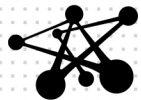




Post-Mortem: Fighting in the Free to Play War

Aki Järvinen
Creative Director, Ph.D.



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2012

Army Attack?

- Free-to-play
- Strategic war genre
- Launched at Facebook, May 2011



Battle Plan

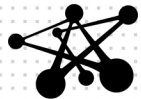
- Concept evolution
- Post-Mortem:
 - The Wrongs & The Rights
- Conclusions





Evolution

From Concept to Launch



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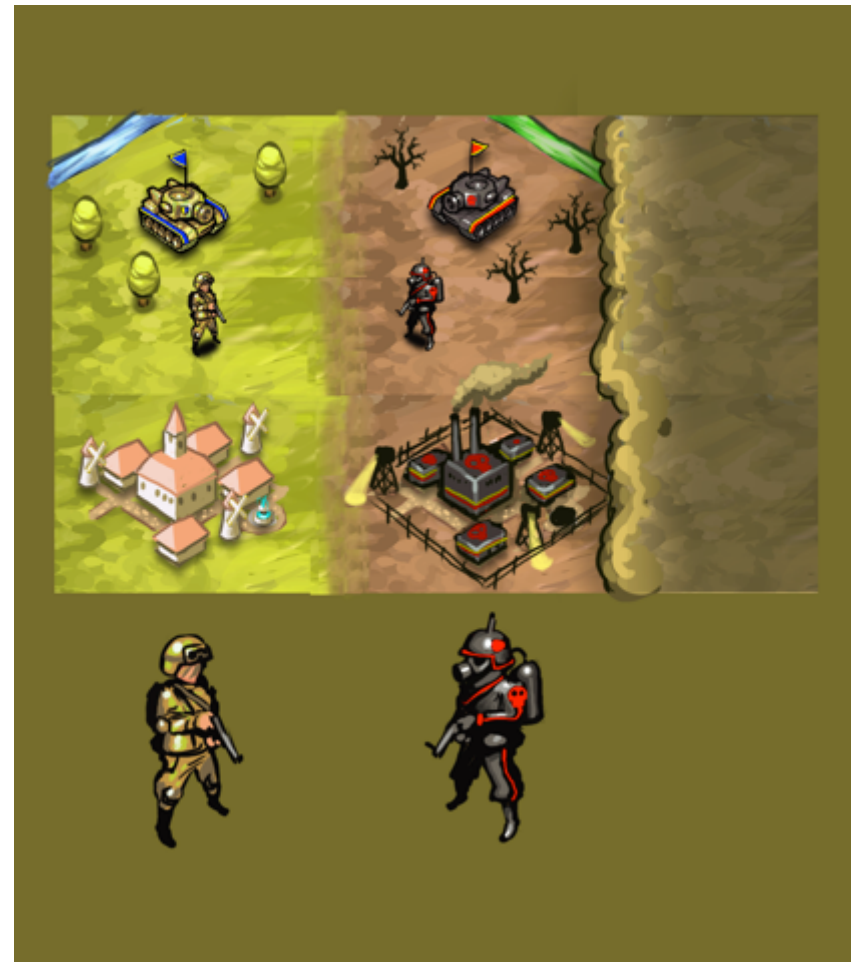
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The Two Armies

- Premise: 'Tower Defense for Facebook'



Following Facebook conventions



Go
More

Create an advert

Intohimosta
urheiluun!

**URHEILU
LEHTI**

Totuus Vallioligasta
liigasta! Urheilulehti
kantaa. Tutustu nyt
vuoden lehdet vain
lompakko. Tilaa he

Like

Free Facebook



Build and protect y
army and destroy
Join now FREE

Like

Hiring Game
Producer

Iterating on the isometric approach



Green light!



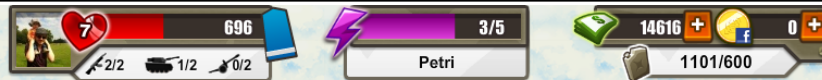
Production Phase

- 1st Playable



Launched May 19th, 2011





Gameplay Video



Peaks on Facebook

- 592,000 DAU
 - *35 days after launch*
- 517,000 DRU
 - *47 days after launch*



Current and future platforms



Acknowledgments



<http://nwn.blogs.com/nwn/2011/06/army-attack-facebook-turn-based-strategy-game.html>

Acknowledgments

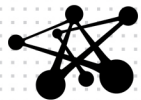
- *Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences* nomination for candidacy in "Social Networking Game of the Year"





Post-Mortem

The Wrongs & The Rights



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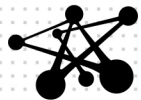
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Post-Mortem

- The 4 Wrongs



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Things that went wrong

- Development issues
 - Post-launch scope & backlog not in place



Things that went wrong

- Live production issues
 - Tools not in place to support desired release frequency
 - Lack of map editor
 - Not prepared for the early success!



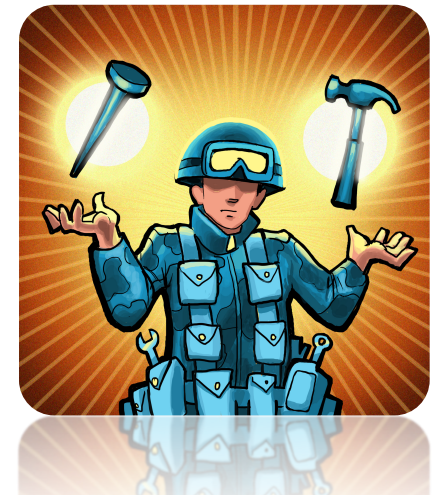
Things that went wrong

- Gameplay issues
 - Lack of content: maps, buildings, units
 - Mission system
 - 'Quick and dirty' Player versus Player - should we ever have done it?



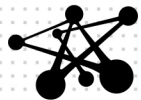
Things that went wrong

- Hard launch
 - Pretty soon, we were fighting against declining numbers



Post-Mortem

- The 5 Rights



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Things we got right

- Team spirit despite a number of changes
 - All disciplines working well together



Things we got right

- Theme
 - War genre up for taking at the time of launch



Things we got right

- Art style
 - Art pipeline and division of work
 - Engagement!



Things we got right

- Virtual Goods Economy
 - Monetization!



Things we got right

- Gameplay
 - Advance Wars for Facebook - check!
 - KPIs above industry standards
 - Average player ratings ≈ 5.0
 - Metrics-driven gameplay tweaks: e.g. removing 'Fog of War'



Conclusions

- Prioritize content tools early
- Launch softly and optimize from there
- Both respect & question gameplay conventions from other platforms, and adapt them to F2P
- Design for PvP from the beginning
- 'Viable niches' – keep looking for them!



Cheers! Questions?





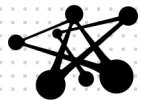
<http://games.digitalchocolate.com>

Aki Järvinen

Creative Director, Ph.D.

ajarvinen@digitalchocolate.com

@aquito on Twitter



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