

Marketing and Monetization for Mobile Indies: Data from the Trenches

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A BUNCH OF INDIES UNDER ONE ROOF



“SEED PUBLICATOR”?



STUFF WE'LL TALK ABOUT

- How do I analyze the competition?
- What marketing and analytics services do I need?
- Where do I test/soft launch my game?
- How much cash do I need and where do I spend it?
- Can different networks impact my campaigns?
- What impact does featuring have?
- What ad revenues can I expect?
- How do I measure and iterate on early retention?
- How do I test my icon?

FIRST THINGS FIRST: DECIDING WHAT GAME TO BUILD

- Look for a “Goldilocks” pie slice
- Find successful games like yours in some way
- More important (and harder): find *failures* like yours



SUCCESSSES to learn from

	Similarities	Differences	Praised for	Top Grossing Rank
Blood Brothers (RPG) Free	Killer battles, mysterious characters, secrets to be discovered	Board game aesthetic, action combat, fantasy	Character collection, leveling, similar to but different from CCGs	59 Overall 9 Role-playing
Dungeon Hunter 4 Free	Hordes of enemies to fight, endless loot to plunder	Action game, fantasy	Best dungeon crawler, immersive experience	40 Overall 9 Role-playing
Rogue Planet \$4.99	"Unique turn-based strategy game set in a futurist world"	Multiplayer is important	Breathtaking story mode, endless fun	64 Overall 3 Strategy

FAILURES to learn from

	Similarities	Differences	Assumed Reason for Failure	Top Grossing Rank
Deep Dungeons of Doom Free	Meet monsters, fight treasures, challenging, "rogue-like"	Action combat, 2d side-scroll, fantasy	Unclear screenshots, difficult action combat, GPS permissions	998 Overall 149 Role-playing
Legends of Yore \$1.99 (w/demo)	"A casual rogue-like designed for mobile"	Pixel 2d, meta-game hidden, fantasy	Premium with demo, no IAP, unclear/pixel screenshots	n/a Overall* 150 Role-playing *(separate demo)
Rogue Touch \$2.99	Extremely Rogue-like	Pixel 2d, no meta-game, fantasy	Premium, unclear/pixel screenshots	581 Overall 60 Role-playing

SAMPLE ANALYSIS



SHATTERED PLANET

SERVICES WE USE OR HAVE USED (SOMEONE PLEASE MAKE IT STOP!)

Testing & Research

App Annie

Google
AdWords

TestFlight
iOS Beta Testing On The Fly

DISTIMO

User Acquisition

★ facebook

★ Chartboost

★ playhaven

Monetization & Analytics

★ FLURRY

★ Vungle

★ playhaven

★ Apsalar

★ mobile app tracking
hasoffers

★ =SDK Required

DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS



Mid-Core Dungeon Crawler



Casual to Mid-Core Brawler

SHATTERED
PLANET

Hard-Core Exploration RPG



Hard-Core RPG

All data comes from ad networks, Flurry, Apsalar: FREE

<Special Thanks to Lysiane Charest>

KEY ASSUMPTION AT THE START

We Don't Know Nothin'

(but we're getting a bit better)

AT WHAT PRICE AN INSTALL?

“SuperData estimates that the cost per install was \$2.73 for mobile games”

-GamesBeat, November 2013

“In Q4 2013, iOS CPI rates...ranged between \$.90 in China and \$2.59 in Australia. The average CPI among all countries was \$1.31”

-Distimo, February 2014

“Android [CPI's] dropped 29 percent to \$1.27 in January from its December spike of \$1.80...iOS increased 13 percent in to \$1.01 in January from December's \$0.88”

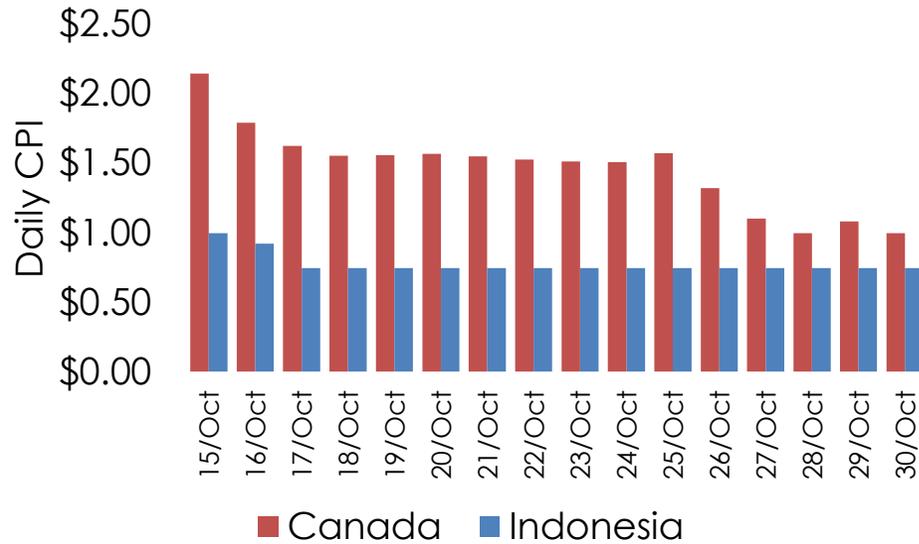
-Fiksu, March 2014

“For [Google Play] the average cost per install in the U.S. was \$1.13, \$0.95, in the United Kingdom, and \$1.18 in Canada.”

