A DESIGN ISSUE:

PROJECT MANAGEMENT FOR GAMES

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MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT
THE M&E INDUSTRY

• Includes: film, television, music, streaming, theatre etc.

• Games currently at ~ 140 billion / year

• Entire sector pressured to innovate and adopt new technology

• Hit driven

• Successful franchises help reduce risk
BARRIERS TO ENTRY

- Low for mobile – oversaturated (like music).
- Moderate for indie/new – oversaturated (music)
- Moderate for console – managed like Netflix
- High for AAA games and massive multiplayer online (film and television model)
- Top games now more expensive than film to develop
POTENTIAL ROI

- Enormous – like all hit driven industry
- Scaling easy with no physical product
- Subscription model moves toward franchise
- AAA benchmark now 1 billion+ per game per year
- Fortnite, Call of Duty, Destiny, Grand Theft Auto, Red Dead Redemption
FIRST UP
CONSULTANTS
GAMES
IP DEVELOPMENT

• Normally starts in small independent studios

• Second iteration at medium independent with publisher investment (3 – 30 million)

• AAA demands enormous investment and is typically done by international publishers

• From second iteration on investors seek to manage risk
RISK

• Like film and television, pre-production for games is now vital

• Especially as teams have changed and grown
DESIGN PROCESS
PRE-PRODUCTION

• Design practice drives the pre-production phase with a very small team (<10)

• Concept (drawings and early prototypes)

• White/grey boxing of core gameplay mechanics

• Rough assets added for early testing

• Feedback and iteration

• Strawgame
EARLY DEVELOPMENT PITCH

• Strawgame
• Concept document
• Beat charts
FULL DEVELOPMENT PITCH

• Strawgame
• Concept document
• Beat charts
• Management and finaling philosophy
• Collaboration approach
• Production milestones
COMPLETION OF PRE-PRODUCTION

• Team begins to grow…
• Game design document
• Technical specification/document
• Art style guide
• Teams, financials and milestones agreed
• Typically 50% point of project timeline
WATERFALL / AGILE

• After a strong waterfall like pre-production, development proceeds in a more agile style based on milestones and beat charts.

• If externally funded the producer acts as client – along with the internal game designer. Both speak for playtesting results.

• If internal (typically AAA) producers speaks for all
STAGES

• Alpha – the game is fully assembled

• Beta – game is ready for full playtesting and this is frequently linked to marketing

• Gold Master – a term from game consoles – game is fully functional and meets all specifications.

• Maintenance – normally patches and DLC
TRENDS
TRENDS

• Moderate growth for sector expected over next 5 years

• Improved game engines and software expected to reduce numbers of coders and artists in future

• Increased role for designers as game market saturates and innovation and differentiation become vital
THANK YOU

• Questions?

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