

# What You Don't Know *Is* Hurting You:

## How Aggressive User Research Improved Resistance 3

The background of the slide is a promotional image for the video game Resistance 3. It features a red and white color scheme. On the right side, there is a silhouette of a soldier in a trench, holding a rifle. The word "RESISTANCE 3" is written in large, white, distressed capital letters across the middle of the image. The number "12" is in a small circle in the top right corner. In the bottom right corner, there is text about the Game Developers Conference 2012.

RESISTANCE 3™

Drew Murray  
Creative Director, Insomniac Games  
Lead Designer on Resistance 3

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

MARCH 8-9, 2012

EXPO DATES: MARCH 7-8

2012

# RESISTANCE 2

The title "RESISTANCE 2" is rendered in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a grid pattern, and the background within the letters shows a black and white image of a city skyline at night, featuring a prominent suspension bridge. The text is set against a dark, textured background that looks like a torn piece of paper or a film strip.



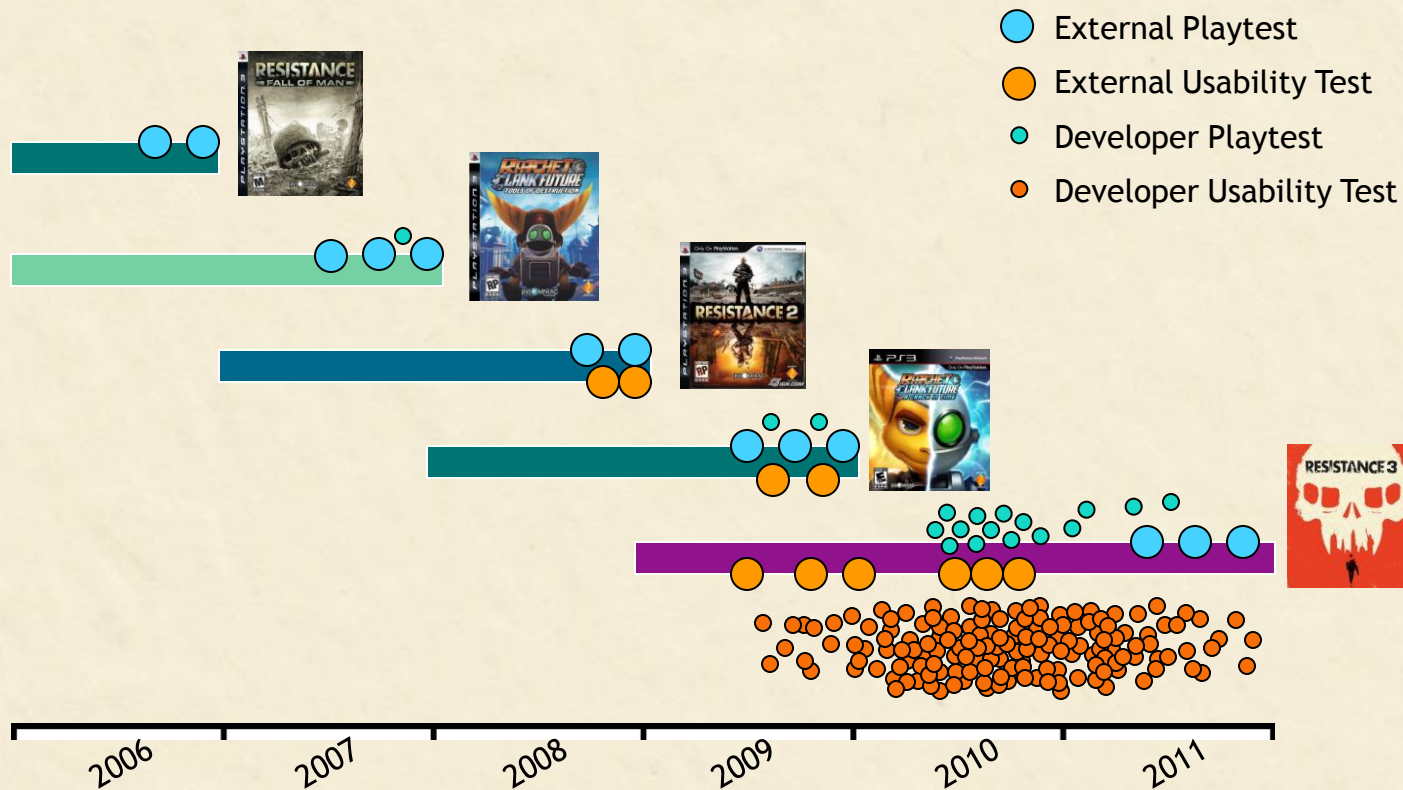
# RESISTANCE 2

The title 'RESISTANCE 2' is rendered in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a detailed grayscale image of a city skyline at night. A prominent suspension bridge, resembling the San Francisco Bay Bridge, is visible through the letter 'A'. The entire title is set against a dark, textured background that looks like a torn piece of paper or a film strip.



The image features a central figure, a soldier in a dark, tactical uniform, seen from behind. The soldier is walking away from the viewer, leaving a trail of dark footprints on a light-colored surface. The background is a large, textured red rectangle that occupies most of the frame. Overlaid on this red background is the title "RESISTANCE 3" in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. The text has a slightly distressed or weathered appearance. A small "TM" trademark symbol is located just above the number "3".

# RESISTANCE<sup>TM</sup> 3



# User Research Methods

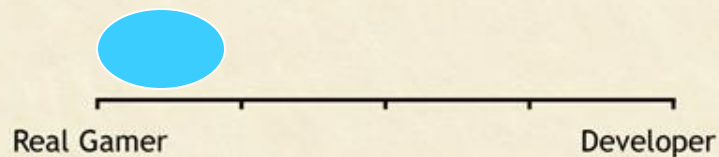
## Key questions:

1. Who are you testing: Real gamers or developers?
2. Aspect of experience: Affect, Behavior or Cognition? (feeling, doing, or thinking?)
3. Category of data: Qualitative or quantitative?
4. How are you getting data: Observation, metrics, self-reporting in situ, self-reporting post hoc?

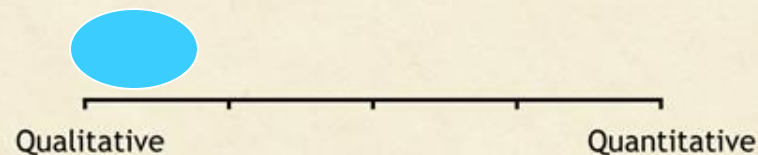


# Usability Testing

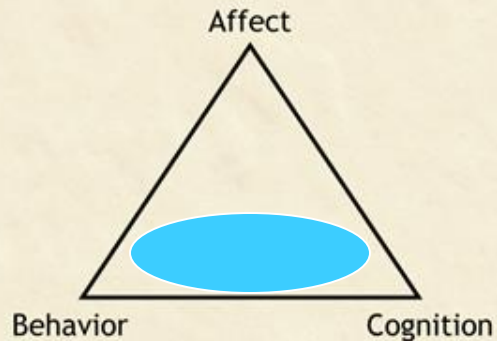
*WHO Are You Testing?*



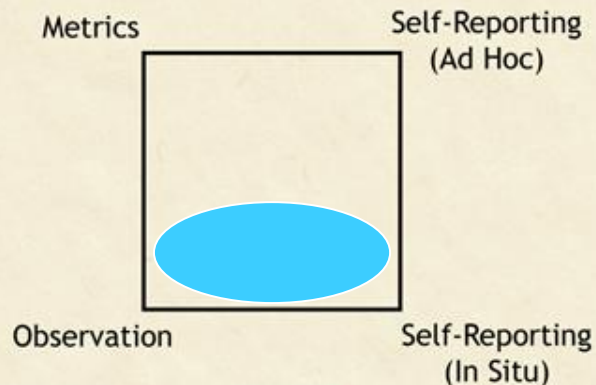
*What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?*



*What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?*



*HOW Are You Gathering Data?*





# Usability Testing

## RITE Method:

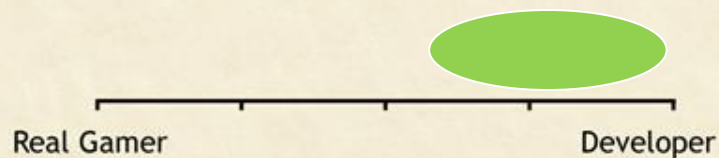
Rapid  
Iteration  
Testing  
Evaluation

**RONIN**  
USER EXPERIENCE

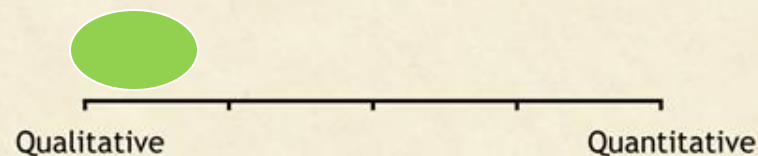


# Internal Usability Tests

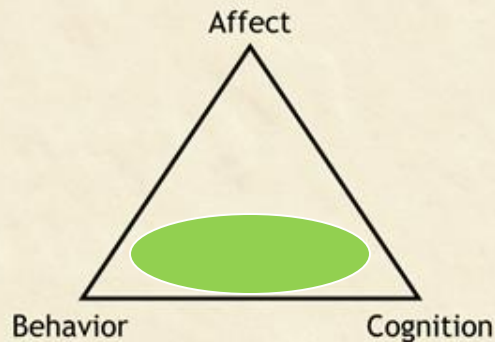
*WHO Are You Testing?*



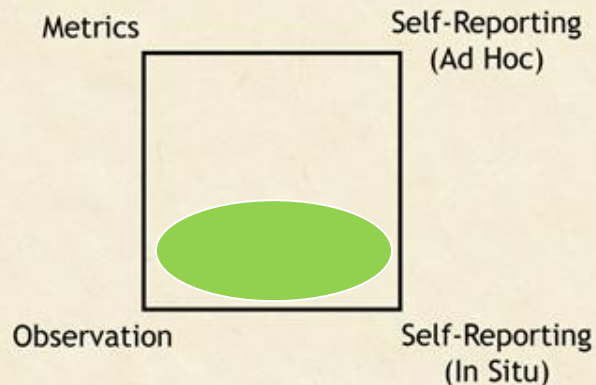
*What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?*



