

PLAYING YOUR OWN GAME: HOW MOBILE INDIES CAN MAXIMIZE THEIR CHANCES BEFORE GLOBAL LAUNCH

Keith Katz
Co-Founder

EXECUTION
LABS



@Ztakk

GDC 2015

YOUR FEEDBACK IS SUPER HELPFUL!

“A whole lot of numbers and graphs, and Keith was at times less engaging than one might wish.”

“Way to [sic] chart heavy.”

“Took to long to get to the point.”

WHY INDIE STUDIOS HAVE NO BUSINESS WHATSOEVER TRYING TO SELF PUBLISH FREE TO PLAY MOBILE GAMES

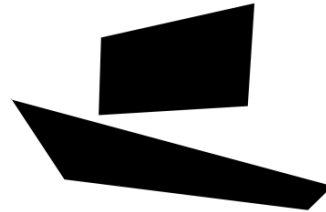
(P.S. YOU'RE WELCOME)

WHY THE HELL ARE YOU DOING F2P?

- Market is now impenetrable for small developers
- Almost certain financial failure
- Must have a plan beyond this game



A BUNCH OF INDIES COLLABORATING



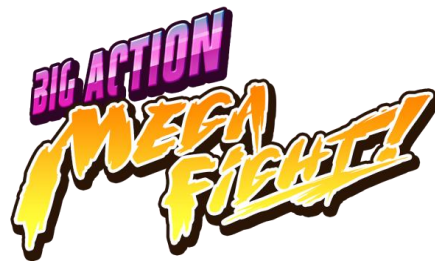
s a n d s a i l o r s t u d i o



DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS



Core RPG



Casual to Mid-Core Brawler



Core Exploration RPG



Core PVP City Builder

<Special Thanks to Lysiane Charest>

A QUICK LOOK AT THE GAMES



Shattered Planet



Big Action Mega Fight

A QUICK LOOK AT THE GAMES



The Order of Souls



WinterForts: Exiled Kingdom

SOME THINGS WE'LL TALK ABOUT

- Understanding the market and your studio's goals
- Where to test/soft launch your game
- Icon testing
- The impact of platform featuring
- Revenue expectations
- Forward-looking approaches

IF YOU MUST, AT LEAST HAVE A PLAN...



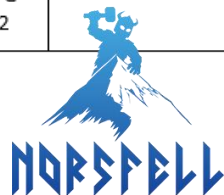
GAME OF WAR by MACHINE ZONE (iOS – FREE)

Grossing	Similarities	Differences	Praised For	Blamed For
iOS US				
Overall #18	Builder game, can only do one action at a time (one worker), troops can be used as defense, similar overall flow, game is in 2D, pretty hardcore, more mature visual style.	Predefined spots for placing buildings, super complex micro systems, global positioning of players on a map, Stronghold is not the only building that dictates progression and unlocks.	Ability to chat with players no matter the language (ultra powerful translation system that makes many jealous!), sophisticated means of social communication, original Hospital mechanic, cool speed up mechanic through the help of allies.	Cluttered guided, v quest syst inclined to P2W, sim Kabam's / of Camel many thir on on the buildings duplicate:
Games #12				
Strategy #1				
RPG #2				



TOTAL CONQUEST by GAMELOFT (iOS / Android – FREE)

Grossing	Similarities	Differences	Praised For	Blamed For
iOS US				
Overall #165	Combat strategy, bunker mechanic where troops are stored (militia), gate system on the walls, use of catapults, overall flow.	Can build anywhere, no placing tile system, no castle feeling, toony graphical style, not possible to carry troops placed in bunker to the fight, full 3D.	Pretty graphics, impressive sounds, original bunker mechanics, full 3D, nice potion system, being able to adjust the vertical angle, interesting god and potion system.	Clash of Clans with a Roman theme, takes a lot of time to load, 3D glitches with collisions, hard to read in battle, drop of frame rates, horrible selection system, placing building is a chore, too few innovations.
Games #150				
Action #34				
Strategy #30				



CAN I BUY A ~~VOWEL~~ INSTALL?

“In December, CPI for iOS increased to \$1.17...Android's CPI increased to \$1.41.”

–Fiksu, January 2015

“The average cost-per-install of an iOS app is 85% higher than that of Android Apps.”

–InMobi, September 2014

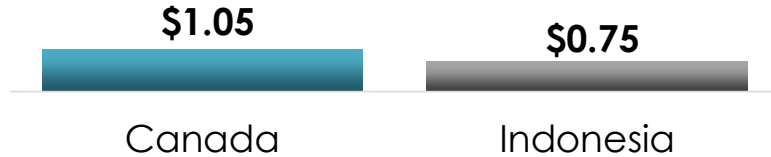
“SuperData estimates that the current CPI for mobile games in the Apple App Store stands at \$2.73 and is trending up.”

–TabTimes, March 2014

WTF?

