Troy Lonergan

A GAMES DESIGNER!

(Can't code, can't write, can't draw)

QUESTION

With your lack of skill how did you do ever make

anything even slightly good?!

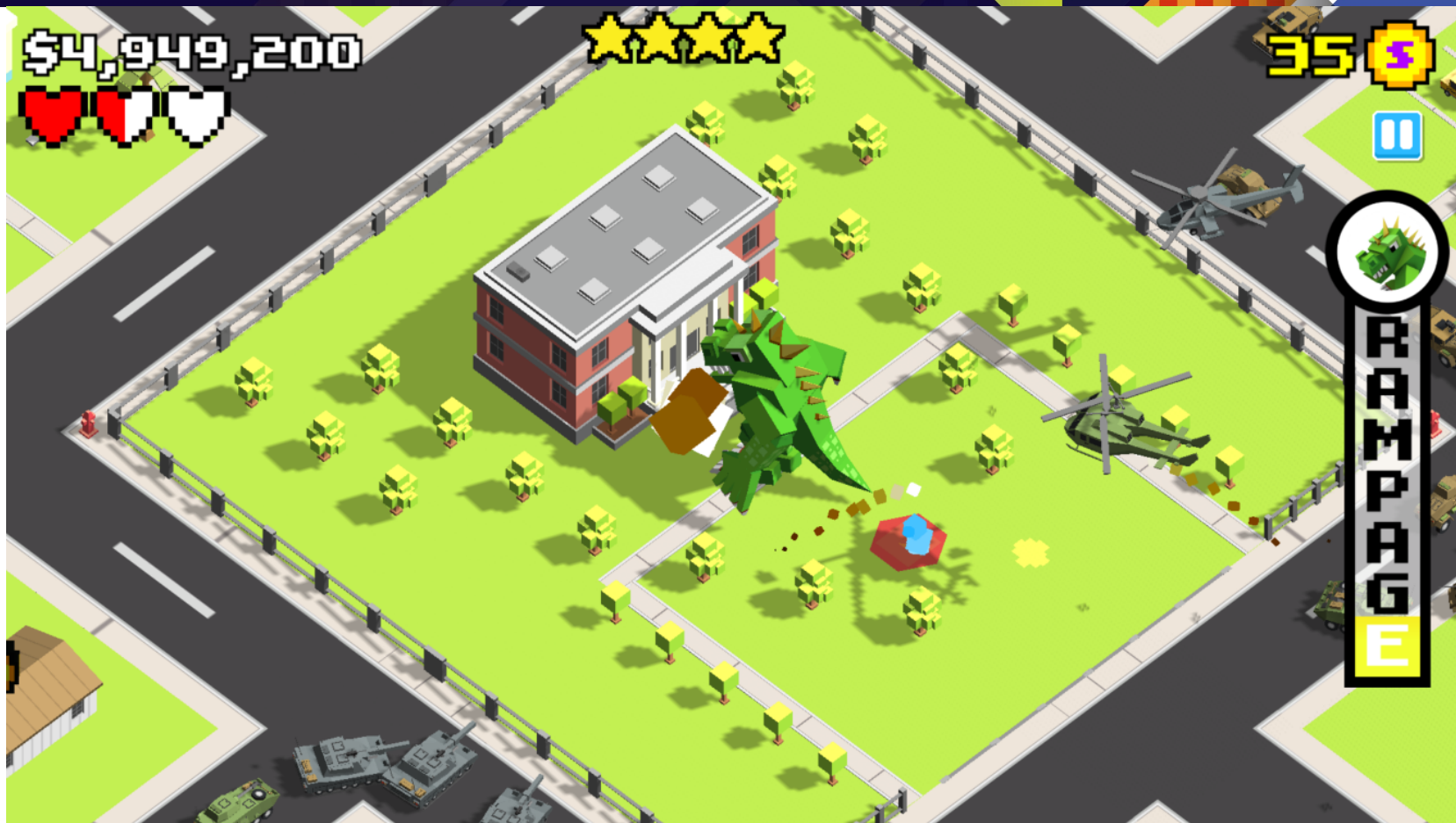# **Smashy City**

Big Monsters

Smashing up a city

You may have heard of this before….

