



March 20-24, 2023  
San Francisco, CA

# Business Development for Self-Publishing Studios and Developers

Richie de Wit  
Bear Knuckle & Raw Fury

Lucas Pessoa  
Robot Teddy

#GDC23



# HI THERE!

- Business Developer at Robot Teddy
- Previously at Zplay, Game Jam+, Hermit Crab





# HI THERE!

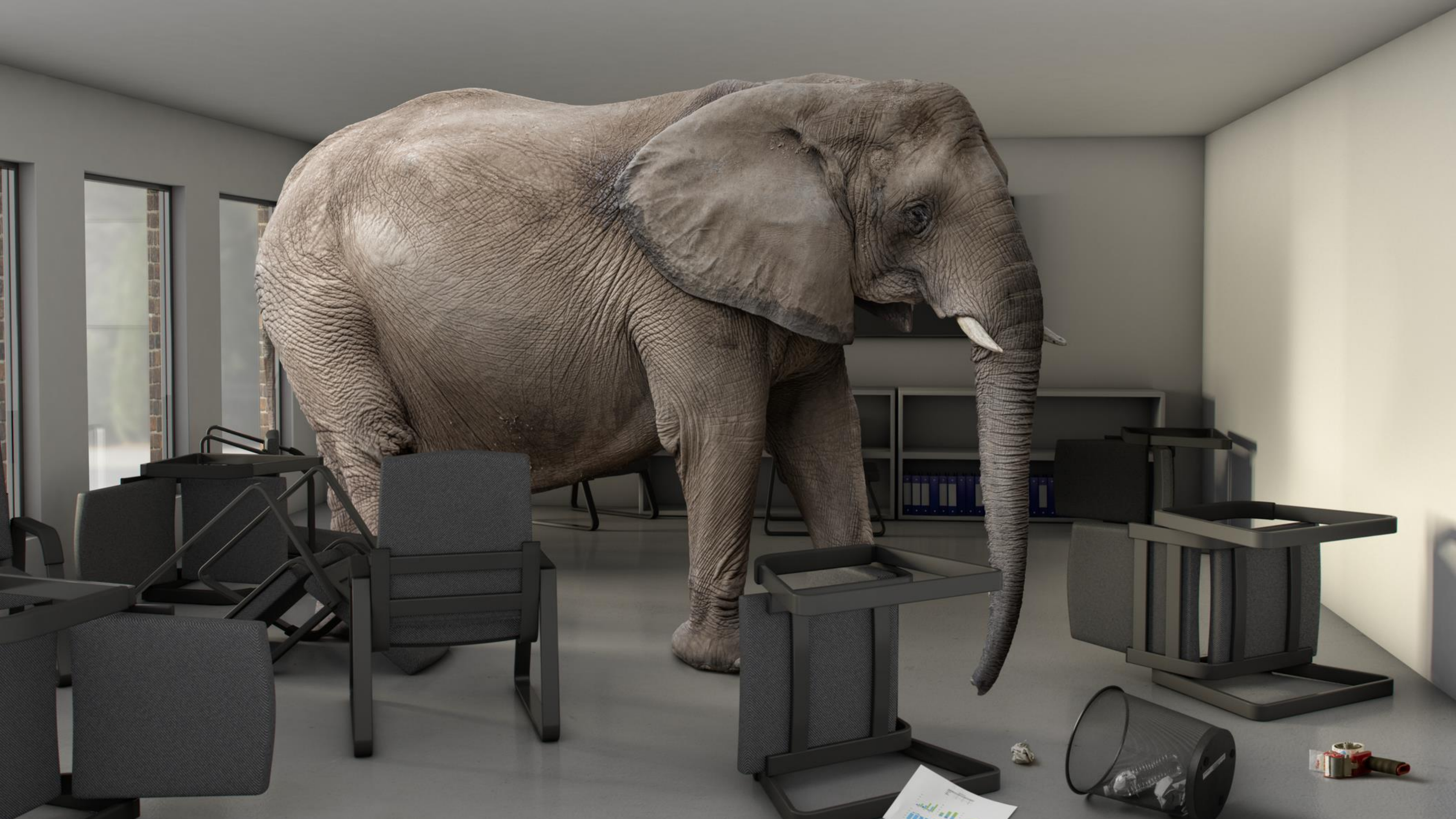
- Founder at Bear Knuckle & Partner Account Manager at Raw Fury
- Previously at Robot Teddy and Dutch Game Garden



# DISCLAIMER

- This talk could be outdated, fast.
- Based on our personal experiences and situations.
- This talk will talk through all kinds of scenarios, not all of which will be applicable or realistic for your studio.





