GDC®

THE DIARY OF A MODERN PR CAMPAIGN

How to Plan Your Game's Promotion

@Olima / Thomas Reisenegger

UBM

Selling games is actually coffee

TOPICS TODAY

I.   What really sells games?

II. 5 phases of a PR campaign

III. Summary

THOMAS REISENEGGER

- **Future Friends Games, Founder**
  Brighton, UK

- **Worked on over 40 games including**
  League of Legends, SMITE, Paladins, Endless Space 2, Northgard, A Normal Lost Phone, Orwell: Ignorance is Strength, What the Golf?
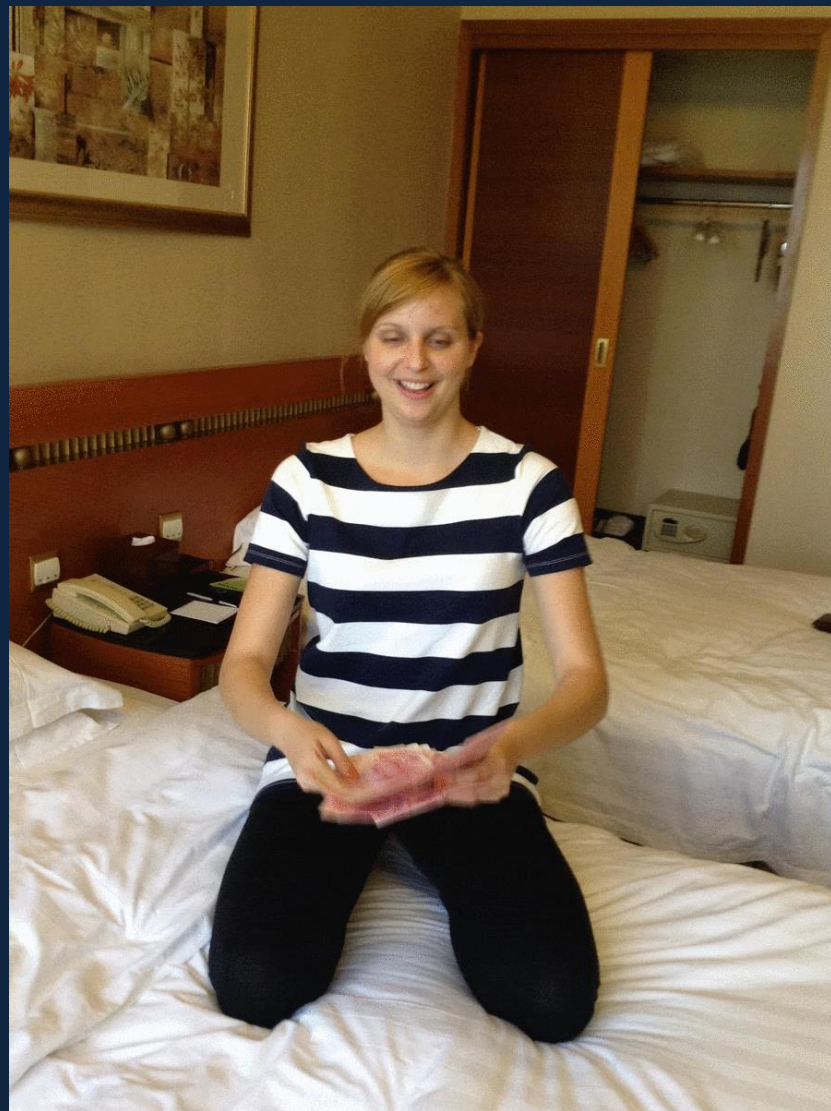
INDIE GAME PR SURVEY **128 STUDIOS**

@olima

QUALITY

WHAT REALLY MOVES THE NEEDLE?

How many Steam games have great reviews but little exposure?

A LOT - A LOT - A LOT - A LOT - A LOT - A LOT

Obscure Steam games and digging for Hidden Gems

by Bill Borman on 06/15/17 10:05:00 am   **Featured Post**

17 comments   t   f Share   G+1

The following blog post, unless otherwise noted, was written by a member of Gamasutra's community.
The thoughts and opinions expressed are those of the writer and not Gamasutra or its parent company.

Every now and then someone makes the argument that all really good games eventually do well, otherwise "if there are really good games that don't sell, how come I never come across one?"
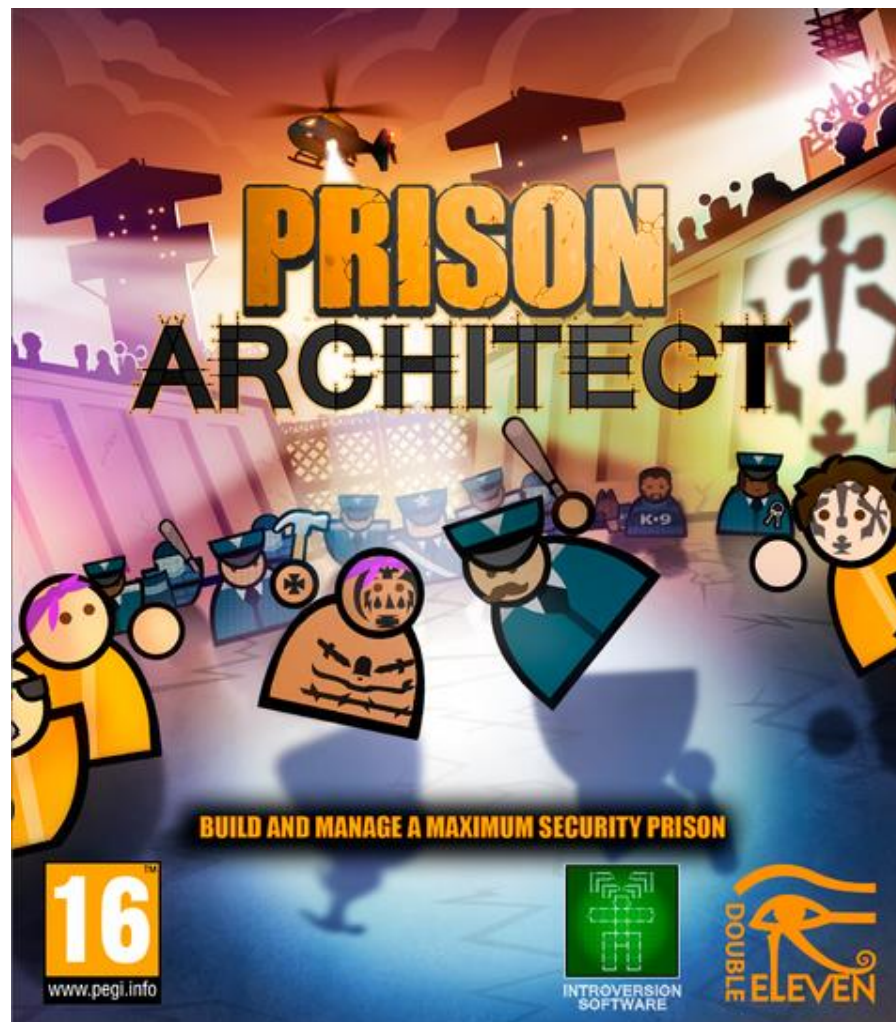
Really Hidden Gems

	AppID	Name	Reviews	Score	Release Date	
1	32150	Everyday Genius: SquareLogic	242	99	09/10/2009	
2	333260	Marvin's Mittens	72	100	17/12/2014	
3	80360	Blackwell Deception	163	98	13/01/2012	
4	311930	Tinertia	44	100	03/09/2015	
5	348440	Quell Memento	40	100	14/05/2015	
6	377660	Blockwick 2	64	100	25/06/2015	
7	384690	Umihara Kawase	33	100	02/11/2015	
8	557410	Dream Quest	32	100	15/05/2014	
9	454530	Decisive Campaigns: Barbarossa	31	100	24/11/2015	
10	349760	Snail Bob 2	30	100	24/09/2015	
11	355420	FLAMBERGE	30	100	25/03/2015	
12	283820	KAMUI	48	97	11/12/2014	
13	418520	SculptrVR	29	100	04/04/2016	
14	431770	Rivalry	45	100	22/01/2016	
15	407380	Strania - The Stella Machina -	27	100	24/11/2015	
16	235080	Tetrobot and Co	130	98	22/10/2013	

QUALITY

GAMASUTRA
The Art & Business of Making Games

Obscure Steam games and digging for Hidden Gems

by Bill Borman on 06/15/17 10:05:00 am   Featured Post

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WHAT REALLY MOVES THE NEEDLE?