*What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?*

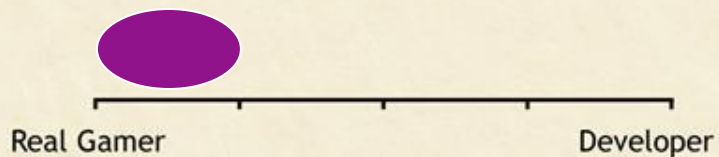


*HOW Are You Gathering Data?*

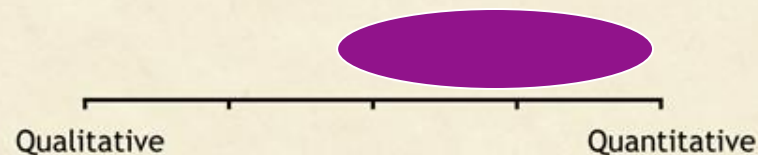


# External Playtesting

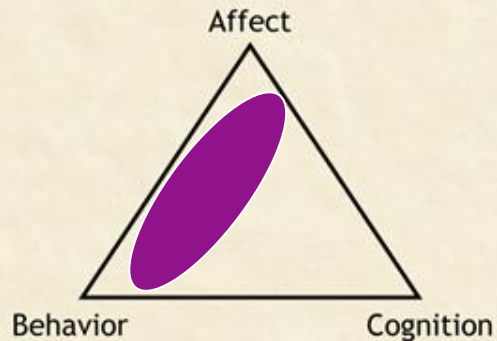
*WHO Are You Testing?*



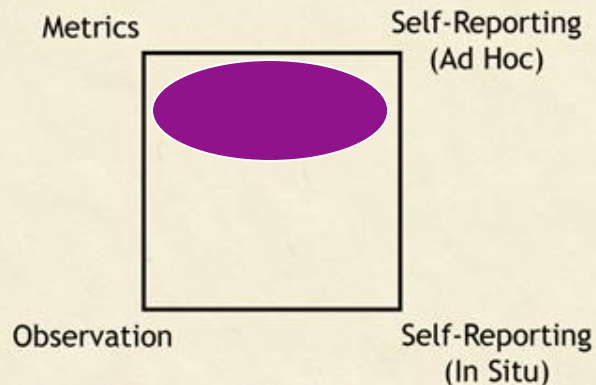
*What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?*



*What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?*

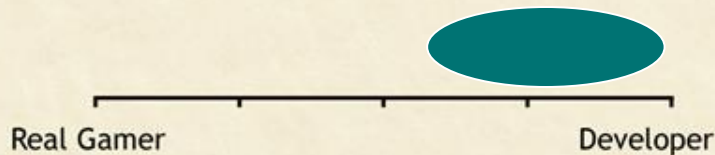


*HOW Are You Gathering Data?*

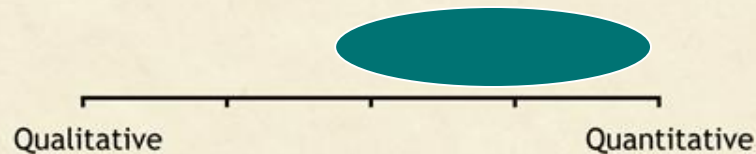


# Internal Company Playtesting

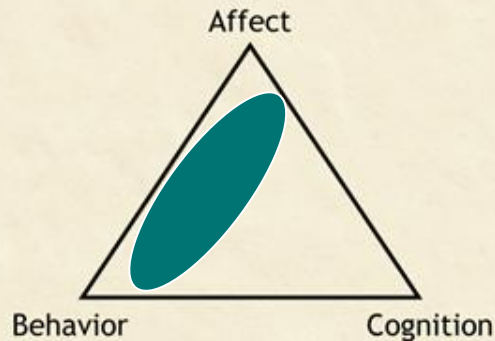
*WHO Are You Testing?*



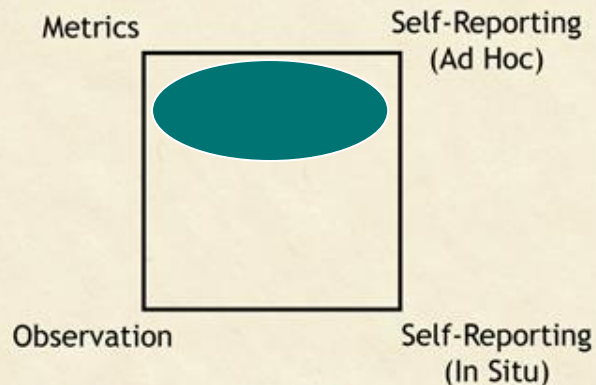
*What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?*



*What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?*



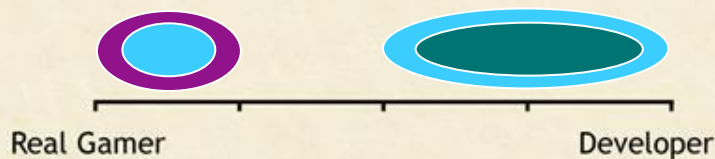
*HOW Are You Gathering Data?*



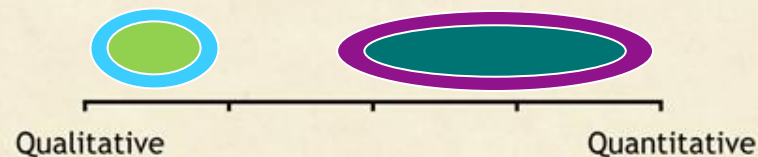


# All Methods

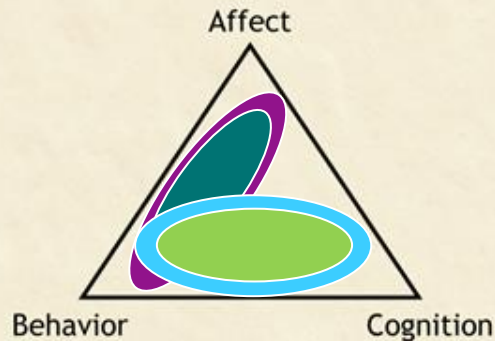
*WHO Are You Testing?*



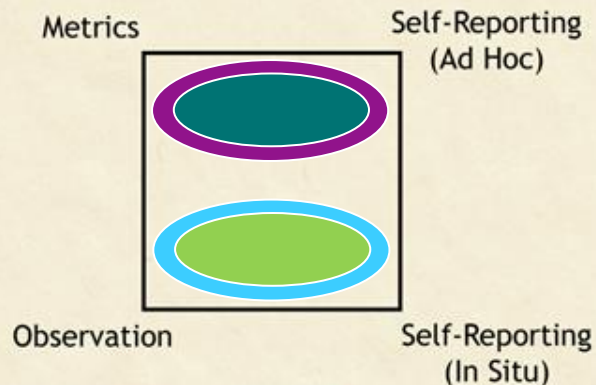
*What CATEGORY of Data Are You Collecting?*



*What ASPECT OF PLAYERS Are You Examining?*



*HOW Are You Gathering Data?*



# Usability Testing

- + Moment-to-Moment Player Experience
- + Cheap and (Relatively) Easy
- + Flexible
- Not Focus on Emotional Response
- Limited Sample Size



# Resistance 3 Usability Research Goals





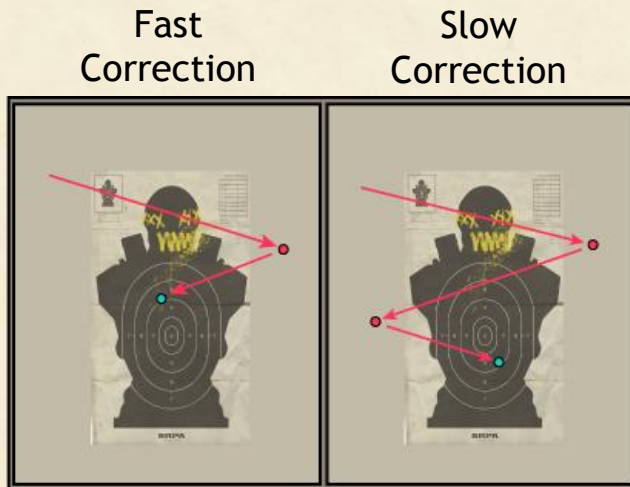
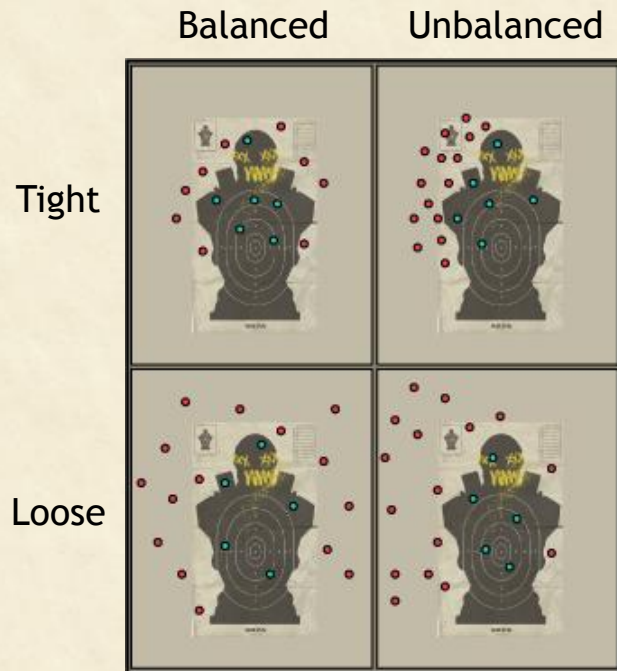
# Core Shooting Controls