**BUT *WHAT IF* MONEY ISN'T AN ISSUE?**



# SELF PUBLISHING

- Self publishing
- Taking on all of the *risk*.
- Having sole *ownership*.



# PUBLISHING

- Publishers
- Getting a *partner* that pays you for the development of your game.
- *Transfer risk* and part of the *ownership*.





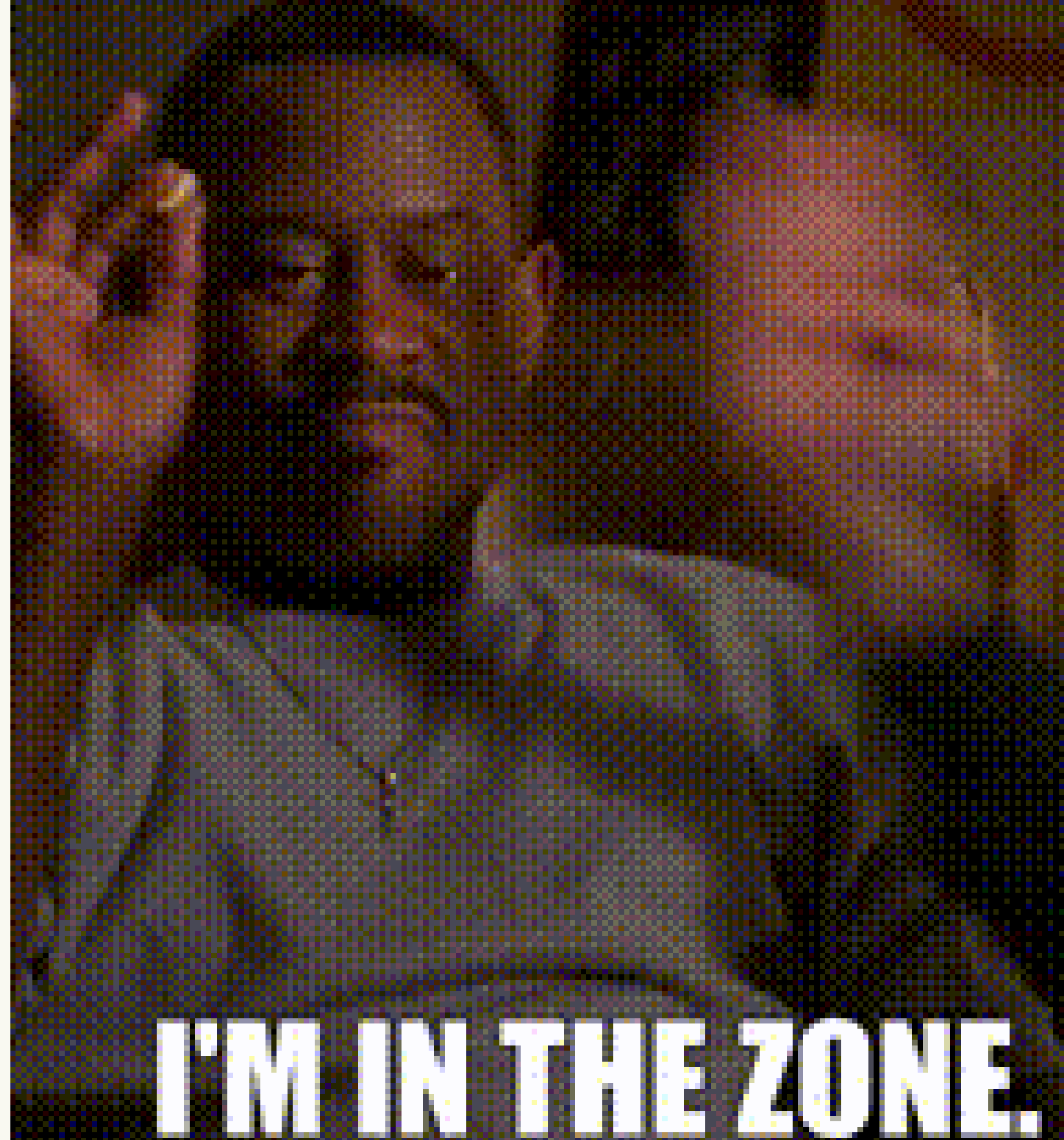
# SELF PUBLISHING

- It's *your* studio.
- The success of your studio & game *starts and ends with you.*
- You don't have to do it alone, *unless you want to.*



# PUBLISHING

- You get to ***focus on development.***
- You benefit from a ***preexisting consumer*** base, and the publisher's knowledge on ***marketing, community building, release management,*** and ***business development.***





**BUT..  
YOU ARE HERE, MEANING YOU ARE  
PLANNING TO GO WITH SELF  
PUBLISHING**

# THINKS YOU NEED TO DO

- Develop ***pitch decks*** and ***pitching***.
- Initiate and maintain ***relationships*** with platforms, storefronts, and service providers.
- Identify and assess ***new opportunities*** or markets.
- Develop ***sales and pricing*** strategies.





# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT?

All activities that either increase the ***upside*** (\$), decrease the ***risk***, or stimulate the ***growth*** of your business or game.

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

*Chat with your Steam Account Manager to secure a Daily Deal Placement during the same time you plan to release an update for your game*



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

*Pitch your game to the ID@Xbox or PlayStation Indie Fund to partially or completely fund porting costs for these platforms, and secure additional marketing support*

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

*Talk to a service provider that can provide an account ecosystem and social features with a variety of supported platforms, which saves you time, opens new markets, and might increase revenue*



# DEVELOPMENT STAGES

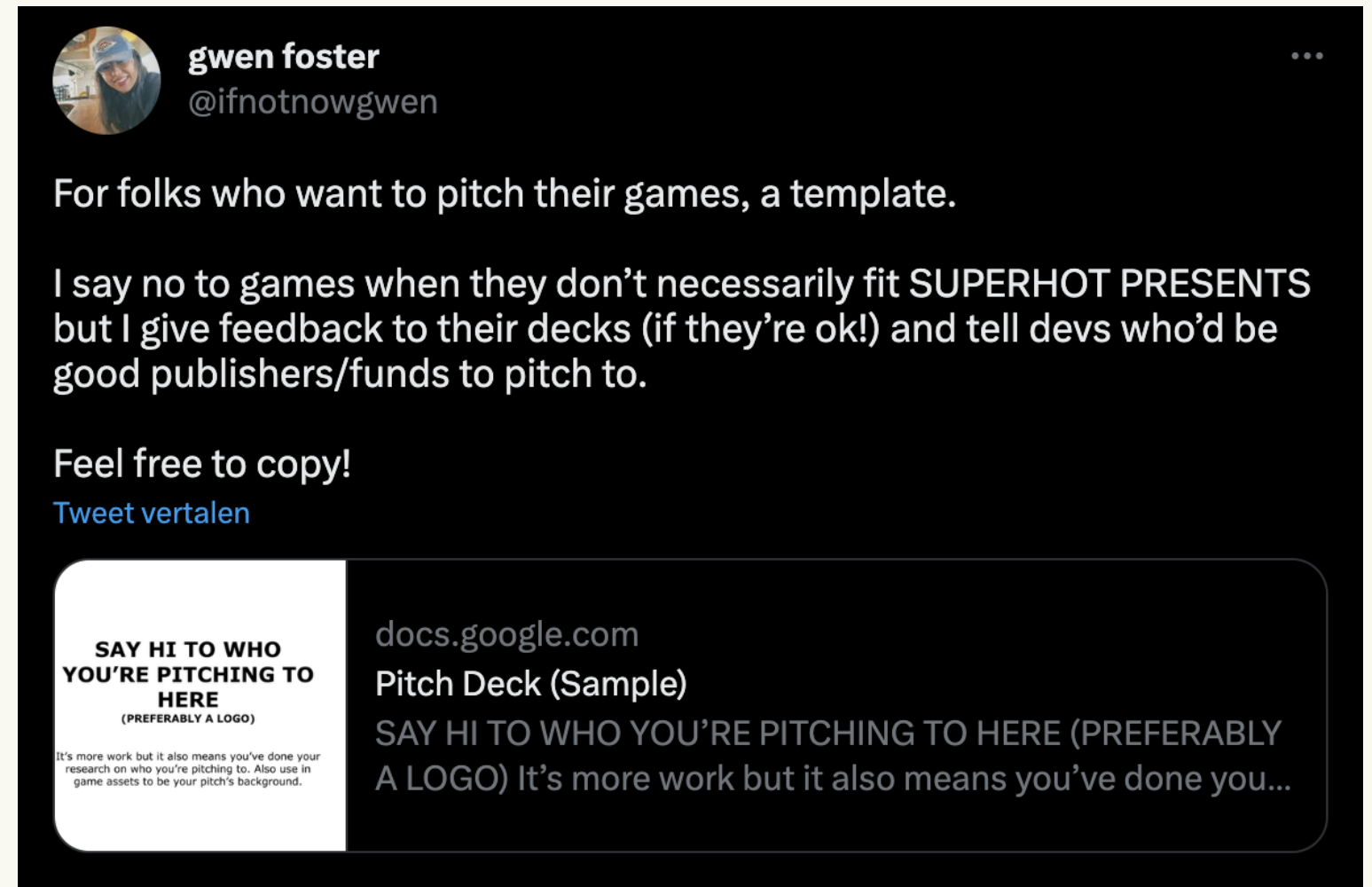
- Ideation & Prototyping
- Vertical slice
- Production
- Feature complete & Beta
- Release Candidate & Post Launch