BRAND

Over 2 million sold

**Over 6,000 sold
(in the first 2 months)**

Introversion Software Youtube channel

QUALITY

MEDIA

WHAT REALLY MOVES THE NEEDLE?

BRAND

waypoint

KOTAKU"

ROCK PAPER SHOTGUN

Polygon™

PCGamesN

8.5 "The truth *Blackwood Crossing* finds is unforgettable and emotionally wrenching."

"Blackwood Crossing pushes the boundaries for narrative-driven indies"

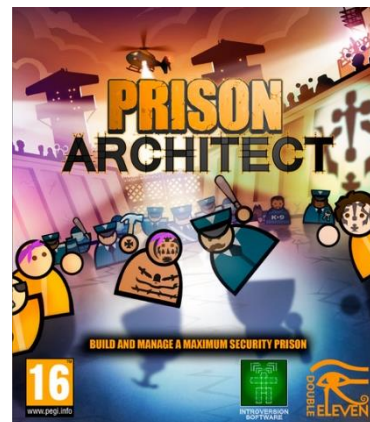*Under 5,000 PC sales 6 months after launch (Steamspy)*

QUALITY

Obscure Steam games and digging for Hidden Gems

WHAT REALLY MOVES THE NEEDLE?

MEDIA

BRAND

QUALITY

Obscure Steam games and digging for Hidden Gems

YTer +
STREAMER

WHAT REALLY MOVES THE NEEDLE?
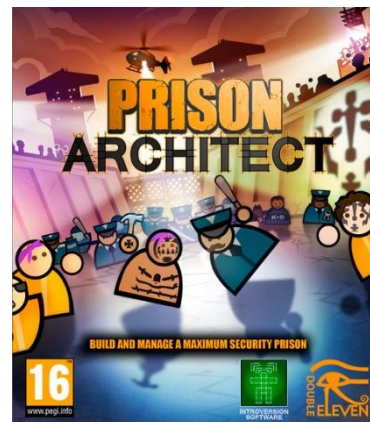
MEDIA

BRAND

GDC 2018 / @olima

Dan Marshall @danthat · 15m

Interesting stats for you: yesterday a big YouTuber covered #Kickmen. It was a complimentary video, if not exactly gushing praise, but fun.

💬 1   🔁 2   ♡ 8   ✉

15 copies 🙁

QUALITY

YTer + STREAMER

PLATFORM

MEDIA

BRAND

SOCIAL MEDIA

WHAT REALLY MOVES THE NEEDLE?

GAMASUTRA
The Art & Business of Making Games

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Every now and then someone makes the argument that all really good games eventually do well, otherwise "if there are really good games that don't sell, how come I never come across one?"

Dan Marshall @danthat · 15m
Interesting stats for you: yesterday a big YouTuber covered #Kickmen. It was a complimentary video, if not exactly gushing praise, but fun.
♡ 1   ⟲ 2   ♥ 8

Dan Marshall @danthat · 14m
7.3 Million Subscribers -> 70,000 views -> sold ~15 copies more than average. That's quite the filter!
♡ 3   ⟲ 1   ♥ 11

Dan Marshall @danthat · 13m
(I don't want this to come across as bitter, I've spoken before I am aware Kickmen is a hard sell. I am just surprised by that figure)
♡ 2   ⟲ 3

PS4

XBOX ONE

PRISON ARCHITECT
BUILD AND MANAGE A MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON

BLACKWOOD CROSSING

Lost in the Garden

What do you think helped selling your game?

Helped a lot

0   5   10   15   20   25   30   35   40   45   50

What do you think helped selling your game?

Legend:
- Helped a lot (orange)
- Helped a bit (cyan)

Categories (top to bottom): Store features, Sales, Websites, YouTubers, Social Media, Events, Newsletters, Bundles, Streamers, Other devs, Print, Adverts

X-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80

Indie game PR survey 2018

NO NO NO NO NO
NO NO NO NO NO
NO NO NO NO NO

*THERE IS NO MAGIC BULLET**

NO NO NO NO NO
NO NO NO NO NO
NO NO NO NO NO
NO NO NO NO NO

* in 99.9% of the cases, please don't rely on being the 0.1%

WHAT WENT RIGHT?

STORE FEATURE

LAUNCH BUILD-UP

THE FIRST TREE
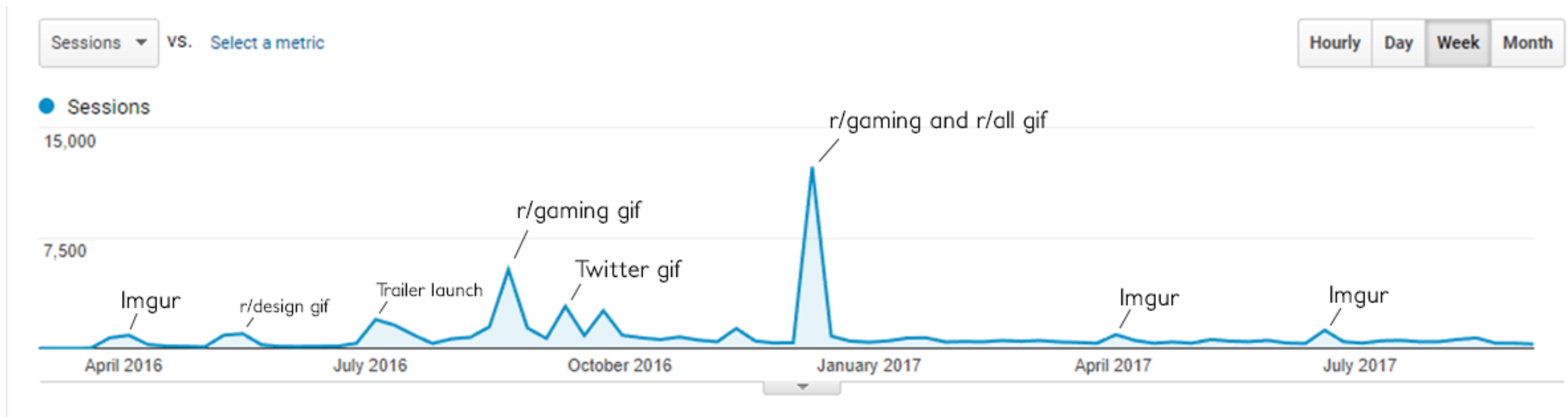
- 12,000 Steam wishlists
- 4,700 Twitter followers

- 4,400 mailing list subscribers
- 1,300 Tumblr followers

WHAT WENT RIGHT?

STORE FEATURE

LAUNCH BUILD-UP

WHAT MAKES A GAME SELL?

AWARENESS

CONSIDERATION

Buys game

CUSTOMER

FAN

WHAT MAKES A GAME SELL?

