Marketing Plan Development

Fall 2018
Housekeeping

• Turn in assignment 2 tonight if you haven’t yet
• Assignment 3 due Tuesday, Nov 13 (day after holiday)
• Assignment 1 grading status
Introducing Kartridge™

Watch our teaser video

Sign up for Beta Access
Request access to our Closed Beta and receive updates along the way.

EMAIL
Ex: name@email.com

I have an existing Kongregate account

SUBSCRIBE

Play on Kartridge to find your new favorite game, connect with other players, and earn rewards for completing achievements.
THE WORLD'S 1ST VIDEO GAME MARKETPLACE TO
PLAY. MINE. SELL.
YES, WE SAID RESELL YOUR DIGITAL PC GAMES

MINE TOKENS

BE A FOUNDER
EARLY ACCESS STARTS SOON

SIGN UP
Nov 11
San Francisco

Reminder: Extra credit opportunity

Volunteering form:
https://form.jotform.com/82975609695982

Reminder: Extra credit opportunity

http://indiemegabooth.com/imb-volunteering-recon-mission/
http://indiemegabooth.com/about/volunteer/
Entry Level Positions - continuing from last week

- Community management
- Social media
Developing Marketing Strategy

Start by assessing key launch considerations

• Fundamentals
  – Nature of game, category/other games, platform, audience …
  – Market variables – nature of platform(s)/channels, seasonality

• Review other/comparable games, market factors

• Campaigns vary significantly from one launch to another

http://www.pixelprospector.com/the-big-list-of-game-revenue-sales/
http://www.pixelprospector.com/the-big-list-of-postmortems/
http://gamasutra.com/
Hope isn't a strategy
SWOT

• Strengths
• Weaknesses
• Opportunities
• Threats
“No battle plan ever survives contact with the enemy.”

Helmuth von Moltke the Elder
Prussian general
born October 26, 1800
In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless but planning is indispensable.

(Dwight D. Eisenhower)
“Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the face.”
— Mike Tyson
“Don’t believe everything you read on the Internet just because there’s a picture with a quote next to it.”

—Abraham Lincoln
Implications

• Maintain flexibility for recalibrations

• Reality check and assessment before pulling trigger
Building Interest

- Announce
- Two to three months before expected launch
- Final two weeks before expected launch
- Launch
YOU NEVER GET A SECOND CHANCE..

TO MAKE A FIRST IMPRESSION
Plot out key tasks, milestones and activities

- Developing the plan
- Announcements
- Asset releases
- Trailer
- Shows
- Game previews outreach
- Game reviews outreach
- Game release date / activities / support
- Post Launch
Launch Environment

• Look at expected game release plans for other notable games
  – In similar game category, on platform/channel, AAA
• Seasonal factors, such as
  – Q4
  – Holidays
  – Big sales
  – Summer
• Other, such as
  – Big news, national elections
  – Big sports/entertainment events, etc

http://www.chrisgregori.co.uk/playdate/
http://vgreleaselist.com/all/#closest
Pursue programs that can extend beyond the initial game release window.

- Promos
- Updates
- Add on content
## Sample Roadmap

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Tactics/Vehicles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L minus 9 months</td>
<td>Announce</td>
<td>PR/Press Release and/or through your website/blog/social media if you’d previously built a reasonably sizable audience. Including assets like screenshots/videos/key art can make for an even stronger announcement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9 months prior to expected launch date)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L - 6 months</td>
<td>New assets reveal Concept art, screenshots, video</td>
<td>PR – article placements and/or through your website/blog/social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L - 5 months</td>
<td>First playable code at industry/consumer event</td>
<td>Event Possibly supplement with PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L – 4 months</td>
<td>Release new game assets – screenshots, character reveals, video</td>
<td>PR – article placements and/or through your website/blog/social media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Sample Roadmap (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Tactics/Vehicles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L – 3 months</td>
<td>Post first look/teaser video and announce release timing</td>
<td>PR – article placements and/or through your website/blog/social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L – 2 months</td>
<td>Project update</td>
<td>Blog post on your website and/or prompt for article through PR outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L – 1 month</td>
<td>Playable code to press outlets</td>
<td>PR – prompt for preview coverage, interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L – 3 weeks</td>
<td>Post new gameplay video</td>
<td>PR – article placements and/or through your website/blog/social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L – 2 weeks</td>
<td>Distribute final review versions of game to press</td>
<td>PR – prompt for reviews to post at launch time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch week</td>
<td>Release launch trailer</td>
<td>PR/Press Release and/or through your website/blog/social media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Big Bang Surprise Reveal

An announcement unveiling that included compelling pre-order offer page and trailer, leading to best pre-order sales volumes up to that time.

Talk Like a Pirate Day

Tie-in with long-running online celebration
One-Day Episode Giveaway
All-time high traffic day for Telltale
Plus, substantive sales and mailing list subscriber increases (sign-up required for free game)

Cultivated Incremental $ via Merch

As follow up to prior healthy programs for other franchises, developed Telltale’s highest grossing merch program to date, with high upsell conversions.
Strong Game Branding
Connection with Key Franchise Icons

Video Series Highlighting Elements Resonating Most with Target Audience
Behind the Scenes Videos

• Spotlight on Christopher Lloyd likeness/voice for Doc Brown, Michael J Fox likeness, original Jennifer Parker performer return

• Games created in collaboration with co-creator/co-writer from films Bob Gale

• DeLorean, Huey Lewis music, engaging visual style, amazing McFly voice talent
Concept: Game unlocks on Steam after community on Twitch beats game