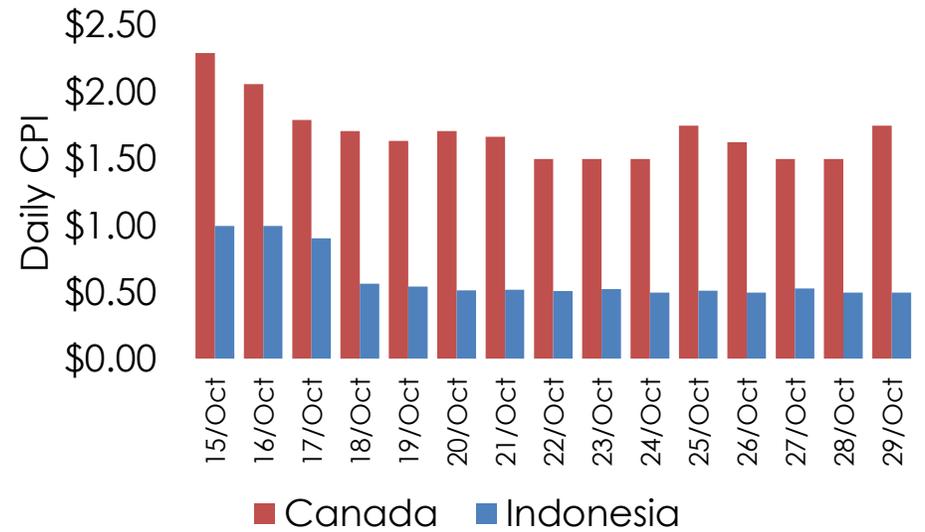
-Chartboost, March 2014

SOUTHEAST ASIA IS THE NEW CANADA

Chartboost Daily CPI for BAMF!
on iPhone/iPod Touch

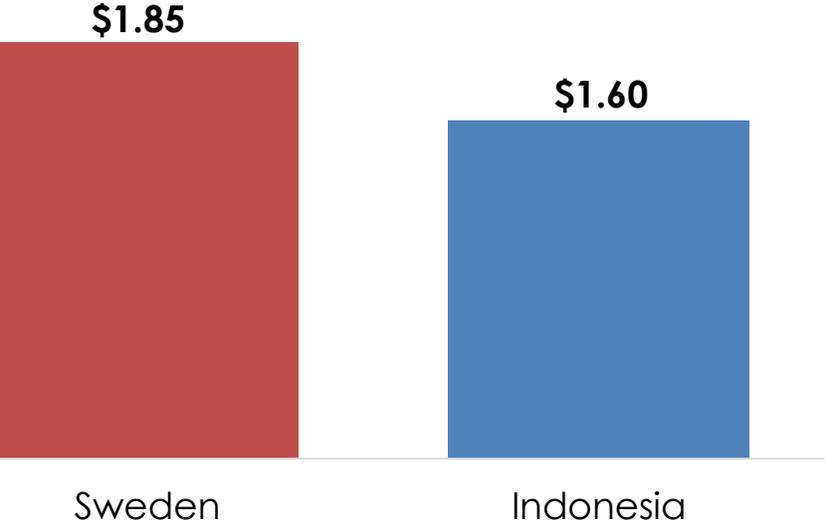


Chartboost Daily CPI for BAMF!
on iPad

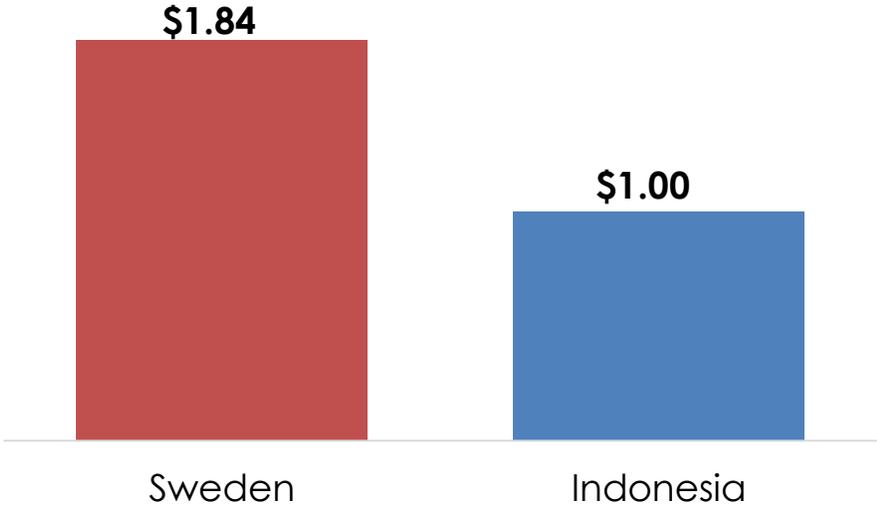


SWEDEN VS INDONESIA: CHARTBOOST

The Order of Souls: iPad CPI

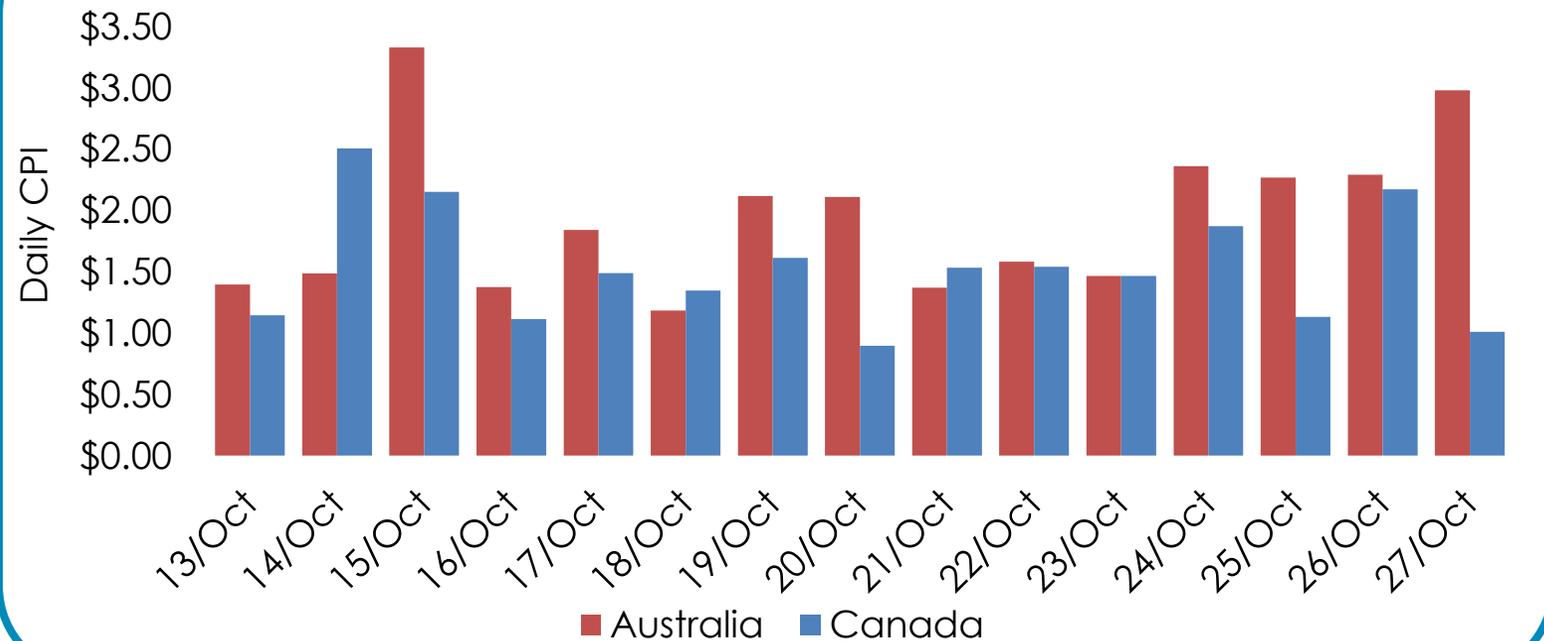


Shattered Planet: iPad CPI

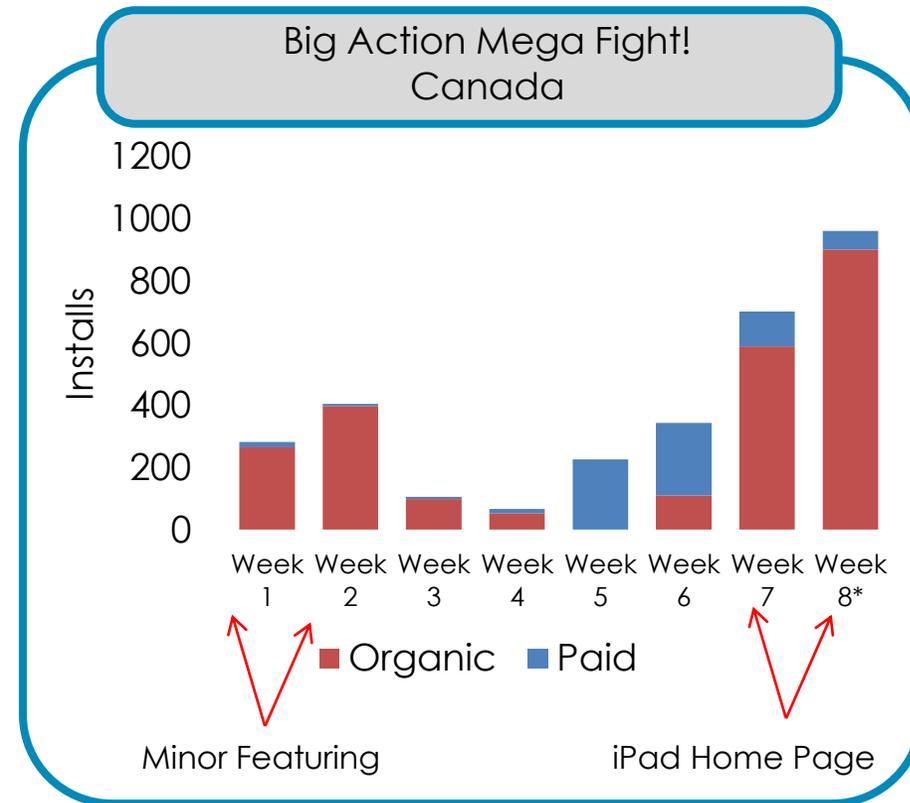
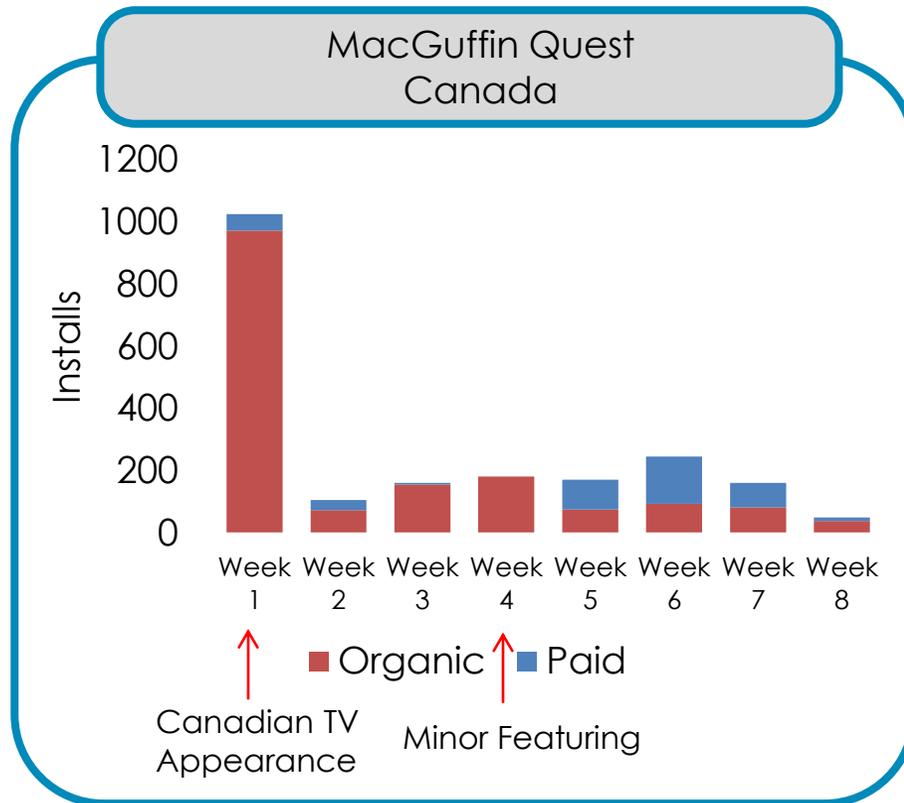


AUSTRALIA & CANADA? BOOO

Facebook Daily CPI for MacGuffin Quest

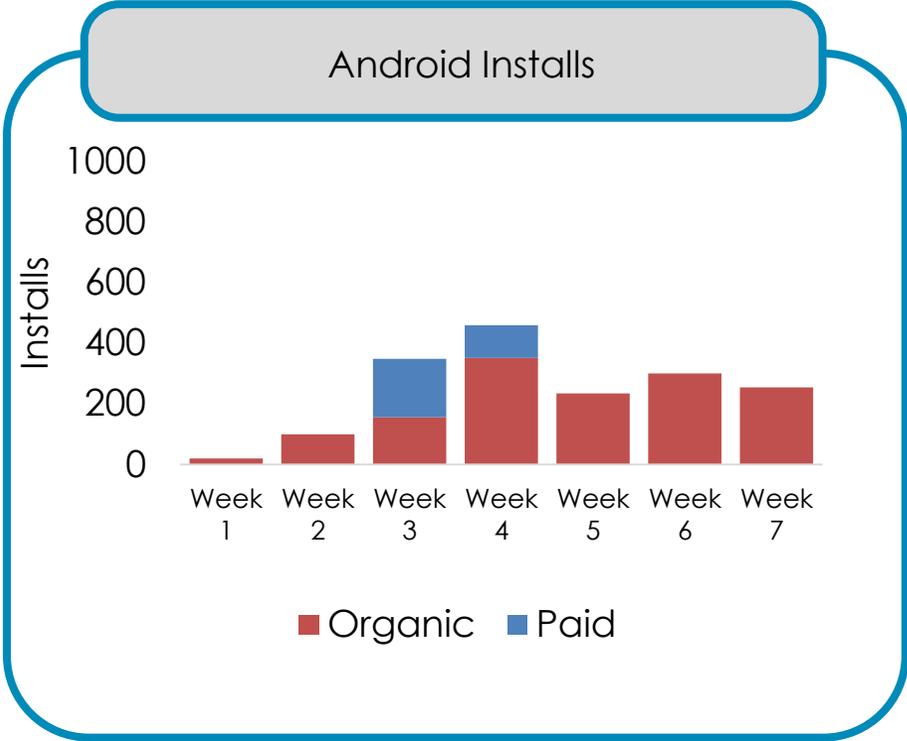
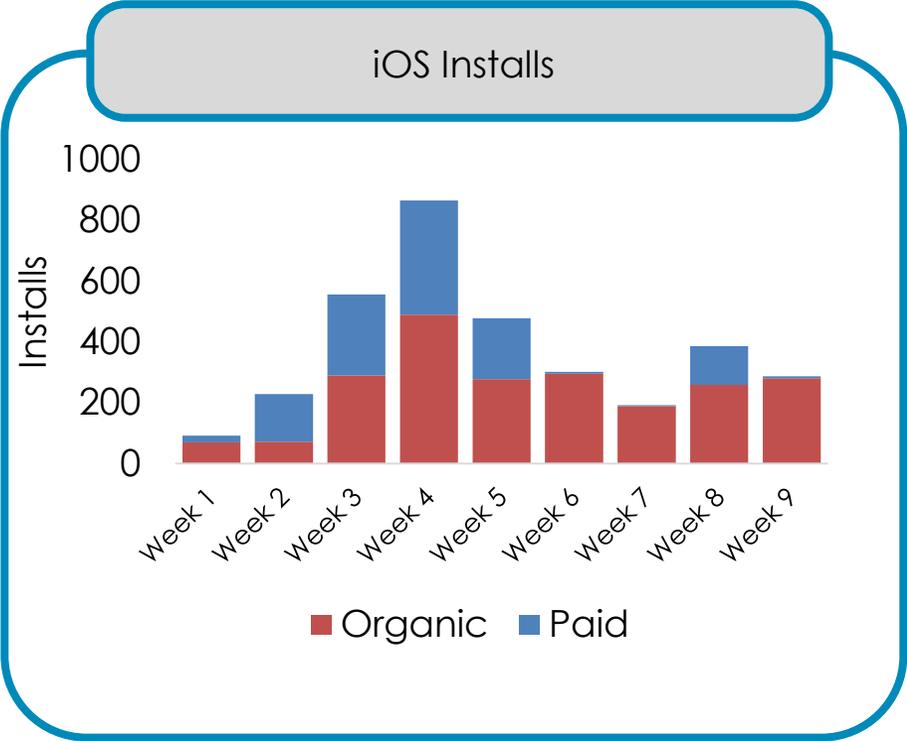


