

# Infinity Blade:

Creating the Blockbuster iOS Trilogy

**Scott Stoddard**

Lead Animator ChAIR Entertainment



SMARTPHONE & TABLET GAMES  
SUMMIT

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE

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EXPO DATES: MARCH 19-21

2014

# Who am I?

Scott Stoddard

ChAIR Entertainment

Lead Animator

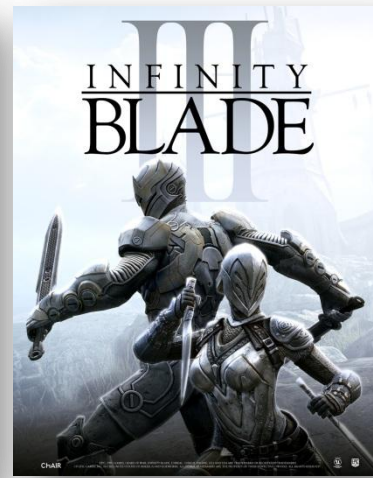
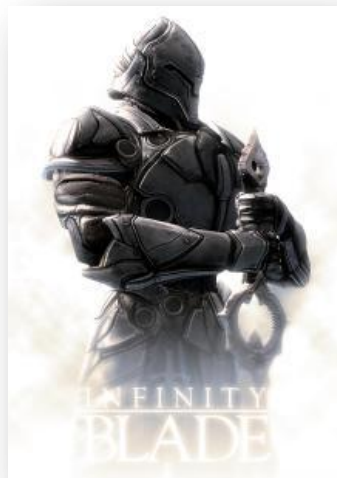
Mocap Performer