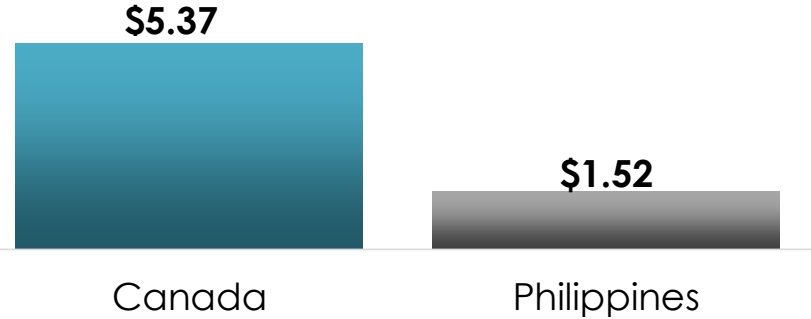
SOUTHEAST ASIA IS THE NEW CANADA

Chartboost CPI* for BAMF!
on iPhone



*October 2013

Facebook CPI* for WinterForts
on iOS



*August & September 2014

IT'S ALSO THE NEW AUSTRALIA

Facebook CPI* for TOoS
iPhone

\$3.92

\$1.13

Australia

Philippines

*June 2014

Facebook CPI* for TOoS
iPad

\$6.28

\$2.19

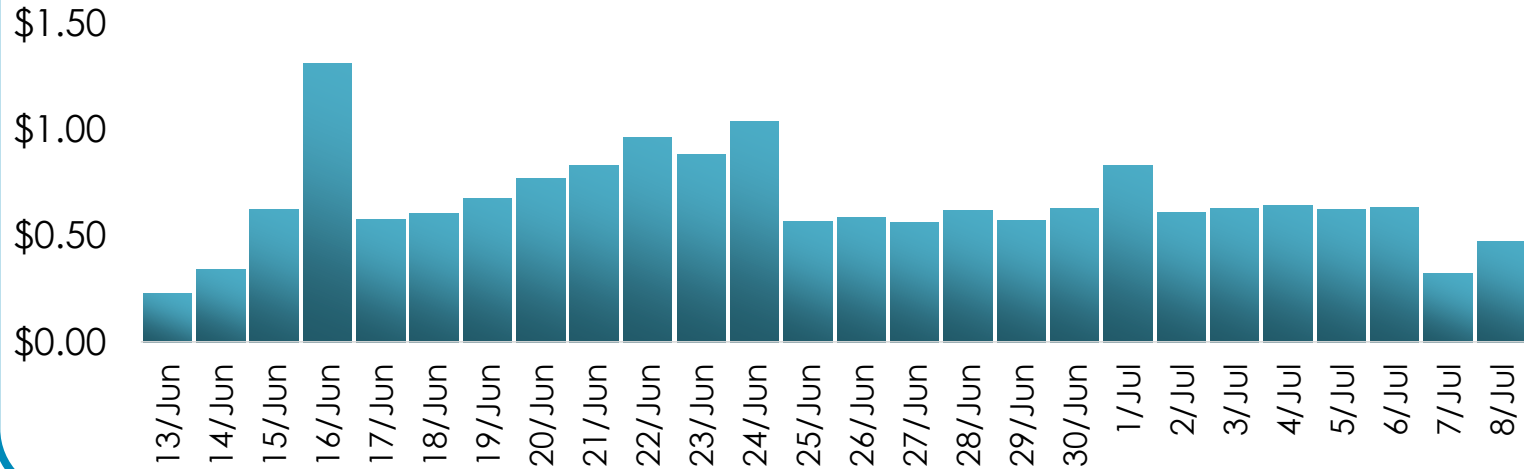
Australia

Philippines

*April & May 2014