PAID VS ORGANIC INSTALLS



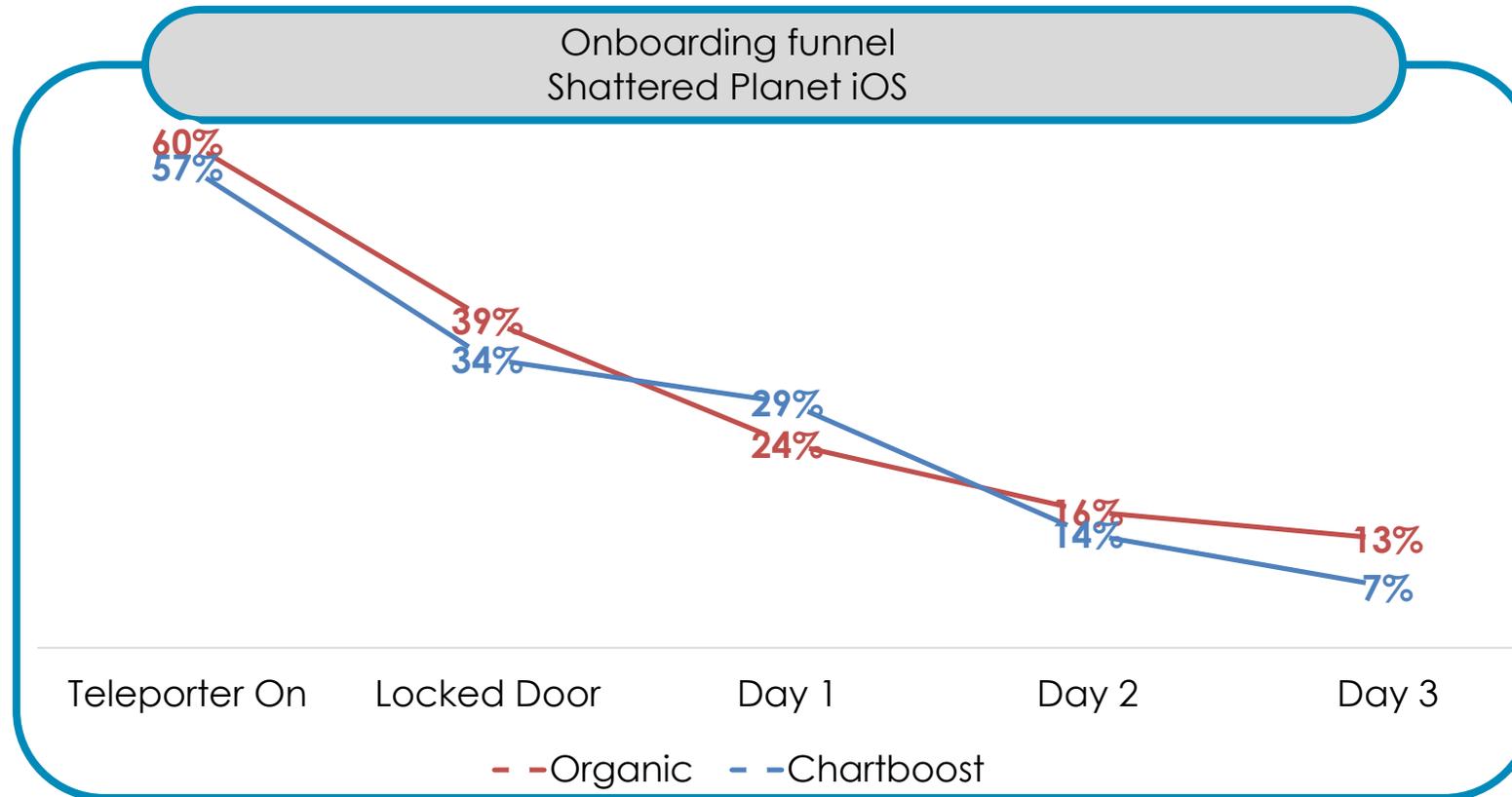
\$2k spent for each game during soft launch

SHATTERED PLANET SOFT LAUNCH

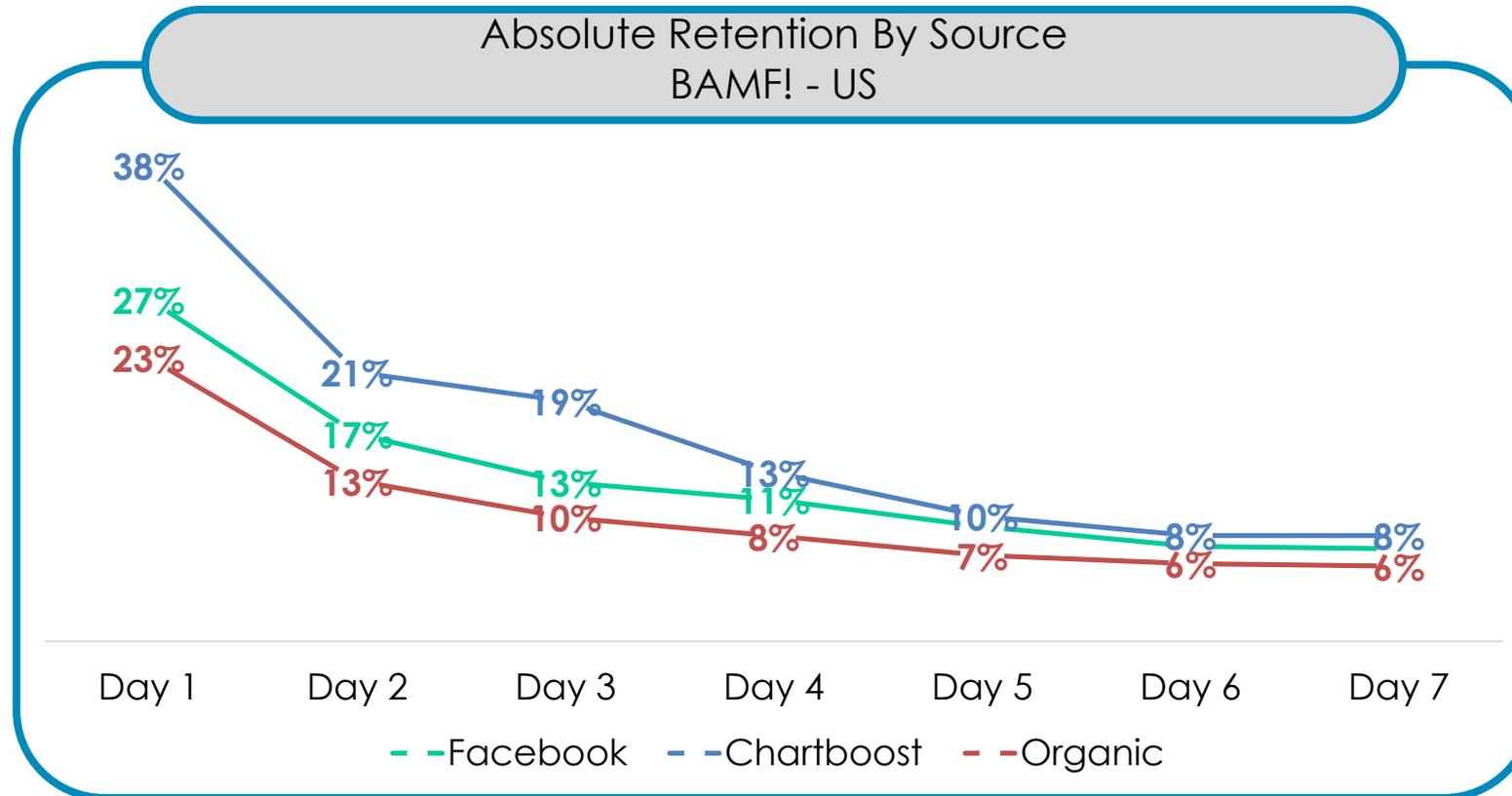


\$3.5k spent during soft launch (3 months)

PAID VS ORGANIC DIFFERENCES



MORE ON PAID VS ORGANIC



HOW WE SELECT AD NETWORKS

- Must be Self-Serve; need to be able to make tiny buys without going through a sales rep
- Can buy on a per-install basis; optimizing CPC or CPM campaigns is time (and money) intensive
- Creative units must be interstitials or videos; banners don't work and have tons of misclicks

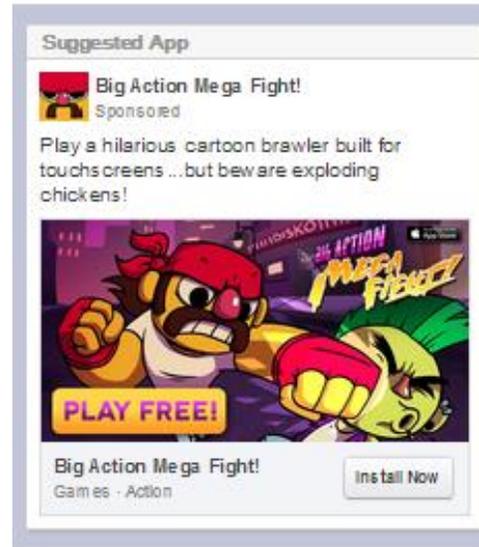
AD UNITS MATTER: CANADA IPHONE

Chartboost



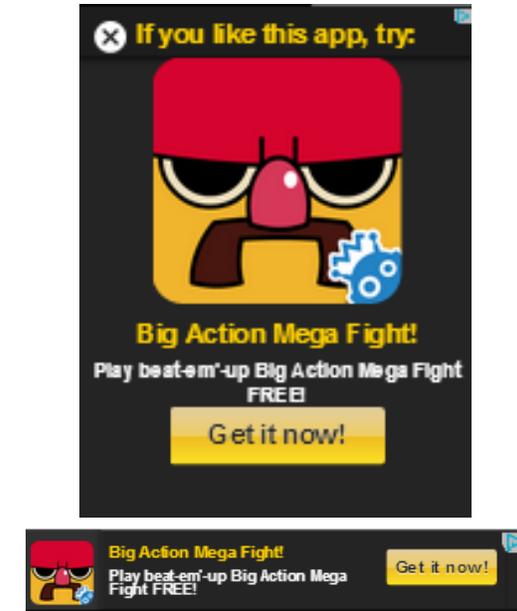
9.2% CTR
\$1.18 eCPI
Interstitial

Facebook



2.7% CTR
\$2.05 eCPI
Newsfeed

Flurry



4.2% CTR
\$2.96 eCPI
Banners +

A TALE OF THREE GENRES



Chartboost: Indonesia iPad

Impressions

Clicks

Installs

BAMFI!

