taco illuminati

Looty DUNGEON

POST-MORTEM

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Austin, TX
Founded Oct. 2015

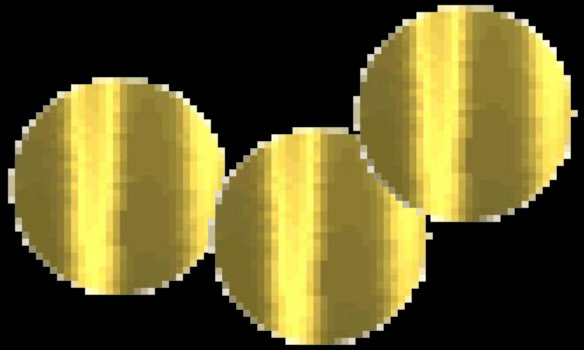
Looty Dungeon

Our first shipped game

Moderate financial success

Huge critical success

Million downloads on iOS

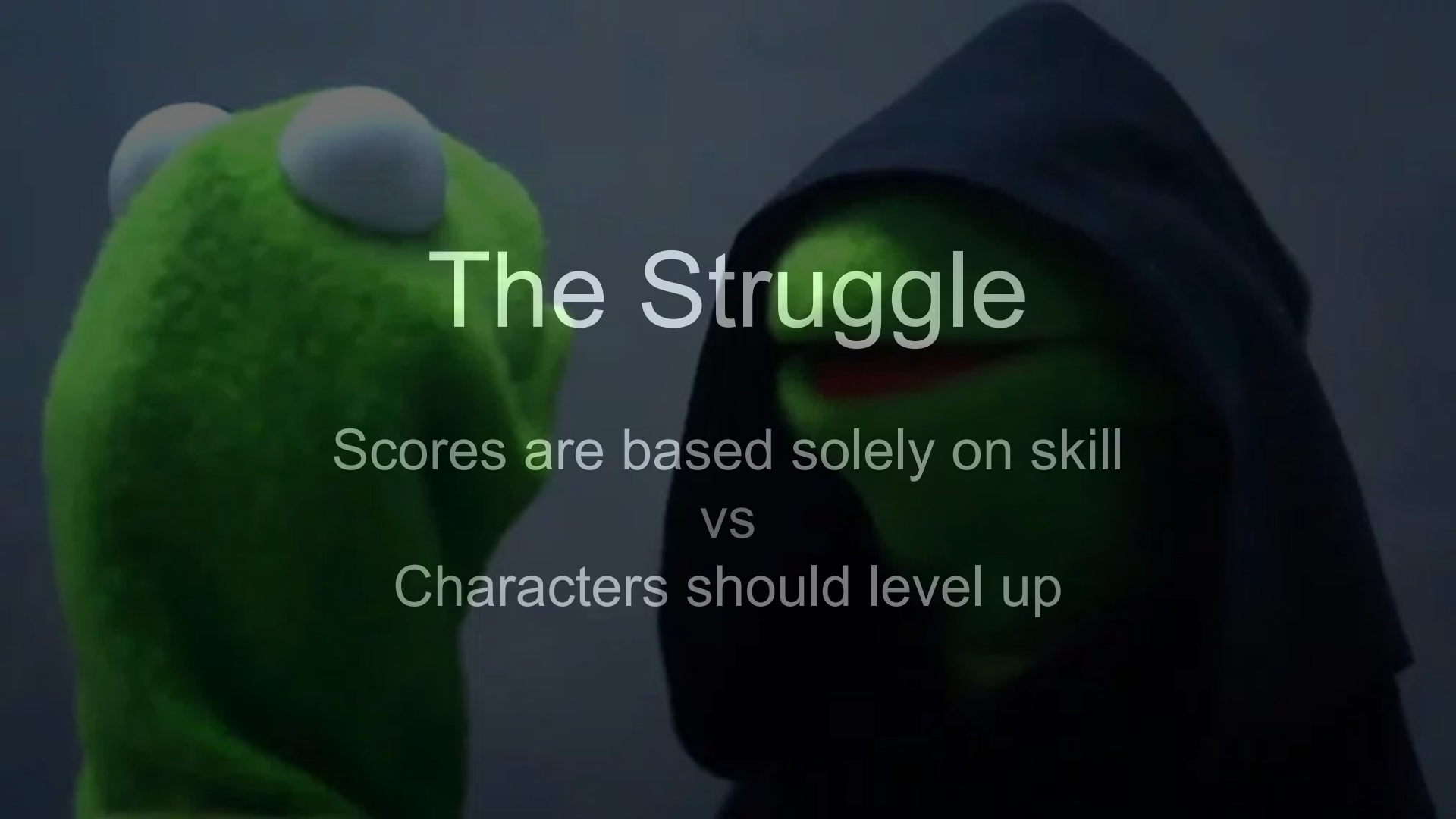


Game Loop

Earn gold to unlock heroes (from gacha)

Get high-scores with heroes

...uh repeat?