# Criteria for Good Aiming Controls

Balanced + Tight + Fast Correction



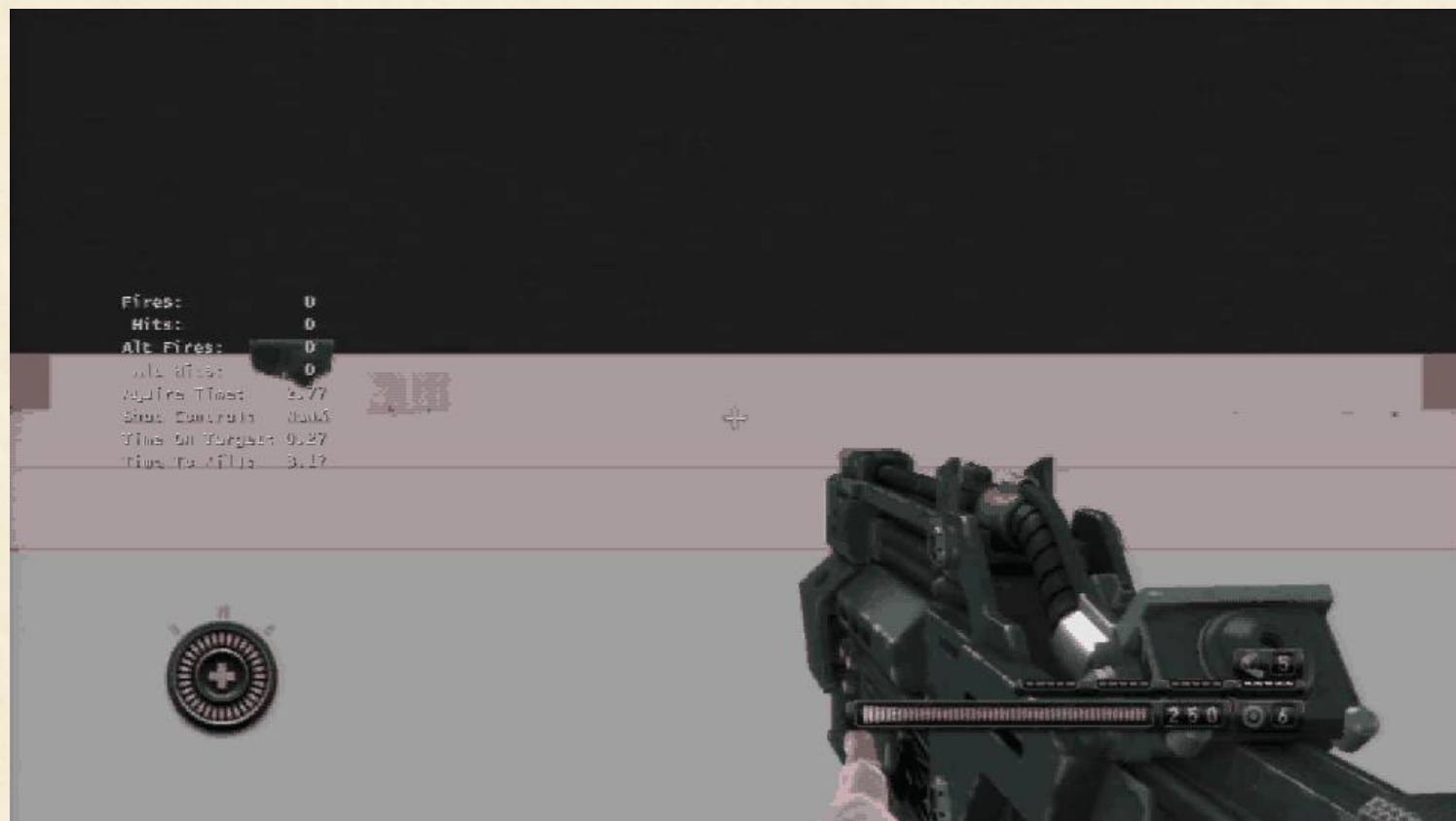
# Testing Approach

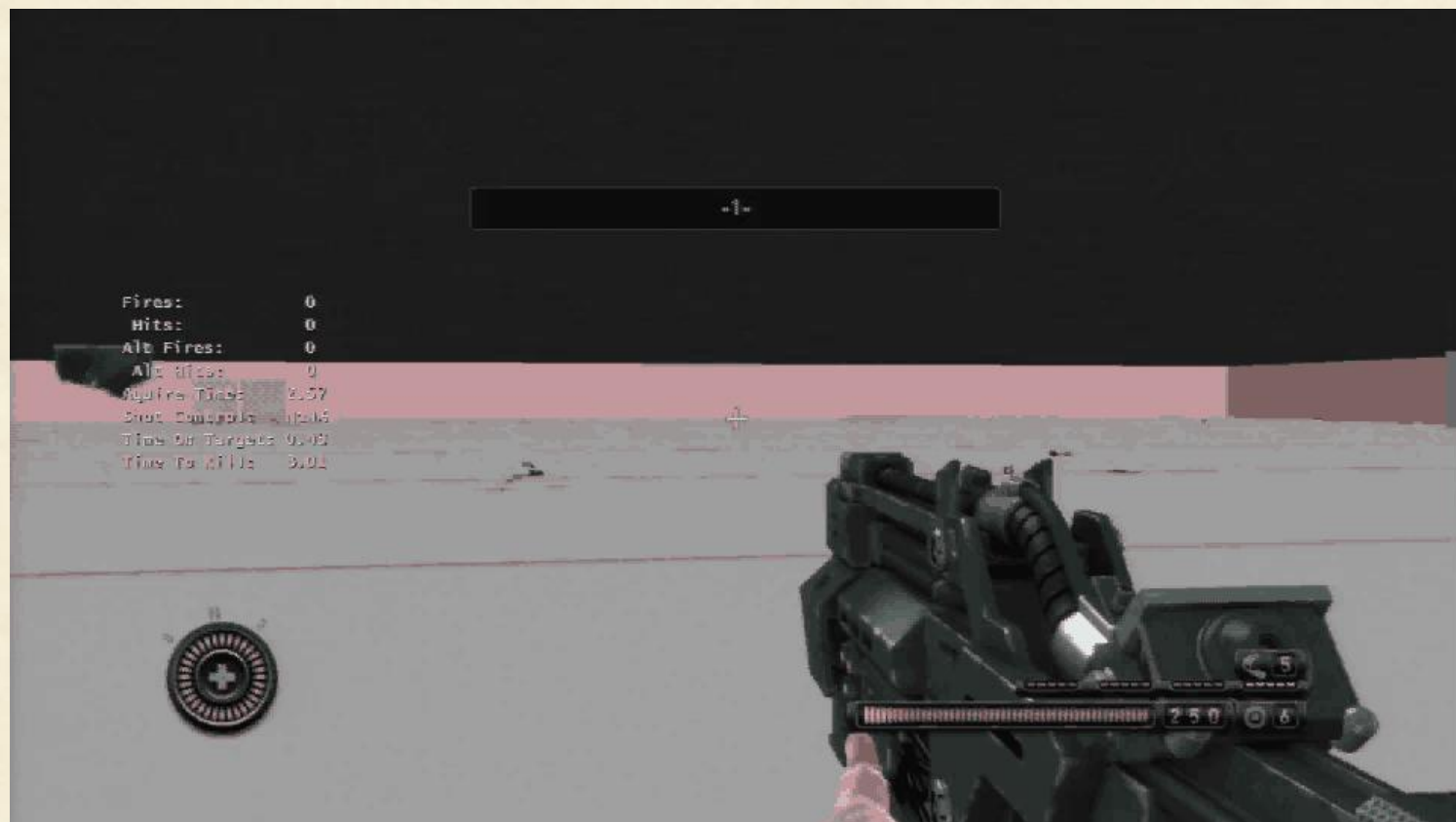


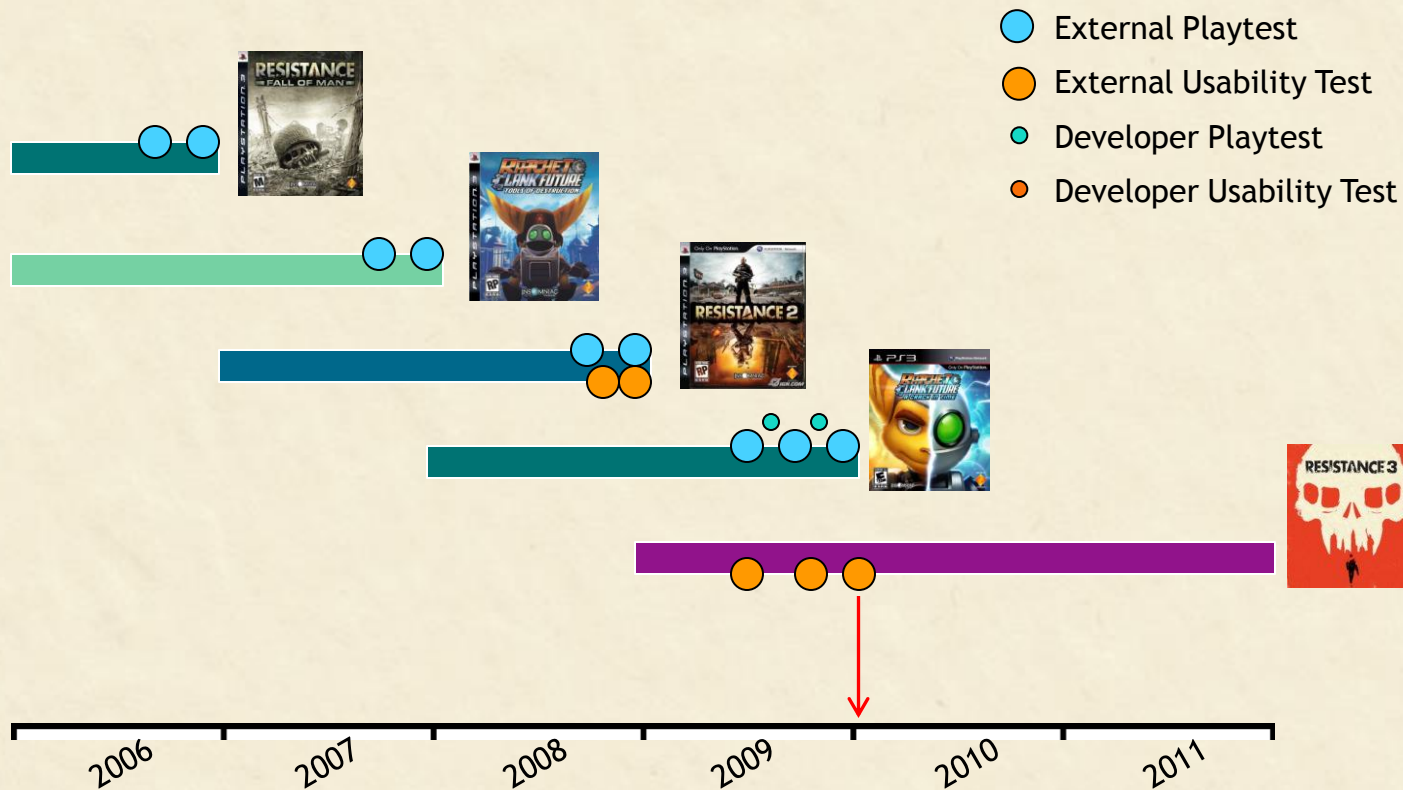