Source: Leveling the Playing Field, Rami Ismail, 30 november 2022

# IDEATION & PROTOTYPE

- The goal in this stage is to ***decrease your risk.***
- Create ***first version*** of your pitch deck.
- Attend ***events***, locally and internationally – online, or offline.



Source: <https://twitter.com/ifnotnowgwen/status/1265907942269714433>



# IDEATION & PROTOTYPE

- Start conversations with *potential partners*.
- Think about *future hires* and other *costs*.
- Write down your assumptions and do *market research*.
- Look into local, regional, or country *funding opportunities*.



# GOVERNMENT GRANTS

African Game Dev Prototype Fund

Canada Media Fund

Interactive Digital Media (IDM)

MDEC

UK Games Fund

Slovak Arts Council

Creative Scotland

European Games Developer Federation

VicScreen

Stimuleringsfonds NL

Digital Culture Grant NL

Flanders Audiovisual Fund

Screen Brussels

Departamento de cultura: consulting Spain

St'art investment fund

PMV

Wallimage Enterprises: Games

HAVC - Croatian Audiovisual Center

Danish Film Institute

Avek: Digidemo Greece

Business Finland

BPI France

CNC Video Games Funding

IFCIC France

Pictanovo

BMVI

Filmfernsehfonds Bayern

Film-und medienstiftung NRW

Gamecity Hamburg

Games lift incubator Hamburg

Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg

MDM: New Media Support

MFG: Games BW

Nordmedia

Ekome cash rebate & tax relief

Wrap Fund Ireland

First Playable Fund Italy

Lazio Innova

Ministero Della Cultura Italy

Norwegian Film Institute

Ministry of Culture and Sports Spain

ICEC - Catalan Institute for Cultural Companies



# VERTICAL SLICE

- The first goal in this stage is still to ***decrease your risk.***
- *Gather even more information.*
- *Figure out what **platforms** and **storefronts** you're targeting.*



# PLATFORMS & STOREFRONTS

## PC

Steam  
Humble  
Epic  
GOG  
Fanatical  
Amazon Luna  
Twitch Prime  
Utomik

## Consoles

PlayStation  
Xbox  
Nintendo  
Steam Deck

## VR

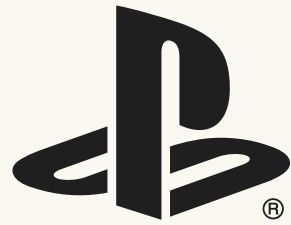
Meta  
PlayStation VR  
Pico  
HTC  
Oppo  
YVR