RAMPAGE
FROM THE LATE 80'S

AWESOME PREMISE

GIANT MONSTERS
SMASHING STUFF

$6,494,550

38

RAMPAGE

Performance

Rating

4.5

Downloads

Around 5 million

Featured

US, China, Europe

Google Play
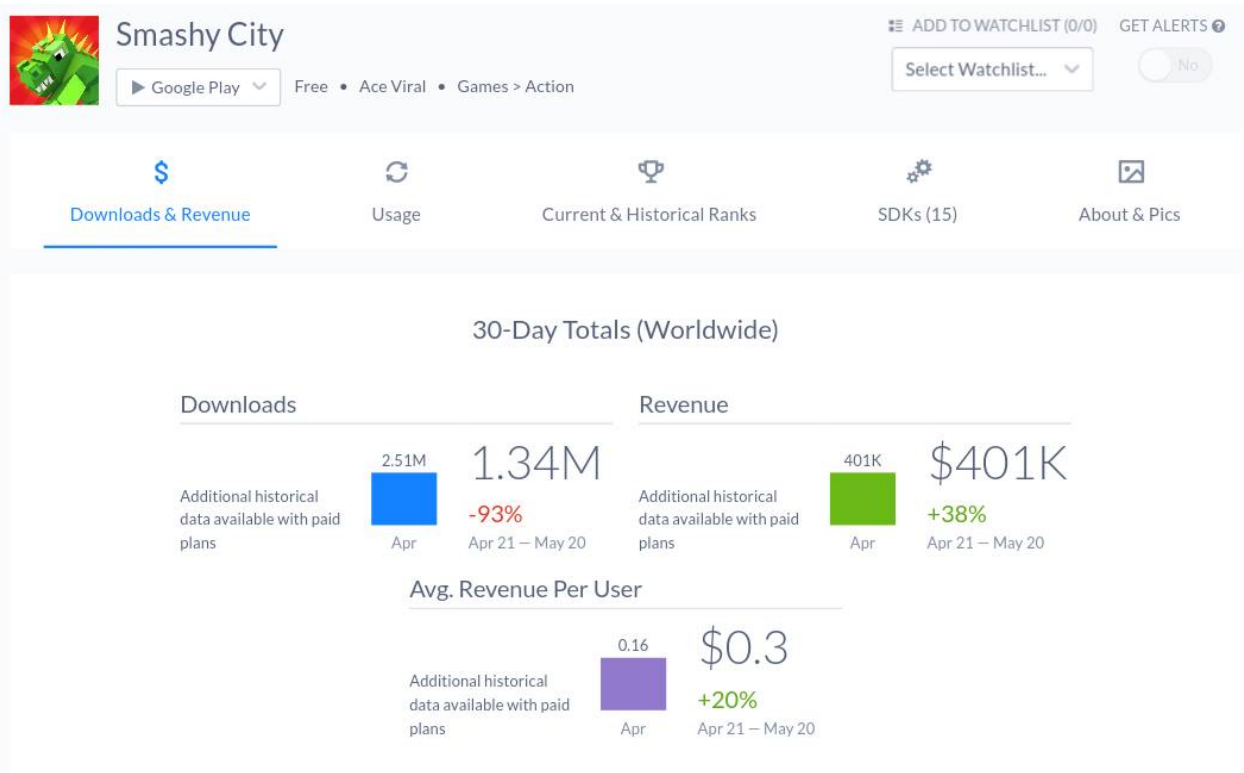
US top 50 overall

Amazon App Store

US top 20

iOS App Store

UK iPad top 10

Revenue

Context #1

"You had house ads"

Released titles are given the same push
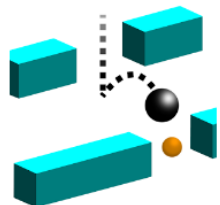
So what about your other games?

Context #2

Before Smashy City

The **same** designer, coder, artist

BALL DROP

Ball Drop

Ace Viral   Arcade

★★★☆☆ 127

PEGI 3

Offers in-app purchases

This app is compatible with all of your devices.

Add to Wishlist   Install

Top Developer

REVIEWS

3.3

★★★☆☆

★5 60
★4 7
★3 8
★2 13

127 total

Josh Clark ★★★☆☆

In all fairness it's too hard but gameplay was fine Just not my cup of tea, as they say. Some

Mahogany Sales ★☆☆☆☆

It's dumb This game is stupid it doesn't even tell you how to play the game and you can hit

Drop the ball down as many gaps as you can.
Tap the screen to juggle the ball and time your drops. Don't hit the moving blocks!