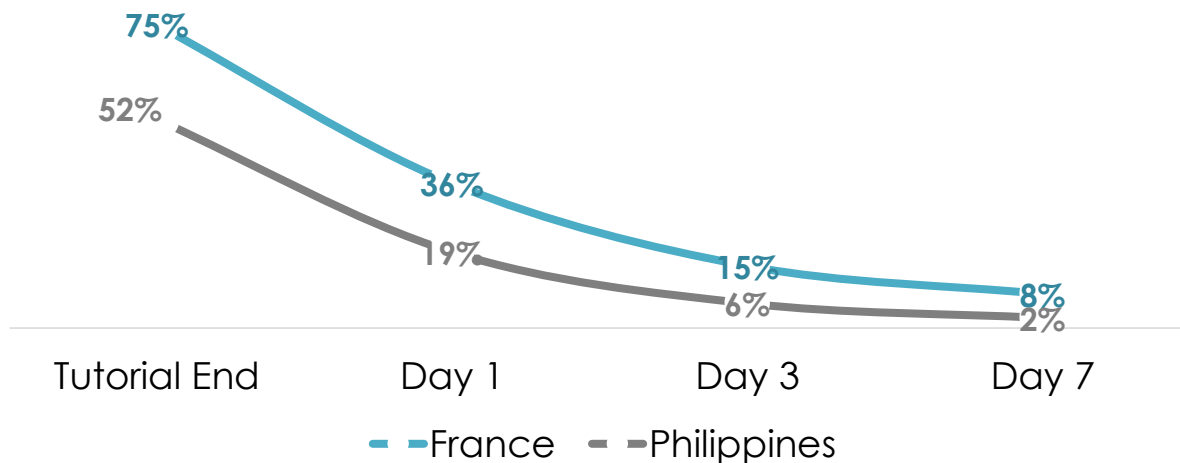
SOUTHEAST ASIA IS A BIG PLACE

Facebook Daily CPI for WinterForts, Android tablets & phones
Philippines

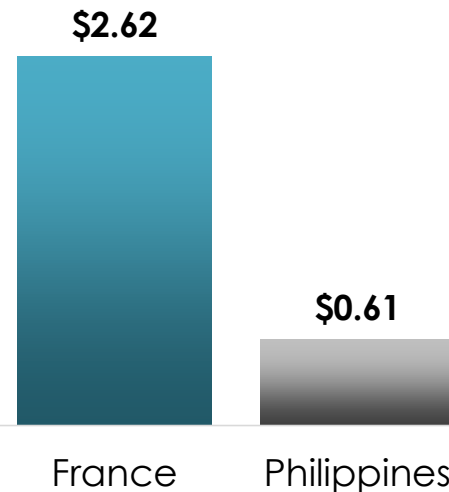


SANITY CHECKING THE NUMBERS

WinterForts Paid Android Users

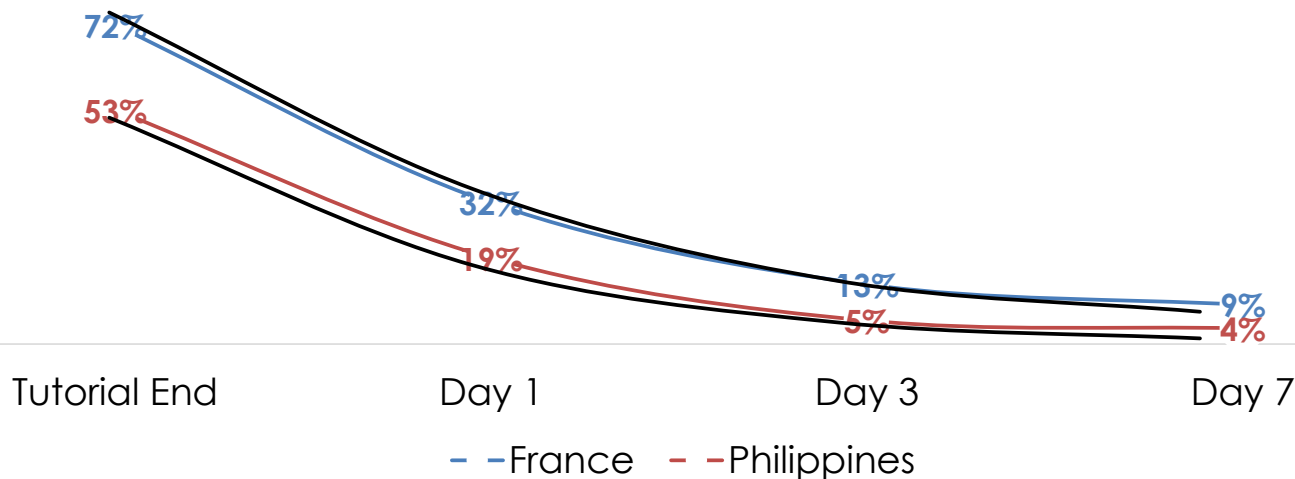


CPI

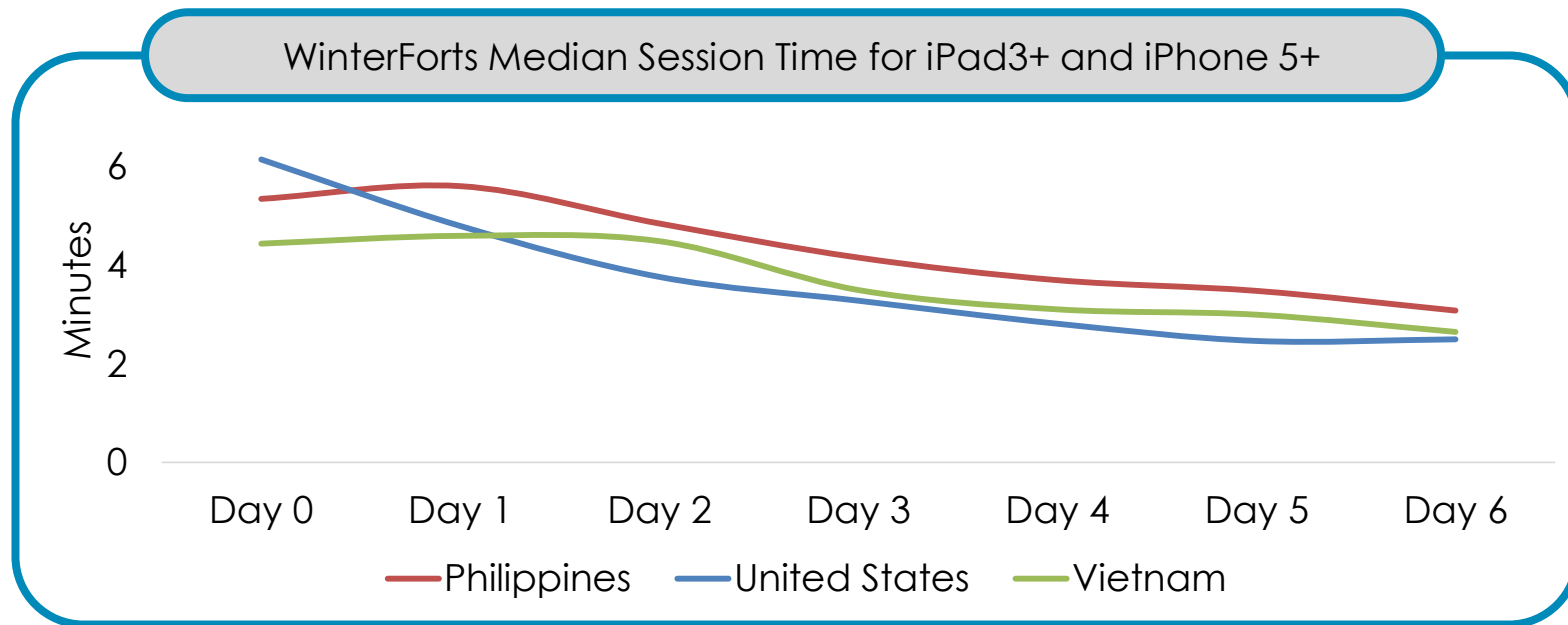


FTUE COMPLETION RATE VARIABILITY

WinterForts Organic Android Users (Oct. 2014)