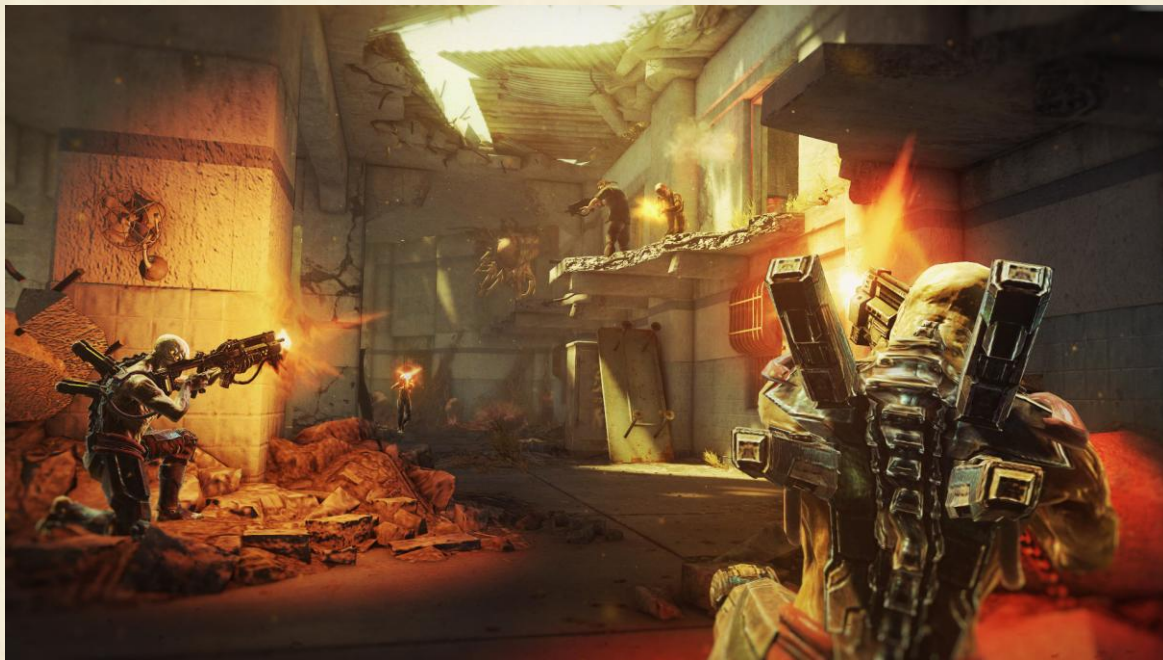






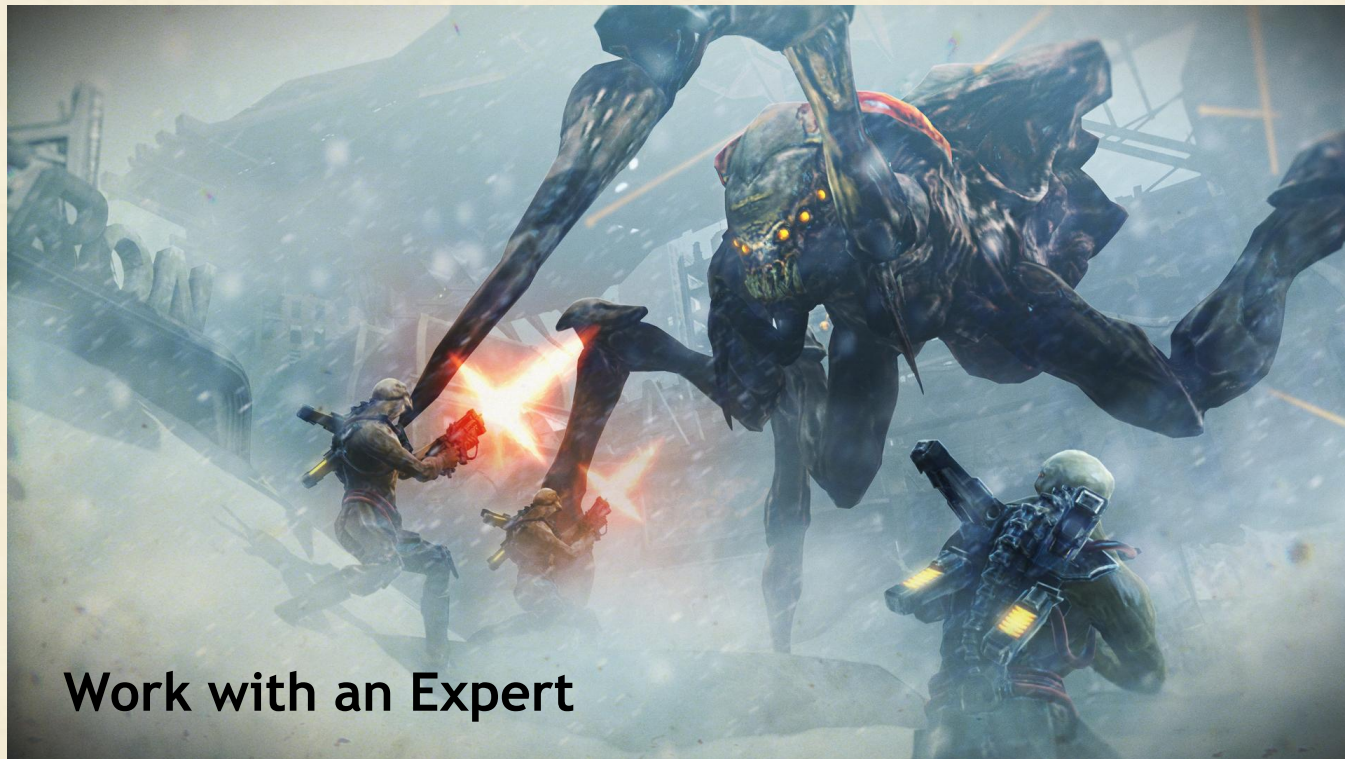
“Right off the bat, Resistance 3 controls wonderfully. . . .  
The shooting mechanics are tight and responsive. . . .”