Disney Interactive

Lead Animator

Spiritonin Media

Director



# IB Design

- Core Combat
- Metagame
- Analytics



# On Micro-Trans



Traditional

Micro-Trans

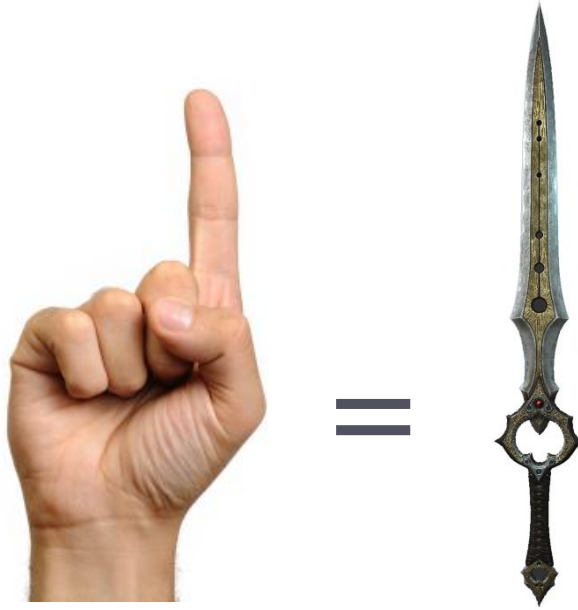
Core Combat

Metagame

Analytics



# Combat Goal



The finger is the sword

\*in 5 months or less

# Cutting Edge Graphics





# Rapid Prototyping



1 week



2 weeks



3 weeks

•30 FPS in 3 weeks

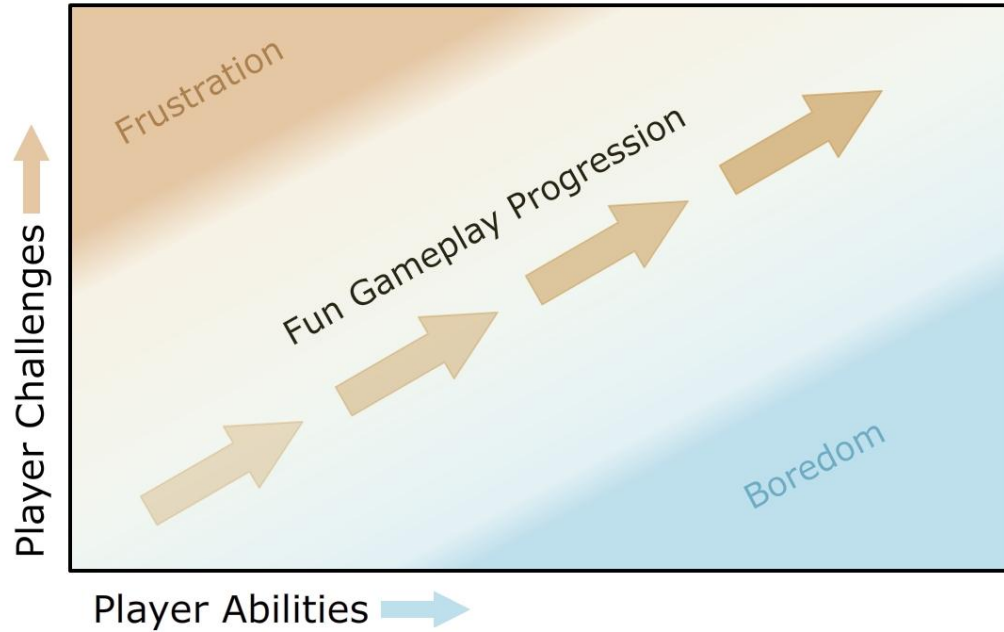


# Touch Point Navigation

- Support 2-3 minute play sessions
- No collision
- Empower Artists
- Boost Performance



