



# COMMUNITY SNOWBALLING IN PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS: FROM PRE-ALPHA TO 20 MILLION AND COUNTING IN EARLY ACCESS

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# Introduction

- Sammie Kang a.k.a  poopieQueen
- Lead Community Manager, PUBG Corporation





# Takeaways

- “How an Unfinished Game With No Marketing ~~Came Out of Nowhere~~ to Dominate the Internet” – May 2, 2017, New York Magazine
- How to create a snowball effect before/after launch
- How to market your indie game with a \$0 budget

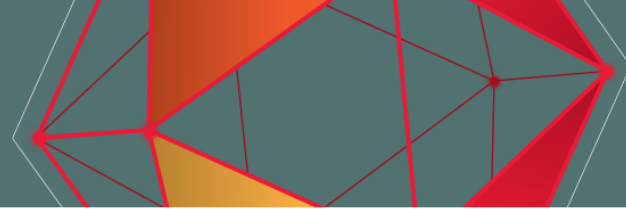




# PUBG Corp.

- Previously Bluehole Ginno Games
- Less than 30 people
- Part of the team that developed <Devilian>
- 10+ years of experience in developing and managing online games
- “Let’s fail fast and learn quickly”





# PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS

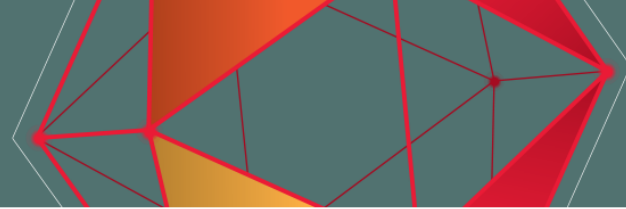
- Project BR0
  - 8x8 km / openworld / realistic / serious
  - The first standalone Battle Royale game
- PLAYERUNKNOWN
  - Gave birth to the Battle Royale genre through his mods
  - Joined the PUBG dev team in March 2016





# Community Snowballing?





# Community Snowballing

- Develop(grow) a close-knit, vibrant tester community
- **Make them an insider:** Provide exclusive access to tests/resources and share non-disclosable information
- **Strengthen relationships and build loyalty:** Get them involved in the development process, listen to their feedback, reward them
- Iterate to make the snowball larger







# Our Snowballing Strategies

- Engage and work with low, mid-tier streamers
- Seek to grow and expand together
  - Growth of their viewership/communities = Increased visibility & awareness of our game
  - Find ways to help grow their communities
  - Offer exclusive benefits to empower them