- IGN

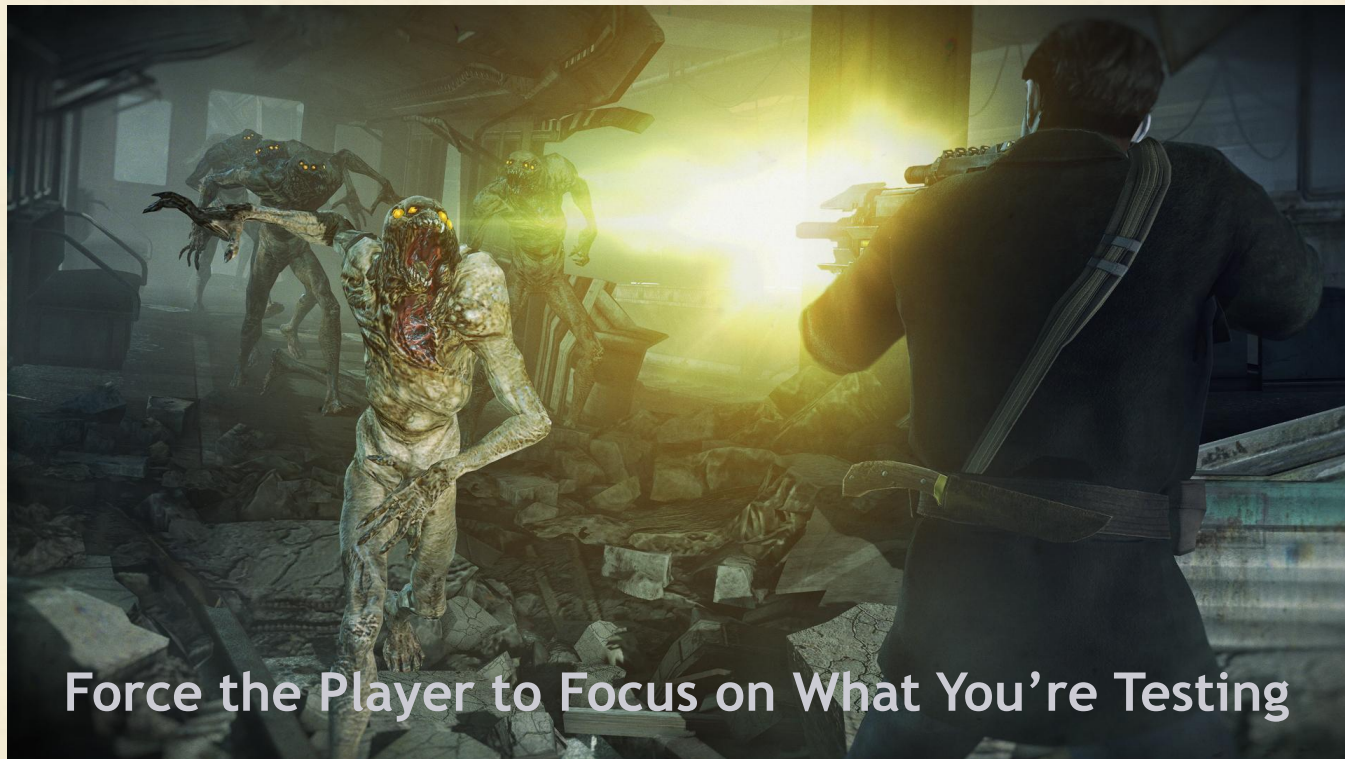




# Usability Testing Tips



# Usability Testing Tips

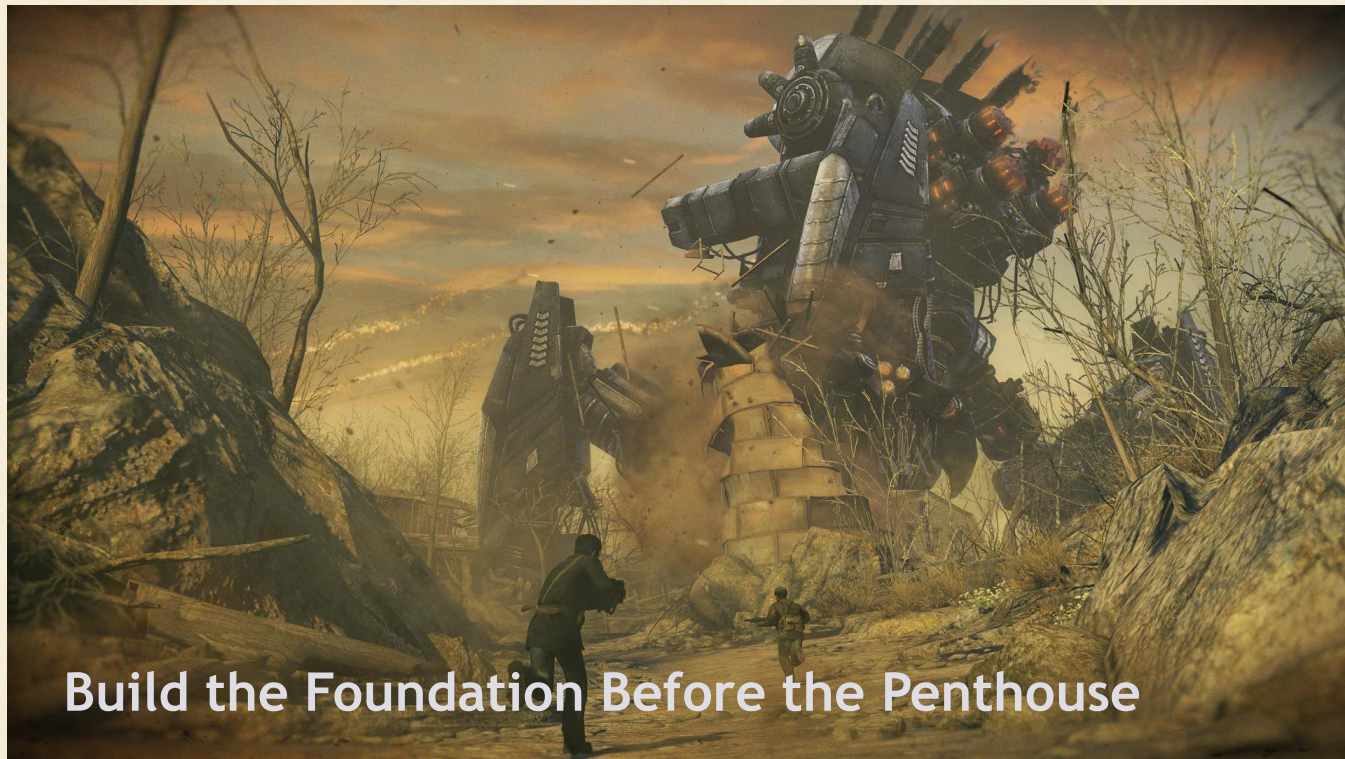


Force the Player to Focus on What You're Testing





# Usability Testing Tips



# Usability Testing Tips



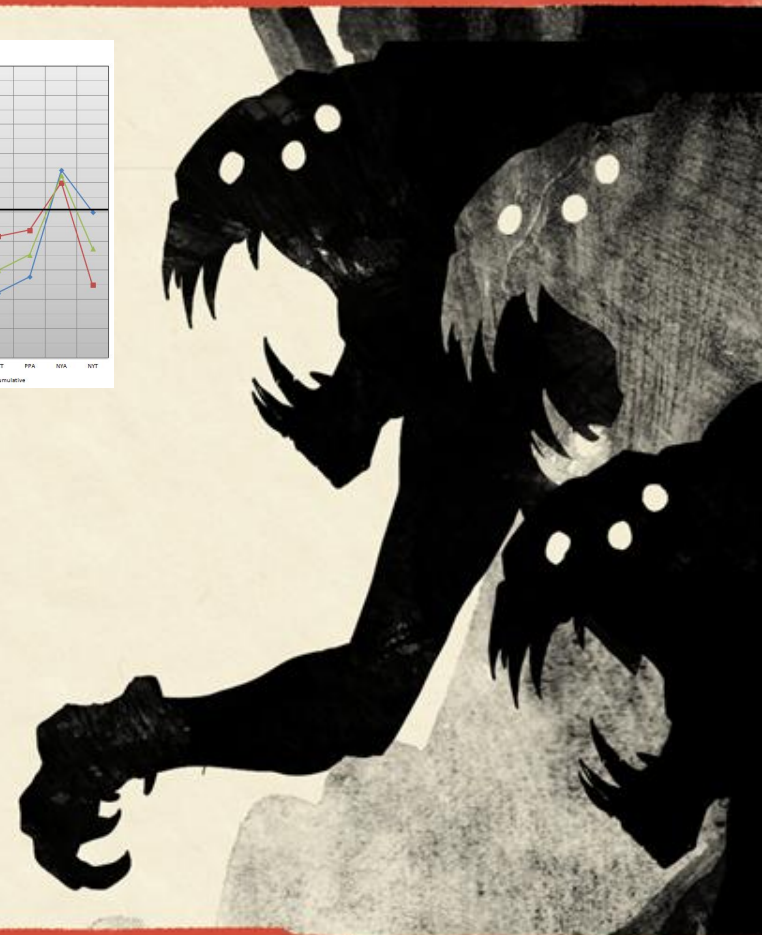
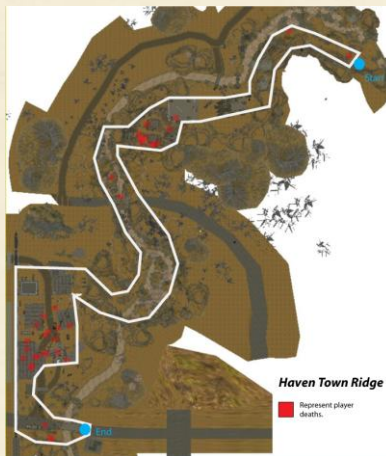
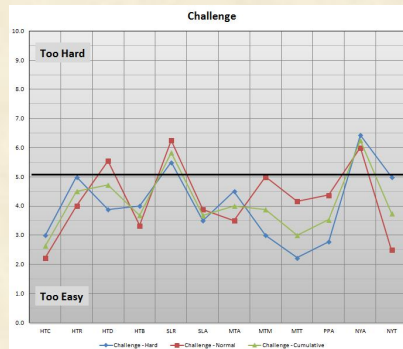