AWARENESS

CONSIDERATION

Buys game

CUSTOMER

FAN

CHAPTER II

5 PHASES OF
A PR CAMPAIGN

Where the magic happens
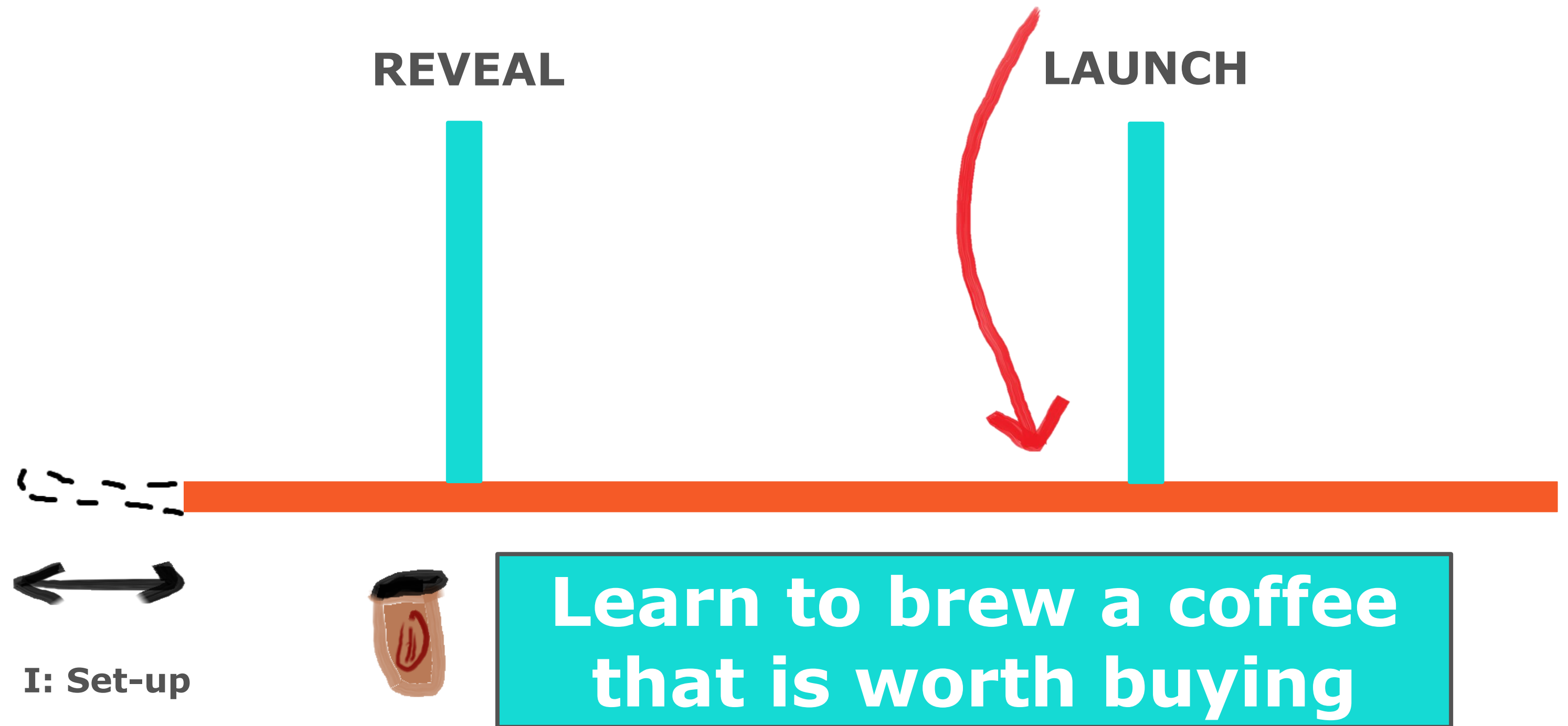
Top 5 to dos
Set-up phase

1. Make a game that people care about & learn to talk about it

I. Make a game that people care about

PUSH PR / PULL PR

I. Learn to talk about your game

Friends test

Short text

Long text

Fugl is a meditative game in which you experience the thrill of flying as a bird.

Feel the breeze under your wings as you glide serenely across picturesque landscapes, or kick up the excitement and soar up steep cliffs like an eagle. With no set rules the free roaming gameplay lets you discover the unspoilt beauty and secrets of the world at your own pace.

Fugl's world is a vast and unique voxel playground. It is procedurally generated yet carefully crafted, with diverse areas to explore. Discover tropical beaches, snowy mountains, endless deserts and old growth forests. Each environment is rich in diverse wildlife with hundreds of animals to find. All are fascinating to observe, and you may even be lucky enough to stumble across rare mythical creatures. Spend time with these other animals for your bird to take on new visual characteristics and flying behaviours inspired by them.

Zombie slayin' rhythm shoot-em-up **Double Kick Heroes**

Fugl

Top 5 to dos
Set-up phase
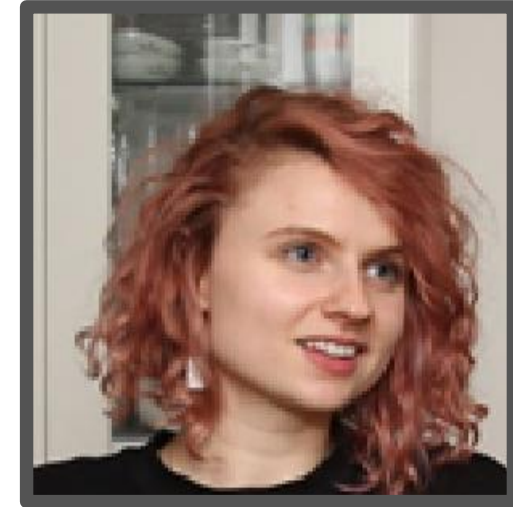
1. Make a game that people care about & learn to talk about it

2. Pick your news beats

II. NEWS BEATS

+ Game announcement
+ **Reveal**
+ First gameplay video
+ **PR stunts**
+ Ports
+ Feature videos
+ **Release date**
+ Release

- Demo
- Kickstarter
- More gameplay videos
- Awards
- Localisation
- Small updates
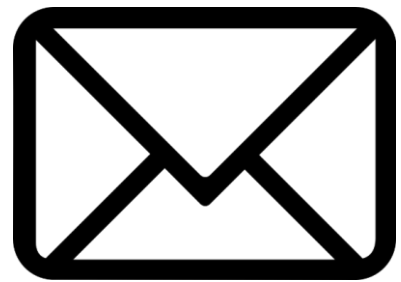- Discounts
- Out of EA launch

Top 5 to dos
Set-up phase
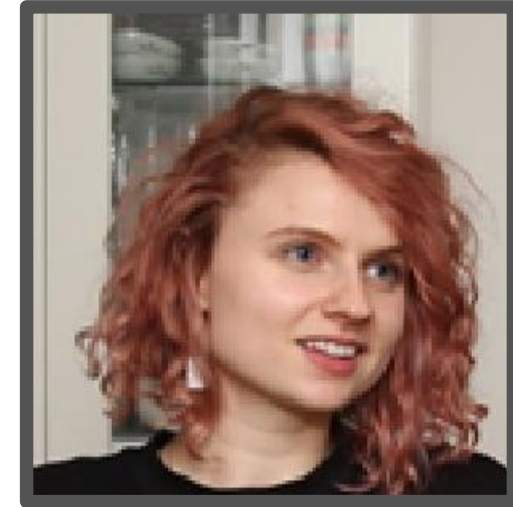
1. Make a game that people care about & learn to talk about it

2. Pick your news beats **+ - + -**

3. Pick the right channels

III. PICK THE RIGHT CHANNELS

Press / influencers

6,436 Points   246,033 Views
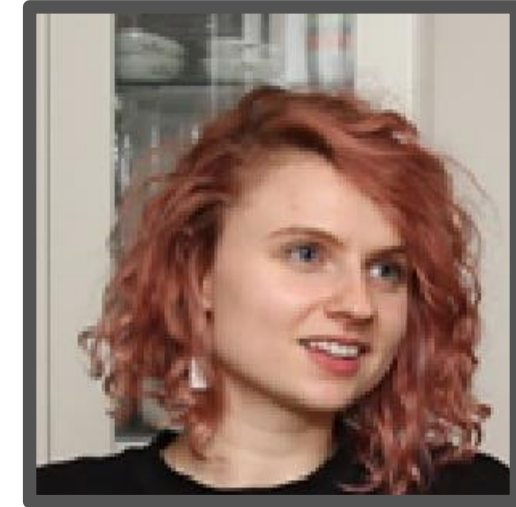
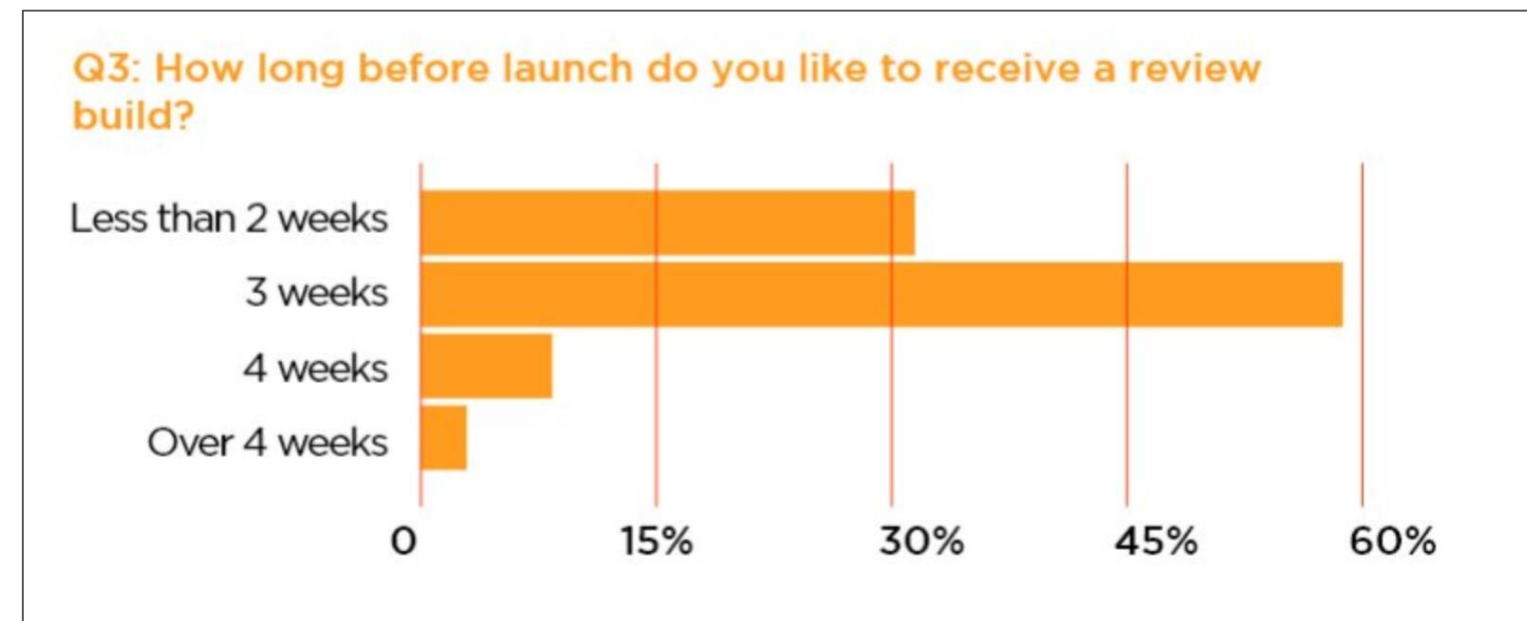imgur   reddit   tumblr.

