

GDC

March 21-25, 2022
San Francisco, CA

Don't Make My Job Easy

Effectively Pitching to Publishers

by August Brown (he/him) // Armor Games Studios
@augustjbrown

#GDC22



A Bit About Me

- Almost a decade of experience in indie publishing
- Most work done in production, but heavily involved in sourcing and evaluations
- Have personally reviewed thousands of pitches for mobile, PC, console, and VR

A New Approach to Pitching

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- Prioritize form over content (materials are still important)

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- Re-examine the pitch as a sales funnel
- Real-life examples!

About Conventional Wisdom

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Sales Funnels 101

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- Enter your shop

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Sales Funnels 101

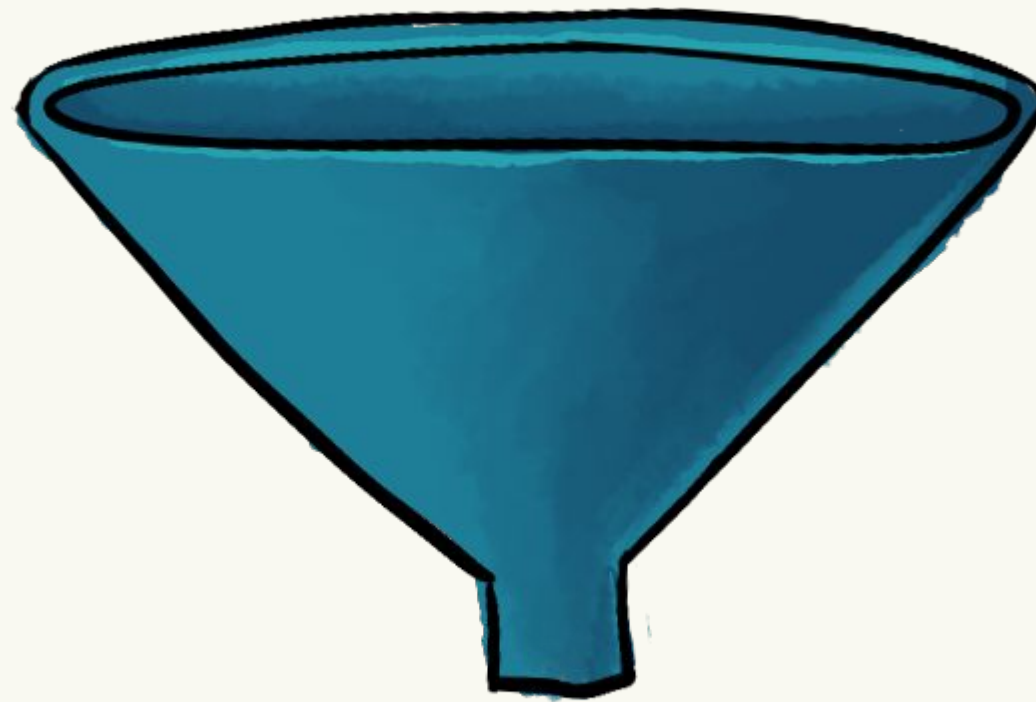
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Sales Funnels: A Case Study

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Scenario A:



Sales Funnels: A Case Study

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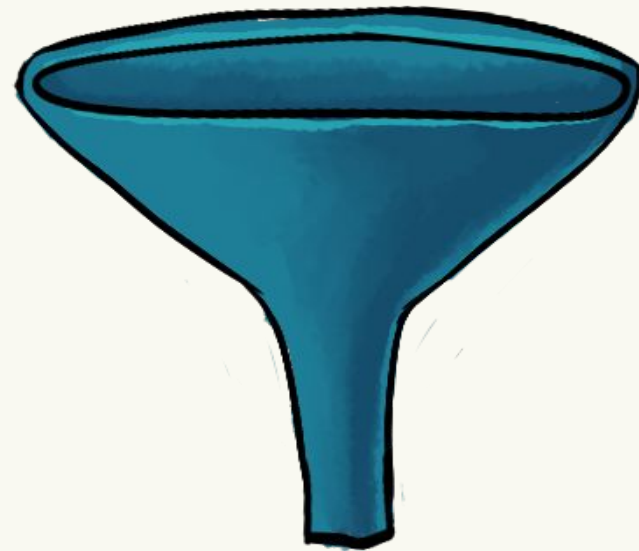