- Inspired by Twitch plays Pokemon
- Commissioned by indie publisher with Russian dev studio
- Boxing management tycoon game

- Proactive publisher, creating idea and establishing support with partners and leveraging channels
- Developed idea in view of changing category trends, with growing popularity of streamers – and viable alternative to press
- Reaches out to influencers beyond press and builds buzz, while ultimately establishing press visibility too

Flippfly
PC, Mac, Linux
Aug 2013 Launch
Now on Steam, GOG, Humble, PlayStation, iOS
We love Steam. But there are lots of great games you can't currently find there! Discover some of them here, and support indie development. IMPORTANT: The sale has ended, but these games are still available! Please check for specific prices when making a purchase.
It all started in 2009, when a bunch of veterans of polish gaming industry joined their forces and founded 11 bit studios. They gathered few talented people and got to work. After a year our first child was born – Anomaly Warzone Earth hit the stores. Quickly it became a huge success, with great sales and number of industry awards, including Apple Design Award. It was a proof that we were on the right track and in the next few years we repeated the success with Anomaly 2, Anomaly Korea and few other games.
MARKET OVERVIEW:
War-themed games as well established yet single-minded trend.

INSIGHT:
Every conflict happens at someones doorstep.

USP:
One of a kind perspective on war.
There are two sides to every story
CLAIM

EVERY WAR HAPPENS
AT SOMEONE'S DOORSTEP

AT WAR THERE ARE THOSE WHO FIGHT
AND THOSE WHO TRY TO SURVIVE

SOME FIGHT FOR GLORY.
SOME, TO SEE ANOTHER DAY.

IN WAR NOT EVERYONE IS A SOLDIER

AT WAR SOME PEOPLE KILL,
SOME WANT TO STAY ALIVE

THERE ARE MOMENTS
YOU WOULDN'T LIKE TO SEE A SOLDIER
SHARP MESSAGING & PUNCHLINE
CLEAR STORYTELLING STRUCTURE
OVERARCHING NARRATIVE
"THANK YOU FOR MAKING A BEAUTIFUL, HUMAN GAME!"

"(...) It's not often a game can touch me as deeply as yours did, especially one with such sparse direct narrative. And I think that was part of the beauty: during those forty-some days of gameplay time, I was creating my own narrative (...). Each character, and their actions, was a small part of me manifesting within the game.

(...) This War of Mine has let me imagine, for the first time, if even only to a slight and non-threatening degree, what the price of war is from the civilian perspective. The struggles of a war-torn country aren't simply black-and-white from a food-and-shelter point of view. It's not just numbers and logistics. Interpersonal bonds become tighter as social bonds can break, and all the while morals loosen - all in the name of survival.

(...) And again, thank you for creating This War of Mine. In spite of it being difficult to bring myself to play again, it's now one of my favorite games I've ever played."

RAIMIE H.
OREGON, USA
COVERAGE

The New York Times  Newsweek  THE VERGE
the guardian  The Washington Post
TIME  WIRED  VICE
SALES

BREAK EVEN IN FIRST TWO DAYS ON THE MARKET
SUPRISINGLY HIGH INITIAL NUMBERS
(HIGH AWARENESS & CONSIDERATION BEFORE THE LAUNCH OF THE GAME)

1,384,887 COPIES @ STEAMSPY
STRONG & STEADY LONG-TAIL SALES
(PREMIUM PRICING, STRONG CUSTOMER SUPPORT, POST-RELEASE DEV)

Strong marketing
Strong product
Once you have pinpointed your strategy, stay strong & stick to it.

Treat marketing as a part of your development process.

Media-wise put adequacy over quantity. High numbers are sweet but not crucial.

Plan ahead but don’t be afraid of slight changes along the way.

Good marketing is important. Good game is a must.
• Had been working in bars for nearly 8 years, before deciding that the only thing he truly wanted to do was make games
• Began learning to make 3D models during the evenings and days off
• Eventually got job working for an architectural company making pre-build visuals, then working for a game developer
• Learned to code to start making prototypes and mini-games
• Entered Ludlum Dare which became this game
• TIGA finalist for 'best game by a small studio'
• BAFTA Scotland nomination for Best Game

“I had missed out one, enormous, gaping skill-set that meant that everything from this point onwards would be an up hill battle: **Marketing.** I had read countless articles stressing the importance of marketing, but I always thought that it was something I'd get round to 'once this feature is finished' or 'when I get time to put together a video'. I always felt that the game wasn't the best possible version of what it could be so I kept holding off until I felt it looked polished enough.”
“The only reason for the awards the game has been nominated for is because by submitting the game the judges actually had to play it, otherwise I doubt any of them would even have heard of it, let alone give it a shot.”

“Absolutely anything that might attract one new fan is worth it in the long run - it all builds up.”

“Marketing involves constantly putting yourself out there for others to judge, and that comes naturally to almost nobody.

“I cannot stress enough that it is just as important, maybe even more so, than any other element of the indie game development process. Marketing is an uncomfortable, densely packed minefield of pain, but it's one that I strongly suggest you gracelessly bellyflop onto from a great height - and do so as early as possible.”
“I'm not sure any marketing convention can be described as 'reliable', everything is a risk and you can't underestimate the role chance plays. I'm always going to try and mix up the way I talk about our games to the audience, because every game we make is so different, and the landscape out there changes very rapidly.”

- Mike Bithell, Thomas Was Alone, Volume and others
Preparation, Opportunity, Luck