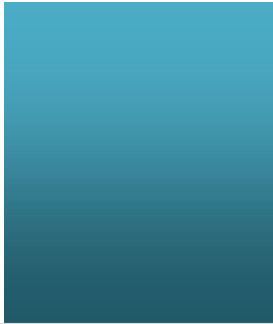
MORE SANITY CHECKING: SESSION LENGTH



SWEDEN VS INDONESIA: CHARTBOOST

The Order of Souls: iPad CPI

\$1.85



Sweden

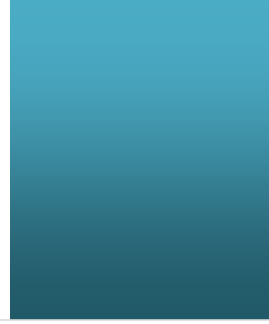
\$1.60



Indonesia

Shattered Planet: iPad CPI

\$1.84



Sweden

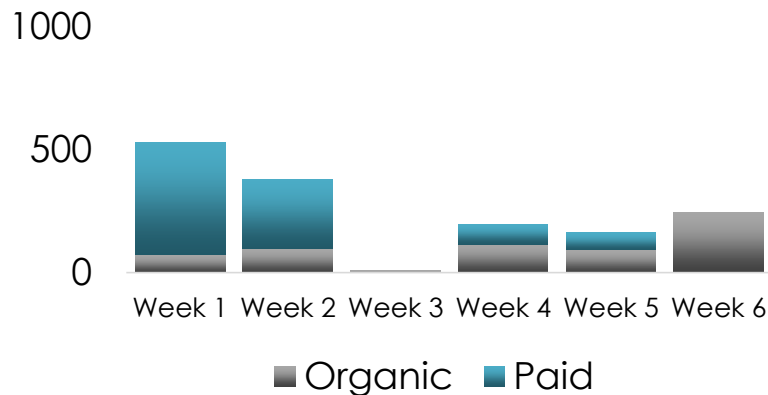
\$1.00



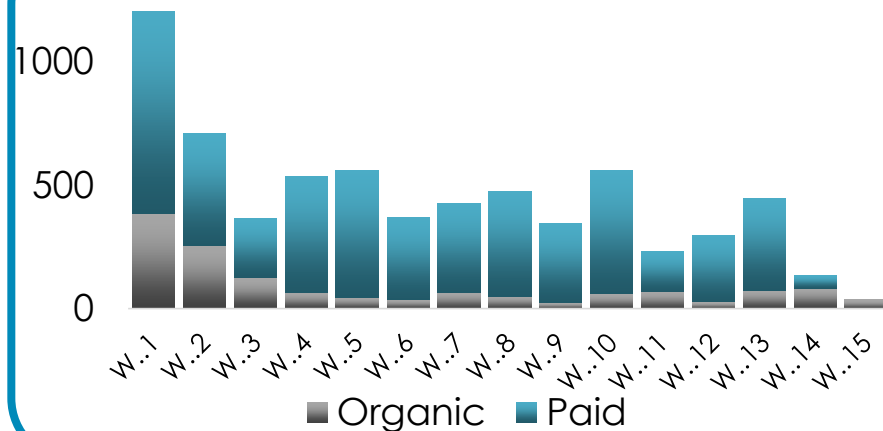
Indonesia

SOFT LAUNCH UA AND TESTING APPROACH

WinterForts iOS Installs

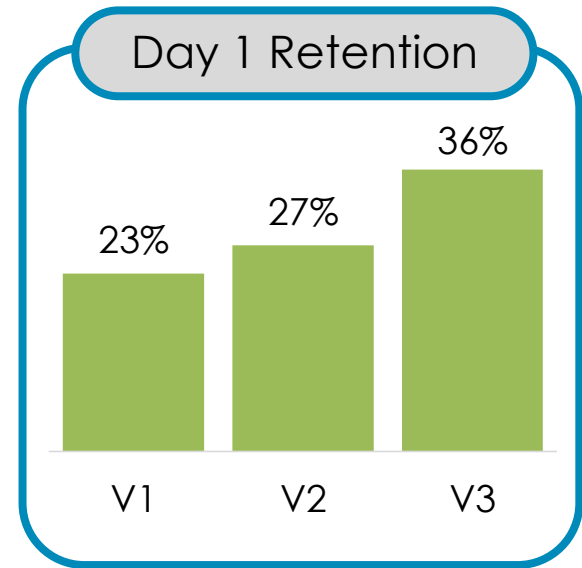
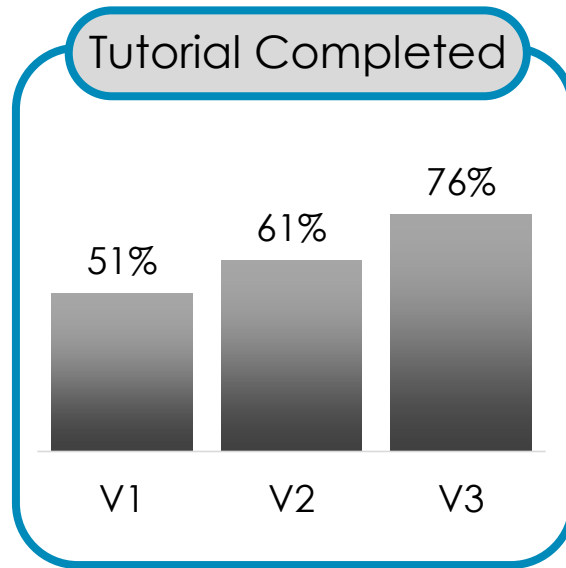
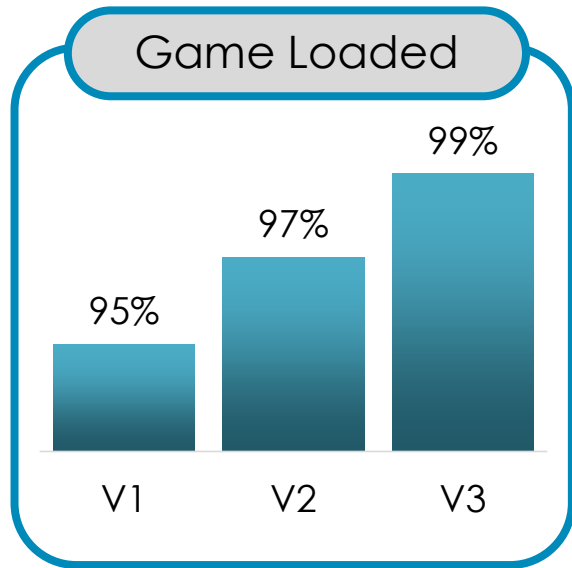