The Struggle
Scores are based solely on skill
vs
Characters should level up

No artificial improvement

Early decision: no leveling up

Player must improve own skill

Protect the “core” gameplay values:

Highscores Must Be Fair

Retention Problem!

Low retention on release

Highscores aren’t enough

Unlocked characters get boring

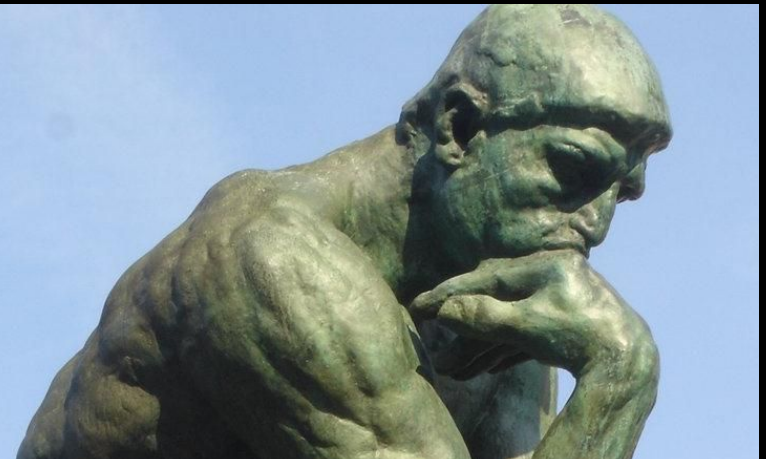
No goals once all unlocked

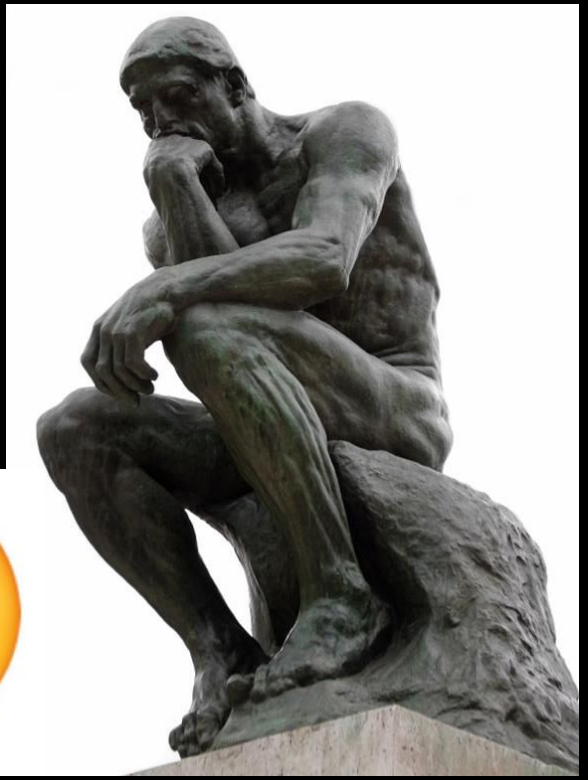
Maybe Characters Should Level Up?

Characters aren’t just collectibles

Gives purpose to play unlocked characters

Gacha duplicates give experience





Sounds Easy!