Collect the jewels to unlock new balls and blocks.
How far can you drop your balls?

WHAT'S NEW

Thank you for your feedback everyone!
We've fine

**Installs
10,000 - 50,000**

ADDITION

Updated
January 2

Same

Different

Simple controls

Character

Free Content

World

Explosions

Most popular Vine clip

Character

Monsters are cool, desirable

Players will play for the meta game

"Hatching" monsters is fun

8 Weeks – How?

Because, 8 weeks

Set timeframes THEN worked out MVP

How did I work that out? (Later)

Unity Asset Store ftw

We used a hugely popular asset set

Cheap, decent quality, fast to implement

Change skyscraper colours – easy!

$7,960,514

27 $

RAMPAGE

First Prototype

Character moving in environment, under an hour

Core gameplay by the end of the day

Saved days of visualisation and work

Sound effects

Checked out the Crossy Road Credits

Googled all the SFX credits, found one...

Don't be afraid to go where others go!

Character Creation

1-2 days modelled, fully animated

2-3 attack animations, 1 walk

25 characters at launch

SMASHY
CITY

Why Blocky Characters?

With less detail, more personable

3-4 anims per character

Rework was very quick

Why go Simple

Easy to create a style

Not locked to one artist
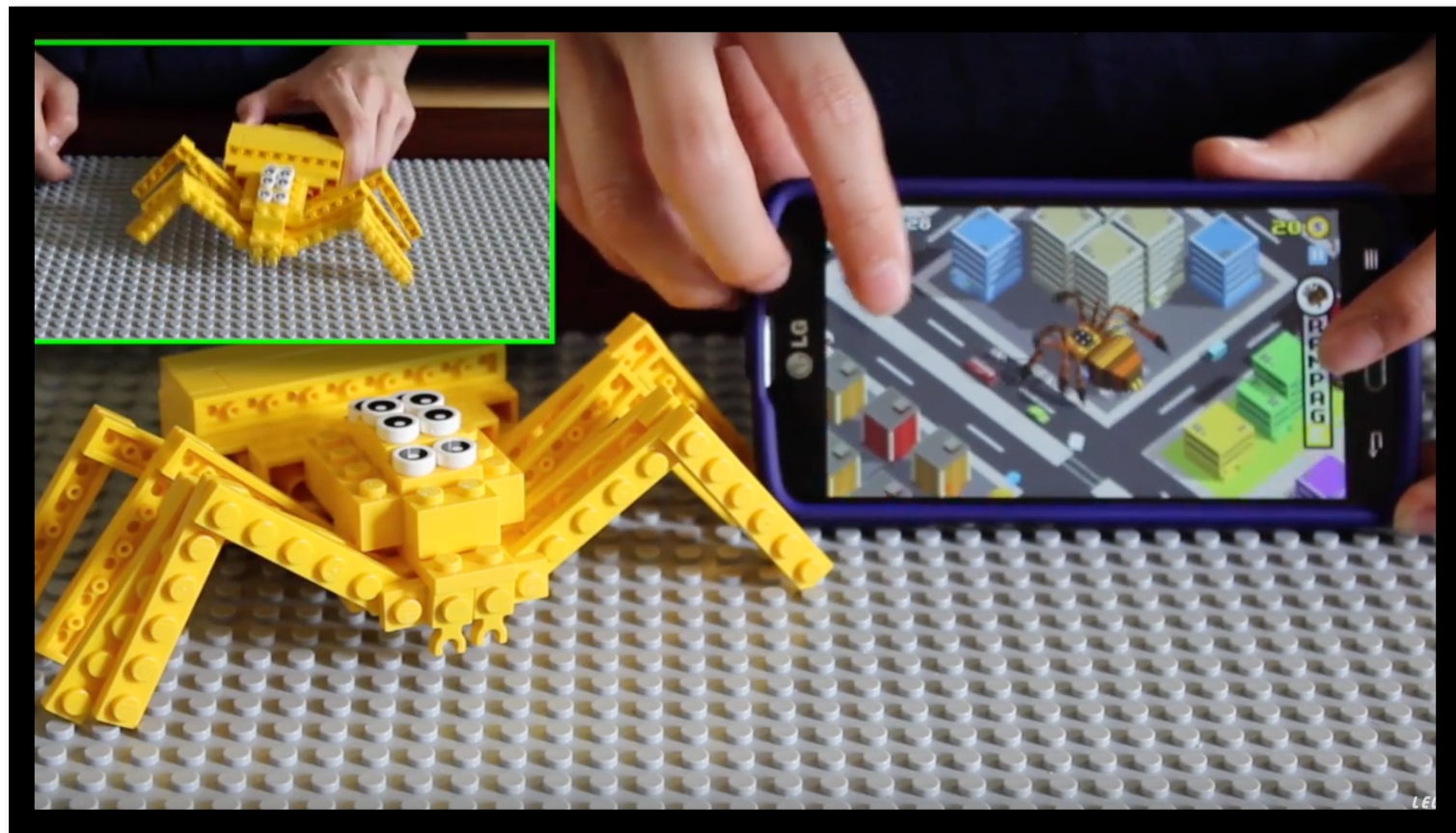
Tracks back to your game