WinterForts Android Installs



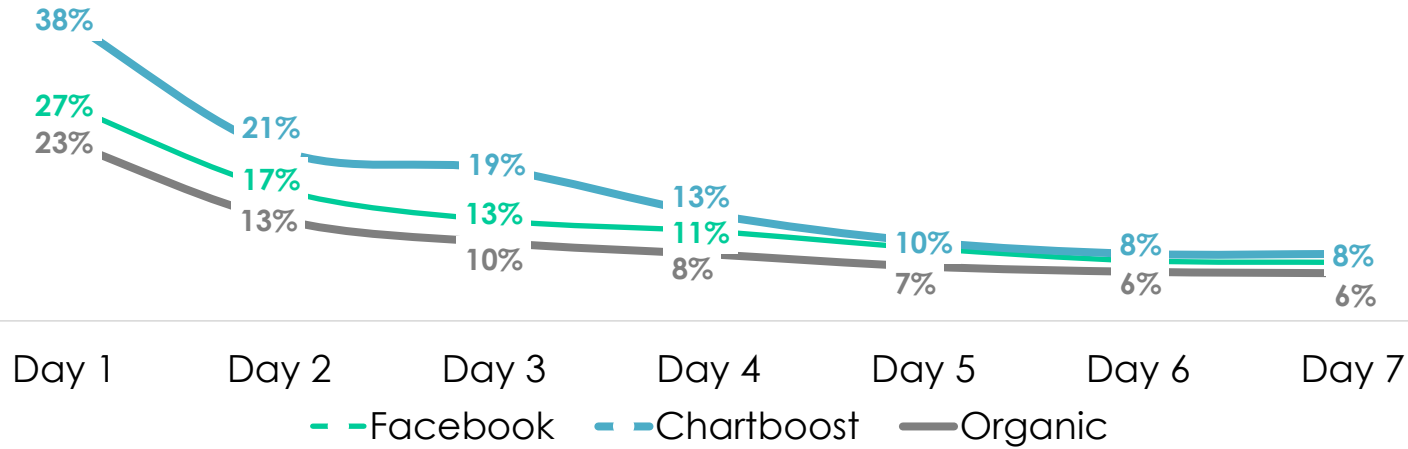
\$9k spent during soft launch (3 months, 2 platforms)

THE VALUE OF FREQUENT UPDATES: WINTERFORTS UTILIZATION OF ANDROID



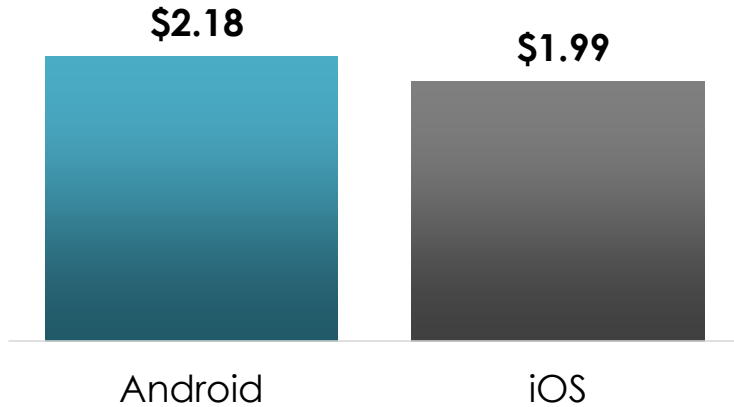
THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTION

Absolute Retention By Source
Big Action Mega Fight! - US

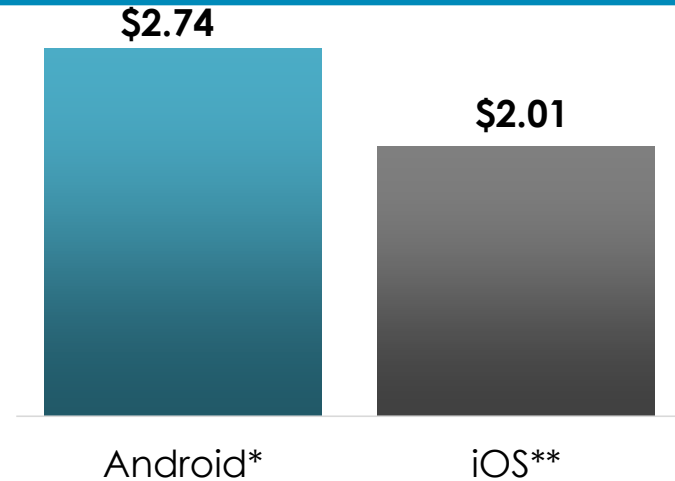


IOS VS ANDROID CPI'S: FACEBOOK

BAMF CPI*: Canada



SP CPI*: Canada



*February 2014

**January 2014

HOW NOT TO DO ICON TESTING

Attempt #1



Play epic dungeon crawler
MacGuffin Quest **FREE!**



Play epic dungeon crawler
MacGuffin Quest **FREE!**



Play epic dungeon crawler
MacGuffin Quest **FREE!**



Wizard, Knight, or Archer?
Play dungeon crawler *MacGuffin Quest* **FREE!**

CTR Range: .52%-.57%

Attempt #3



FREE
BEAT 'EM UP GAME



FREE
BEAT 'EM UP GAME



FREE
BEAT 'EM UP GAME

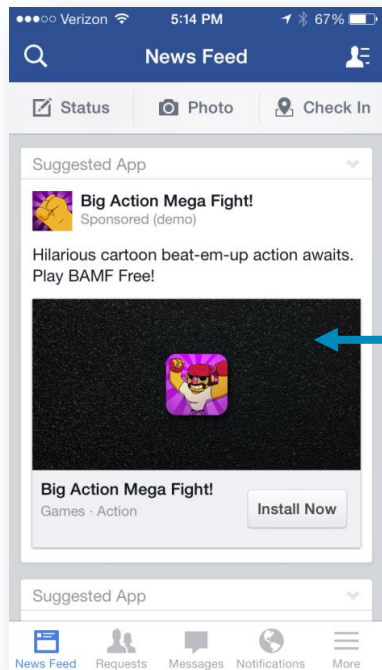


FREE
BEAT 'EM UP GAME

CTR Range: .44%-.52%

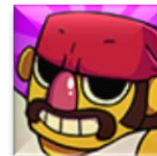
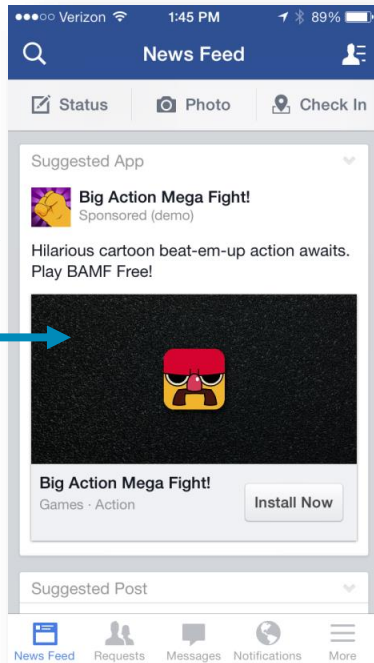
Back to the Drawing Board!

HOW (WE THINK) TO DO ICON TESTING

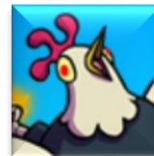


Control
image and
copy in all
4 ads

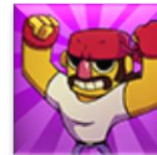
Actual
icon
we're
testing



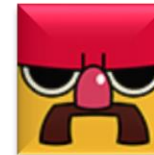
.717% CTR



1.085% CTR



.618% CTR



1.194% CTR

SHATTERED PLANET ICON

Round 1



.8% CTR

Round 2



1.3% CTR



1.1% CTR



Round 3



1.7% CTR

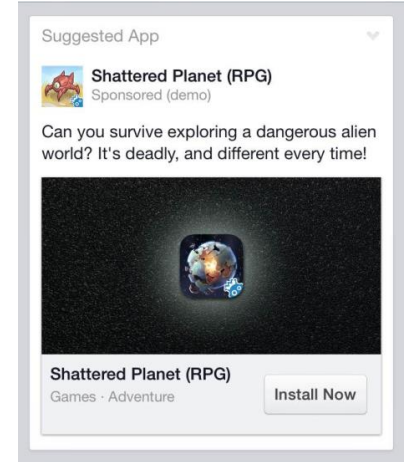


1.8% CTR



1.6% CTR

Developer's Choice





Example Ad


STILL DOIN' IT!

Sadly, Facebook now forces you to use whatever small icon is currently live.


Suggested App



WinterForts: Exiled Kingdom (Strategy) 

Sponsored · 


Build your fort and battle thousands online!





PvP Strategy Awaits!
Available on the App Store

Install Now

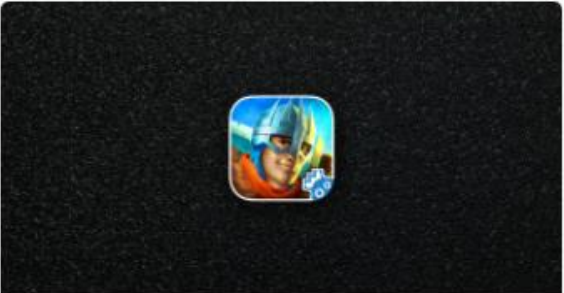
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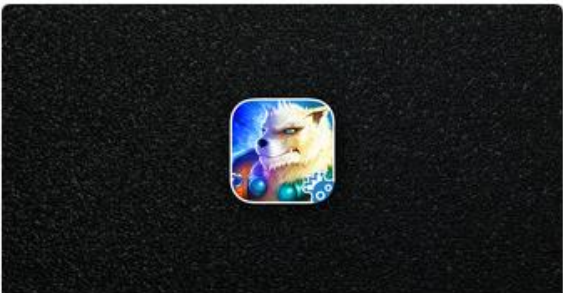
Suggested App