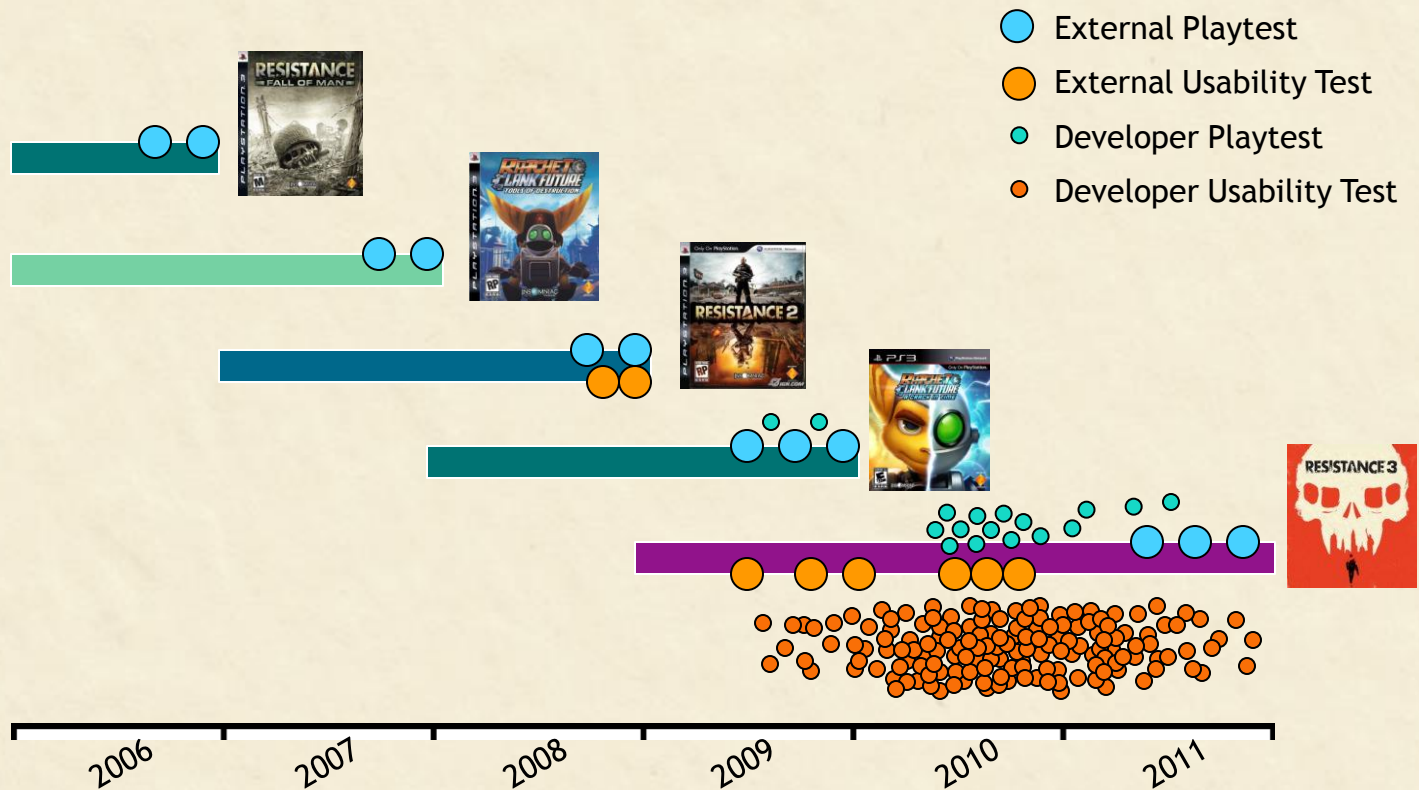
# Group Playtesting

## + Metrics

## - Amount of Time Involved

LEVEL SUMMARY				
Fun	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Fun - Hard	7.0	9.0	9.4	9.0
Fun - Normal	6.7	7.5	7.8	5.6
Fun - Cumulative	6.8	8.3	8.6	7.4
Interest in Continuing	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Interest - Hard	9.5	9.0	9.4	8.5
Interest - Normal	6.7	8.0	7.8	7.8
Interest - Cumulative	8.2	8.5	8.6	8.2
Plot Continuity	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Plot - Hard	n/a	8.0	9.4	9.0
Plot - Normal	n/a	7.5	7.2	6.7
Plot - Cumulative	n/a	7.8	8.3	7.9
Stuck	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Stuck - Hard	9.5	8.0	9.4	9.5
Stuck - Normal	7.2	7.0	8.3	8.3
Stuck - Cumulative	8.4	7.5	8.9	8.9
Challenge Level	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Challenge - Hard	3.0	5.0	3.9	4.0
Challenge - Normal	2.2	4.0	5.6	3.3
Challenge - Cumulative	2.6	4.5	4.7	3.7
Pacing	HTC	HTR	HTD	HTB
Pacing - Hard	3.5	4.5	4.4	3.5
Pacing - Normal	3.9	4.0	5.0	5.6
Pacing - Cumulative	3.7	4.3	4.7	4.5
10 = Best, 0 = Worst				
5 = Best, 0, 10 = Worst				





# Appropriate Research for Group Playtesting



Individual Feature Comparison



Pacing and Difficulty Tuning



Scores Generally Moving Up?