Scenario B:



Sales Funnels: A Case Study

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Sales Funnels: A Case Study

Scenario A:



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Pitching is Marketing

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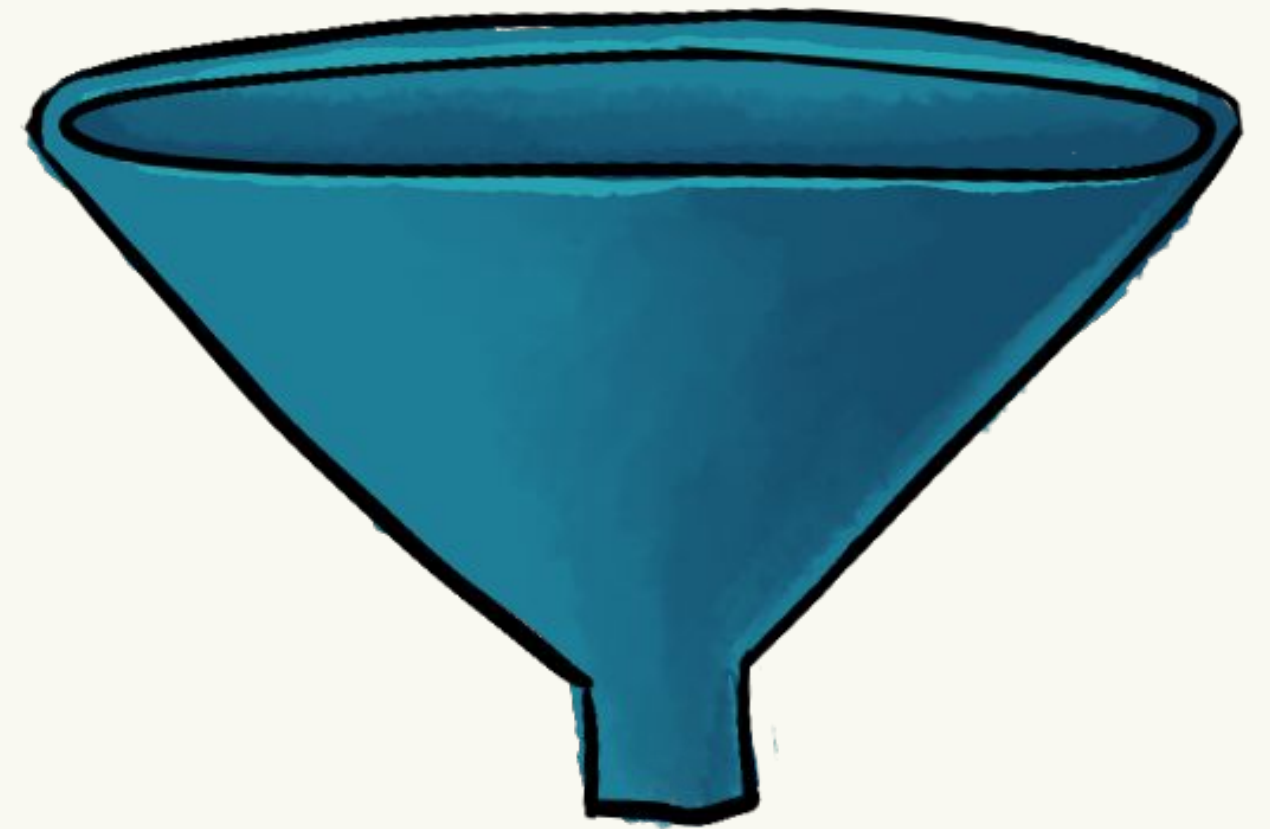
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- This all sucks

How Decisions Get Made

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- Easily-manipulated human beings with feelings do

Thinky-Brain vs Feely-Brain

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Thinky-Brain vs Feely-Brain



- Potential audience size

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- Team experience

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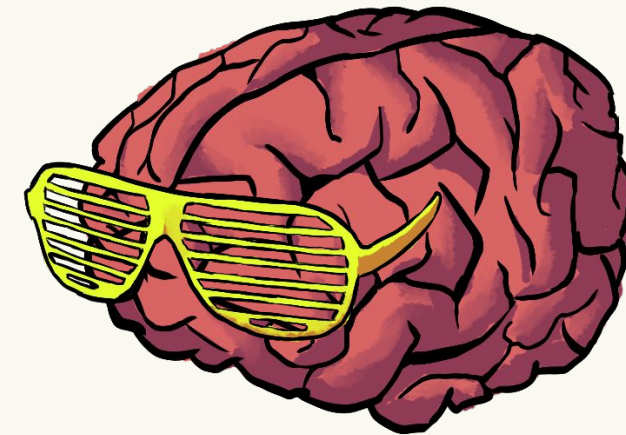


