MMORPG vs Social Games – Differences & Lessons Learned

SECOND WAVE
GAMES

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Personal Background

▸ CEO of Second Wave Games, social gaming company based in SF

▸ Involved with the online game industry since 1997

▸ Experience in both game publishing and game development

▸ Consulting background for social game monetization

MMORPGs vs. Social Games
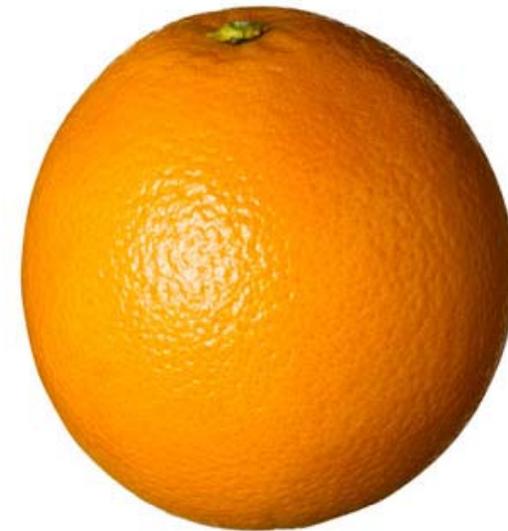
User Acquisition

MMORPGs – Challenges (UA)

- Registration
- Download
- Hardware/Software

If I want to play 2 different games...
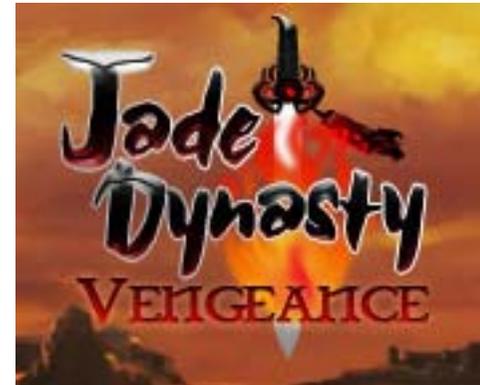
May have to log in/register for 2 different sites

Username:	
E-mail address:	
Confirm E-mail:	
Password:	
Date of Birth:	1980 ▾ Nov ▾ 15 ▾

1. Select an ID and Password

User Name: [   ] CHECK
Letters and numbers only. Must start with a letter. 3-16 characters.
Note: Do not share your User Name with other players.

Forum Name: [   ] CHECK
Letters and numbers only. Must start with a letter. 3-16 characters.

Email Address: [   ] CHECK

Confirm Email Address: [   ]

Password: [   ] Password Strength

Confirm Password: [   ]

Security Question: [Select a question... ▾]

Answer: [   ]

2. Tell us about yourself

Name: [   ] [   ]

Gender: ○ Male ○ Female

Downloading…1d 4h 39m left

Photo courtesy of annthegran.com

Hardware/Software

Photo courtesy of bostinnovation.com

Product	Current Installed Driver	Recommended Driver
⊟ NVIDIA GeForce 8600 GT (x2)	158.27	**ForceWare Release 169** **Version:** 169.21 WHQL **Release Date:** December 19, 2007 Learn More

Note: NVIDIA always recommends the latest WHQL driver. If you are currently using a newer BETA driver, you can choose to ignore this recommendation.

☐ I have read and agree to the terms and conditions of the NVIDIA Software License Agreement.

Download Now

Error

This computer does not meet the minimum requirements for installing the software.

Setup will exit.

OK
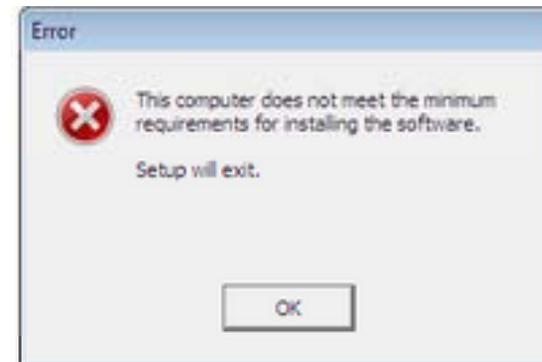
This is what makes MMOs Exciting!

▸ Graphics quality

▸ Immersive Storyline & Game Content

▸ Robust game features

▸ Loyal user base = high retention

▸ High monetization $$!!

MMORPGs – User Acquisition

- Sources online (Asia – also offline)
- CPA/CPM on ad networks
- PR on webzines, game magazines, gamer review sites
- Target gamer communities and peripheral communities
- Cross-promotion to existing users
- Events & product tie-ins
- Word-of mouth/guerilla marketing
- Rely on existing users to actively engage circle of friends

Social Games – Challenges (UA)

- Increased cost of user acquisition
- Lost among the noise (too many games out there)
- Large user base, hard to retain
- Loss of viral channels, hard to get noticed

Why Social Gaming is Awesome

▸ Easy on-boarding

▸ Frictionless entry = great user acquisition

▸ Easier/less time/less money to develop

▸ No download, no install. Flash penetration is extremely high.