100%

12.4%

2.40%

CPI: \$0.62

Planet

100%

11.1%

0.66%

CPI: \$1.18

Order

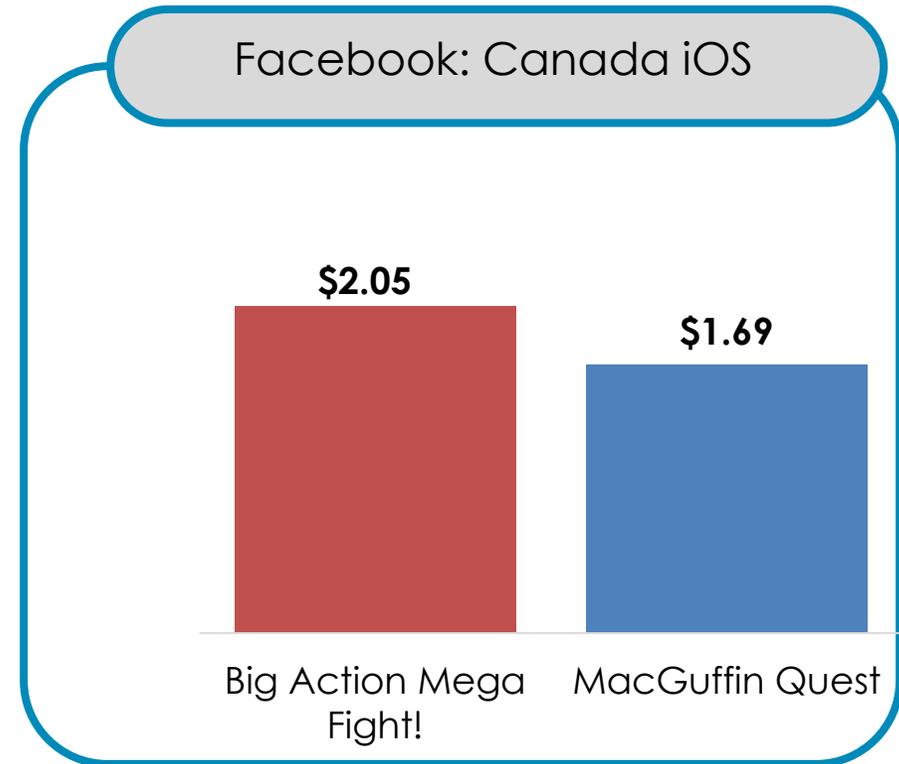
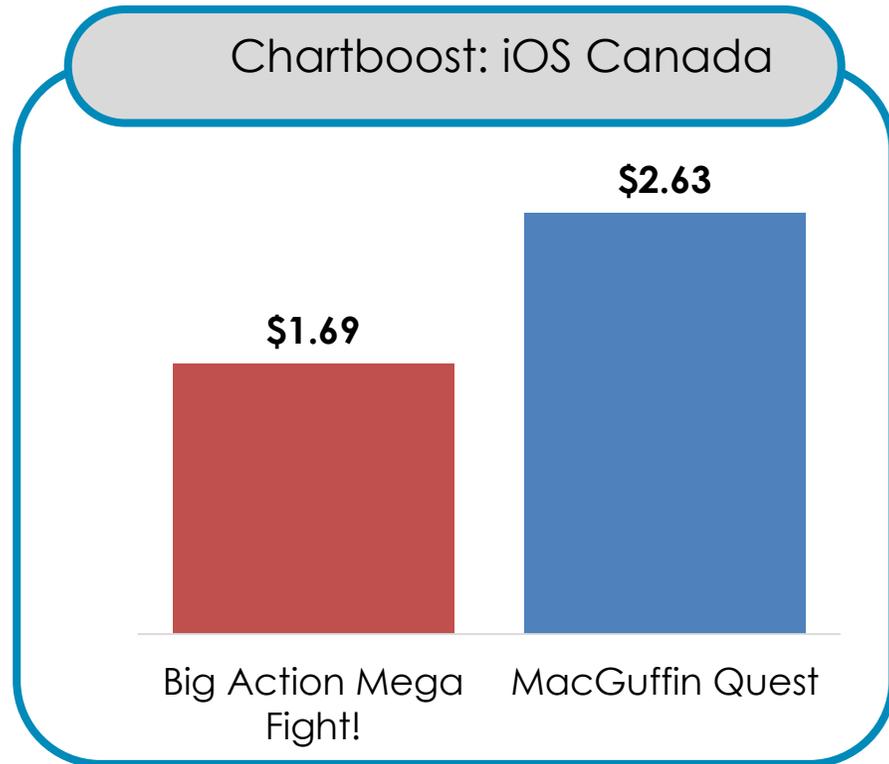
100%

10.6%

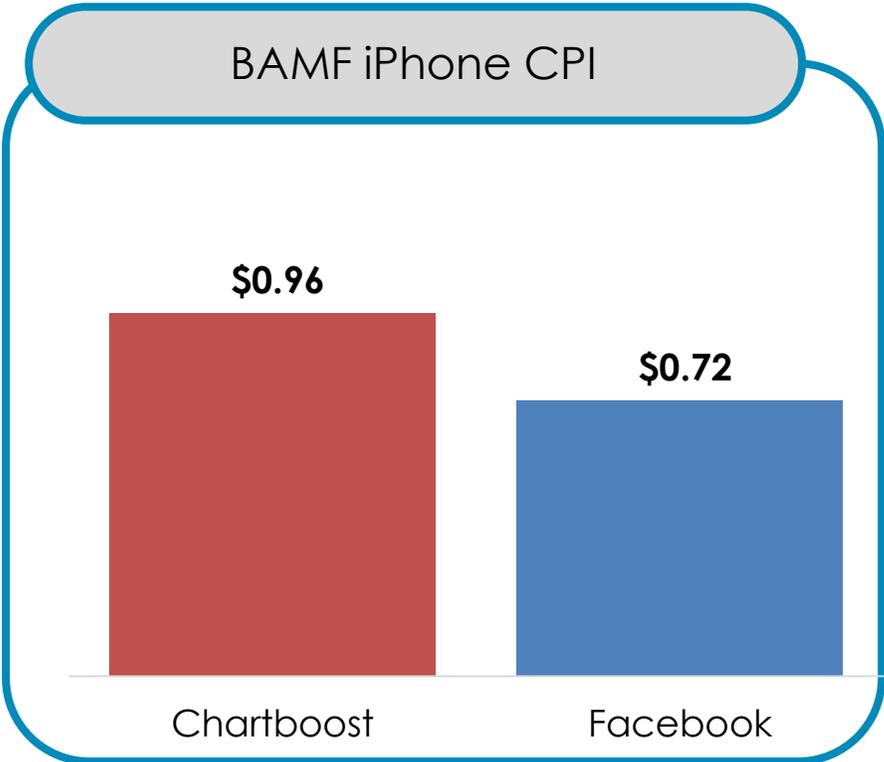
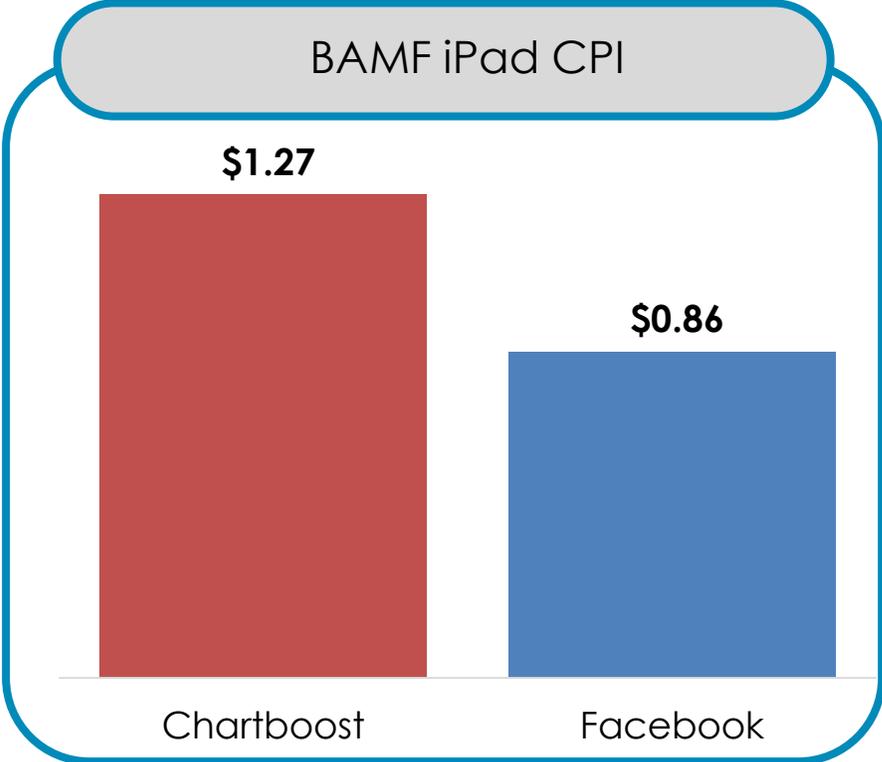
0.94%