## Mobile

Google Play  
Apple Arcade  
Huawei  
Samsung  
Galaxy Store  
Amazon Kindle



# PLATFORM FUNDING



# SUBSCRIPTION DEALS



VIVEPORT™

# FUNDS

Ancient Games Fund  
Bright Gambit  
Diverse Game Developers Fund  
Fundamentally Games  
Galaxy Fund  
Indie Development Fund  
Astra Fund

Kowloon Nights  
Merge Games  
Wings  
Midgame Fund  
The Games Fund  
CryEngine Indie Dev Fund  
Indie Fund



# VERTICAL SLICE

- The second goal in this stage is to start *increasing your upside*.
- Pitch to *platforms, store holders, funds, and investors*.
- Contract *review & negotiations*.



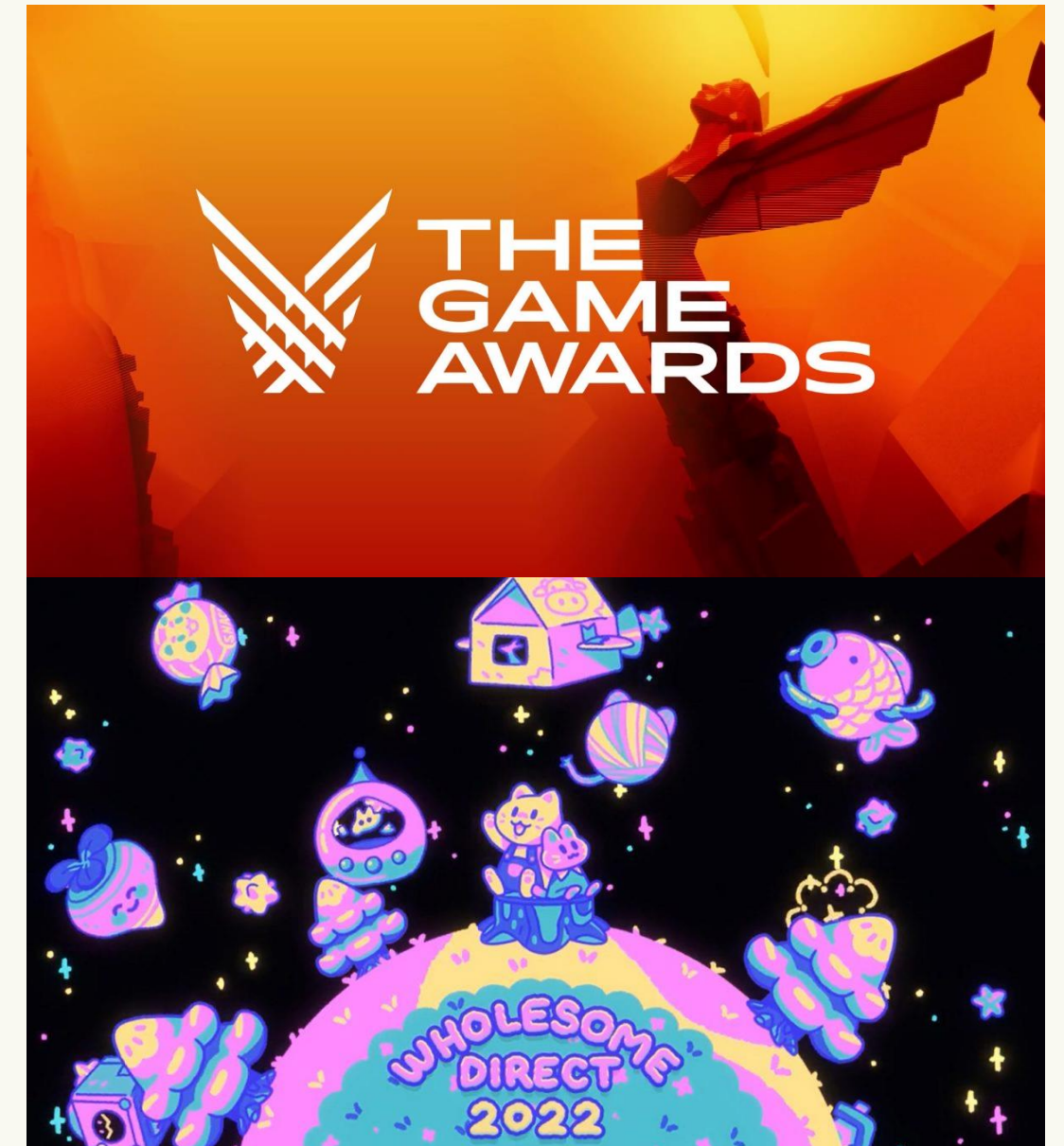