Worldwide Ubiquity of Adobe Flash Player by Version - September 2010

	Flash Player 9 & below	Flash Player 10	Flash Player 10.1
Mature Markets[1]	99.0%	97.9%	73.8%
US/Canada	99.5%	98.1%	75.8%
Europe[2]	99.0%	98.2%	76.2%
Japan	98.7%	97.0%	65.5%
Australia/New Zealand[4]	98.8%	97.7%	69.5%
Emerging Markets (from June 2010)[3]	98.9%	96.1%	n/a

Worldwide Ubiquity of Adobe Flash Player by Version - June 2010

	Flash Player 8 & below	Flash Player 9	Flash Player 10
Mature Markets[1]	99.3%	99.2%	97.5%
US/Canada	99.1%	99.1%	97.5%
Europe[2]	99.3%	99.0%	97.9%
Japan	99.7%	99.7%	97.1%
Australia/New Zealand[4]	99.7%	99.7%	96.8%
Emerging Markets[3]	99.0%	98.9%	96.1%

Social Games – User Acquisition

▶ 3 Primary Ways for User Acquisition*

Viral	**Paid**	**Publisher**
• Feed items	• Facebook Ads	• 6 Waves
• Requests / Invites	• RockYou	• Mind Jolt
• Photos / Messages	• Incentivized	• App Bars (Applifer, Appstrip)

* Not including PR, guerilla marketing, and organic traffic

Social Games – User Acquisition

▸ **Viral Acquisition: Recent Changes**

   ▸ Feed virality went down because of news feed redesign (only feeds of games you're currently playing show up in Top News and Most Recent)

   ▸ Discovery stories were introduced to boost feed virality

Social Games – User Acquisition

▸ Viral Acquisition Overview

Step 1: Create situations to engage in a viral action

Social Games – User Acquisition

▸ **Viral Acquisition Overview**

Step 2: Optimize messaging for CTA
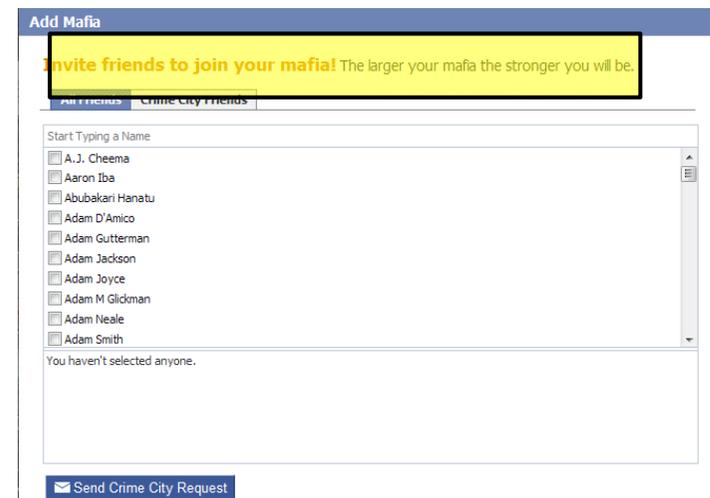
Social Games – User Acquisition

▸ Viral Acquisition Overview

Step 3: Landing Page Design
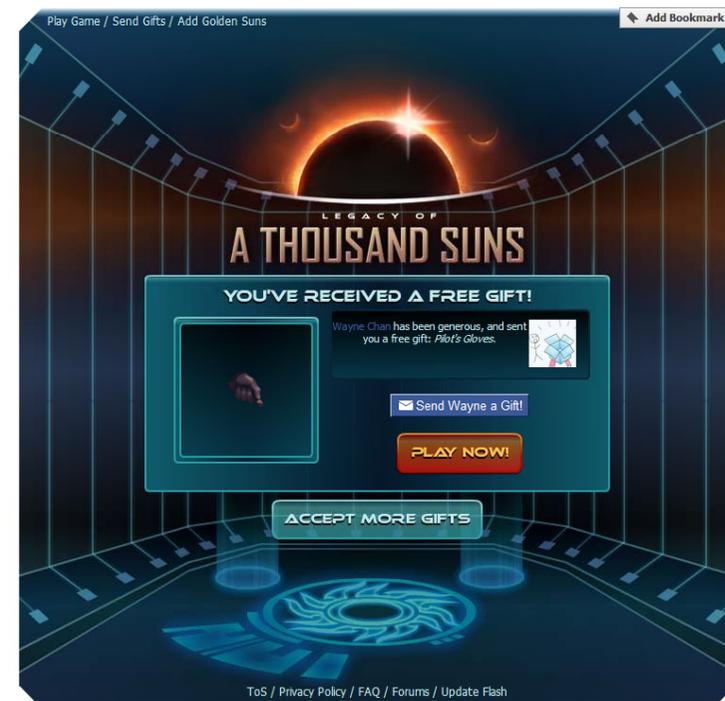
Social Games – User Acquisition

▶ Paid Acquisition Overview

www.facebook.com/advertising

- Most scalable way to acquire traffic*

- CPC prices have increased in the US though still cheap for certain countries (even cheaper for non-English speaking)

- Image selection accounts for 70% of the CTR for Facebook ads

  - http://www.shoemoney.com/facebook-advertising-soup-to-nuts-guide

Social Games – User Acquisition

▶ **Publisher Overview**

www.6waves.com

www.mindjolt.com

www.applifier.com

Retention / Re-Engagement

MMORPGs

▸ Episodic content

▸ Constant content updates on a large scale (new maps, features, etc.)

▸ Regular in-game events and promotions

▸ Community

▸ Gamer engagement (CM/GM)

▸ Email newsletters and updates

▸ Email reminder to log-in

▸ Expiring credits

▸

Social Games – User Acquisition

▸ Retention Drivers

Appointment Gaming	Social Retention	Content Updates
• **Timers** • **Energy mechanic**	• **Feed items** • **Requests / Invites** *** But now for people already playing the game**	**Combination of content + channel**

▷

Lessons Learned

▸ Focus on the Minimum Viable Product – it may be smaller than you think

▸ Analytics matter

▸ Keep experimenting

▸ Speed is key (Quality vs. Speed)

▸ Be prepared for changes – nothing is in stone

▸ Be distinguishing, not different

▸ Synchronous vs. asynchronous – know the difference

▸ Design the mechanics first, then design the game

Questions?

Thank you.

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