CPI: \$1.64

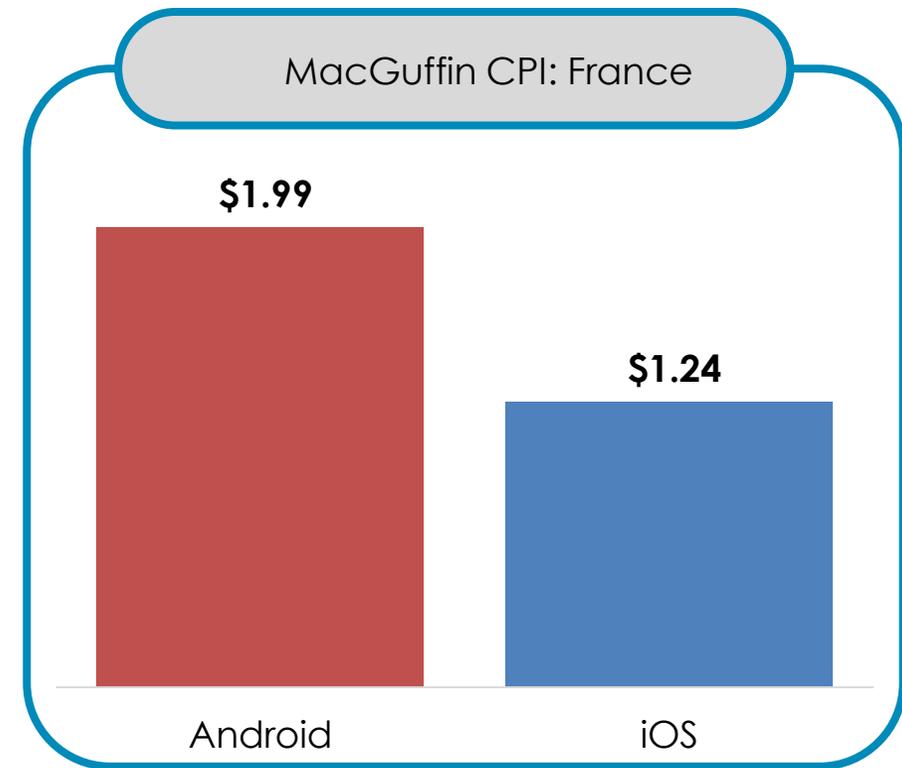
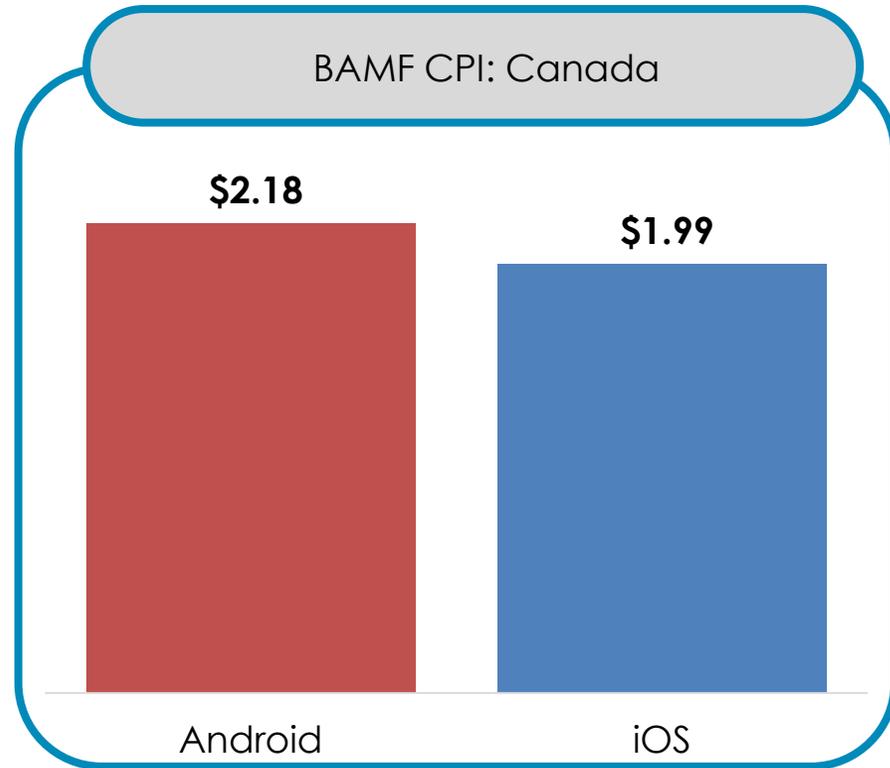
TARGETING ABILITIES MATTER



CHARTBOOST VS FACEBOOK: US



IOS VS ANDROID CPI'S: FACEBOOK



SAME GAME, DIFFERENT TARGETING

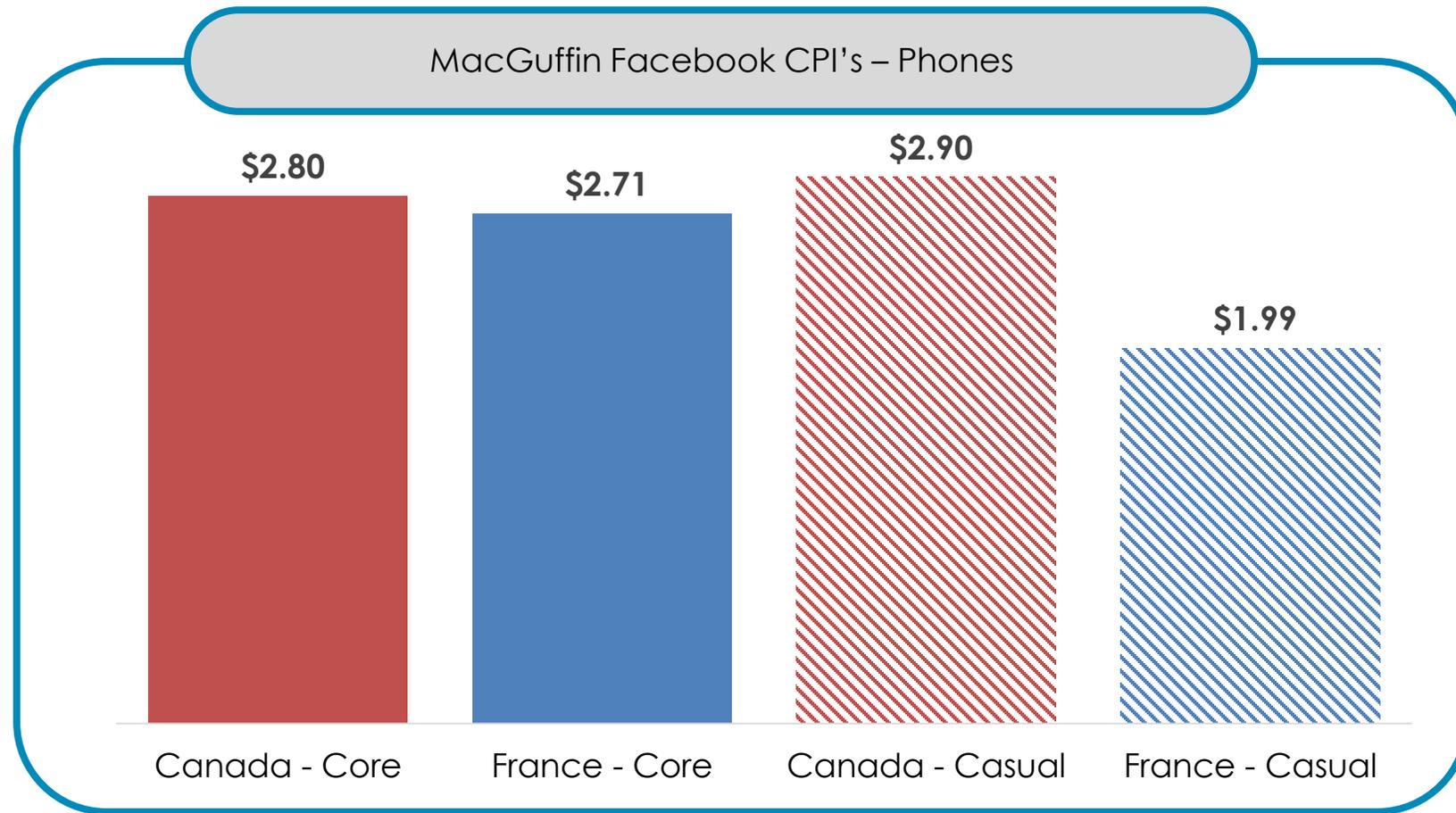


Archer. Wizard. Warrior. Loot up, power up, don't die. Easy, right? Don't bet on it...

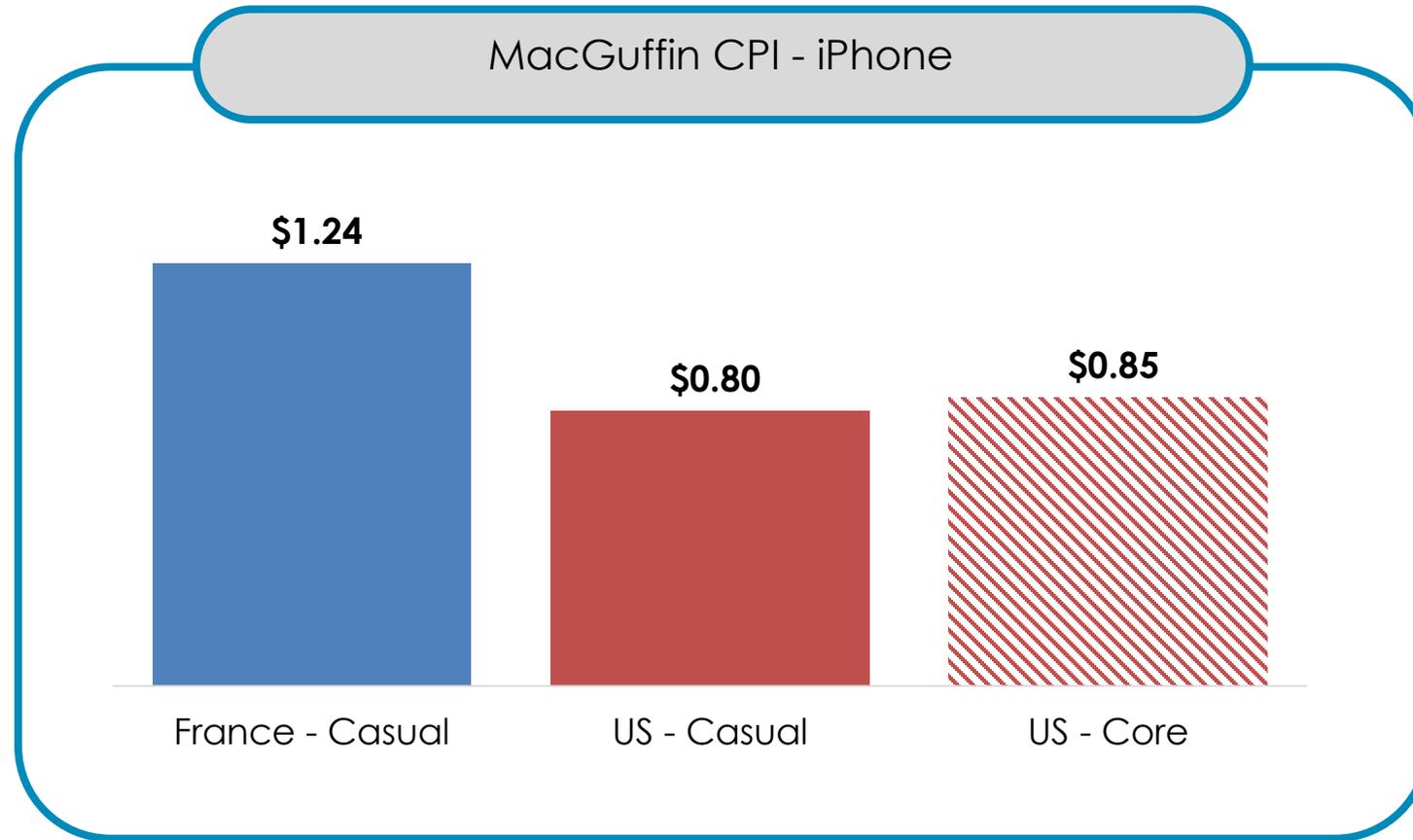
Finally, a dungeon-crawling adventure game that anyone can play...but no one can put down!