Top 5 to dos
Set-up phase

1. Make a game that people care about & learn to talk about it

2. Pick your news beats **+ - + -**

3. Pick the right channels ✉ 🐦 f 💬 **DISCORD**

4. Make a PR plan

IV. PR PLAN

	November	December				January				February			
Week	48	49	50	51	52	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Topic	Planning	Teaser gif	Short video	Holiday 'dead zone' - planning		Teaser	Release Date	Gameplay vid	Gameplay vid 2	Gameplay vid compilation	Launch prep	Launch	Follow ups
Assets	Press page First screen Key art	Gif	Video			Teaser gif	Date teaser trailer	Gameplay vid	Gameplay vid 2	Vignette compilation video	-	- Launch Trailer - Launch screenshots - Launch gif	-
Gaming press							x			x	x	x	x
Nintendo press		x			Happy holiday	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Yters & Stramers							x			x		x	
Blog	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Newsletter		3x			x				x	x		x	
Twitter	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x
Facebook	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x
Imgur & reddit		x					x					x	
Events									x				
Other		Steam page	Discord start										

IV. PR PLAN TIPS

- Start: release date

- Leave 2-3 weeks between beats

- Review codes 3 weeks before launch

- Double check dates

  - Bank holidays

  - Game releases (releases.com / steamlist.net)

  - Events (gameconfs.com / pomoterapp.com/calendar)

Q3: How long before launch do you like to receive a review build?

Less than 2 weeks	~30%
3 weeks	~58%
4 weeks	~9%
Over 4 weeks	~3%

Biggamemachines – Survey of game's journalists

Top 5 to dos
Set-up phase

1. Make a game that people care about & learn to talk about it

2. Pick your news beats **+ - + -**

3. Pick the right channels

4. Make a PR plan

5. Set up monitoring

Week	November		December			January				February			
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Gaming press							x			x	x	x	x
Nintendo press			x		Happy holiday	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Yters & Stramers							x			x		x	
Blog	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Newsletter			3x		x					x		x	
Twitter	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x
Facebook	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x
Imgur & reedit			x				x					x	
Events										x			
Other		Steam page	Discord start										

V. SET UP MONITORING

- Alerts ➡️ Google Alerts · TweetDeck · **Promoter**
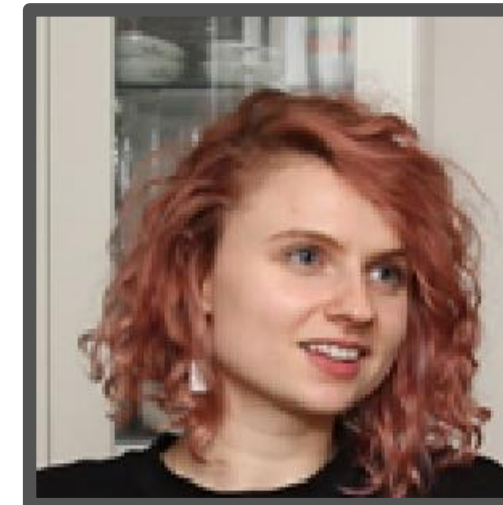
- Website traffic ➡️ SimilarWeb

Top 5 to dos
Set-up phase

1. Make a game that people care about & learn to talk about it

2. Pick your news beats + - + -

3. Pick the right channels

4. Make a PR plan

5. Set up monitoring

Google Alerts   Promoter

Week	November					January				February			
	48	49	50	51	52	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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Gaming press							x			x	x	x	x
Nintendo press			x		Happy holiday	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Yters & Stramers							x			x		x	
Blog	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Newsletter			3x		x					x		x	
Twitter	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x
Facebook	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x	3x
Imgur & reedit			x				x					x	
Events										x			
Other		Steam page	Discord start										

GDC 2018 / @olima

PR TIMELINE

REVEAL

LAUNCH

I: Set-up   II: Pre-reveal

Test the coffee & refine it

Top 5 to dos:
Pre-reveal

1. Set up channels ✉ 🐦 f DISCORD

2. Start community building

Start community building

HUNTDOWN | 21 January 2018

Indies In Development: This week's most promising picks from #ScreenshotSaturday

By
Dominic Tarason

Top 5 to dos:

Pre-reveal

1. Set up channels ✉ 🐦 f 💬 **DISCORD**

2. Start community building ➡

3. Experiment

EXPERIMENT

Overland 🚗🐕
@OverlandGame

Follow

something about this seems off??

GIF

3:16 PM - 28 Jan 2018

1,135 Retweets 5,768 Likes
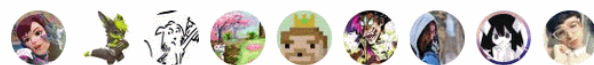
194   1.1K   5.8K

Overland 🚗🐕
@OverlandGame

Follow

apparently we ~didn't~ catch quite all of the corner cases in the last patch

LAKE CITY
SUNSET, DAY 4

FREYA
3/3

FREYA
LIVED IN A CAR BEFORE. HAS PROBLEMS
READING PEOPLE.