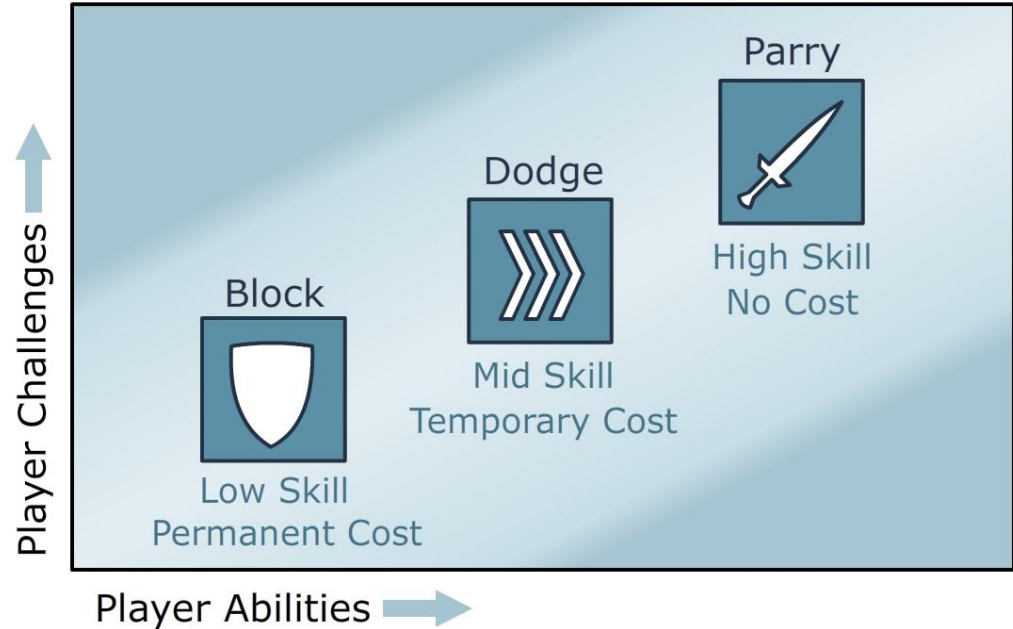
# Player Abilities



- Balance abilities with challenges
- Player progression and mastery

# Defense Abilities

- 3 levels of mastery
- Parry most interesting
- Swipes still needed work



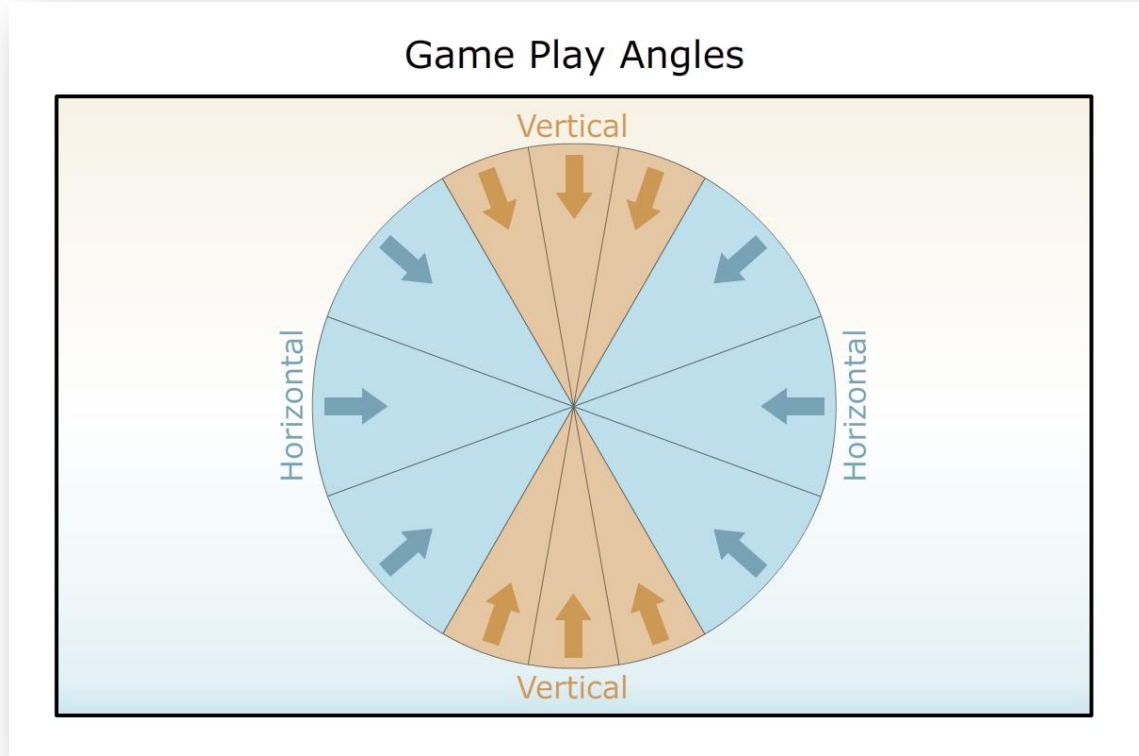
# Swipe Detection



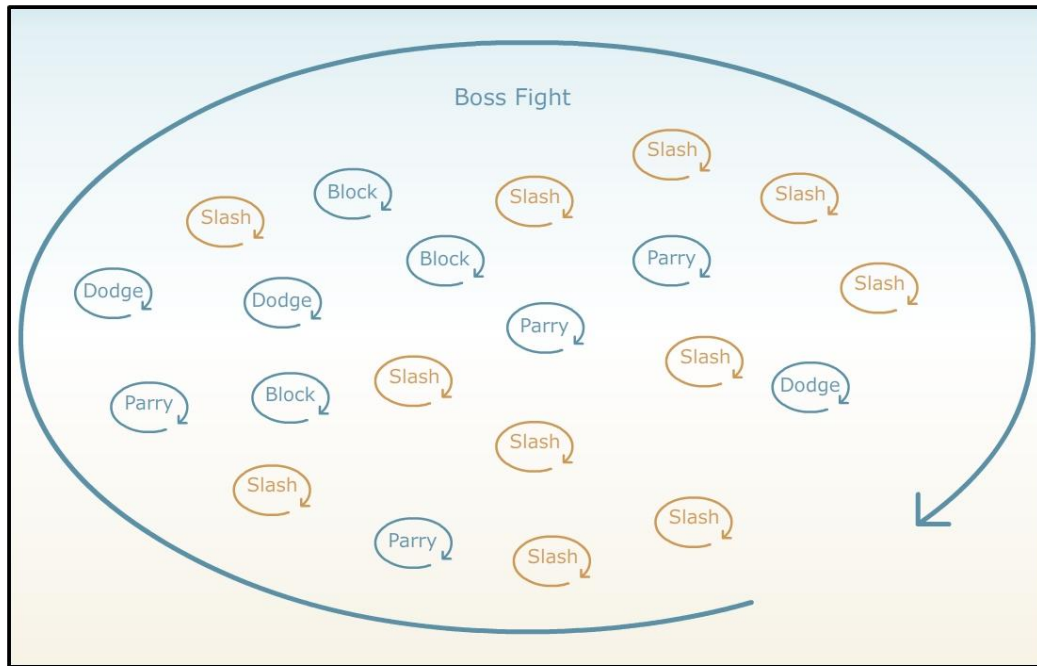
- Finger swipe  
~half a second
- 2 frame swipe  
detection
- 5<sup>th</sup> of a second to  
impact