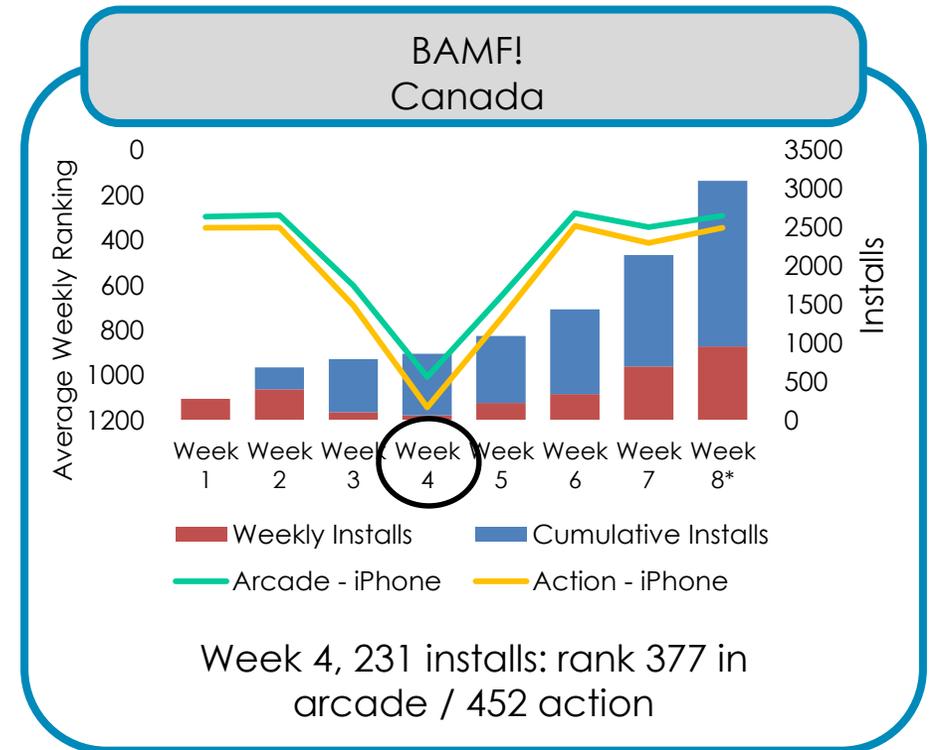
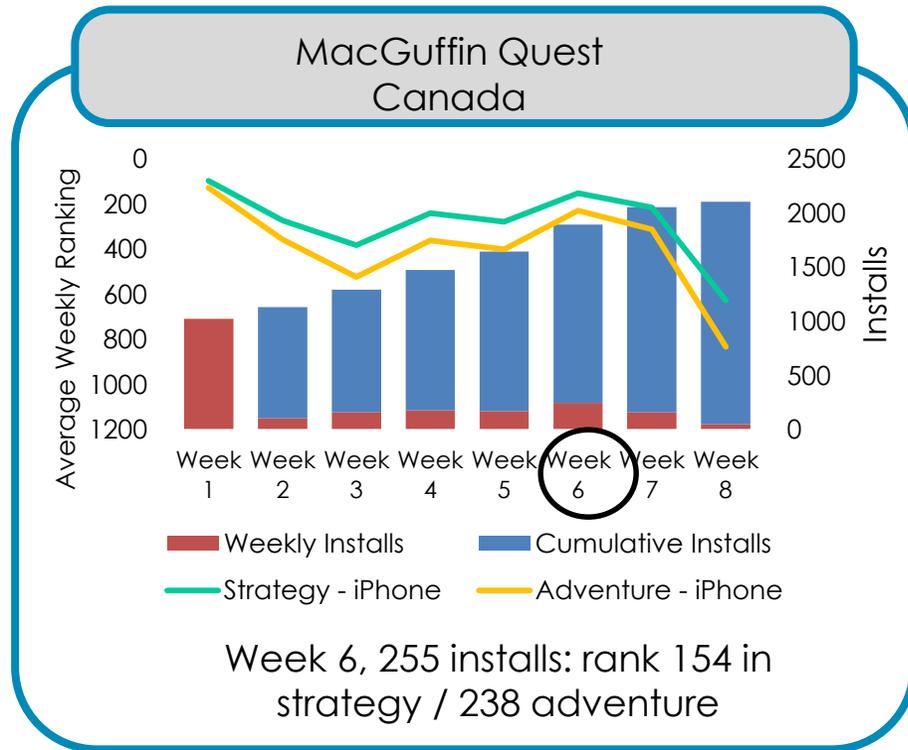
CORE VS CASUAL: ANDROID



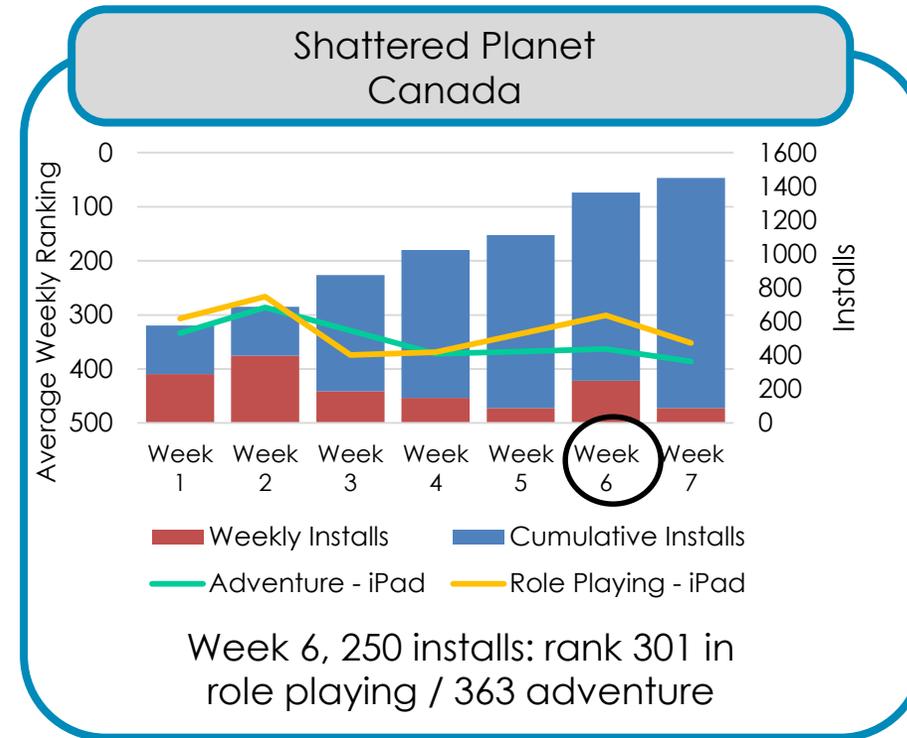
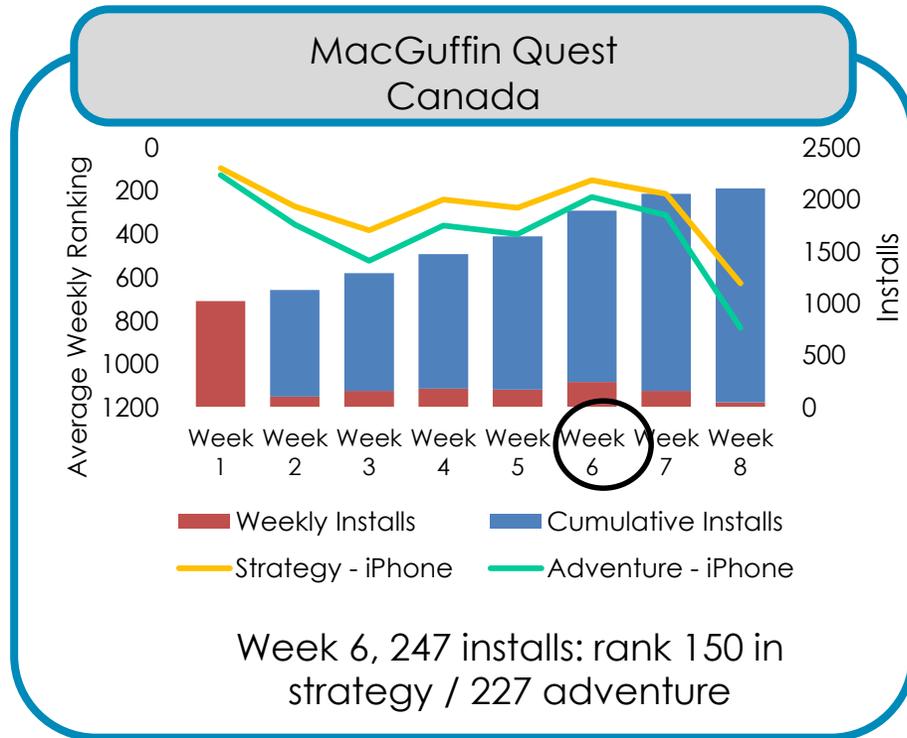
CASUAL VS CORE CPI'S: FACEBOOK