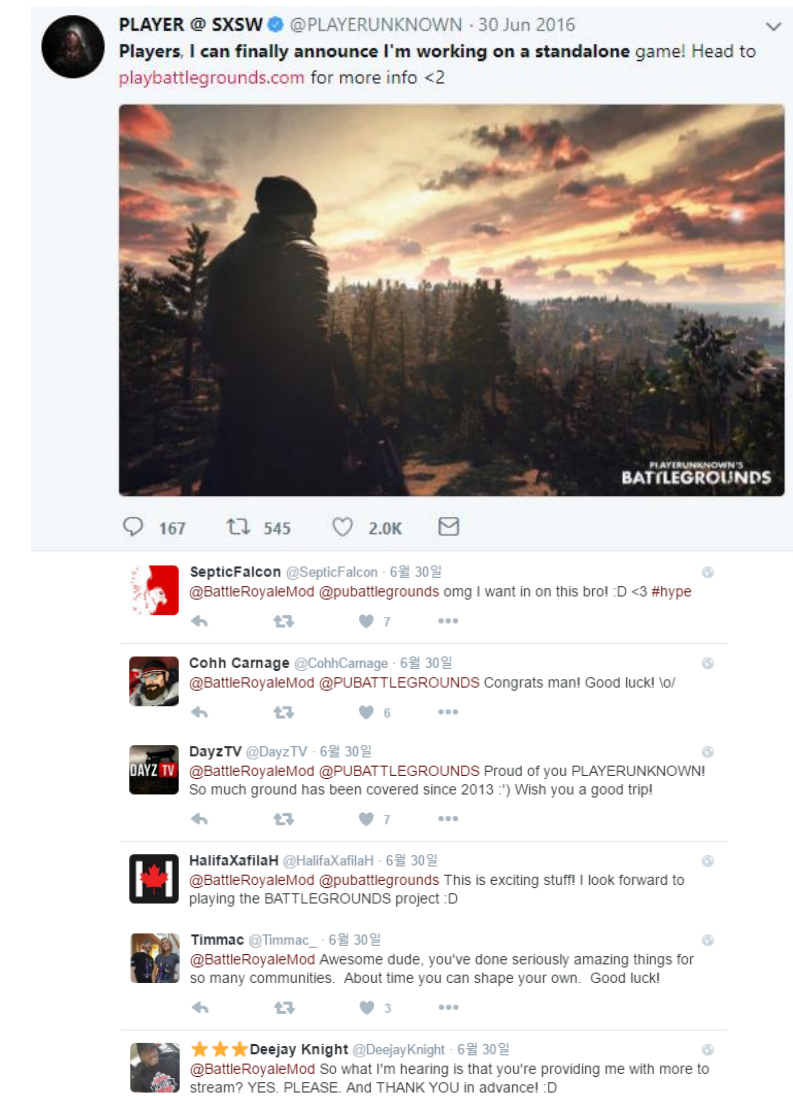






# Closed Pre-Alpha

- First play test after 4 months of development
  - 8x8 km map / Basic gameplay
  - Under NDA
  - 1,100 registered testers, 600 participated
  - Total of 6 hours in 2 days, 52 games





# Closed Pre-Alpha

# announcements | All info shared in this Discord is under NDA. By joining this D...

PLAYERUNKNOWN

지난주 월요일 오후 1시 34분

@everyone Please fill out this survey when you have a chance. Thank you again for your help with testing over the weekend!

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQL5dJGz9bU5donKRc4HNu6O98-CKkriCvdtO6ZaBellWb1PFZ4g/viewform>

Google Docs

PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS Pre-Alpha Survey

2016년 8월 4일

PLAYERUNKNOWN

지난주 목요일 오전 9시 55분

@everyone We now have translation support on our homepage. If you want to help, head over to the site and activate translation mode in the top right of the homepage. You will be asked to create an account, and you can then start.

<http://playbattlegrounds.com/>

Bluehole\_Hyowon

지난주 목요일 오전 10시 54분

@everyone For those that would like to upload media files from our first pre-alpha test, please use this link: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/6dV4pdj3xAU0EfyNqobVW>

Dropbox

Dropbox - Submit files

Dropbox is a free service that lets you bring your photos, docs, and videos anywhere and share them easily. Never email yourself a file again!

@everyone If you would like to view all the files that have been uploaded by the tester group, please use this link: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/luilei4cmae58qn/AAAImqjpZz3RssNWlgVZRQKXa7dl=0>

Dropbox

Closed Pre-Alpha 1

Shared with Dropbox

# bug-reports | All info shared in this Discord is under NDA. By joining this Discord...

31 / 33

my character went under the map/invisible right after leaving spawn and i have no idea why

Rowynn

지난주 월요일 오전 11시 39분

hit a person at full speed from behind, got sparks and knocked backwards in the buggy. they didn't die (수정됨)

De\_Facto

지난주 월요일 오후 12시 21분

got killed by a player doing an exploit. hes was basically hovering in the jump animation. no footsteps, was able to quickly glide to me (more faster than walking or run speed), and was able to shoot at this position. eventually he touched the ground but then i witnessed him do the exploit again. If the devs want i can tell you how he did it but i dont want to say it to everyone, thinking that anybody who sees it will try to do it as well.

## Calling all testers!

Thank you very much for both the support and interest shown in our announcement of PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS! While we are still at a very early stage of development, we still want to share a lot of what we are working on, and have a strong community of testers to help us in making a good game.

By applying to become a tester, you agree to participate in play-tests, and provide feedback about bugs, and issues you find with the game. You will be playing the game in a very early stage of development, so you will be required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement which will be lifted at some time in the future.

We will be sorting your applications over the coming weeks, and we will inform those that have succeeded via email. At this stage we don't need massive amounts of testers, so the initial group will be limited, so if you don't make it in, you are still on a list and may be invited when we expand the test group in the future.