Youtube

New Videos every day

Mostly kids

…and one who did this

Only delivering the MVP

Unique Monster Special Moves

More city destruction

I didn't circulate or mention these

"Weren't they in the Design document"?

Design Document

:)

Freedom from "Design"

Such a simple idea, why dictate?

Allowed the Coder Ownership

Worked for this game, may not for others

Time Saving Design #1

Removed discrete movement and attack

Somewhat of a risk however – MVP/time

May have felt you were not the monster

Quick, easy to tweak and test controls

3 iterations before mechanics locked down!

Time Saving Design #2

Complex controls = harder to understand

Tutorial – simple and quick to make

People can play right away

Removing barriers

Anyone can understand the game

Decreased chance of people uninstalling

Decreased development time

Inspired; Crossy Road

Crossy Road – GDC Lecture

Retention, collection, meta game

Rate and monetization

Inspired; Smashy Roads

Simple Controls, learning curve

Collectables, different abilities

...the name?

Learn from yourself

Cool characters always win

If people don't understand, they stop

The team – a game they love

Learn from your Team

Artist – his art **built** the company
Total downloads maybe 75m+

Coder – always coded great games
People always like his games

8 weeks

No Design

No Schedule

How did I work out my MVP to be 8 weeks?

Experience

Can gauge how long every aspect takes

Enough exposure = I've learned timeframes

Learn, learn, learn – however you can

Keeping Control

Nothing added that wasn't core

EXCEPT where I knew we could do it

And then I learned to give up control…

Be the Producer

Be a Producer, design niceties come second

Pragmatism; don't allow the Designer rule you

Smart choices *are* difficult

Produce; remove your Design powers

"The Producer just got someone else to decide"

"That's not how I wanted it!" *RAGE!*

Do this to yourself

Give up the power

Give away as many 'Design' decisions as you can

Don't just say it. **DO IT. STOP CONTROLLING.**

Result? Smashy City.

Managing staff

By giving away power, you ARE managing

Not LOSING control. GIVING control.

Trust.

This is not your game anymore

It's their game.

They will care more. They will want it to succeed.

This will scare the cr*p out of you!

Attitude

"What if they ruin it?!" – **Wrong**

They work **WITH** you; not **FOR** you.

Show faith. **Trust**. Back them 100%

Exceptions

Outside remit of core design

If it impacts the schedule [too much]

Explain. Quantify. People are reasonable.

Allow flexibility in development

Traffic system, Brad worked on it early

Map tile system, worked on it together

He started to come up with ideas...

Brad's Ideas

Dave – The Artist!

Hugely experienced

Give him a list, done

Loves making the monsters

SMASHY
CITY

Near Fatal Error

First Character, Kong

Me: "Maybe he shouldn't squint?"

Dave: "…it should be like that…"

Part 3:

Wrap up

Question

How did I create a top 50 app?

Answer

I didn't. The others guys did.

Question

How can you create a great app?

Answer

Find people more skilled than you.

Most powerful things I've done at a games company

Not be a Designer

Not be a Producer

Not be a Manager

Be a Supporter

Be a Supporter

Love what your workmates do, back them

Champion them, internally and externally

Give them credit where it's due…
and that's why I'm stood here today.

Questions?