



# 5 Key Best Practices in Free-to-Play

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Chris Williams, VP & GM of F2P

# Who is Big Fish?

Big Fish is the world's largest producer and publisher of casual games.

- Founded in 2002.
- Has distributed more than 2 billion casual games.
- Creator of the world's #1 F2P mobile social casino game *Big Fish Casino*.
- Aggressively expanding into F2P based on early success.
- Top 10 iOS Publisher with over 300 mobile games.
- Leading PC & Mac App Store with F2P download and online games.
- 140+ worldwide developer partners
- 3,000+ games sold in 150+ countries
- Offices located in Seattle, WA; Oakland, CA; Vancouver, Canada; Cork, Ireland; and Luxembourg.



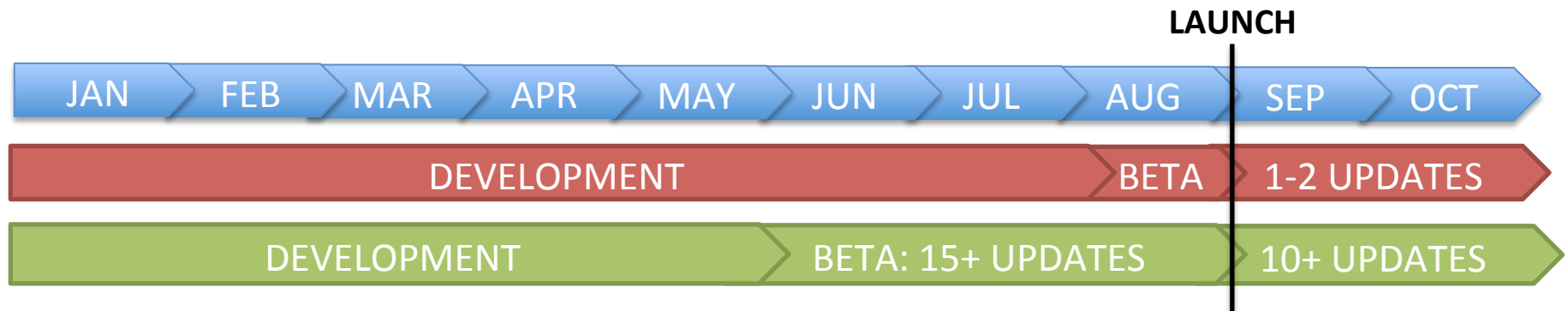
# So, you want to make a F2P game...

- **Development:** Plan for 2-3 weeks of Live Beta before launch and update every 4-6 weeks.
- **Monetization:** Add currency and virtual goods.
- **Engagement:** Assume users are similar and a few passionate players will play 3 times a day.
- **Analytics:** Monitor a few high level metrics.
- **Notification:** Message your users every 1-2 weeks.



# Development

**Mistake #1:** Plan for a 2-3 week Beta and release client updates every 4-6 weeks.



**Best Practice:** 3 Month Live Beta with server functionality for rapid pre-launch iteration.



## ***Match-Up by Big Fish*** – rapid updates for 3+ months

- Over 15 changes to game logic and difficulty
- Countless economy changes – payouts, daily bonus, starting balance, etc.
- Daily changes to available Tournaments
- Hundreds of changes with only 3 client updates



# Development

**Best Practice:** Operate your game as a host of your users and their friends at an event.



# Engagement

**Mistake #2:** Design your game content for users who are playing 2-3 times per day.

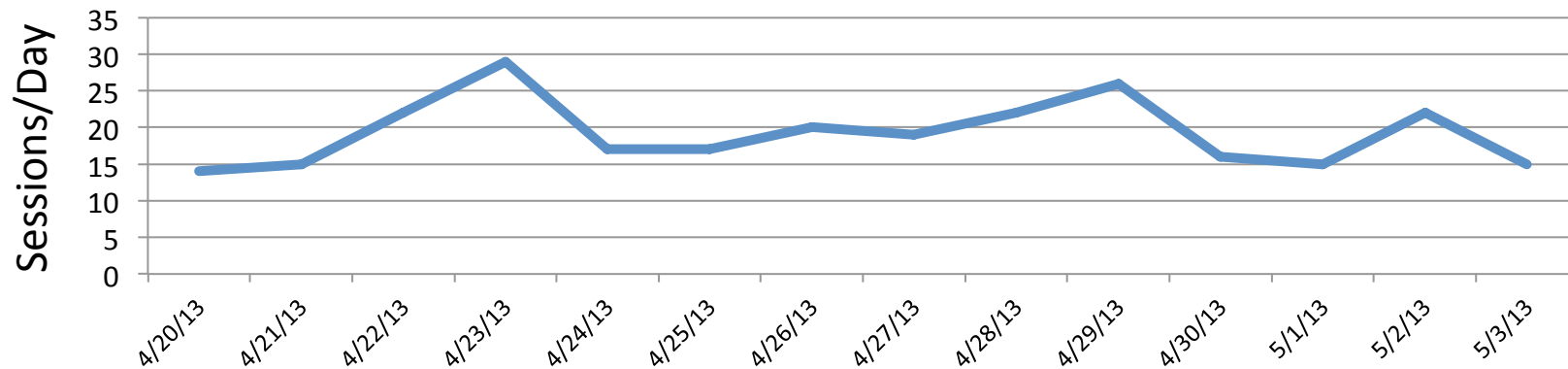
**Best Practice:** Be prepared for your most active users to play much more frequently.