Have to overhaul entire combat system

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...Told Apple we would do it in a month

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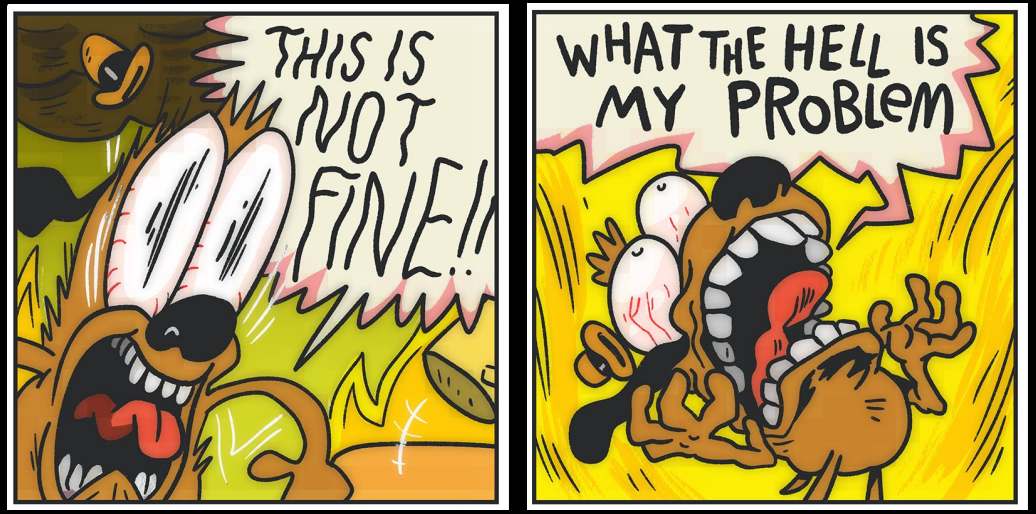
CRUNCH IS BAD