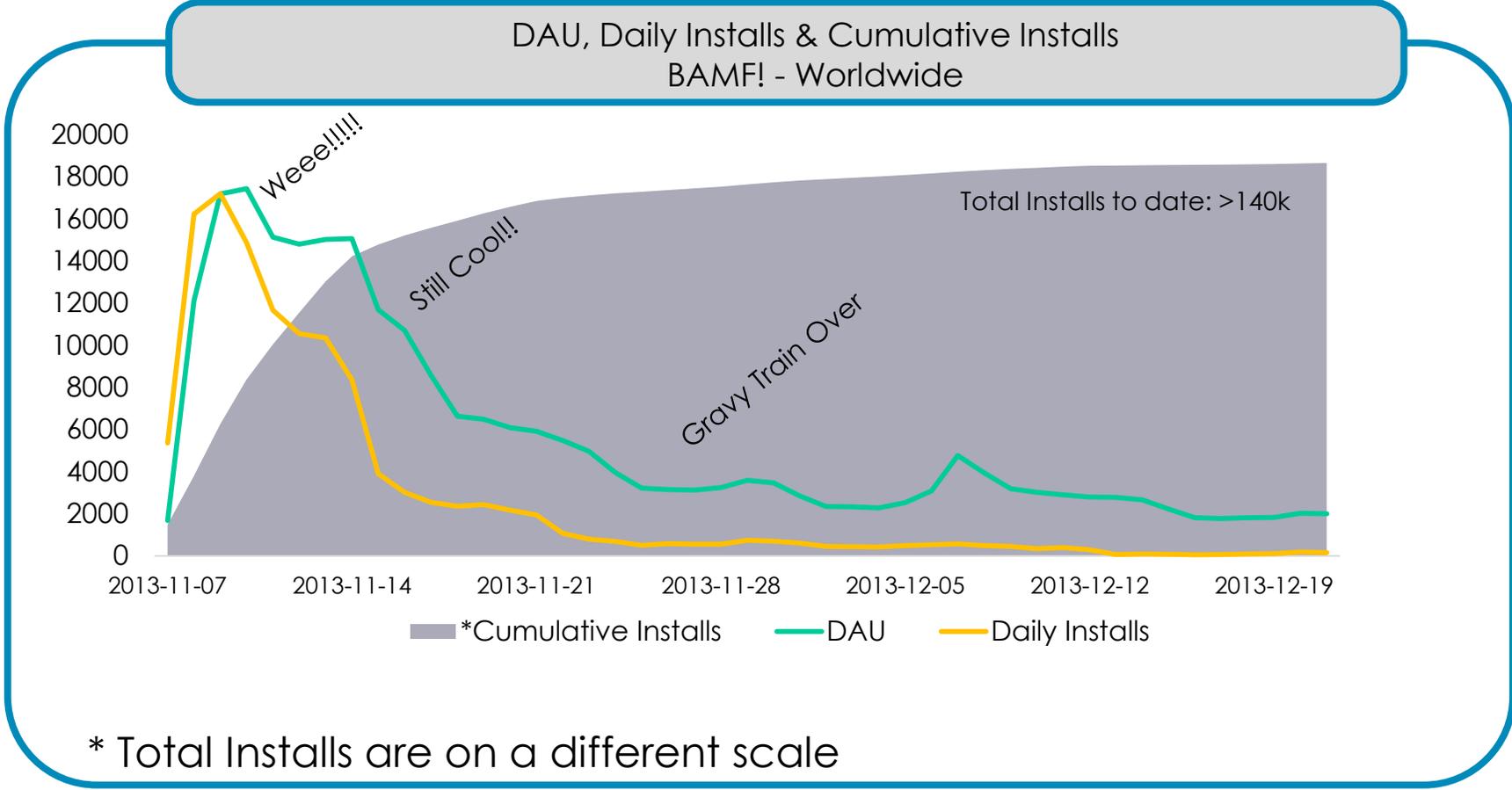
CATEGORY CONSIDERATION



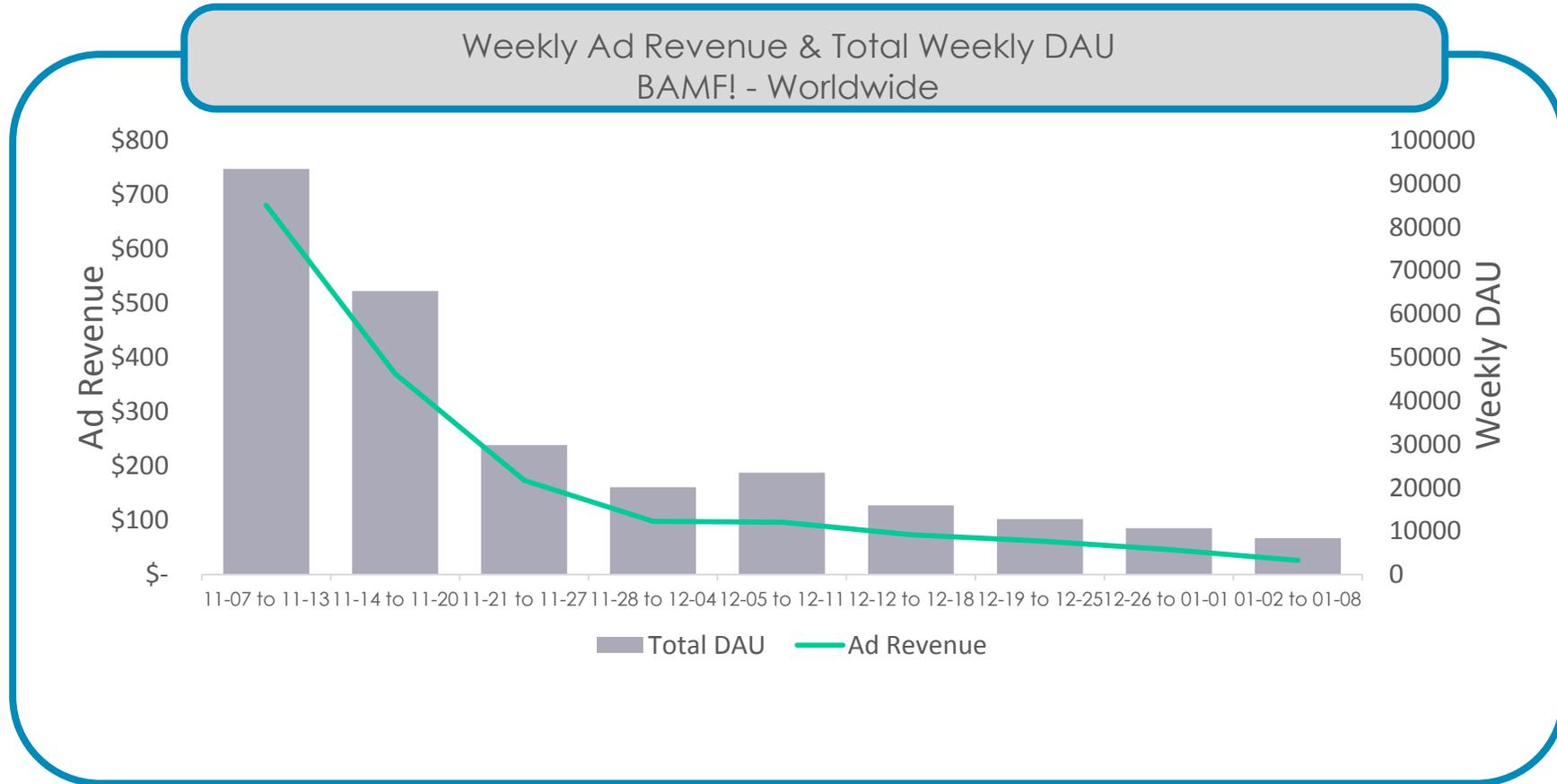
MORE ON CATEGORIES



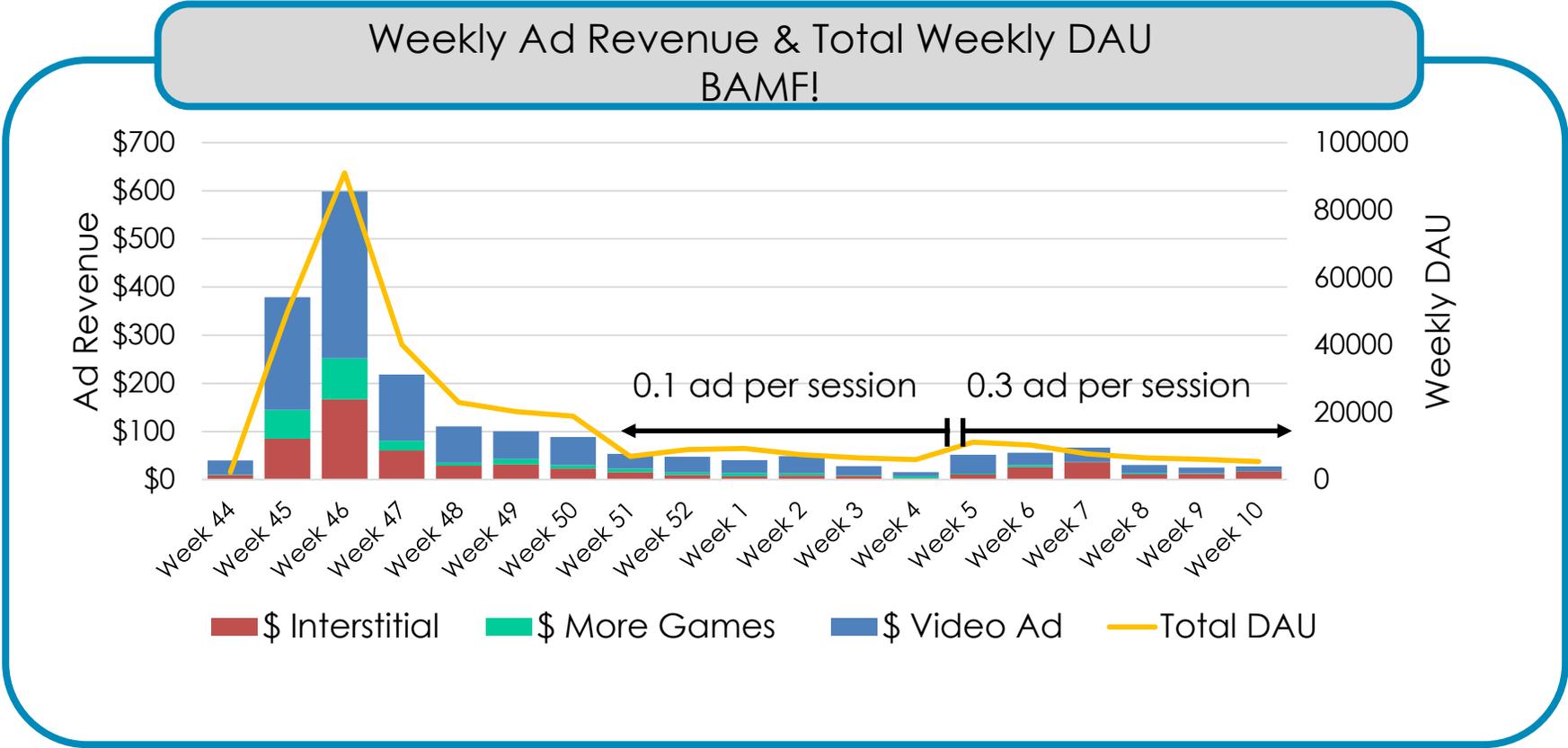
APPLE FEATURING IMPACT



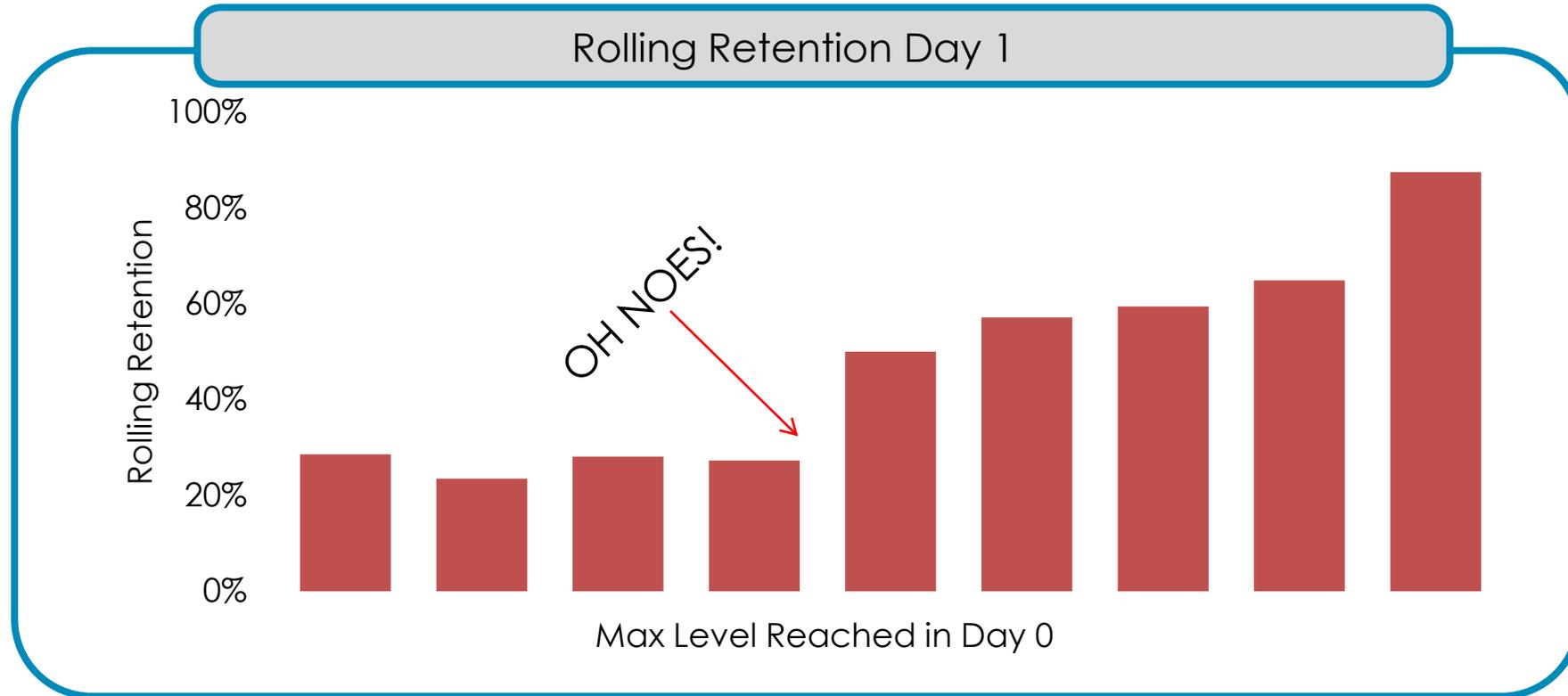
WEEKLY DAU & AD REVENUE



WEEKLY AD REVENUE BY SOURCE



ONBOARDING COMPLETION: BAMF!



MQ TUTORIAL ITERATIONS: V1



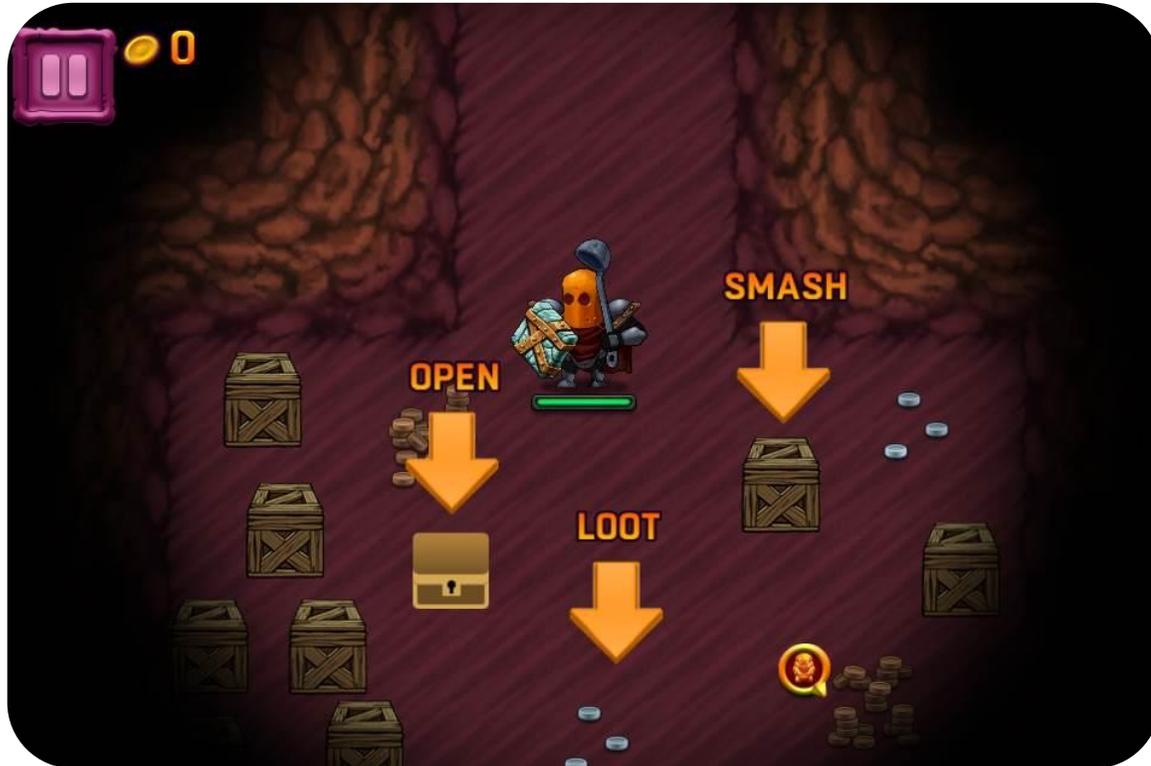
Text boxes for every event and arrows had no text



Expandable UI for items, but no explanatory text

Tutorial Completion Rate: 49%

MQ TUTORIAL ITERATIONS: V2



Most text boxes removed,
single word hints for items



“Place” text added for bomb,
hints for UI items as well

Tutorial Completion Rate: 66%

MQ TUTORIAL ITERATIONS: V3



Simplified UI with all buttons on screen, but limited at first



Full UI for items after placing bomb, heroes icons later

Tutorial Completion Rate: 70%