# Benefits to Developer Testing

## Testing Prototypes and Speculative Gameplay



## Asking Detail-Oriented Questions

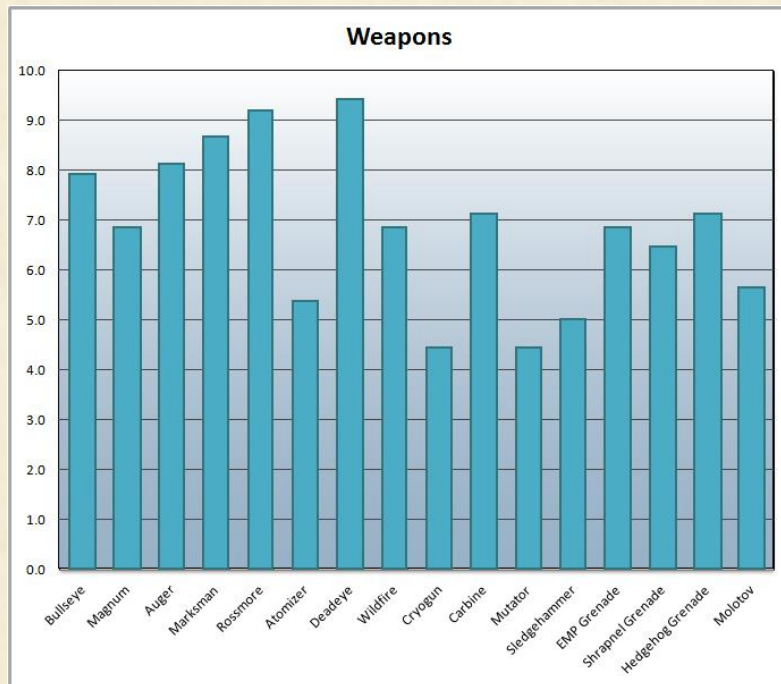




# Individual Feature Comparisons



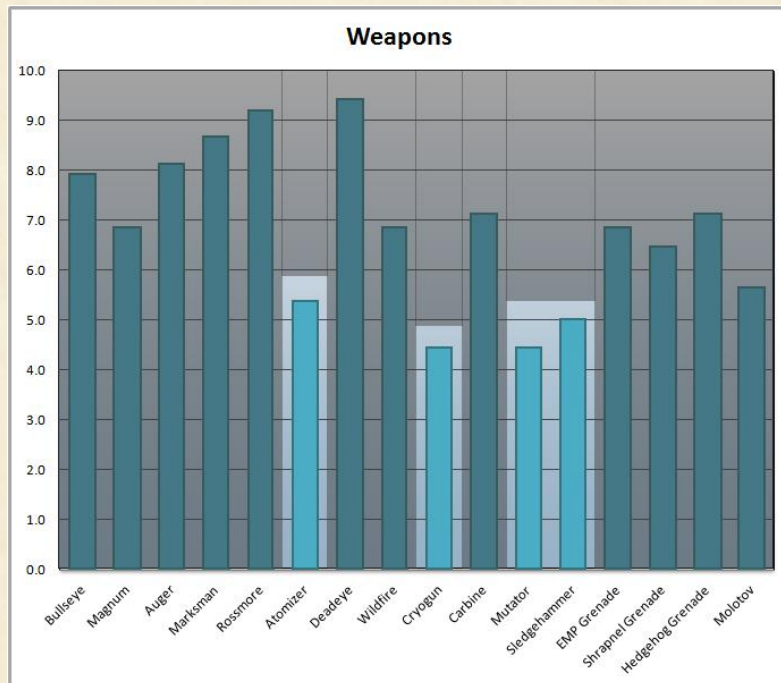
# Individual Feature Comparisons



April 2011  
Survey Results



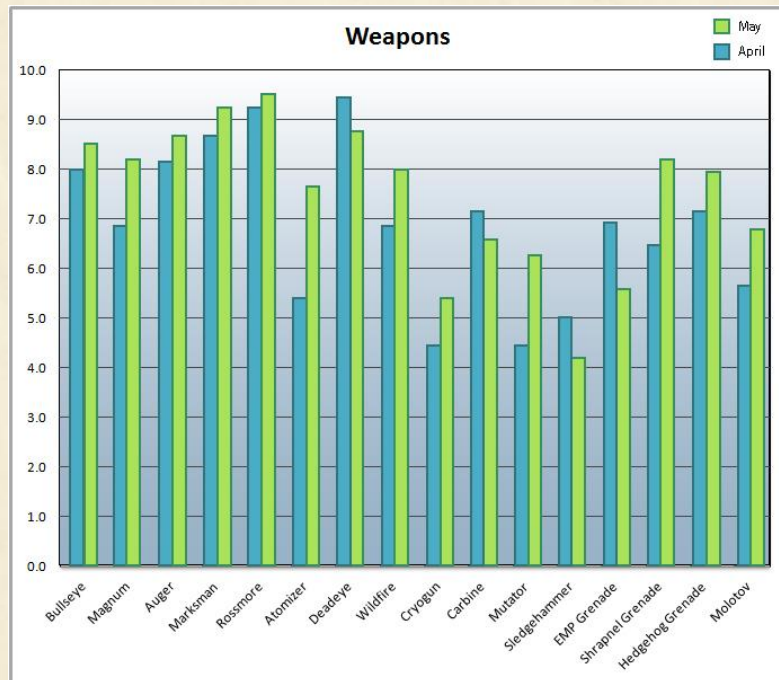
# Individual Feature Comparisons



April 2011  
Survey Results



# Individual Feature Comparisons

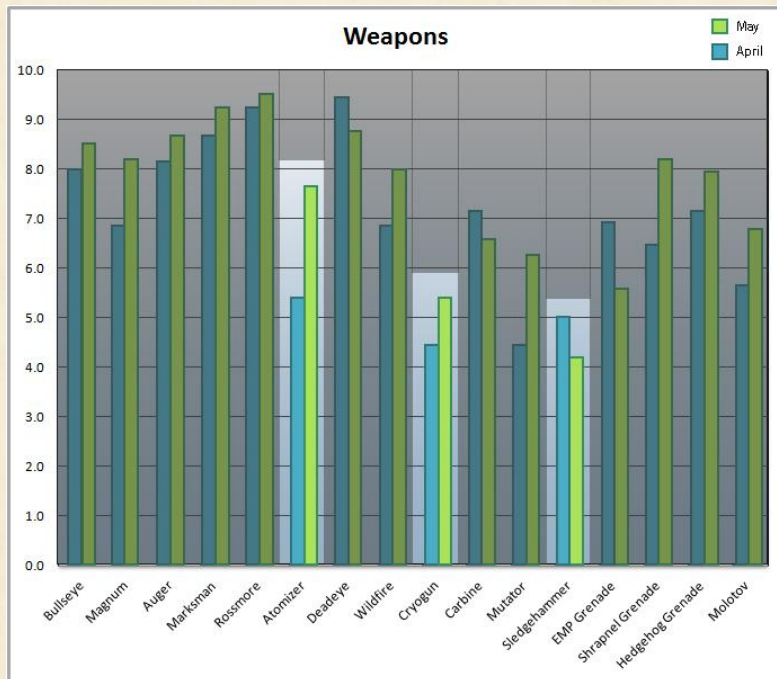


**April & May 2011  
Survey Results**





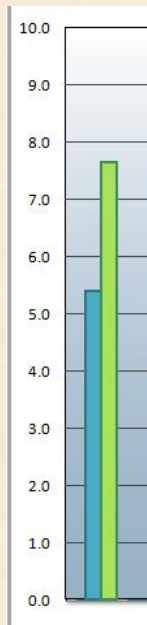
# Individual Feature Comparisons



**April & May 2011  
Survey Results**



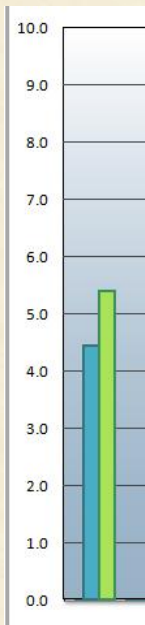
# Individual Feature Comparisons



## Atomizer



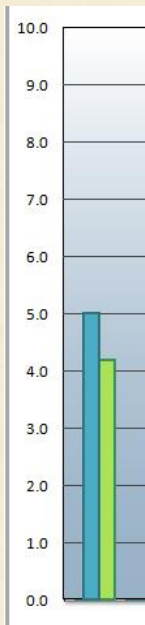
# Individual Feature Comparisons



Cryogun



# Individual Feature Comparisons

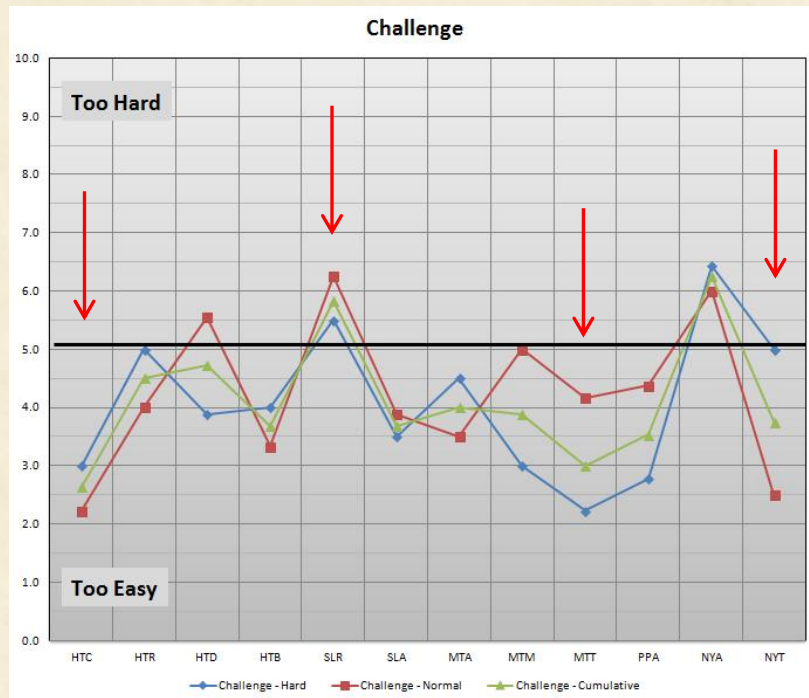


## Sledgehammer





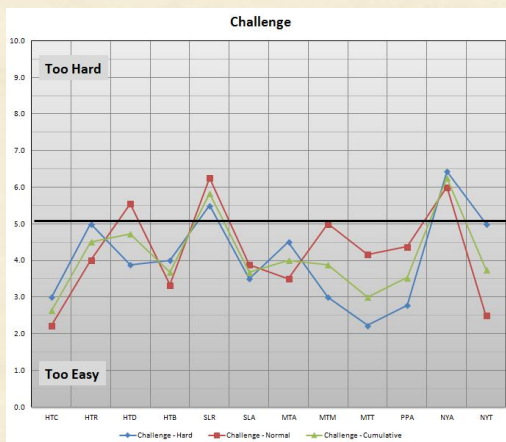
# Challenge / Difficulty Tuning



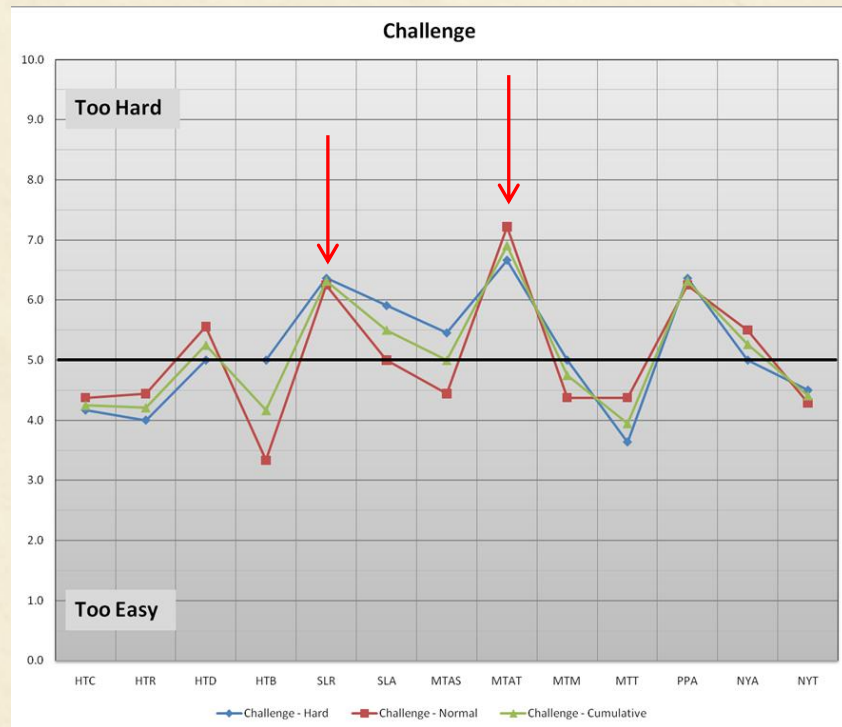
April 2011



# Challenge / Difficulty Tuning



April 2011



May 2011

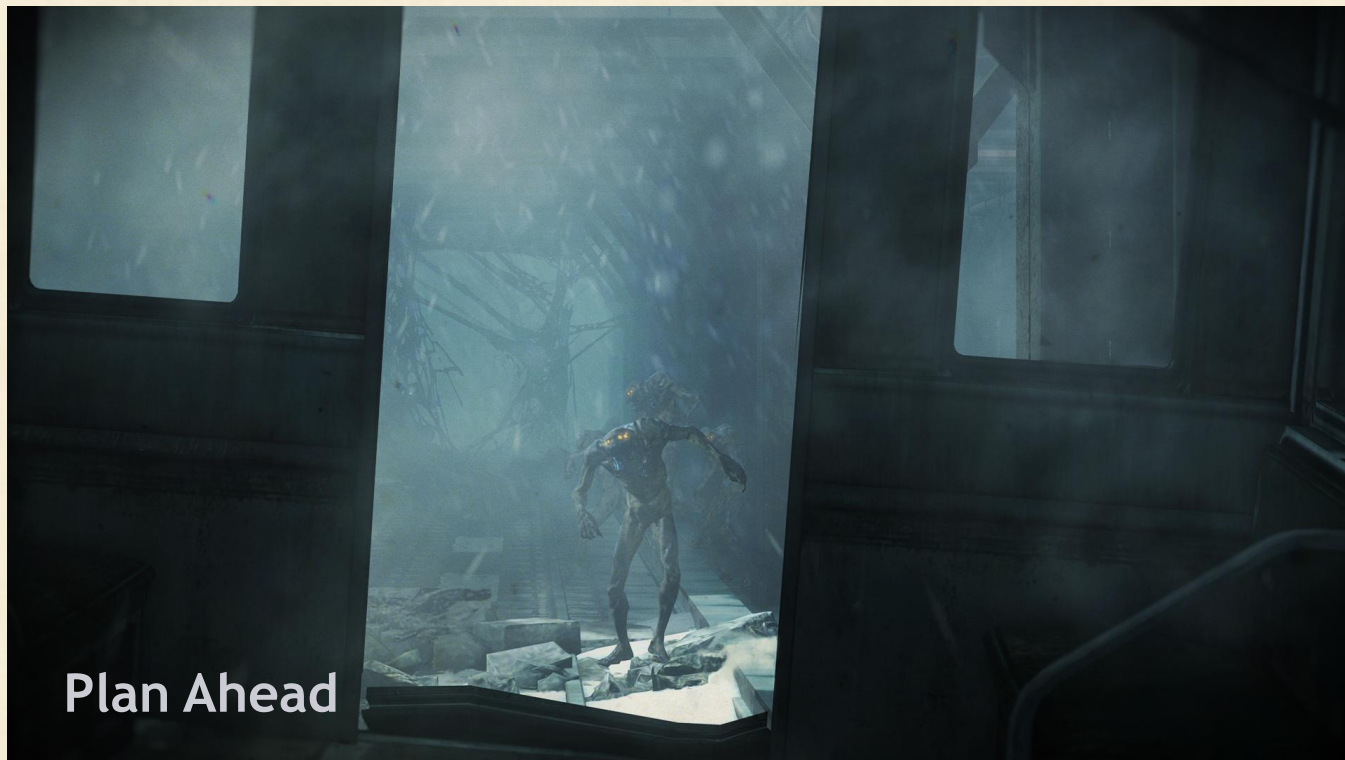


“. . . Resistance 3 possesses one of the most ingenious collections of weapons ever assembled in a video game; a veritable wheel of abject destruction which inspires a degree of familiarity which very nearly resembles *parenthood*.” - Joystiq