Stuck to arbitrary date

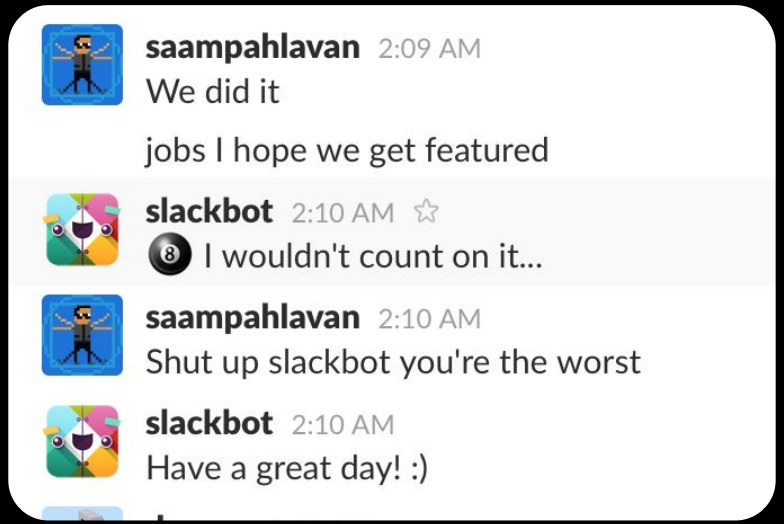
Wanted to impress Apple

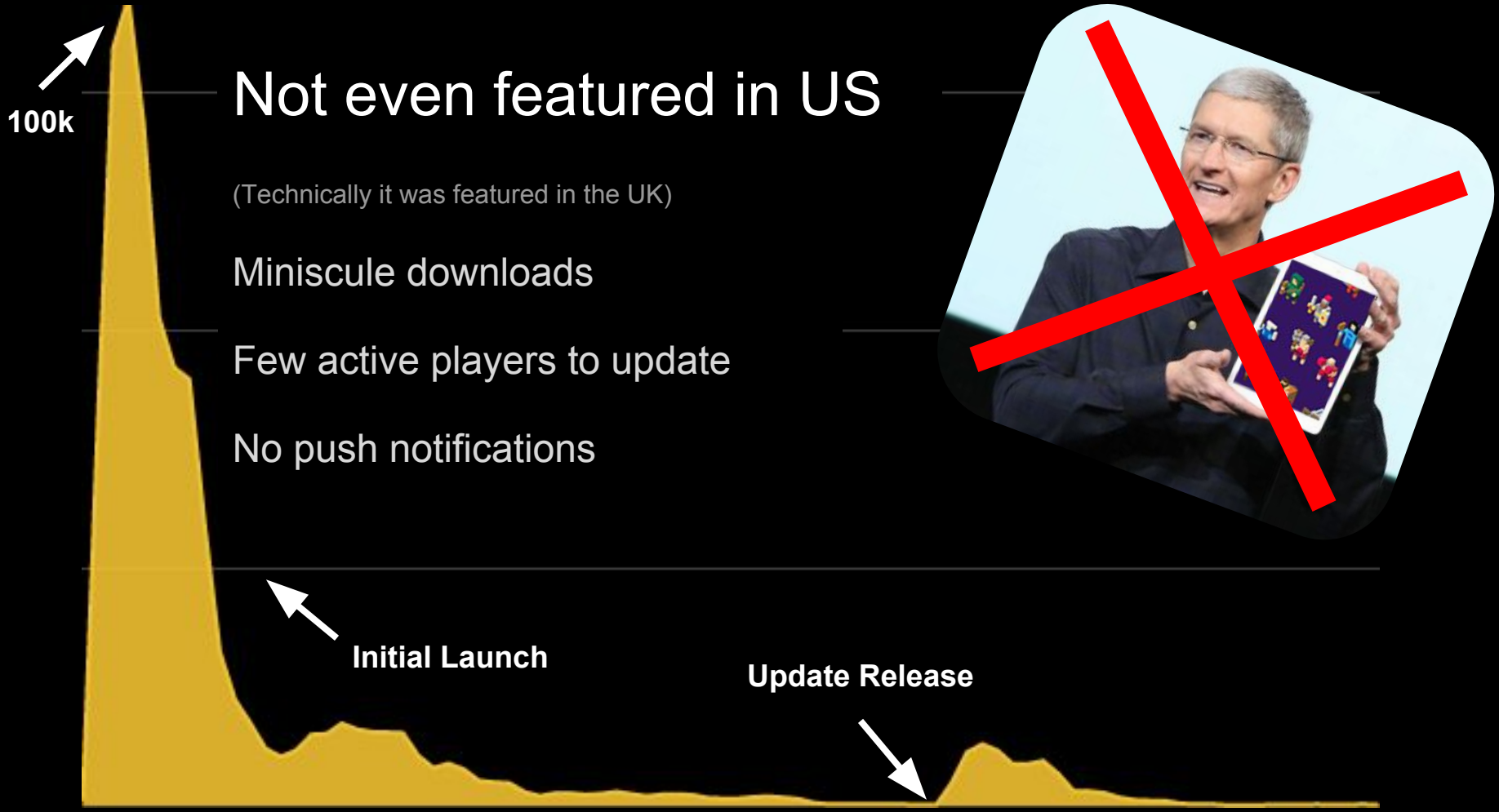
Bad for your work!

Also, bad for you!



"The Taco crew submits the update"



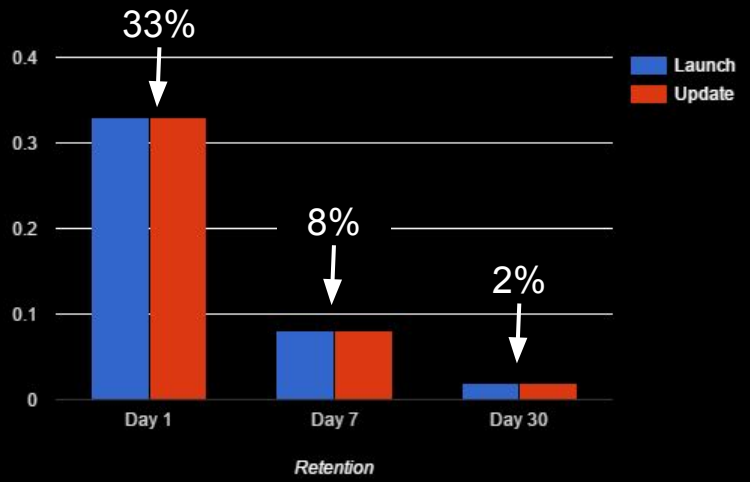

100k
Not even featured in US
(Technically it was featured in the UK)
Miniscule downloads
Few active players to update
No push notifications
Initial Launch
Update Release

Update didn’t improve retention

Day 1, 7, 30 retention unchanged

Retention is hard to improve

Retention on Android port also not improved



Takeaways

Think it through!

Plan it out!

Roadmaps and schedules, y’all

Push back deadlines

Take breaks!

Make Money From Your Art!