Key requirements to become a tester are :

- A public Steam account that is at least 1-year-old;
- No VAC/BattlEye bans on your account;
- Windows PC that meets the minimum system requirements listed below:
  - OS : 64-bit required, Windows 7, Windows 8.1, Windows 10
  - Processor : Intel Core i5 2.0 GHz
  - Memory : 4GB RAM
  - Graphics Card : DX11 GPU with 2GB VRAM : GTX 660 / Radeon R9 270
  - DirectX : Version 11
  - Network : Broadband Internet Connection
  - Storage : 20GB available

Please note that little optimization has been applied to the game and the system requirements will be changed as we move forward



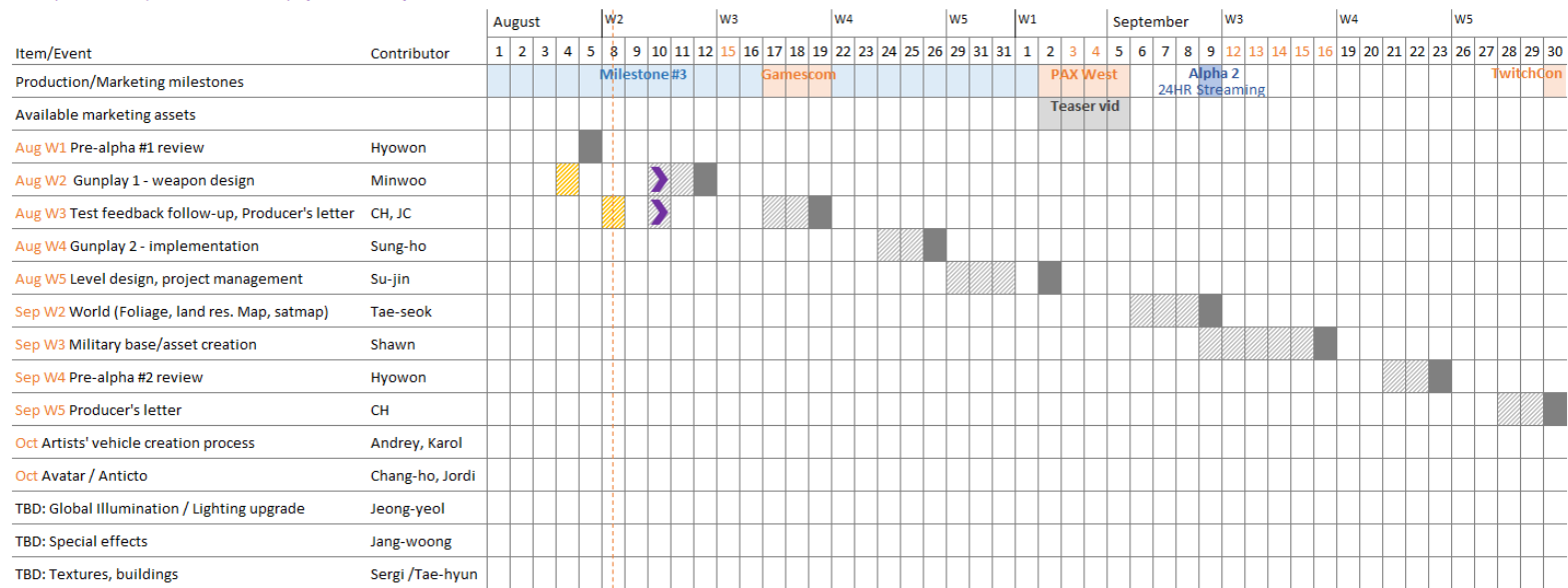


## PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS

## Content Calendar

- A new blog post is published every Friday at 9:30 pm KST.