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Sponsored · 

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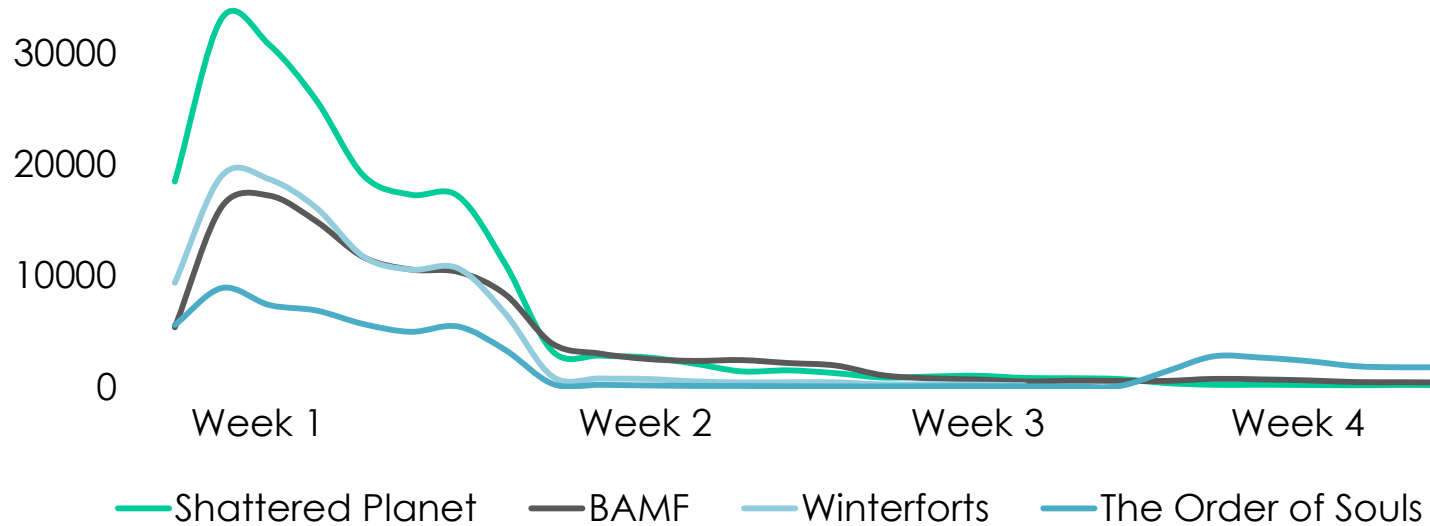


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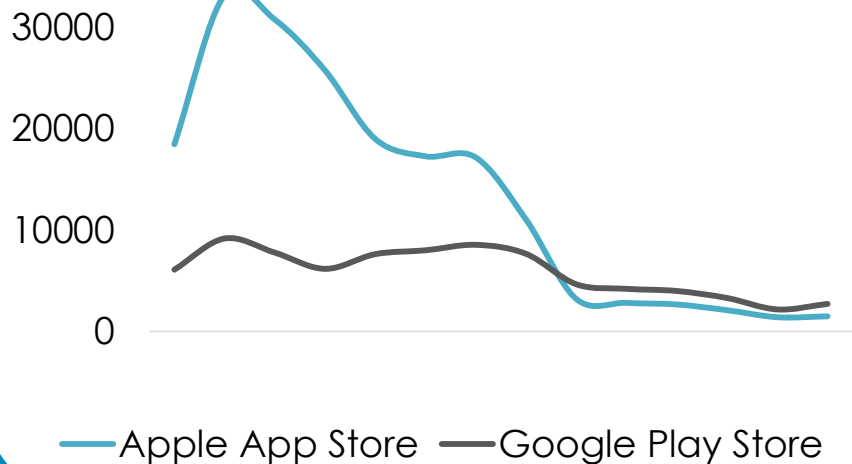
APPLE FEATURING IMPACT