- Potential audience size
- Team experience
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- External risk factors

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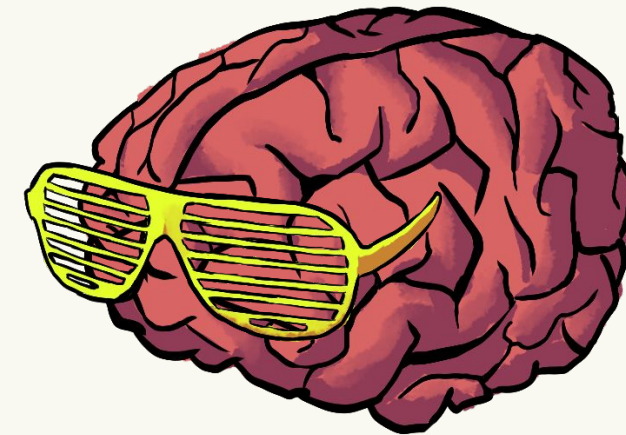
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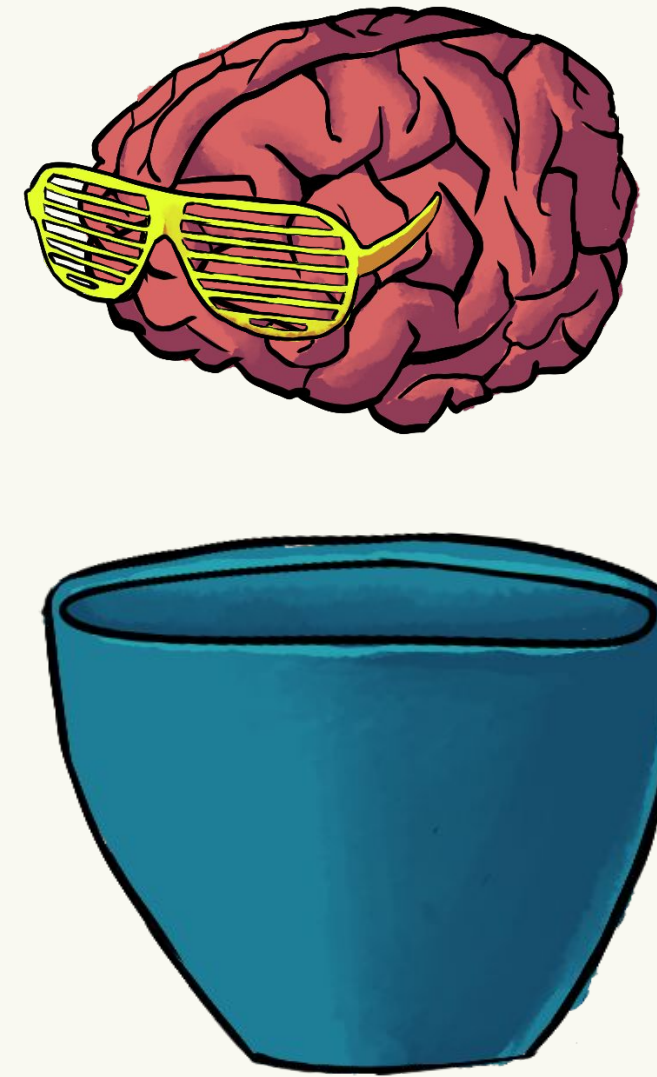
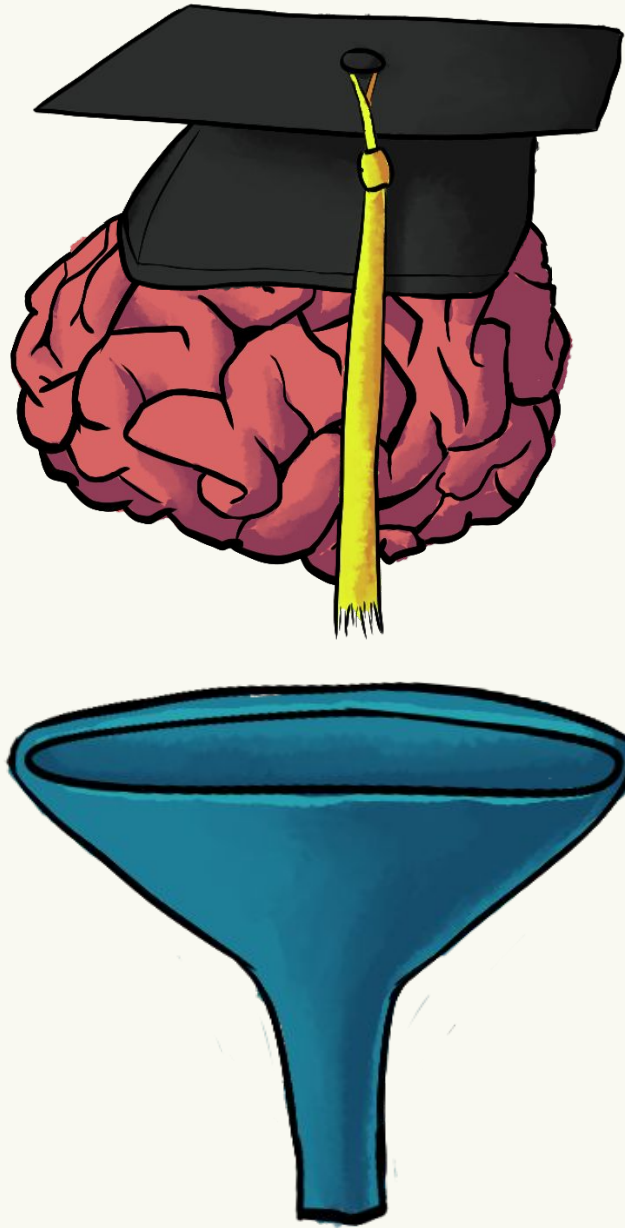