## ***Dark Manor: A Hidden Object Mystery***

- 3 month of Live Beta
- Hi-Depth™ Hidden Object Scenes
- Day/Night Gameplay

**Most Active Users - Play Sessions Per Day**





# Engagement

*Dark Manor: A Hidden Object Mystery* featuring HiDepth™ Hidden Object Scenes





# Engagement

*Dark Manor: A Hidden Object Mystery* featuring Day & Night gameplay modes.





# Monetization

**Mistake #3:** Just add virtual currency and virtual items and expect users will spend money.



*Fairway Solitaire* is the world's leading F2P iOS solitaire game.



Virtual Currency

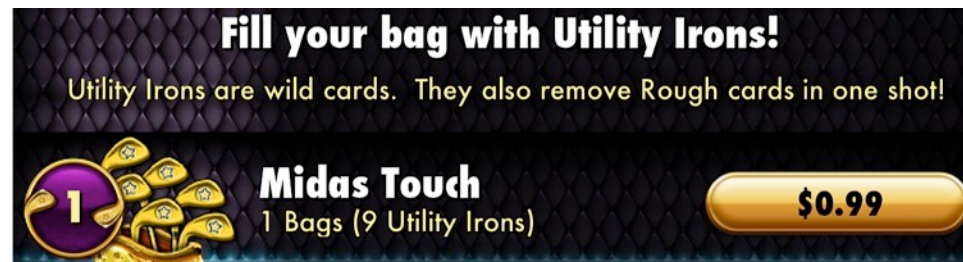
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Customized Cards

