The Business of Games
Legal and Funding Guest Lecture
Disclaimer

This information is not legal advice. It is general in nature and not a substitute for an attorney’s advice on your unique circumstances.
Who is this guy?

Legal:
- Should I hire a lawyer?
- Corporate basics
- Contracts
- Intellectual Property

Funding:
- Crowdfunding
- Patreon

Questions
Who is this guy?
CrowdCounsel
@factortest
Legal
Should I Hire a Lawyer?

- You are running a business.
- Trade off between time and money.
- Simple things can be done by yourself, but will take time.
- Complex issues are rarely worth doing yourself.
- Risk appetite is key.
Corporate Basics

- Almost always want an entity.
- LLC is usually the best choice.
- Have an operating agreement.
- Get the entity a bank account.
- Treat it as a separate entity, not your personal bank account.
Contracts

- You are running a business.
- Get everything important in writing.
- If you work with other people, you need a contract.
- Contracts help force hard conversations.
- Contracts save friendships.
- Get a lawyer if you need it.
IP - Copyright

- Copyright is the core right for games.
- Copyright is automatic (mostly).
- Don’t rely on fair use.
- Remember to get a contract.
IP - Trademarks

- Google first.
- USPTO search second.
- Trademark your game name and studio name.
- Lawyers are useful for filing.
IP - Everything Else

- Patents
- Trade secrets
- Right of publicity
Funding
Crowdfunding

- Must have a community.
- No longer an easy path to funding, but can de-risk.
- Can be a way to test demand.
- Combine with other funding methods.
Patreon

- Not a perfect fit for traditional game development.
- Works great for ongoing work.
- Must have a community.
Questions?