- Potential audience size
- Team experience
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- Haha fuck yeah!!! Yes!!

Thinky-Brain vs Feely-Brain



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- That's really it

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- The more my feely-brain is driving, the less work your deck and demo have to do
- Your goal isn't to get signed, your goal is to find a champion and get them amped

Hooking the Feely-Brain: Case Studies

- Real-life examples of games we signed
- How they organized their pitches
- How our feely-brains reacted

Case Study 1: The Tartarus Key

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- Email subject:

Project Tartarus Pitch - PS1 Style Horror Mystery

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Project Tartarus Pitch – PS1 Style Horror Mystery

- Body:

Project Tartarus is a narrative-heavy throwback to 90s style graphics and atmosphere (think PS1-era Resident Evil & Silent Hill), with an emphasis on mysteries and puzzles, not on combat.



Tag line:
Trapped in a mansion with six strangers, your actions directly influence who lives and who dies.

Case Study 1: The Tartarus Key

- Additional info:

Here is a link to a complete [Vertical Slice](#) for the start of the game.
(Keyboard and mouse required; character models are placeholders, all other environment art is final.)
Alternatively, you can watch a playthrough of the Vertical Slice [here](#).

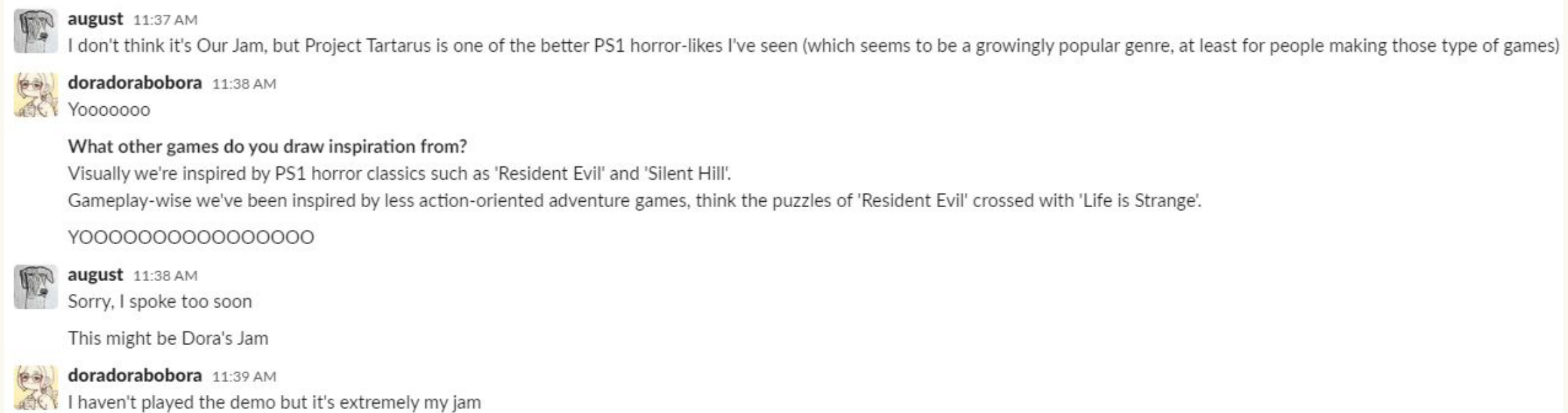
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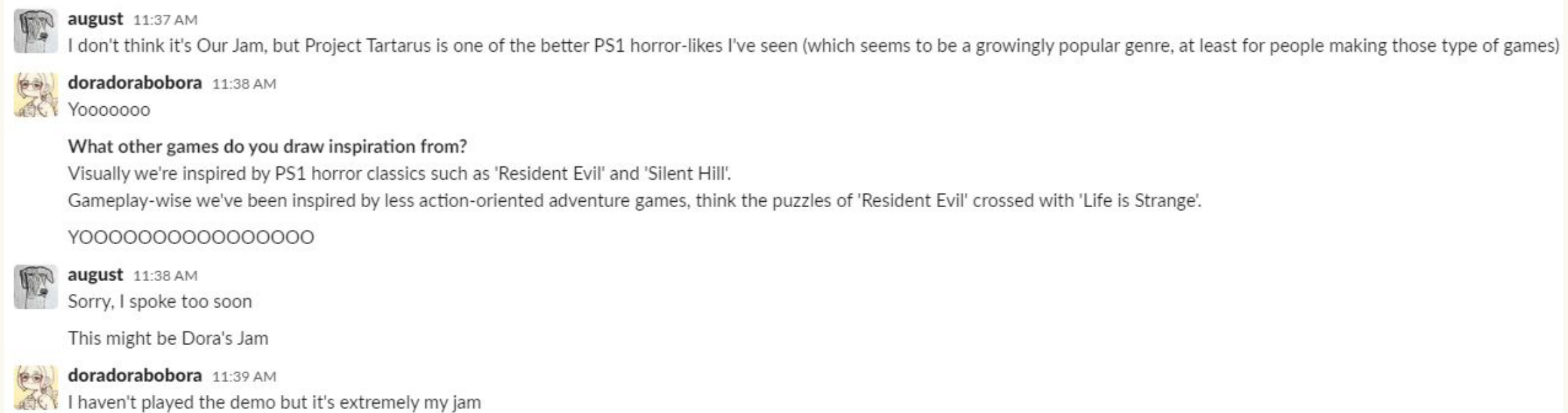
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12:03:



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- Thinky-brain bits important, but don't build excitement
- Take big swings

Case Study 2: Islets

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- Me

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Pitching Islets- A surprisingly wholesome metroidvania with a puzzle-piece map

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- Body:



Case Study 2: Islets

- Additional info:

I wanted to reach out to pitch Islets. Islets is a surprisingly wholesome metroidvania, where you soar the skies in a rickety airship, discover floating islands, and connect them together.

[Pitch Deck](#)

[Gameplay Trailer](#)

[Windows Build](#)