HOW NOT TO DO ICON TESTING

Attempt #1



CTR Range:
.52%-.57%

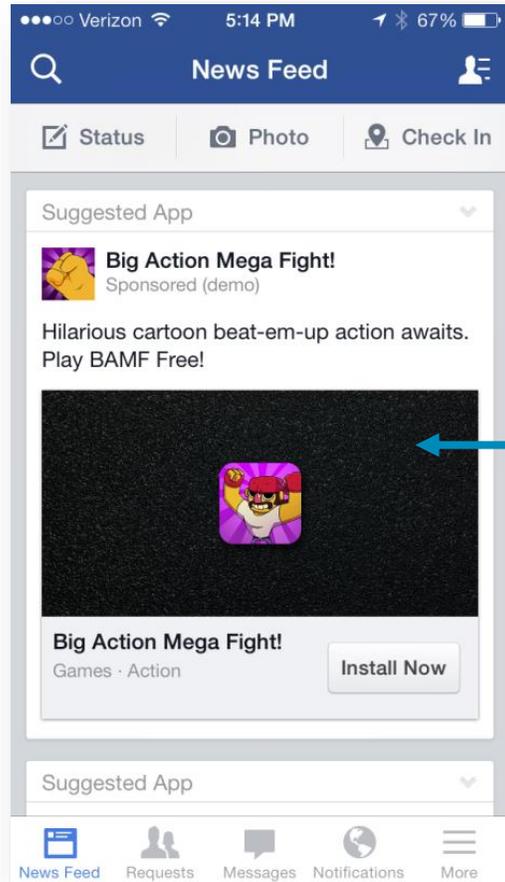
Attempt #3



CTR Range:
.44%-.52%

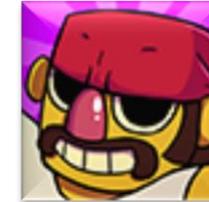
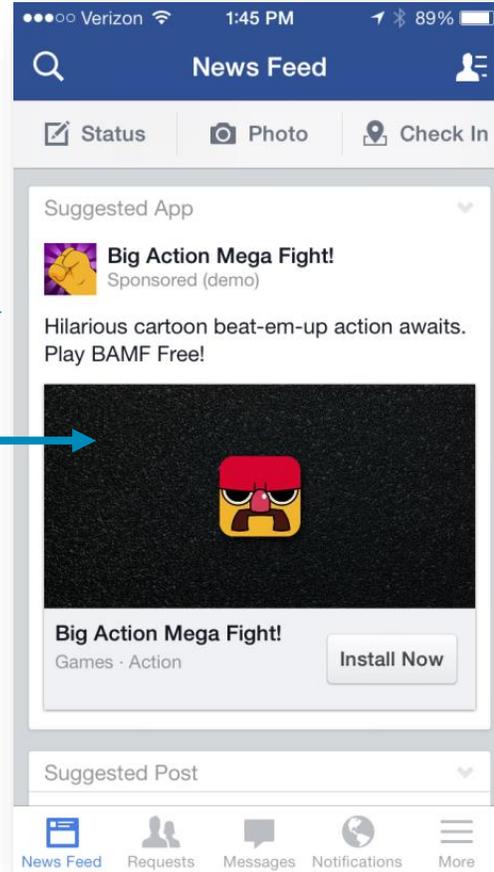
Back to the Drawing Board!

HOW (MAYBE, WE THINK) TO DO ICON TESTING



Control image and copy in all 4 ads

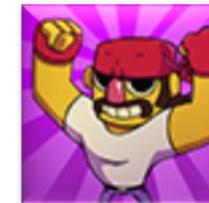
Actual icon we're testing



.717% CTR



1.085% CTR



.618% CTR



1.194% CTR

PICK THE WINNING ICON GAME!

Round 1



.8% CTR

Round 2



1.3% CTR

1.1% CTR

Round 3



1.7% CTR

1.8% CTR

1.6% CTR

Winner, Winner!



Suggested App



Shattered Planet (RPG)
Sponsored (demo)

Can you survive exploring a dangerous alien world? It's deadly, and different every time!



Shattered Planet (RPG)
Games - Adventure

[Install Now](#)

Example Ad

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 **@Ztakk**



 **@ExecutionLabs**