

A black and white portrait of an elderly man with a full, curly beard and hair. He is wearing a dark, draped garment. He holds a large, ornate key in his right hand, which is extended towards the viewer. The background is dark and textured.

10 in 20

Ten Keys to Designing for IPs

# The Locked Door



Stale or “Challenging” Franchises



Expand and retain audience



Unique or new experiences within IP



Big IPs for Big audiences



Why? (we’re friggin ambassadors)



# The “Q.E.Y.S.”



Easy acronym for future use

Q

Question

E

Example

Y

You (or “us” or “we”)

S

Suggestion





# 1 Boil down to the essence



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Q

What is our IP?  
(really)

E

Only Geonosis?

Y

Often we assume

S

No more to remove



# – Everything radiates from here.

Q – It fuels but does not overpower.

E – One location in a SW game?

Y – Usually we assume we know what it is and add in this and that. Or we fight it.

S – It's about this and that and that and that...



## 2 Find the true boundaries



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**Q** How far can we go?

**E** Clones rock too

**Y** Too far & not far enough

**S** Define contrivances  
(for your property)



# – Now that you have the focus, how far away from that can you go?

Q – How far can we go before we break the franchise rules?

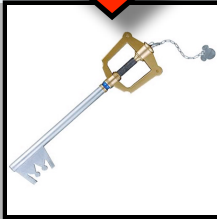
E – RC Military fantasy of being a clone on the ground. A clone Jedi would go too far.

Y – Only within the yellow or outside the red.

S – Define contrivance: Each IP, no matter how crazy, has its contrivances.

# 3

## Find the right angle



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Q So how do we use it?

E No More ~~Heroes~~ Jedi

Y Straight on 'til morning

S Aim the essence



# – Find an “off-axis” angle which still fulfills the fantasy.

Q – Now that we have an essence and some boundaries, how do we use them?

E – A Star Wars game with no Jedi?! It was within boundaries but of angle to the usual SW essence (in yellow).

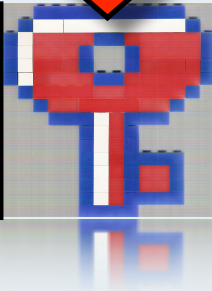
Y – What we often do as a safe solution is just stay right in the middle (yellow) and not challenge the usual.

S – Again, find the right “off-axis” angle.

# 4 Rules AREN'T made to be broken



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Q When do we break them?

E Archeology is hard  
(or it should be)

Y We think we must

S You reinterpret



# – This one deals with the urge to close that line.

Q – You don't break them.

E – Part of Lara's essence is that she is always challenged. We forgot that for TRA Wii.

Y – There is that sense that we must go and break rules that should be given.

S – If you did in fact know the rules, look for new ways to interpret them without breaking them. Instead of the above.

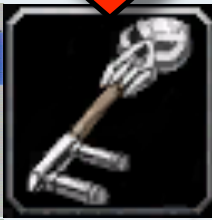
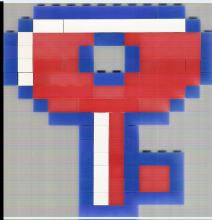


5

# Filter expectations



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Q What is the baggage?

E Lara's control

Y Blinded by rage

S Essence as filter  
(strong marketing partnership)



# – This one deals with the old or stale franchises and using the “angle”.

Q – Baggage and preconceived notions.

E – We still find that people see TR controls as bad.

Y – It isn't the customer's fault.

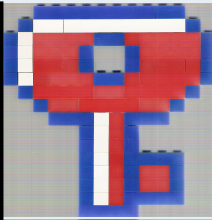
S – Use essence as filter and find a strong partner in marketing. This becomes your key message.

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# Defend the vision



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Q

How can we convince them?

E

Force Powers in space

Y

It isn't a leap of faith

S

Use the tools  
(the vision needs defending)



# – This is more for the publisher side of things but can be for both.

Q – So you have come this far, don't turn back now.

E – We had a vision for force powers in space, but no one thought it was a good idea.