END TURN   UNDO

5   CAR

5:58 PM - 9 Mar 2018

322 Retweets 1,994 Likes

Top 5 to dos:
Pre-reveal

1. Set up channels ✉ 🐦 f 💬 twitch DISCORD

2. Start community building →

3. Experiment →

4. Prep reveal trailer, A LOT

REVEAL Trailer

Who made your launch trailer?
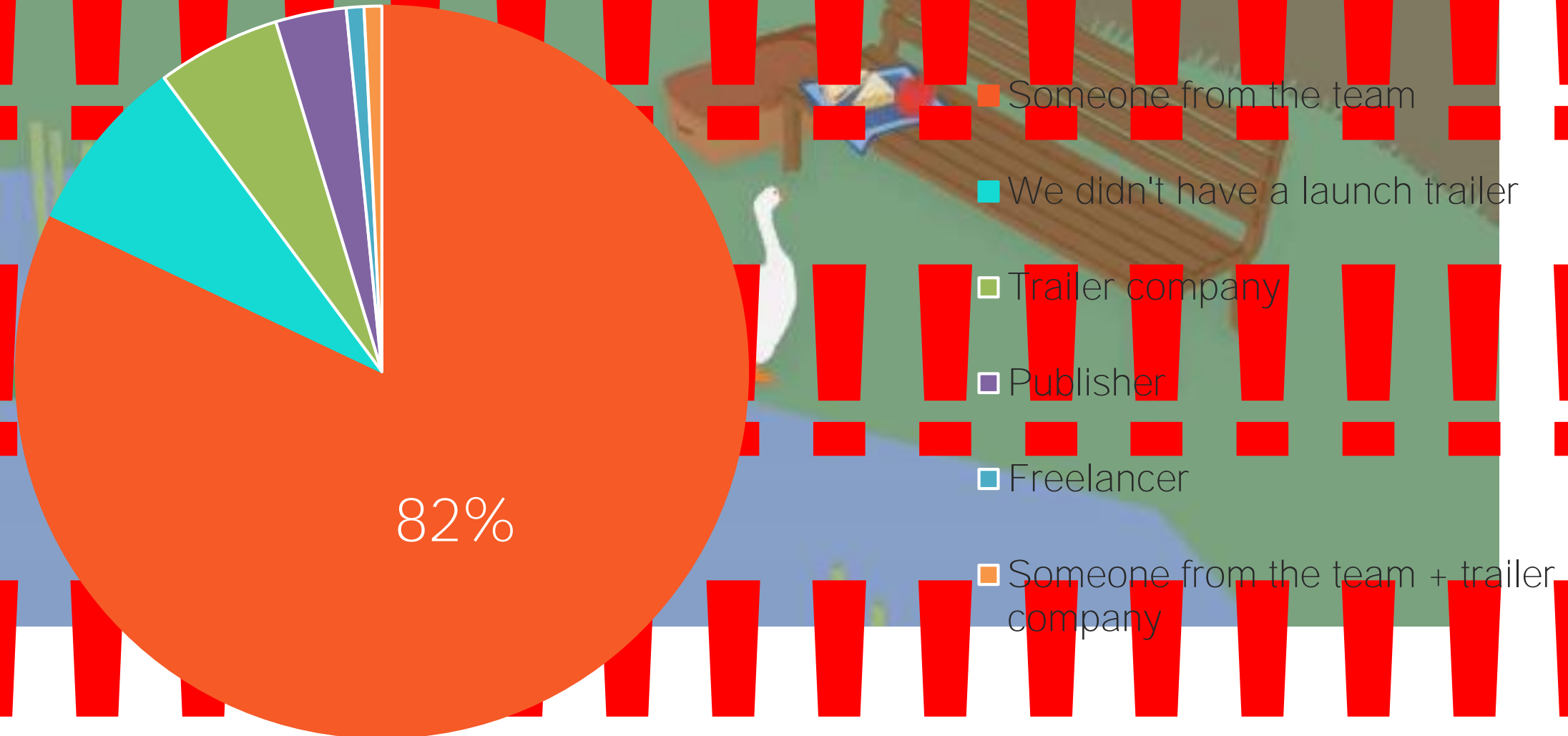
82%

- Someone from the team
- We didn't have a launch trailer
- Trailer company
- Publisher
- Freelancer
- Someone from the team + trailer company

Top 5 to dos:
Pre-reveal

1. Set up channels ✉ 🐦 f 💬 DISCORD / twitch
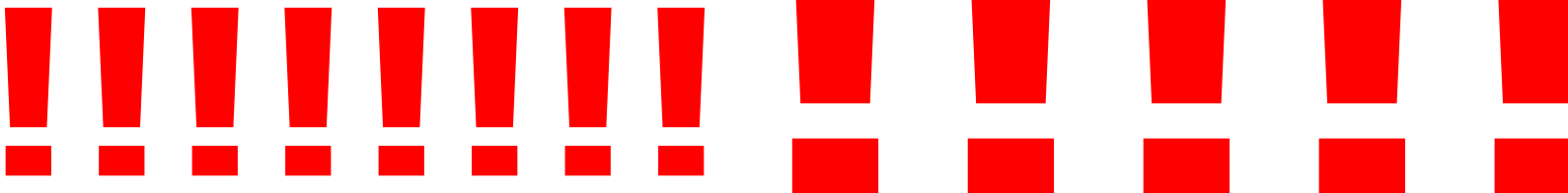
2. Start community building ➡

3. Experiment ➡

4. Prep reveal trailer, A LOT ❗❗❗❗❗❗❗

5. Don't rush it ❗❗❗❗❗❗❗

PR TIMELINE

REVEAL

LAUNCH

Launch build up

I: Set-up   II: Pre-reveal   III: Pre-launch
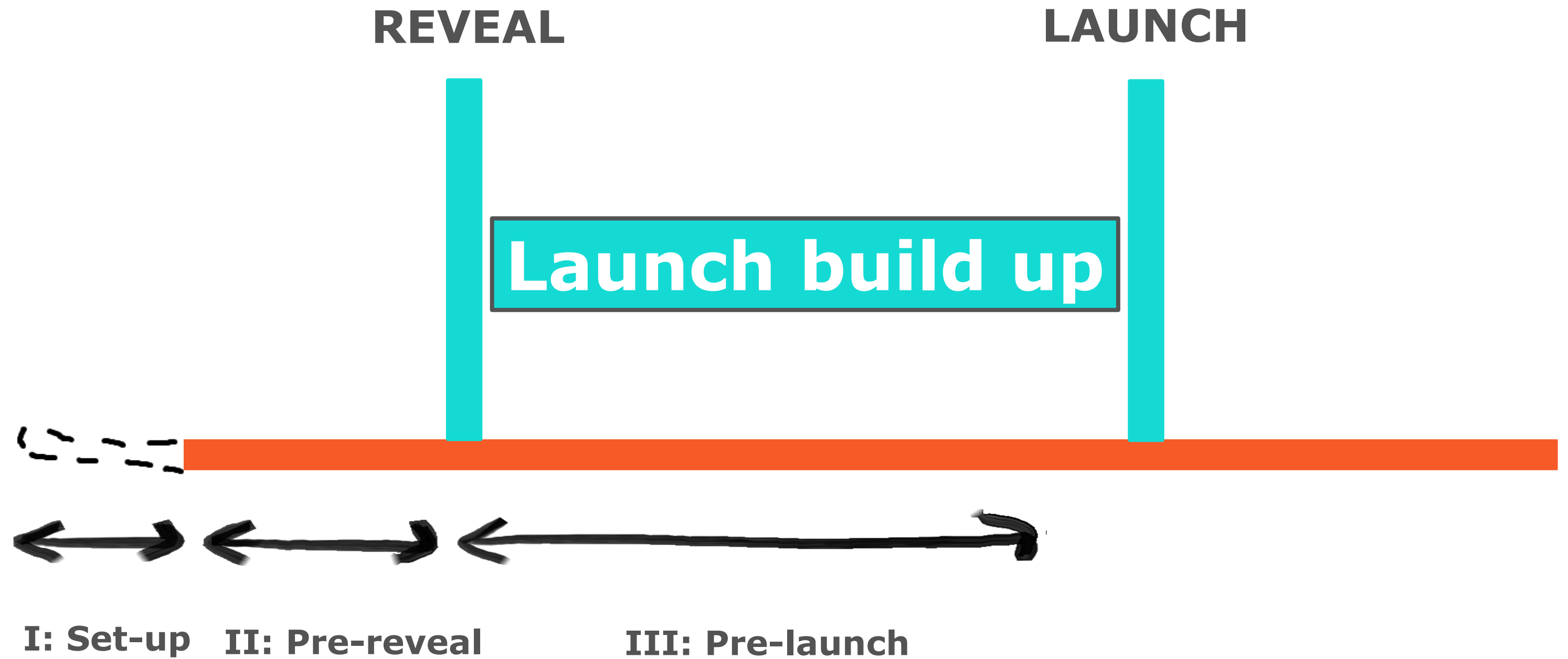
Top 5 to do list
Pre-launch
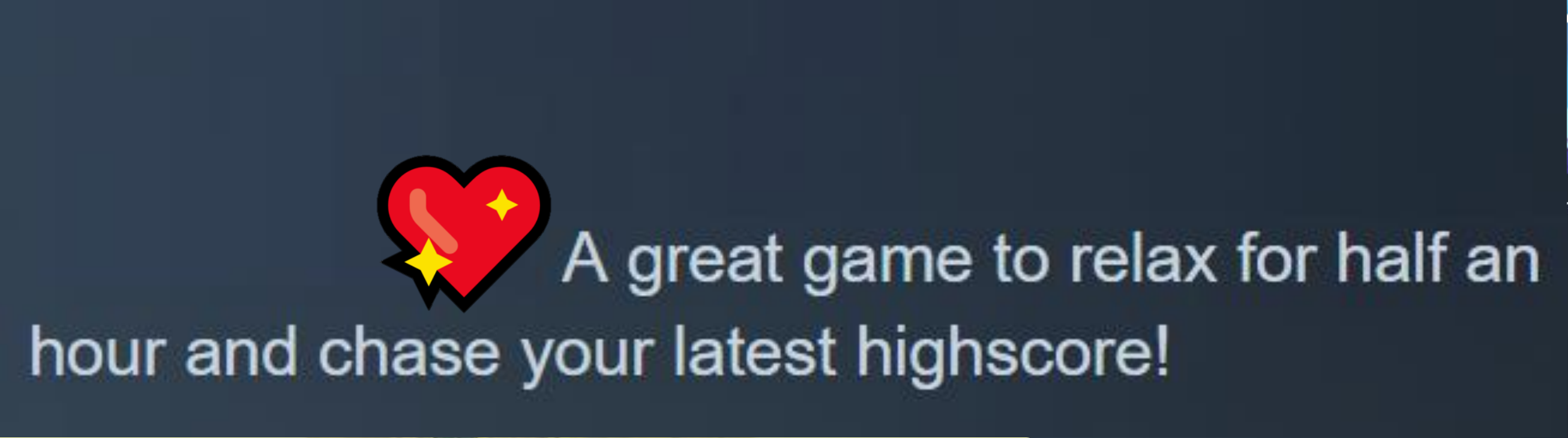
1. Keep pushing

2. Store optimization

Steam Store optimization

Top 5 to do list
Pre-launch

1. Keep pushing

2. Store optimization

3. Attend shows / previews

4. Think in headlines

5. SURPRISE!

Press appointments - beforehand

Random pre-launch tips

- NEVER announce date before passing cert

- Let community help ping Streamers and Youtubers

- Find contacts

![hunter logo]

![TwitchMetrics logo]

Mike Rose
@RaveofRavendale

Following ⌄

Wanna see your favorite YouTuber / Streamer play Descenders, 🚴 our upcoming extreme downhill biking game 🚴?