# PRODUCTION

- The goal in this stage is to ***increase your upside*** and **stimulate growth**.
- ***Maximize sales*** at launch, but also start thinking about ***post launch***.
- Get new hires and partners onboarded– and ***ramp up development***.
- Focus on ***partner management*** to get ***support***, and additional funding if required.



# FEATURE COMPLETE & BETA

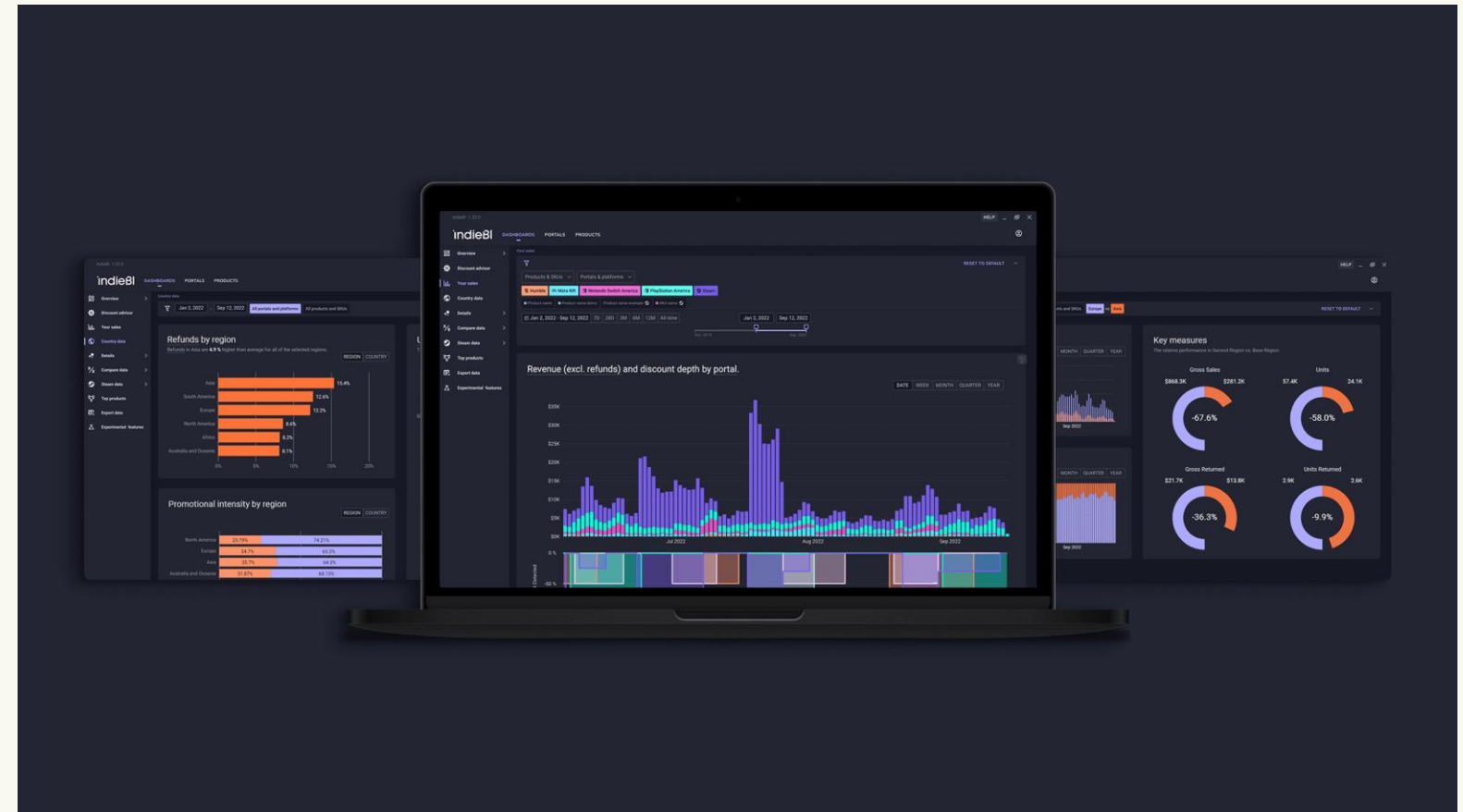
- The goal in this stage is to ***stimulate growth***.
- Use ***platform relationships*** to arrange marketing promotions.
- Arrange participation in ***showcase events***, both online and offline.
- Secure a dedicated ***wishlists*** and/or ***pre-order*** page.





