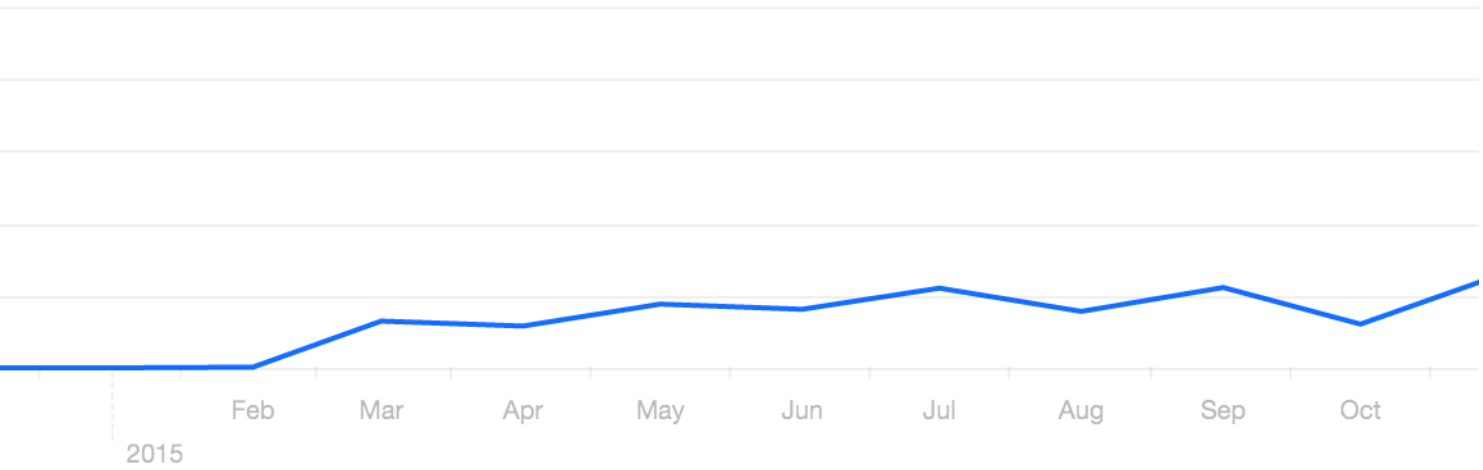

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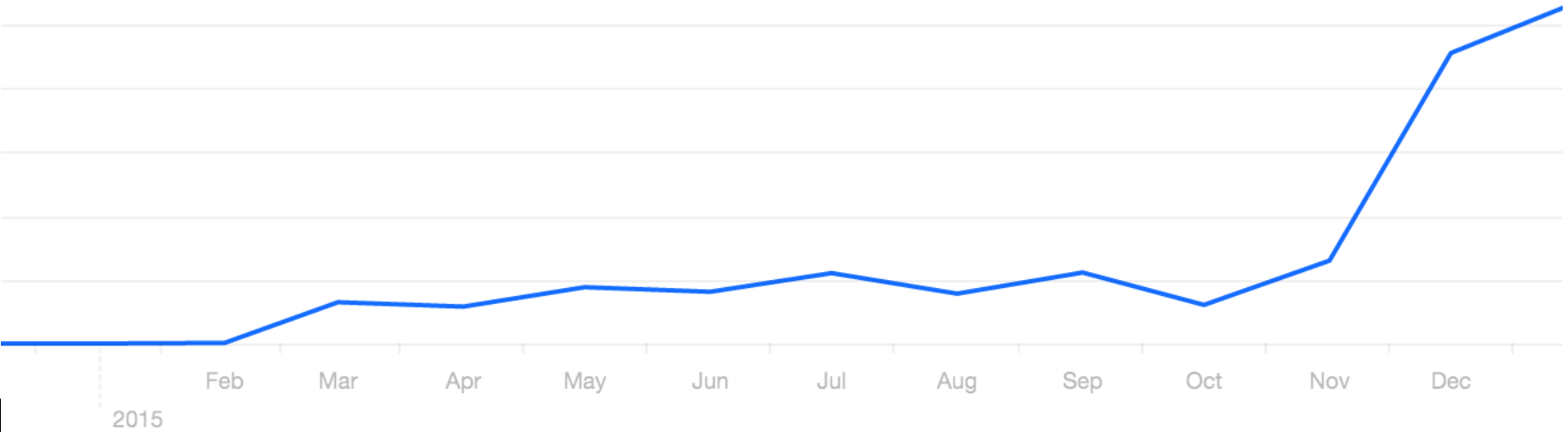