Tag them and I'll make sure they get a review copy before launch on Feb 9!

7:40 PM - 18 Jan 2018

PR TIMELINE

REVEAL

LAUNCH **party**

I: Set-up   II: Pre-reveal   III: Pre-launch   IV: Launch
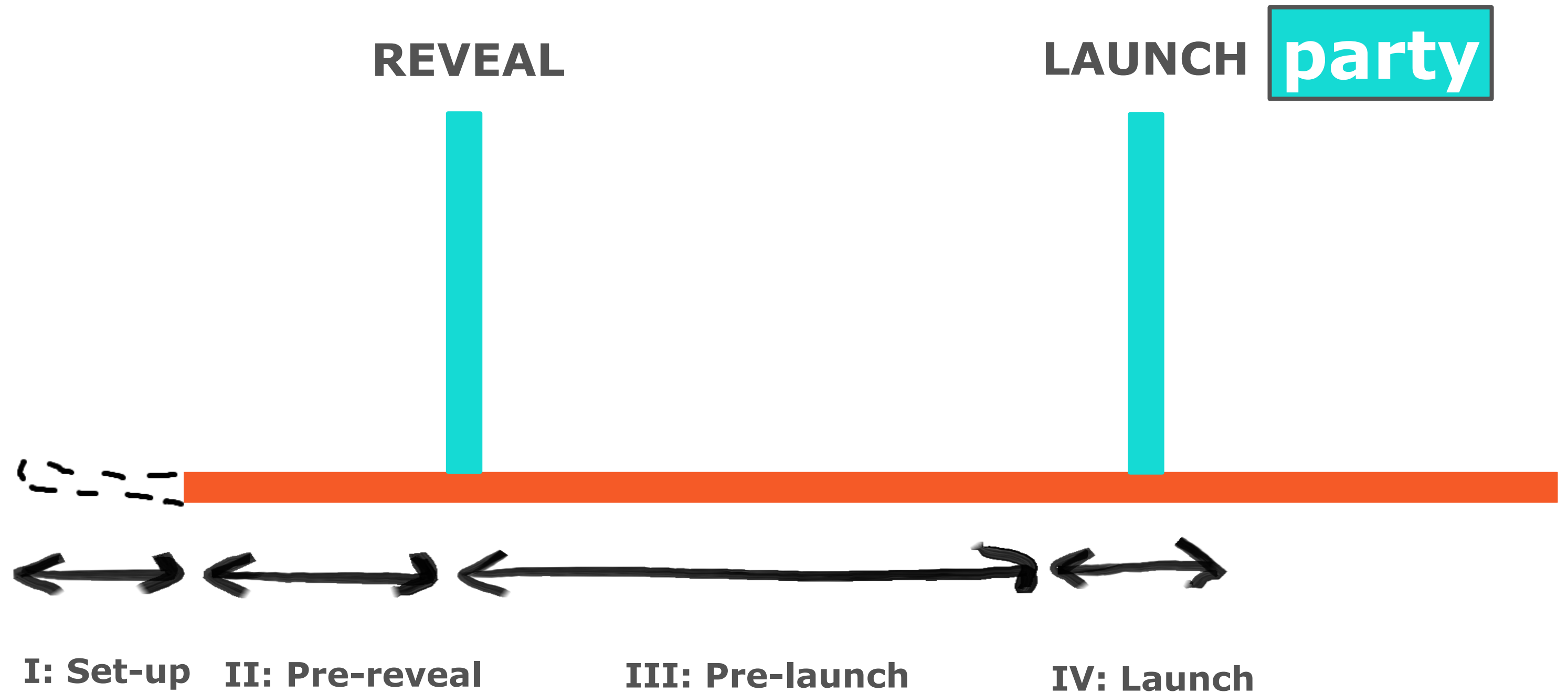
TO DO LIST
Launch day

- ❑ Launch trailer

- ❑ Launch your game

- ❑ Press communication

- ❑ Reach out to YouTubers and Streamers

- ❑ Blow all social horns (+ imgur and reddit?)

- ❑ Encourage day 1 reviews

Encourage day 1 reviews

ICO Partners
3 hrs · ✳

Last week there were 187 new releases on Steam (including EA and out-of-EA)
👇

74% with <10 reviews
28% with 0 review

icopartners.com/steam-newsletter

PR TIMELINE

Stay relevant

REVEAL

LAUNCH

I: Set-up   II: Pre-reveal   III: Pre-launch   IV: Launch   V: Post-launch

How long after release did you stop your PR & marketing activities?
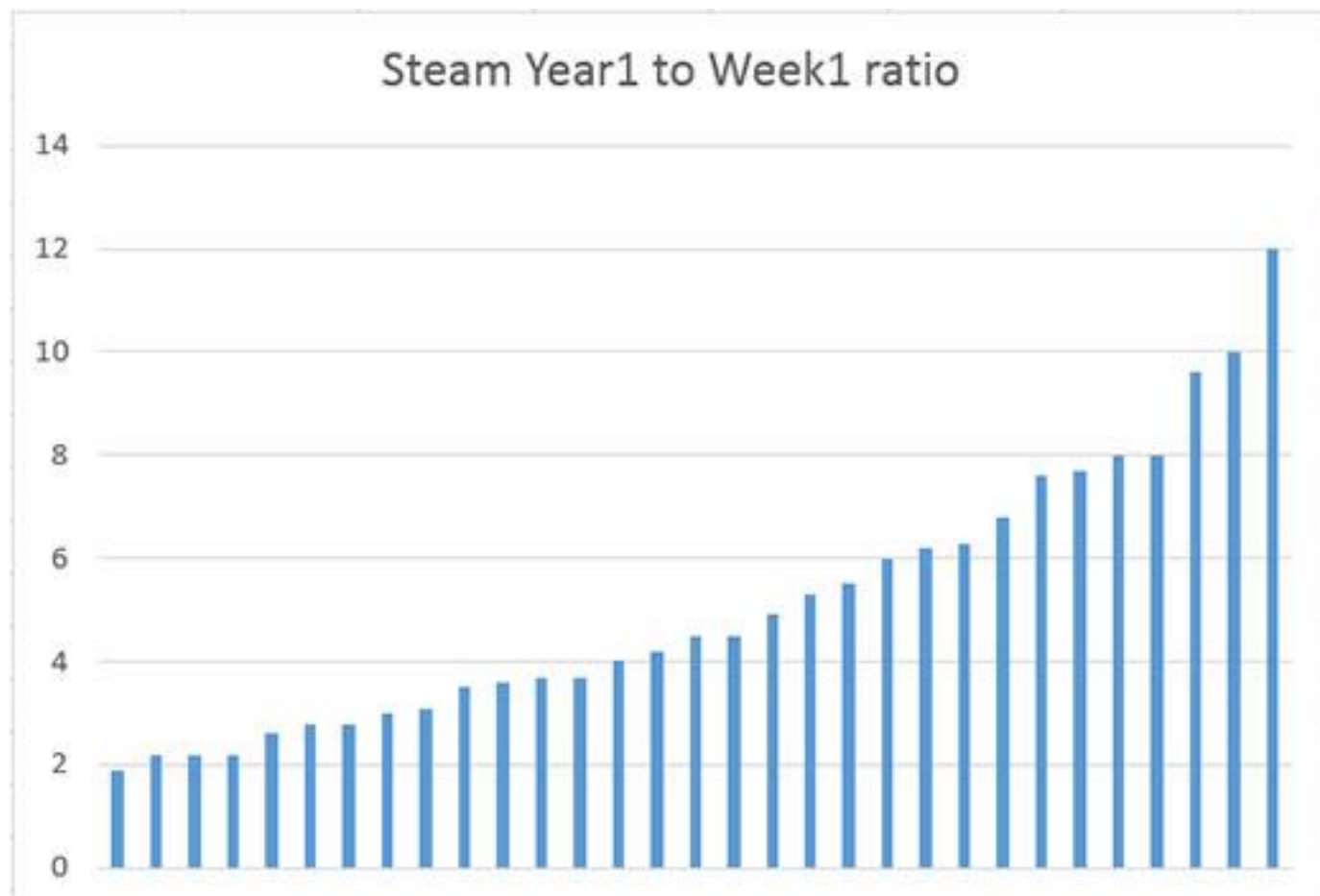