# RELEASE & POST LAUNCH

- The goal in this stage is *to stimulate growth* and increase your *upside*.
- Think about *other* platforms, storefronts, and key selling websites.
- Think about *collaborations*.
- Execute *post-launch sales strategy* and refine over time.



Indiebi.com

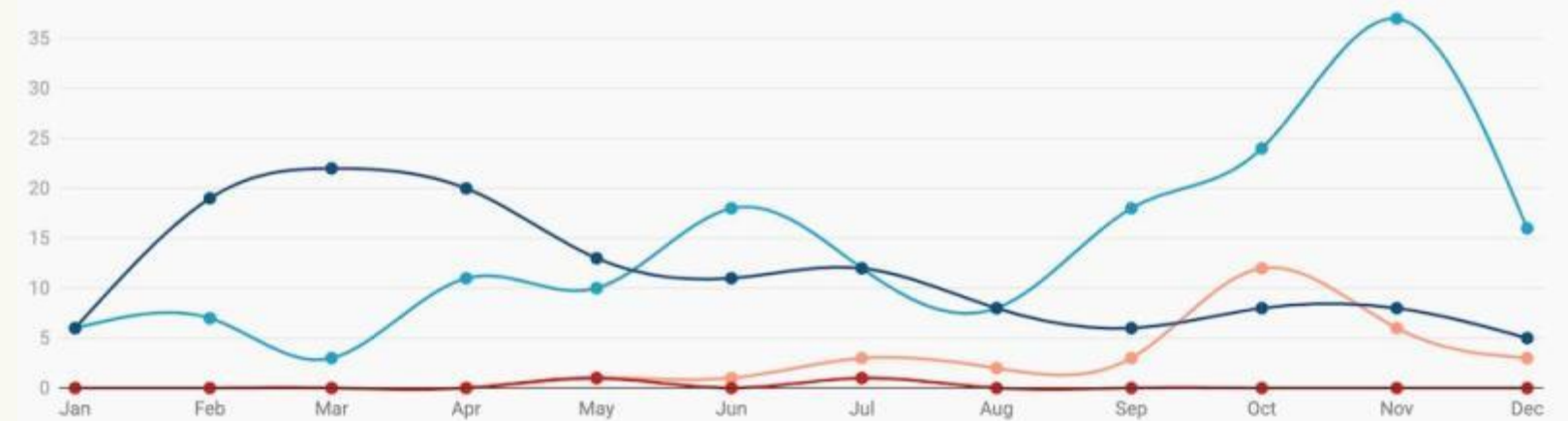


# NETWORKING

- ***Game Conference Guide***
- Find the ***right people*** to talk to.
- Make sure you ***prepare***.
- The art of ***the follow up***.

## **Most comprehensive database of games industry events.**

Daily updated, integrated calendar, reminders for deadlines, monthly newsletter and more.



[gameconfguide.com](https://gameconfguide.com)



# THANK YOU

- Questions?
- Please fill out the *feedback form*
- Lucas Pessoa de Freitas  
(*@lucas pessoaf*)
- Richie de Wit (*@richiedewit*)