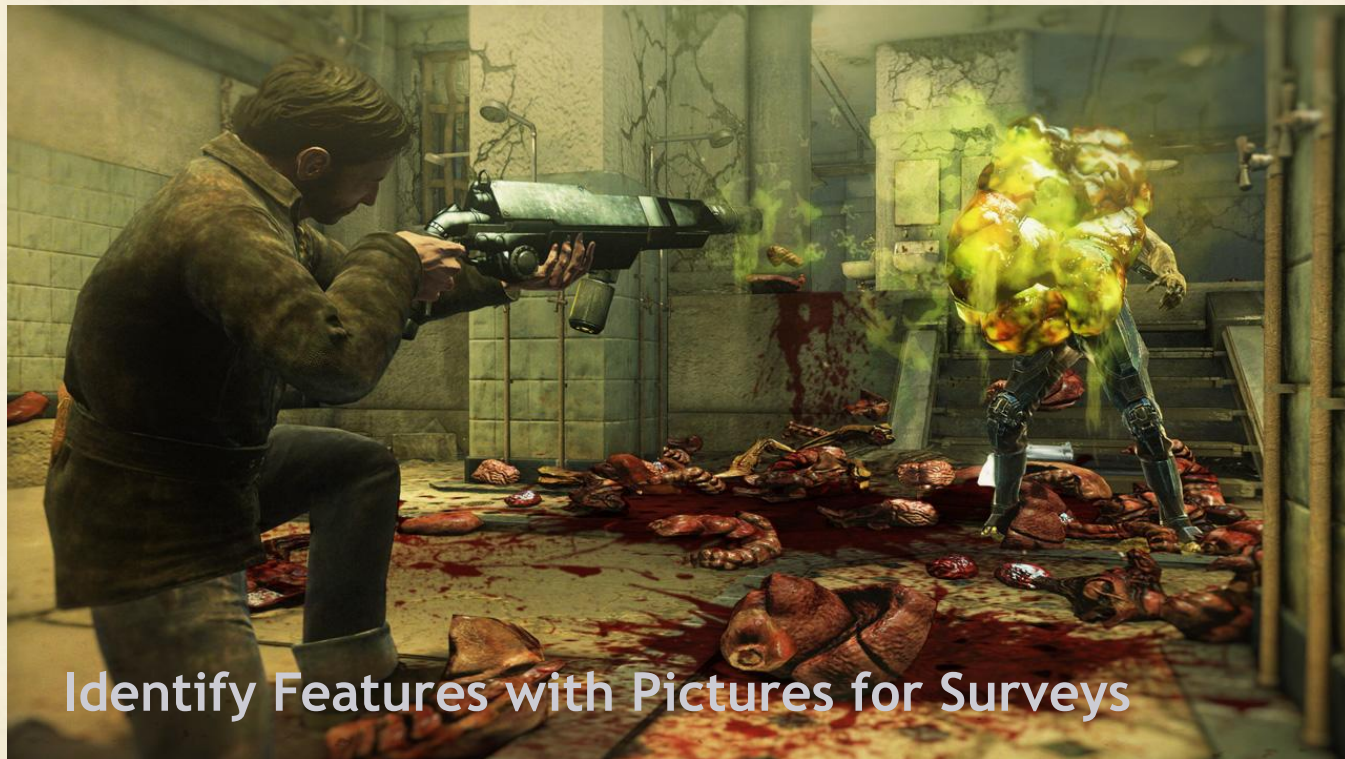


# Group Playtesting Tips

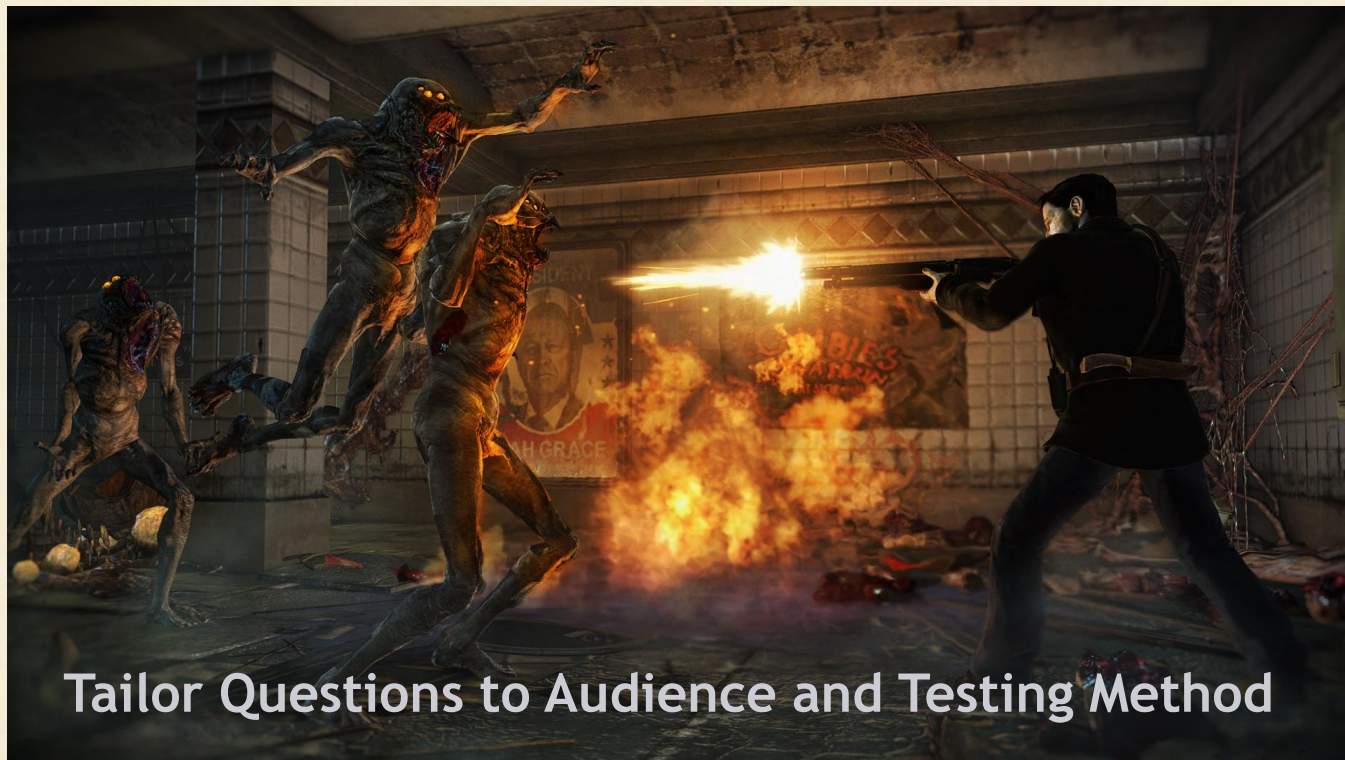




## Group Playtesting Tips



# Group Playtesting Tips

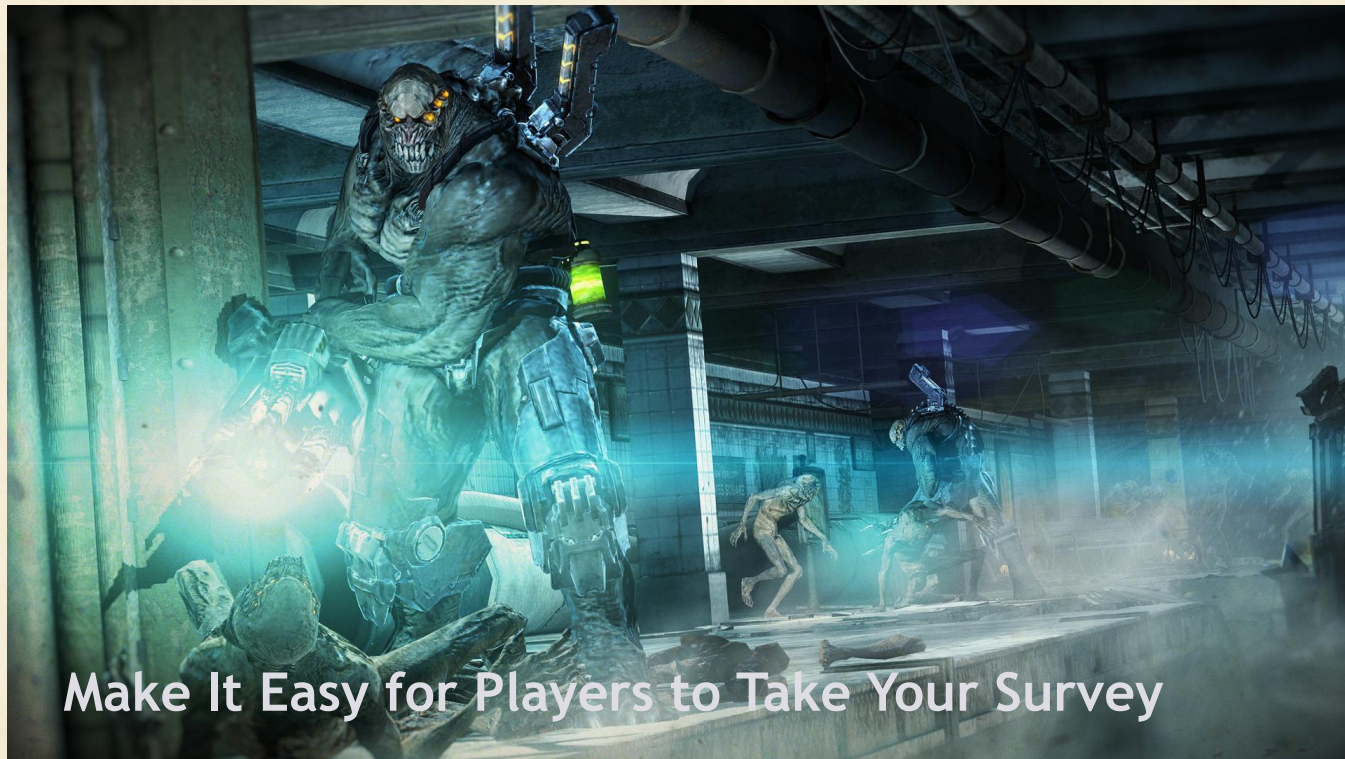


Tailor Questions to Audience and Testing Method





## Group Playtesting Tips





## Group Playtesting Tips



## Did It Work?

“Best Resistance yet. . . by far.”

- Playstation LifeStyle

“It’s easy to say that this is the best Resistance title.”

- 1UP

“This third title is easily the best yet.”

- Play.tm





## Was It Worth It?





# What You Don't Know *Is* Hurting You:

How Aggressive User Research Improved Resistance 3

Drew Murray

[dmurray@insomniacgames.com](mailto:dmurray@insomniacgames.com)

Additional Information on Game  
User Research:

Bill Fulton

[www.RoninUX.com](http://www.RoninUX.com)

The background of the slide is a stylized, high-contrast image of a soldier from the game Resistance 3. The soldier is seen from behind, walking away on a red surface. The word "RESISTANCE 3" is written in large, white, distressed capital letters across the middle of the image, with the soldier's figure partially obscuring it. The overall aesthetic is gritty and military-themed.

# RESISTANCE 3™

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

MARCH 8-9, 2012

EXPO DATES: MARCH 7-8

# 2012