- No promo 2 months after
- Promo 2 months after

38,8%

61,2%
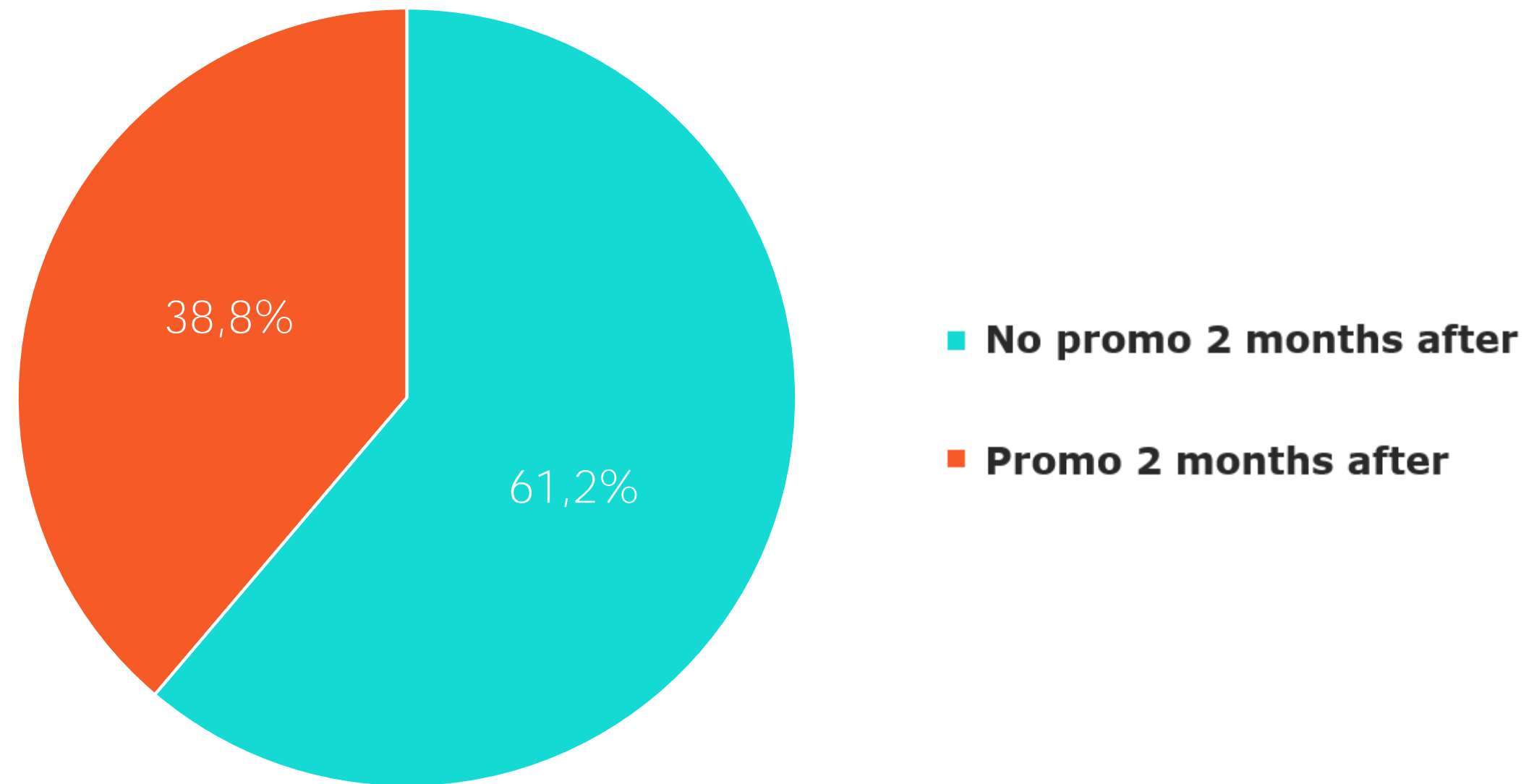
TOP 5: To dos
Post-launch

1. Figure out how much post launch support makes sense

Can week-one Steam sales predict first-year sales?

Steam Year1 to Week1 ratio

- Average = 5.1x

- First week / $10K
  First year / Could make $50k

# TOP 5: To dos
Post-launch
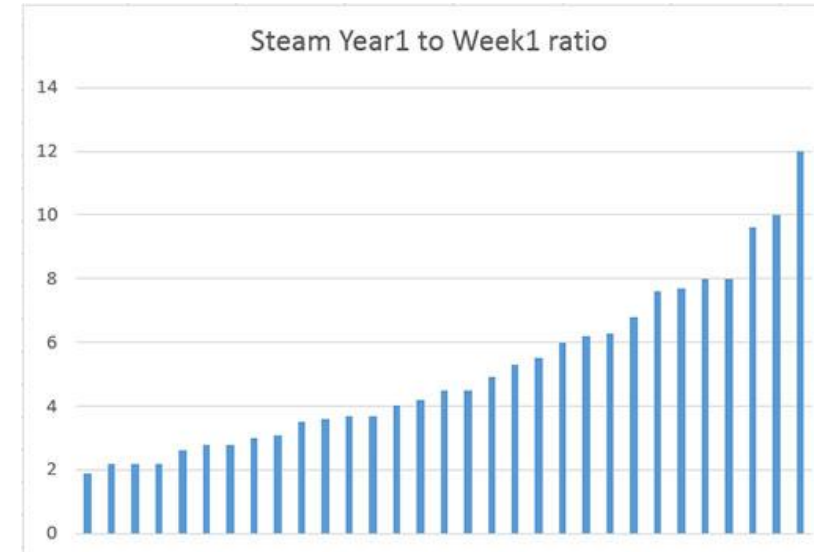
Steam Year1 to Week1 ratio

1. Figure out how much post launch support makes sense

2. Manage review scores

3. Follow up with press / influencers

4. Build and keep a fan base

5. Plan your updates right

Not Recommended
2.6 hrs on record

POSTED: 21 FEBRUARY

Isn't it weird that a game related to bitcoins keeps your GPU at 90% even when (minimized) and is so cheap? Basically, it is a really bad game created only to scam you into using your GPU to mine bitcoins.

Plan your updates right

Eurogamer.net

Home | News | Game Dev Tycoon | PC | iPhone | iPad

Game Dev Tycoon adds ultra hard mode where you combat piracy with DRM

See off thieves.
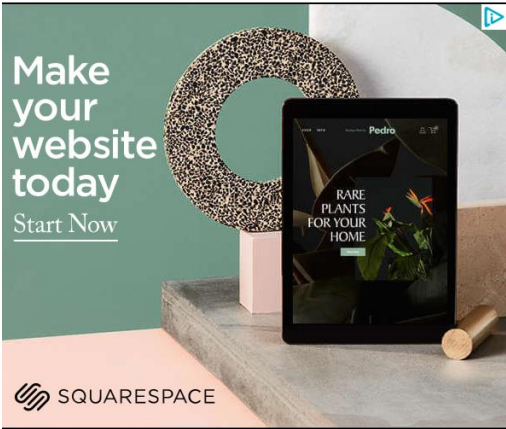
By Tom Phillips   Published 09/03/2018

Video games development simulator Game Dev Tycoon now has an ultra difficult "Pirate Mode" where your software gets pirated.

Emulating the real world problem of piracy, this advanced option will see reduced sales on all of your games. "Bankruptcy is likely", you are told.

Game Dev Tycoon originally hit the headlines - and found success - when it forced those who had pirated the game itself to unwittingly fail from the effects of in-game piracy. Now you can opt in, instead.