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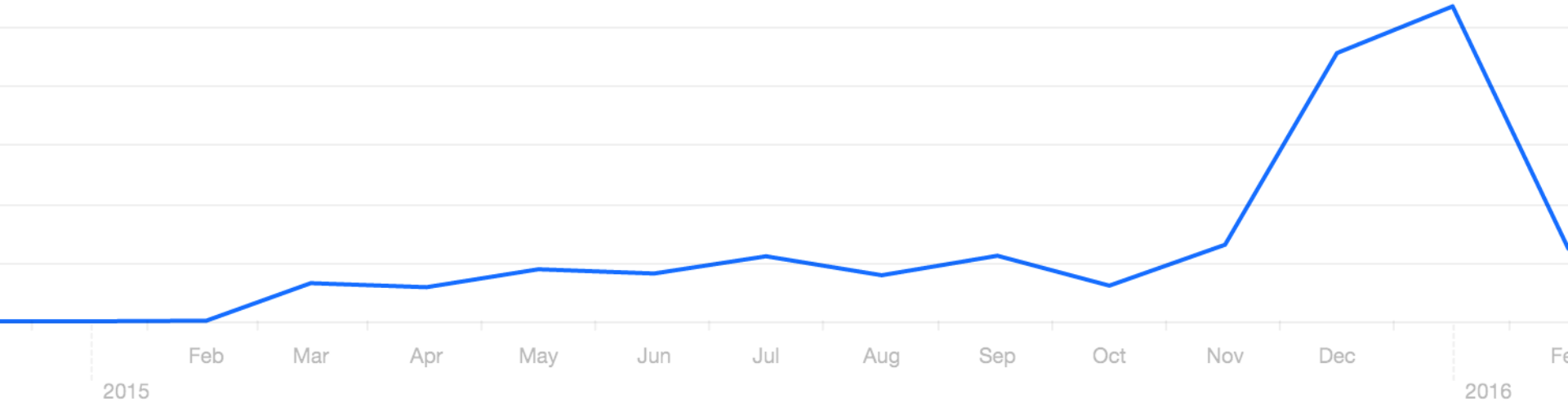

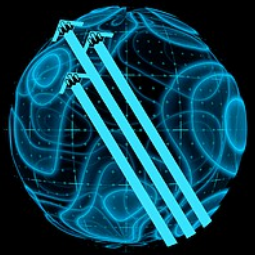

TACTERA

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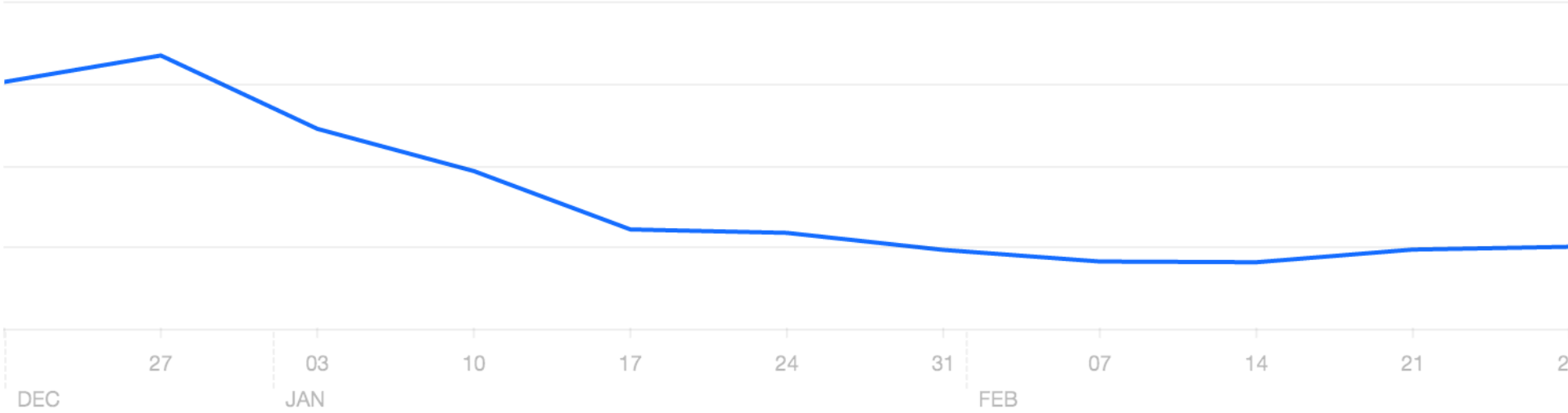

oculus

Oculus Rift

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  - 100k-400k units?

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- Oculus Touch coming H2 2016

PlayStation VR

- Launching H1 2016? Or Fall?

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- Price unknown

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- Hardware base of 35M+ PS4s

PlayStation VR

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- Price unknown
- Hardware base of 35M+ PS4s
- Plenty of support from Sony

htc
htc

HTC Vive

- Launching April 2016, $799 price tag

HTC Vive

- Launching April 2016, $799 price tag
- Potentially strongest appeal to enthusiasts

HTC Vive

- Launching April 2016, $799 price tag
- Potentially strongest appeal to enthusiasts
- Marketing via Steam

What's the analogy?

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Why target the Gear VR?

Why target the Gear VR?

- You don't need high-end performance, tracking, input, or pricing

Why target the Gear VR?

- You don't need high-end performance, tracking, input, or pricing
- You believe in the platform

Why target PSVR or Rift?

Why target PSVR or Rift?

- You have a high-end game that doesn't need room-scale tracking

Why target PSVR or Rift?

- You have a high-end game that doesn't need room-scale tracking
- You want funding / support

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Why target the Vive?

Why target the Vive?

- Your game takes full advantage of room-scale / hand tracking

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Why target all of them?

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- You are ~~batshit crazy~~ ambitious

Why target all of them?

- You are ~~batshit crazy~~ ambitious
- Or, you want to hedge your bets

Why target all of them?

- You are ~~batshit crazy~~ ambitious
- Or, you want to hedge your bets
- Your game is flexible enough to make it work

Gear VR

Thank you!

@E_McNeill

E McNeill

Indie Game Designer

Thank you!

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