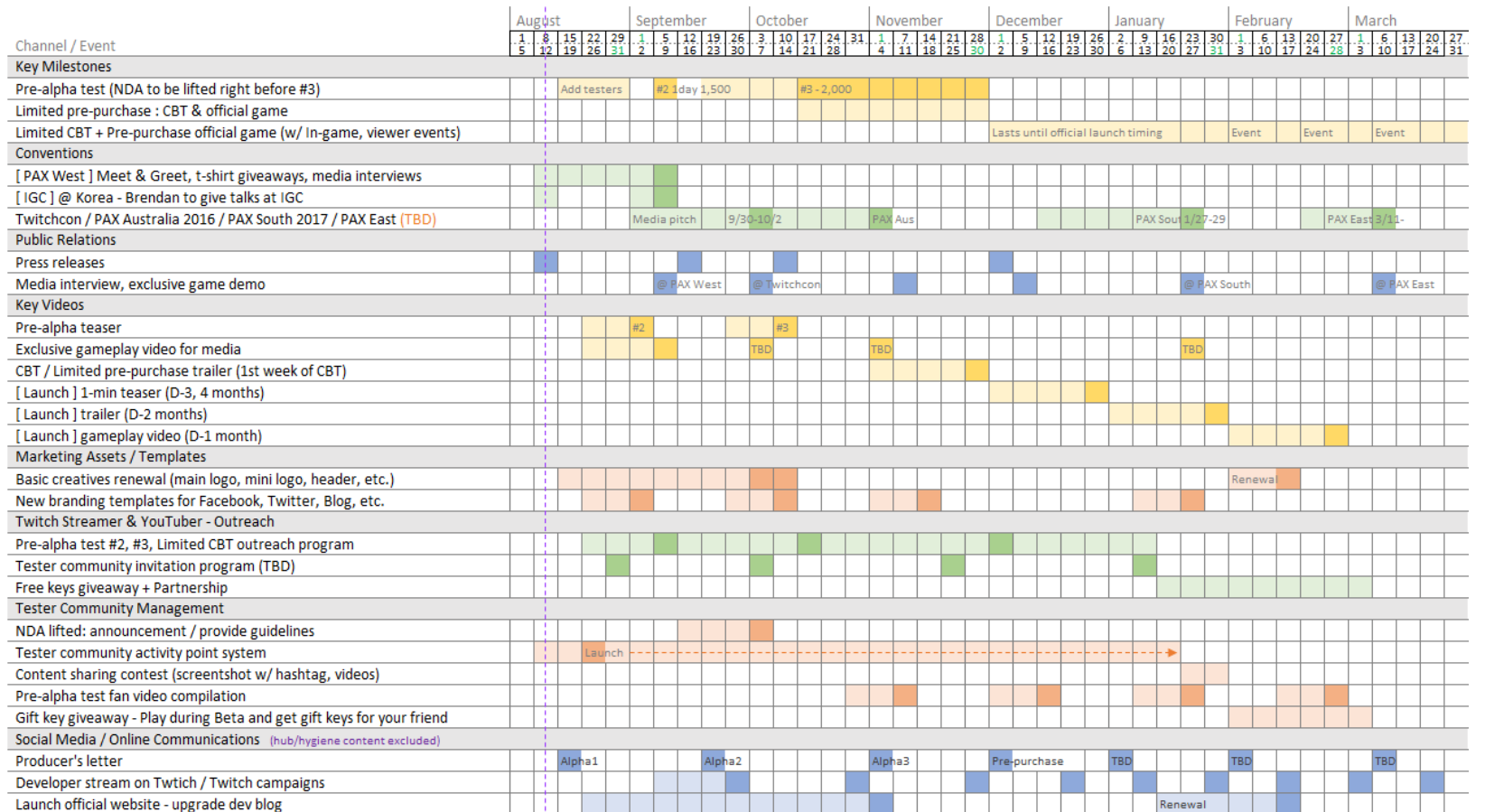
- Every week, draft posts should be ready by EOD Thursday.



## PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS Marketing Calendar

\*All programs and campaigns are subject to change based on actionable insights from play tests and other key momentums

\*Sales goals, strategic framework and marketing objectives will be defined later





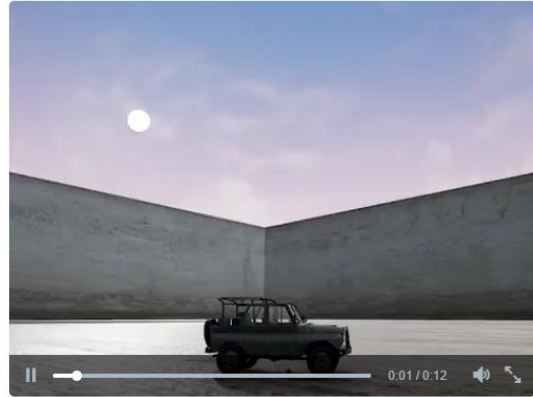


PLAYERUNKNOWN @BattleRoyaleMod · 7월 25일  
Players, here is a little teaser for one of the vehicles we are working on for @PUBBATTLEGROUNDS <2



30 130

PLAY BATTLEGROUNDS @PUBBATTLEGROUNDS · 20시간  
I think we need to tweak our grenade's explosive power a little...