Games in this article

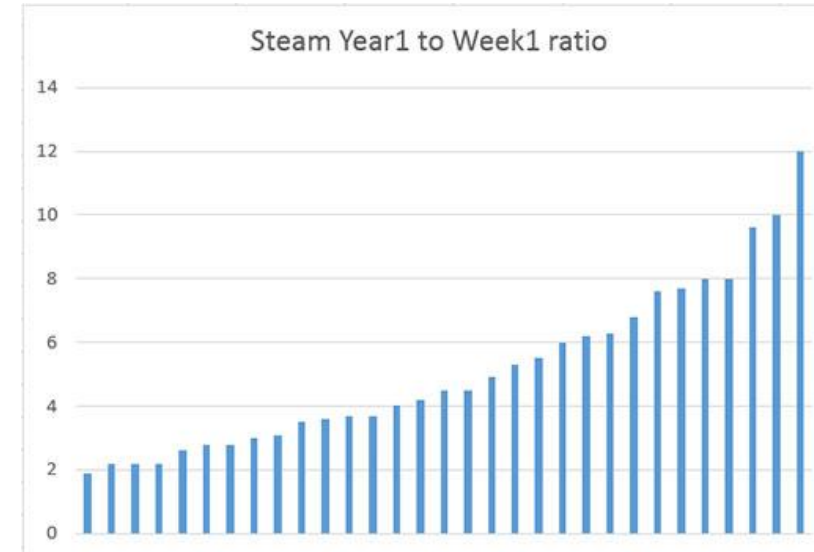Game Dev Tycoon
PC, Mac, iPhone, iPad, Android

Follow the games you're interested in and we'll send you an email the instant we publish new articles about them.

Sometimes we include links to online retail stores. If you click on one and make a purchase we may

TOP 5: To dos
Post-launch

Steam Year1 to Week1 ratio

1. Figure out how much post launch support makes sense

2. Manage review scores

3. Follow up with press / influencers

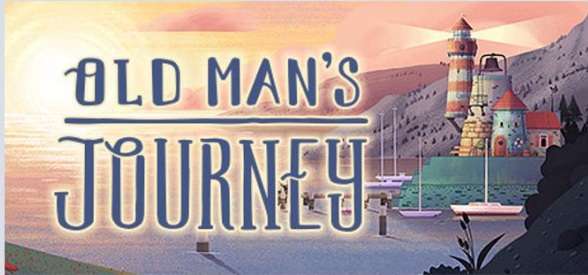4. Build and keep a fan base

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CHAPTER III

SUMMARY

Summary

1. Store feature vs launch build up

STORE FEATURE

NORTHGARD

OLD MAN'S JOURNEY

LAUNCH BUILD-UP

NICHE
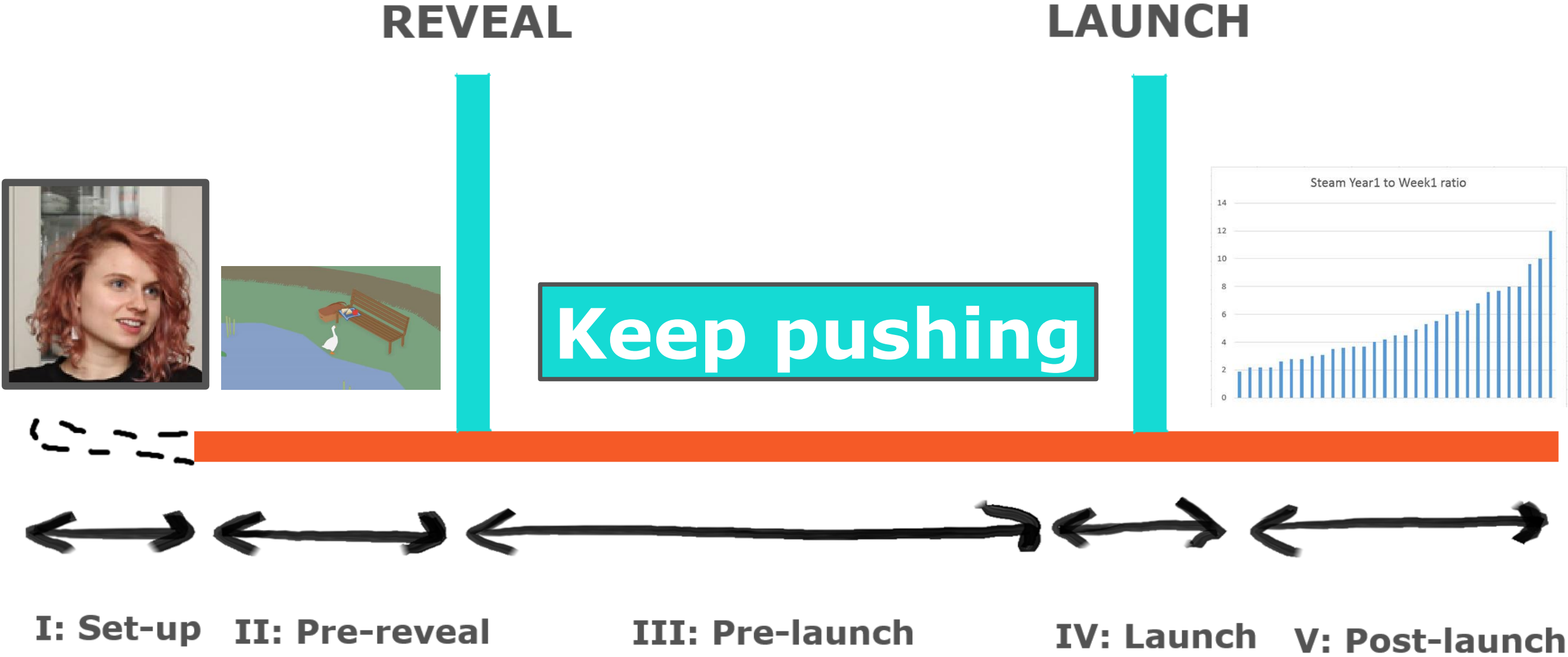a genetics survival game

THE FIRST TREE

AWARENESS

CONSIDERATION

Buys game

CUSTOMER

FAN
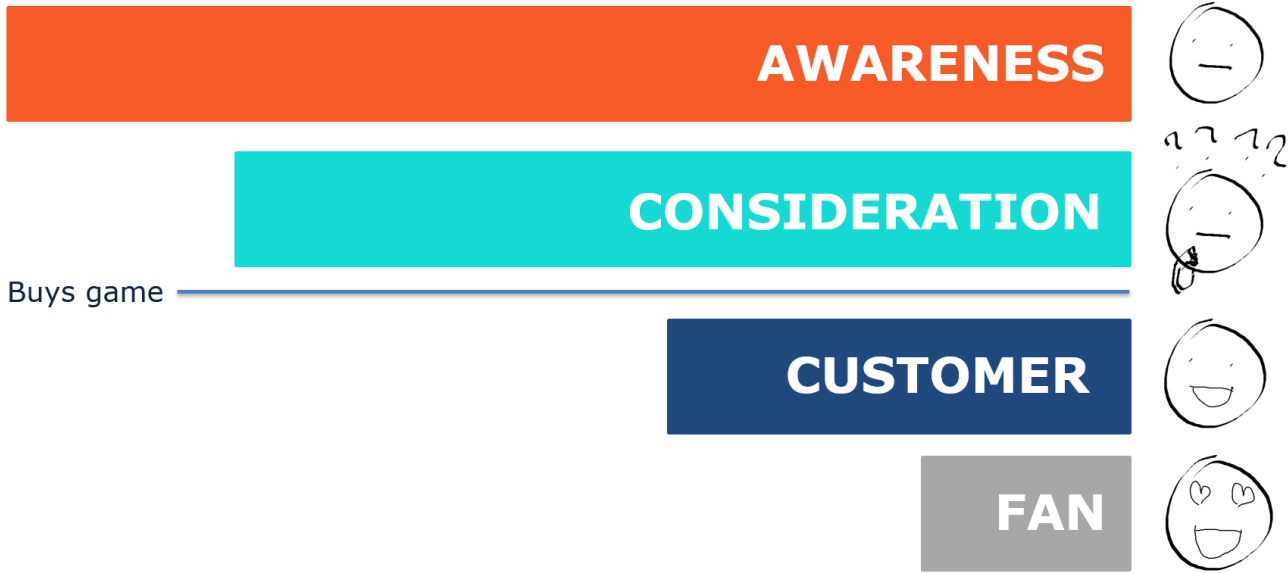
2. keep the sales funnel in mind

Summary

Thomas Reisenegger

@Olima

Future Friends Games