= \$0

**Best Practice:** Clearly communicate the gameplay value of the virtual item to the player.



# Monetization

**Best Practice:** Users need to find emotional value in their in app purchase.

PRACTICAL

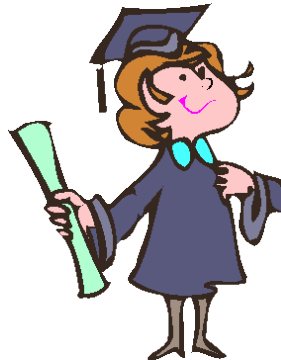
EMOTIONAL



Return on  
Investment



Time &  
Convenience



Pride &  
Status



Luck &  
Probability



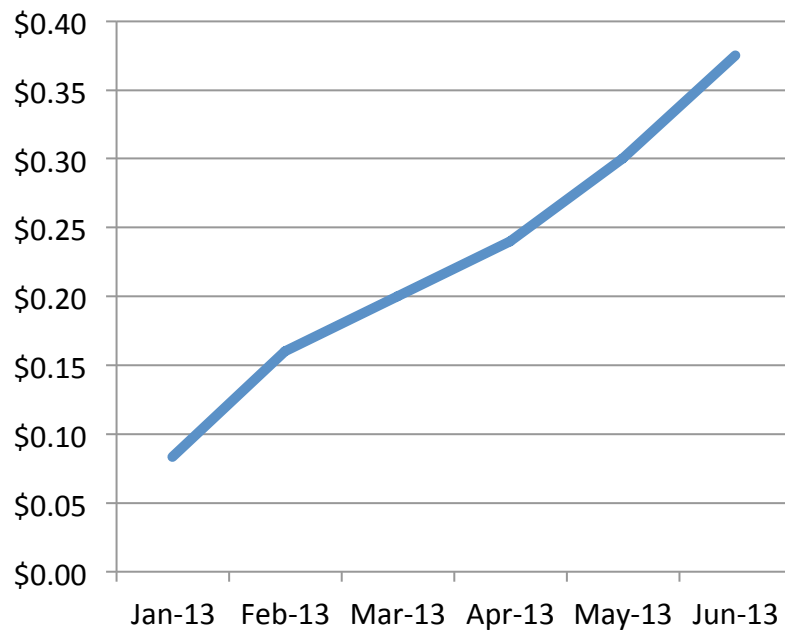
Rare &  
Scarce



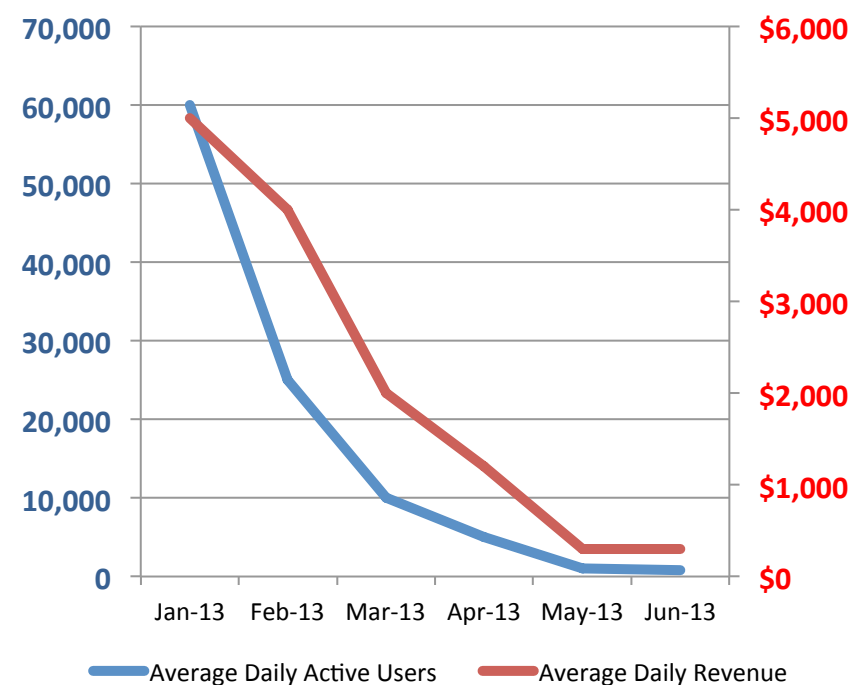
# Analytics

**Mistake #4:** Focus on just a few standard high level metrics to measure game performance.

Average Revenue Per Daily Active User



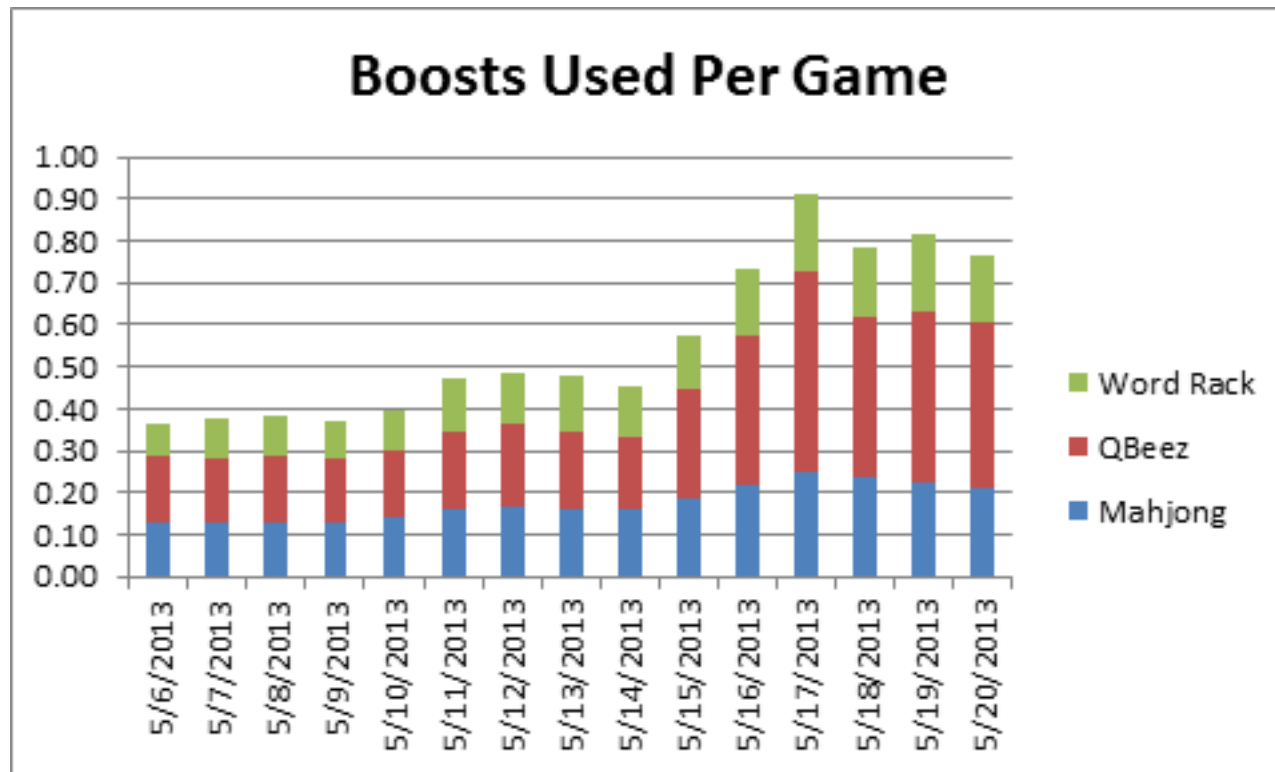
Daily Active Users & Revenue





# Analytics

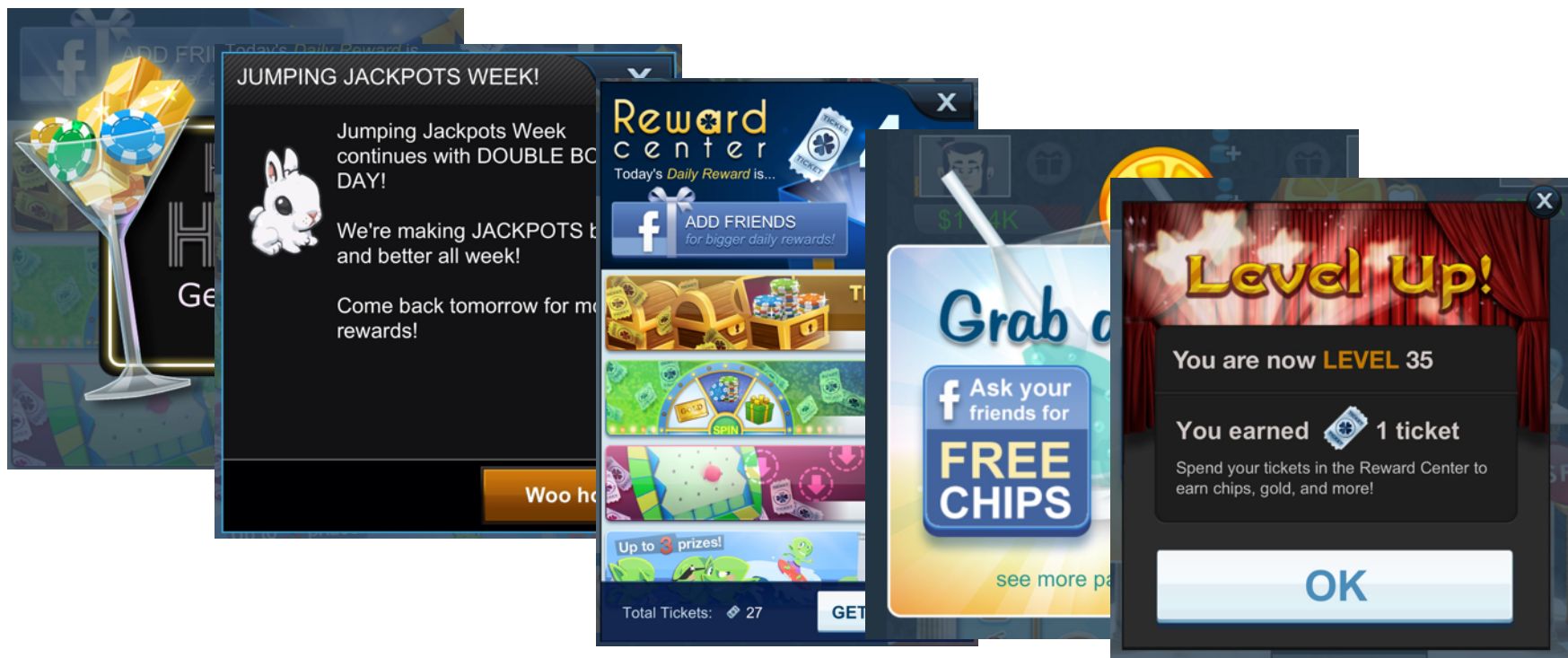
**Best Practice:** Establish custom metrics that accurately reflect the health of your game.



# Notifications

**Mistake #5:** Be cautious with how often you message your users to avoid irritating them.

**Best Practice:** Message your users daily with exciting, relevant and targeted information.



# What you have learned today...

- In creating a F2P game think of yourself as the **host** of a daily entertainment destination.
- Simply having virtual currency and a virtual goods store will not create monetization. You must create **emotional value**.
- Plan to monitor game **specific metrics** and rapidly iterate during a **lengthy Beta** using server connected game data.







[freetoplaysubmissions@bigfishgames.com](mailto:freetoplaysubmissions@bigfishgames.com)