Investigate issues with retention & monetization early

A game cannot just be “good”

Make it worthwhile to keep playing!

```
public void BuyCharacterForActualRealWorldMoneyImNotKiddingAboutThis() {
    //holy shit give us that money
    CollusionManager.Instance.PurchasePlayer(selectedPlayer);
}
```

Crunch is bad

Don’t do it

Extend or double your deadlines

Be flexible with dates

Others don’t care

Featuring isn’t guaranteed

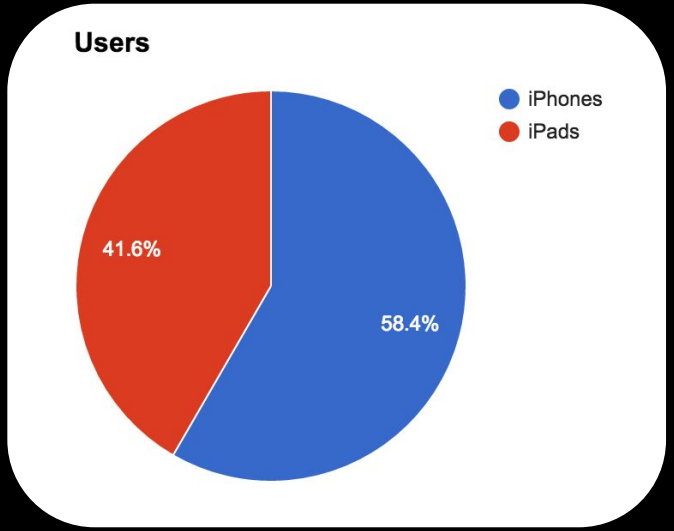
Update featuring has most competition

Don’t assume or rely on update featuring

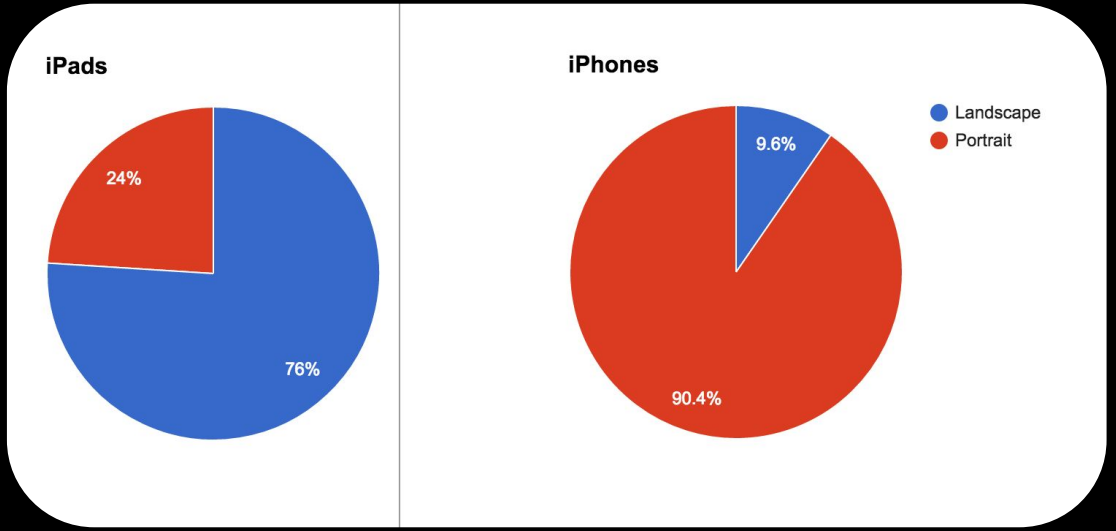
Regular contact with Apple doesn’t guarantee a feature

Move on!

Stats and stuff!



Downloads on iPads v iPhones



Device orientation preference on iPad v iPhone

Thanks!

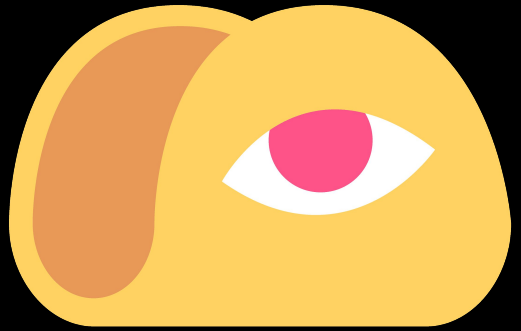
Follow us on twitter! @illtaco

Jake @naxum
Saam @saampahlavan
Damon @whirred_up

Thanks to:
Juan Gril, Patrick Curry, Jocelyn Reyes, Unity,
and our game dev friends / fam (Question Hound - KC Green)

developer.apple.com/contact/app-store/promote/

tacoilluminati.com/gdc/



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Austin indies y’all