24 122

PLAY BATTLEGROUNDS @PUBBATTLEGROUNDS · 7월 26일  
The first round of tester invites have been sent. If you made the list, you should be getting an email shortly!



**Pre-alpha Tester Application Update**  
Players, We have now sent out invitations to the applicants that qualified for our first test group. If you didn't receive an email inviting you to our te...  
playbattlegrounds.com

39 160

PLAY BATTLEGROUNDS @PUBBATTLEGROUNDS · 8월 10일  
This Friday on the dev blog, a look at weapons and how we get them working well in-game!

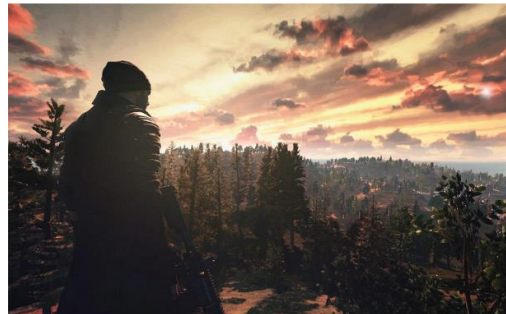


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2016-06-27  
**Welcome To The Development Blog!**

GENERAL



Players,  
I'm excited to finally share more details about what I've been up to for the last few months. This February, I received a message from Dr. Changhan Kim, a Production Director at Bluehole. He explained that he'd wanted to make a Battle Royale type game for the last 10 years, and when he learned about what I had done with Arma 3 & H1Z1, he decided reach out to see if I would be

2016-07-15  
**Call For Testers Update**

GENERAL



Players,  
Thank you all for your applications! We were positively overwhelmed by the response we have received thus far. We are currently busy sorting through the responses we have received and will be getting in contact with those that made it over the coming weeks. If you don't hear from us in this time, don't worry as our initial test group is quite small, but we will be increasing it's size over the coming months.

2016-07-22  
**Characters**

ART



Players,  
Today, we would like to share our process of character development, from concept to finished in-game model.  
First off, here is a short video with the two artists responsible for our character art, Taehyun our concept artist, and Cedric our lead character artist.

2016-07-29  
**Vehicles**

VEHICLES



Players,  
Today on the dev blog we will be looking at the vehicle creation process. When we are deciding on vehicles to add to the game, we consider how they will affect game-play, but also if they will fit with the location of the island.





# To Test or Not To Test?











# Closed Pre-Alpha: **Key Points**

- To test or not to test?
  - “We are not a AAA developer/publisher” - no pre-launch hype, no marketing resources
  - Make it a privilege; Exclusivity is key
  - Help testers understand that it’s an early version with plenty of bugs and crashes, as well as some missing features