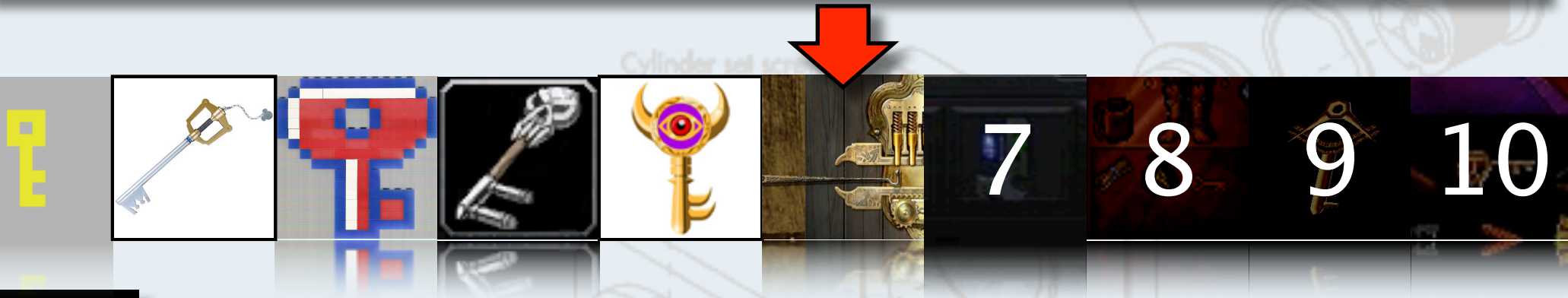
Y – Devs so often worry that it is a leap of faith so they don't do it.

S – Use the essence and the boundaries to prove the point. Don't be afraid of a vision as long as it follows Essence/Boundaries.



## 7

## Front and Center



Q How do we deliver it?

E Heads Up Display

Y Over do it

S Room to breath  
(remember goal - fresh)



# – May not be controversial.

Q – How do we get them the franchise we know we want to?

E – In RC, we spent a lot of time putting many SW fantasy elements right in the HUD.

Y – We too often over do it and put the typical IP elements in every layer of the game which doesn't leave room to explore.

S – Always present, clean and clear, remember the essence. Layer 1 allows 2, 3, 4, etc. to be more flexible.



8

# Repeat to reinforce



**Q** How do we maintain?

**E** Lara's moves (+/-)

**Y** Every event unique

**S** Repetition with a spin  
(context)



# – You need to reinforce through safe repetition.

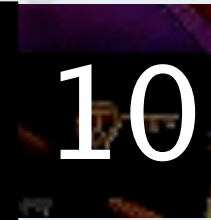
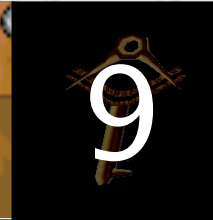
Q – How do we keep the franchise essence going?

E – Context changes but moves don't. Within reason.

Y – The player won't get fatigue like we think they will. They want to relive it, if it is good.

S – Repeat core experiences. Reinforce messages w/o bloat.

# 9 What they don't know CAN hurt them



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Q What about the details?

E Starfighter Cast

Y Bogged down

S Stay experiential  
(first)



# – Franchise specific info can go too far.

Q – What about all those juicy details?

E – All new SW characters with big deep backstories for Starfighter. But most people don't care.

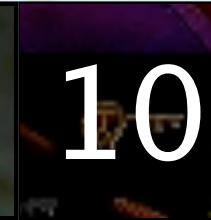
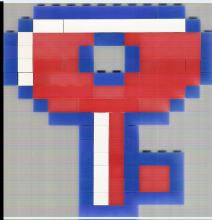
Y – Bogged down and lose the essence. Be careful with too many details.

S – Stay experiential first, exposition second.



# 10

# Fanboys really are crazy



# 10

Q But what about them?

E The battle of what?

Y Only for them

S Localize the effort



# – They fuel the vocal minority. Word of mouth via fanaticism.

Q – How do we accommodate these guys?

E – End of RC gave them what they wanted without making the whole game that way.


Y – Become one yourself and don't phone it in.

S – 5 to 10% just for them (IP may vary). Value the core.




# The Key Ring



$Q + E + Y + S =$  



$E \times B / A =$  



Never assume  
(go deeper)



We are ambassadors  
(it's too important to screw up)



# Through the Locked Door

Thanks for coming!

Thx to Crystal Dynamics

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