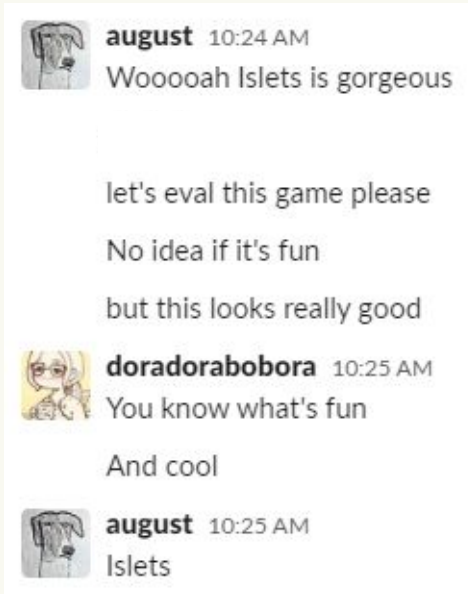
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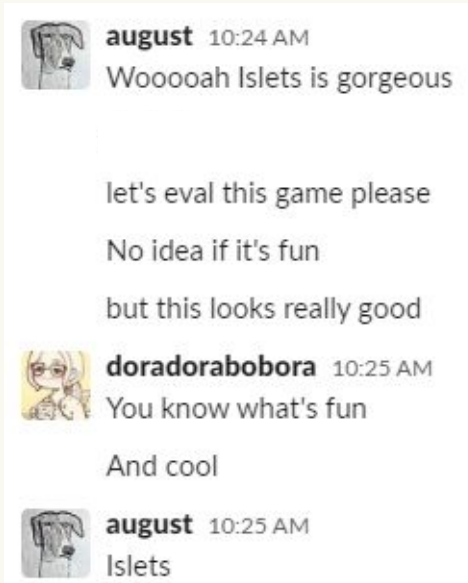
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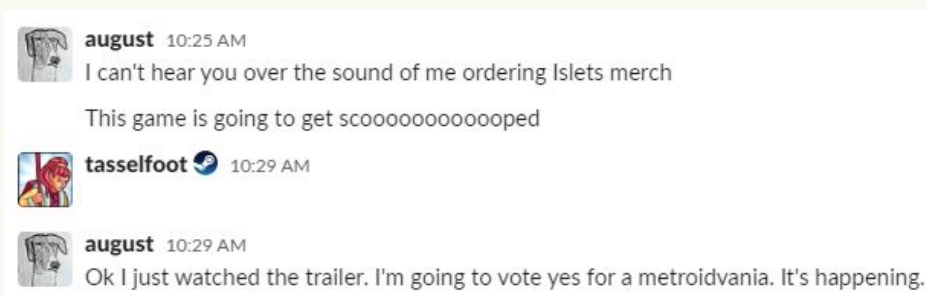
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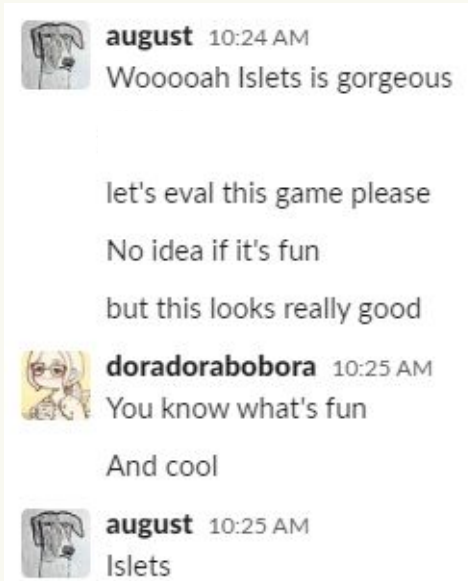
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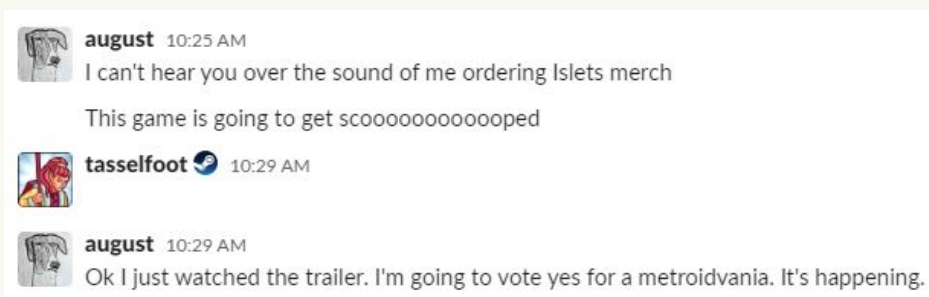
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10:40:



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- Most publishers won't have your champion (that's fine)

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- Front-load your pitch
- Don't go broad / own your vision
- Most publishers won't have your champion (that's fine)
- Break your pitch down point by point and prioritize the hookiest bits

Thank you!!

august@armorgames.com

@augustjbrown