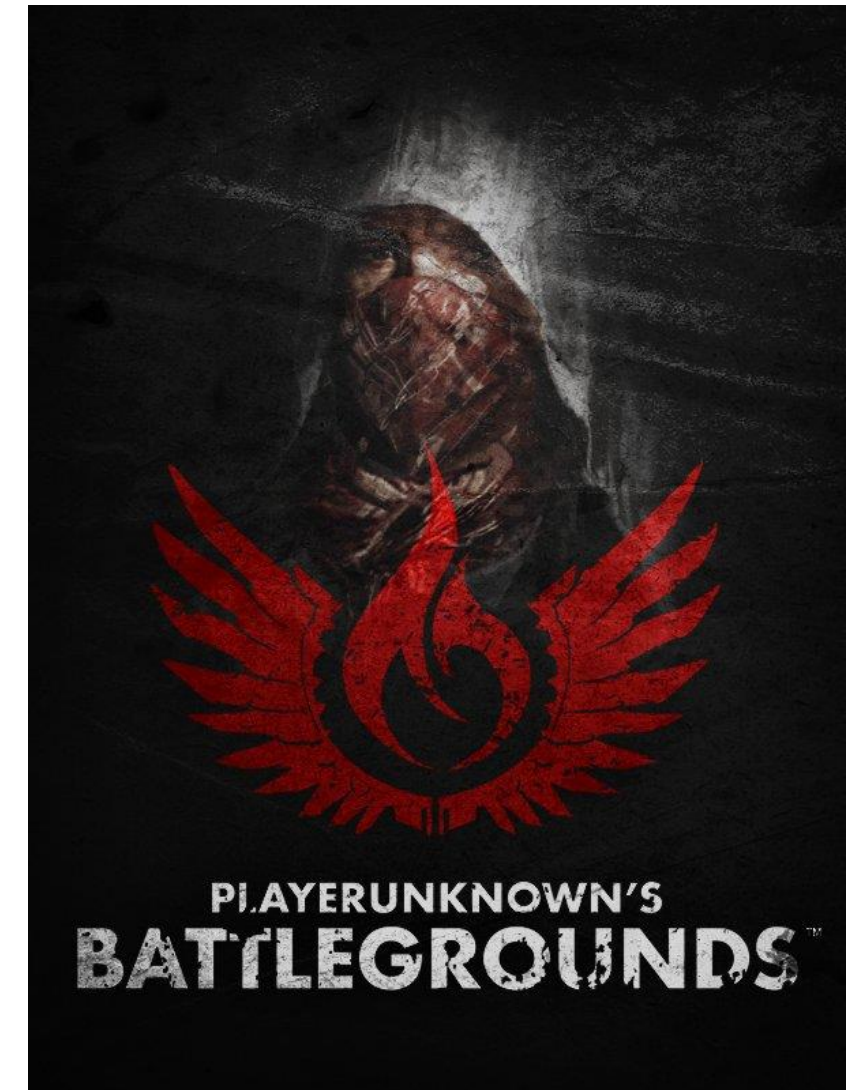






# Alpha 1

- “We need C-130 in PUBS.”
- NDA lifted... Panic mode!
- Longer testing window
- Performance on Twitch
  - 128 Twitch streamers participated
  - Peak CCV: 44k





# To Lift or Not To Lift?





# Alpha 1: Key Points

- NDA: To lift or not to lift?
  - “Our testers are going to be disappointed”
  - “Will this get our testers to trust our dev team?”
- Reinforce sense of exclusivity: “You are the chosen one”
- Drive up initial interest of potential testers: “I wanna play but I can’t?”





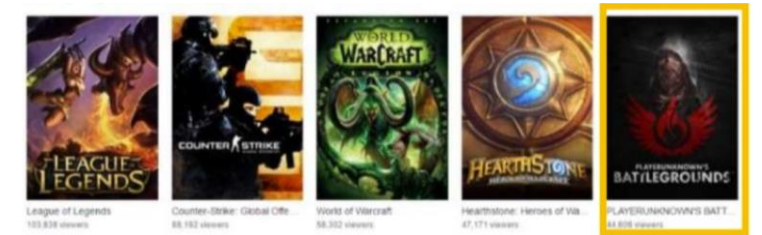
# Alpha 2

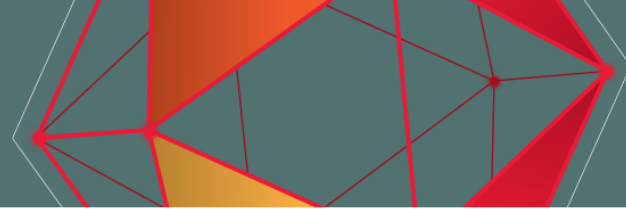
- 4 weekends (Mid-November - Early December)
- Bigger tester group
  - Identified, invited more testers & streamers
- #5 on Twitch / 800+ streamers participated

**PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS™**  
ALPHA2 TEST SCHEDULE

STARTS ON NOV 12TH / ENDS ON DEC 4TH

| Time Zone | Day      | EU Server          | NA Server          |
|-----------|----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| CET       | SAT, SUN | 5 PM - 1 AM        | 1 AM - 9 AM        |
| GMT       | SAT, SUN | 4 PM - 12 AM       | 12 AM - 8 AM       |
| EST (US)  | SAT, SUN | 11 AM - 7 PM       | 7 PM - 3 AM        |
| CST (US)  | SAT, SUN | 10 AM - 6 PM       | 6 PM - 2 AM        |
| PST (US)  | SAT, SUN | 8 AM - 4 PM        | 4 PM - 12 AM       |
| KST       | SUN, MON | 1 AM - 9 AM        | 9 AM - 5 PM        |
| ACDT      | SUN, MON | 2:30 AM - 10:30 AM | 10:30 AM - 6:30 PM |