Global Launch Daily Installs
Apple App Store

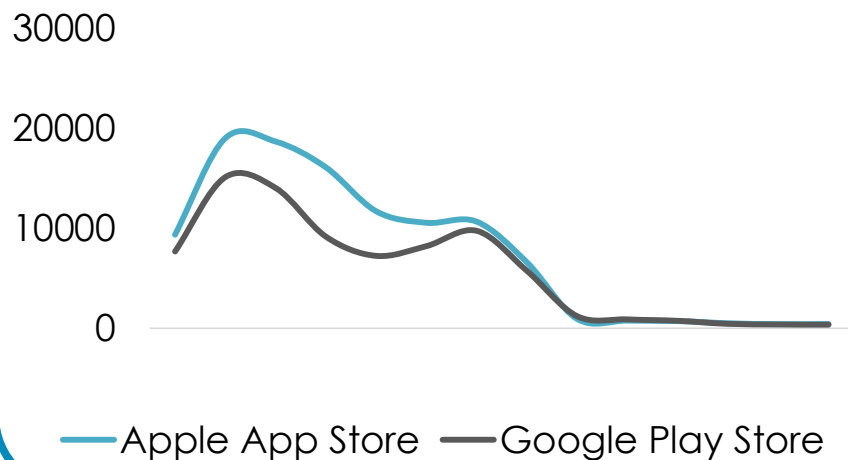


APPLE & GOOGLE FEATURING IMPACT

Global Launch Daily Installs
Shattered Planet



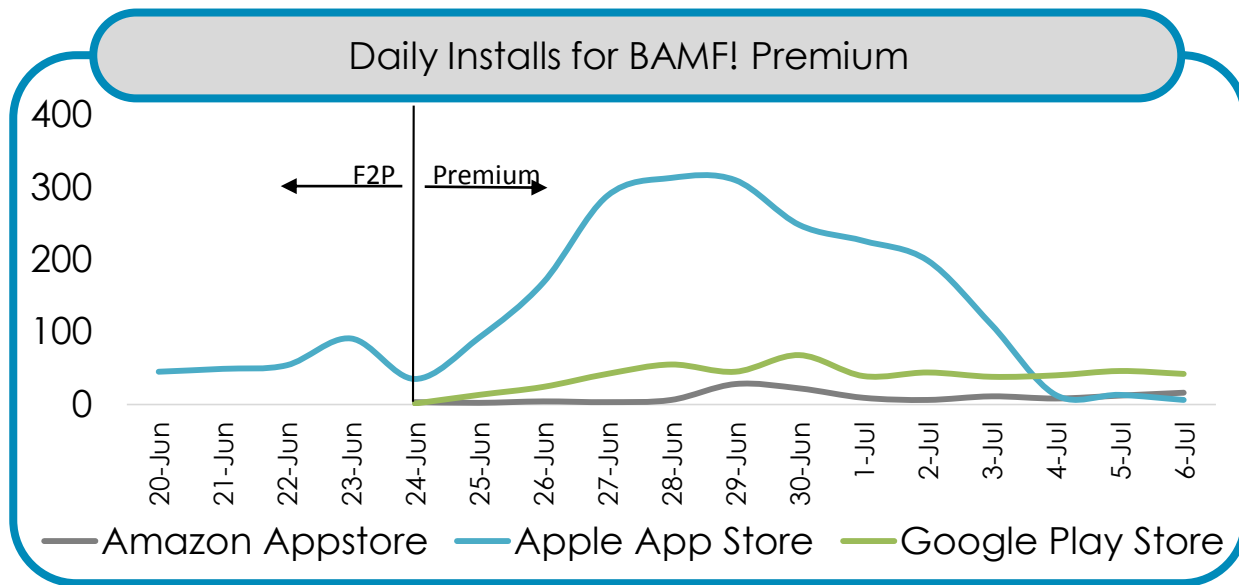
Global Launch Daily Installs
WinterForts



NORSFELL: F2P AS PUBLISHER PROOF



DOUBLE STALLION: F2P AS A SPRINGBOARD



DOUBLE STALLION: F2P AS A SPRINGBOARD



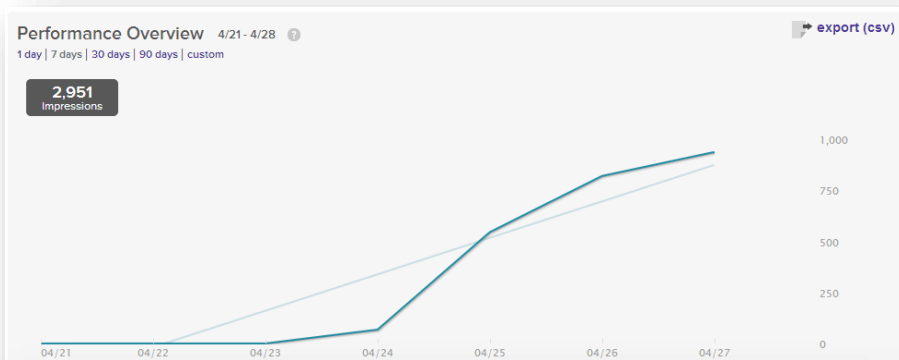
Utilized F2P engine for project deal

Secured VC seed funding

Received CMF funding



KITFOX: F2P AS A MARKETING TOOL



This game has been Greenlit by the Community!

The community has shown their interest in this game. Valve has reached out to this developer to start moving things toward release on Steam.

Results?

Two Months, F2P Mobile: \$20k

Two Weeks, Premium PC: \$45k




Average time to Greenlight: 90 days

Shattered Planet time to Greenlight: 8 days

KITFOX: F2P AS A MARKETING TOOL

Home Updates 13 Backers 6,044 Comments 654 Montreal, Canada Video Games

Funded! This project was successfully funded on September 26.



LAST DAY!

MOON HUNTERS

PLAY

STAFF PICK!

Humble Store PSVITA PS4

6,044 backers

\$178,986 CAD

pledged of \$45,000 goal

0 seconds to go

Project by Kitfox Games Montreal, Canada

First created - 3 backed

Tanya Short 498 friends

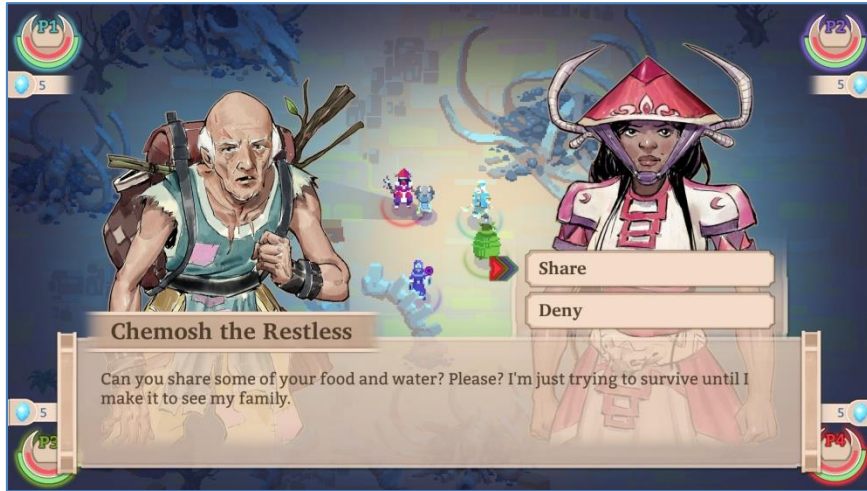
kitfoxgames.com

Share 5,541 Tweet Embed

See full bio Contact me



KITFOX: F2P AS A MARKETING TOOL



Leveraged F2P for Greenlight (premium)

Used F2P eyeballs for Kickstarter

Named by PC Gamer and Rock, Paper Shotgun a "2015 game of the year"



**WHY INDIE STUDIOS HAVE ~~NO~~
SOME BUSINESS SELF PUBLISHING
FREE TO PLAY MOBILE GAMES IN
CERTAIN SITUATIONS**

Contact:
Keith@executionlabs.com



@Ztakk



@ExecutionLabs