# Alpha 2: Key Points

- Should you hire an agency or keep thing in-house?
  - The answer is “no”: They want to talk to you, not your PR rep
  - Build relationships that last, at least with core targets
  - Become their true supporter
- Streamers look for new/better content to build their business on
  - Your game could be the new opportunity to grow their business
  - Give all streamers/content creators a chance to leverage your game

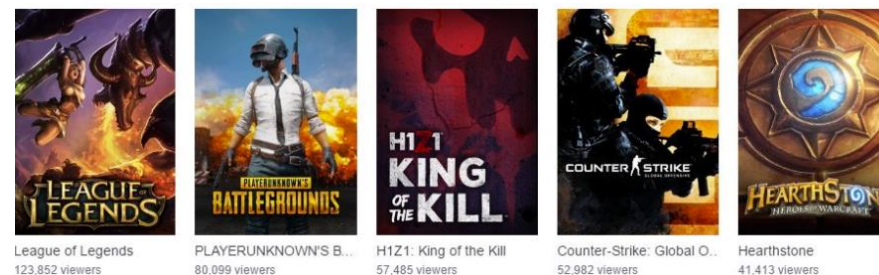






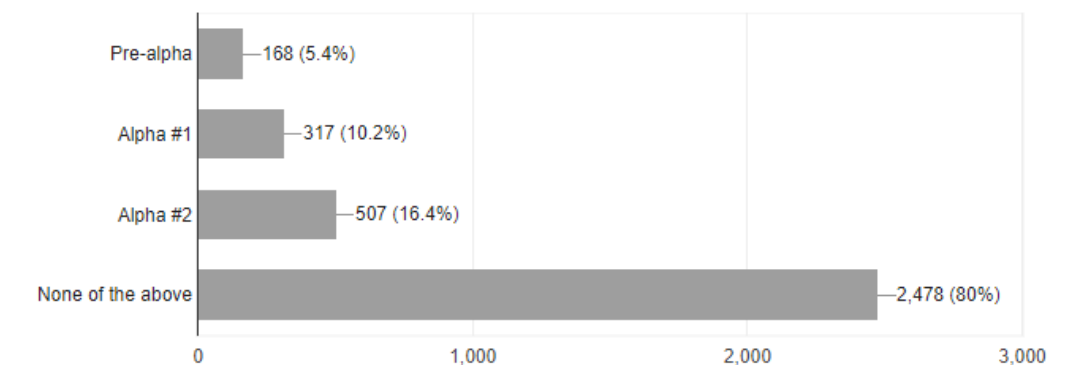
# Closed Beta

- Reach a larger target market
  - Casual gamers / Top-tier streamers / Variety streamers
  - Cold emails / Twitter / Referrals / Discord key distribution bot
  - Hand out cards at meetups and conventions
- Focus on maximizing Twitch/YouTube coverage during CBT
  - Invited 30K additional testers
  - #2 on Twitch / Peak CCV: 80K



Have you participated in previous alphas?

3,097 responses



## PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS (PUBG): Closed Beta Registration for Content Creators

Streamers, Content Creators, Let's Players, and Reviewers,  
Welcome to PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS Closed Beta Registration.

After less than a year of development, PUBG will head into Closed Beta in February 2017. We are excited to share that more streamers and content creators will be invited for this beta.

If you missed the chance to join the PUBG content creator community in 2016, you can sign up here to be on the Closed Beta wait list. There will be no NDA and we encourage everyone to stream or create content during the testing period.

Thank you for your interest in the Closed Beta for PUBG!

- PUBG Community Team







# Closed Beta

**PLAY BATTLEGROUNDS** @PUBATTLEGROUNDS · 11 Mar 2017  
All servers are now ONLINE for the 3rd weekend of **closed beta** testing! We have lots happening all weekend at #PAXEast2017, so stay tuned!



**PLAY BATTLEGROUNDS** @PUBATTLEGROUNDS · 12 Mar 2017  
At #PAXEast2017? Need a **closed beta** code? Hit up our booth now to get yours, but be quick as we have limited numbers to hand out!



**PLAY BATTLEGROUNDS** @PUBATTLEGROUNDS · 17 Mar 2017  
One hour to go before the final weekend of the **Closed Beta** starts! This week we pay tribute to some of our supporters with some new graffiti!







# Closed Beta: **Key Points**

- Reward loyal testers and streamers, strengthen relationships
  - Distributed beta keys through Twitch streamers; help them attract new viewers
  - Give loyal fans and streamers exposure (e.g. CBT Highlight Video)
  - Act on their feedback but also acknowledge it to empower them





# Early Access

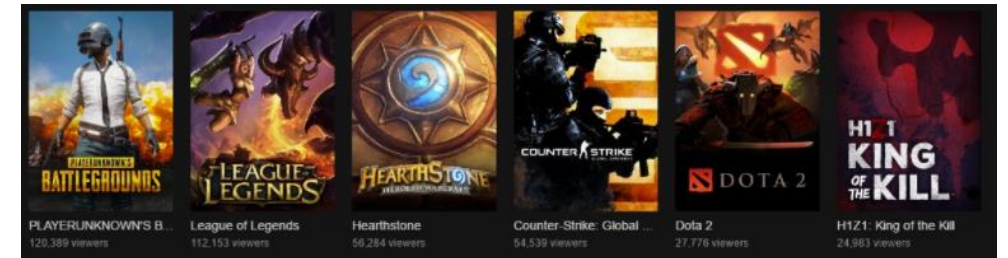
- EA Launch: March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017
- “Fastest time to sell a million units on Steam Early Access” - In 16 days
- Launched PUBG Partner program





# Early Access: **Key Points**

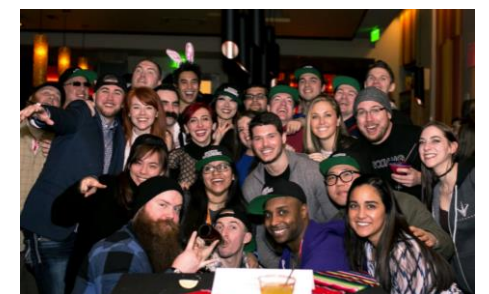
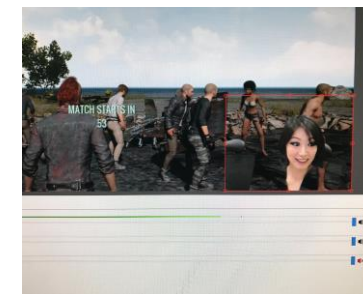
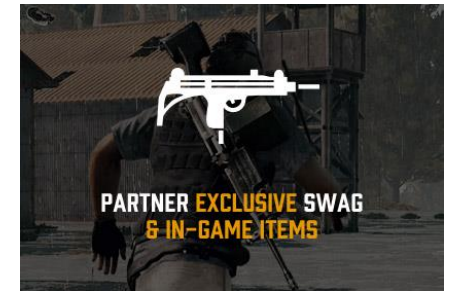
- Bigger benefits/rewards to true ambassadors
  - Give them bigger exposure (e.g. Early Access ad)
  - In-game graffiti event
  - Access to custom games
- Create events to celebrate and highlight the ambassadors
  - Twitch Charity Invitational, May 2017
  - PAX East mixer

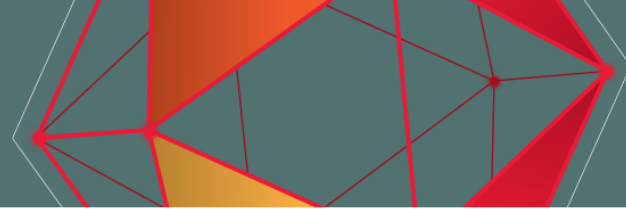




# Other Programs & Activities

- Developer livestreams
- Rewards to all Alpha testers
- Offline community meetups
- “What is it like to be a streamer?”
- “What is it like to be a viewer/fan?”





# Recap #1

- Start with a small exclusive community of hand-selected members
  - “By invitation only” - Scarcity, exclusivity
  - They become genuine ambassadors for your game







# Recap #2

- Give them exclusive content, insider information and benefits that help them feel they are part of a special community
  - One of those “in the know”
  - Allow them to shape your game
- “How will they gain from being part of this community?”
- In-game badges / activity point program / multi-tiered reward program





# Recap #3

- Content creators/streamers and Twitch should be a part of your marketing plan but they are not marketing tools
  - Understand their business, they are your business partners
  - Start small







# Recap #4

- Directly talk to your players, connect with your most loyal fans/testers
  - Foster a greater level of intimacy
  - Directly communicate how their input is actually being put to work
- Not ready to scale fast / maintaining the level of transparency and frequency of communication







PLAYERUNKNOWN'S  
**BATTLEGROUNDS**