# Swipe Fidelity

- Started with 4 swipe directions
- Ended with 12



# Structuring The Fight

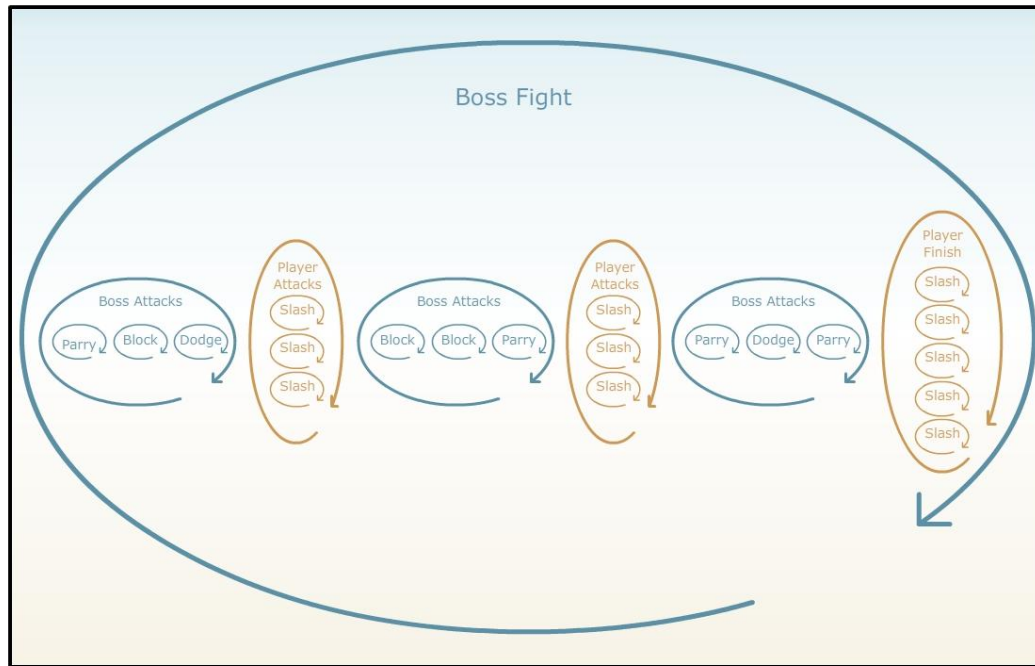


- Micro mechanics worked
- Wanted satisfying skill based play
- Fight progression needed more structure



# Boss Attack Sets

- Made them take turns
- Reward mastery
- Better progression



# A New Play Connection



- Simple actions with powerful feedback are fun

Core Combat

Metagame

Analytics



# Metagame Goals



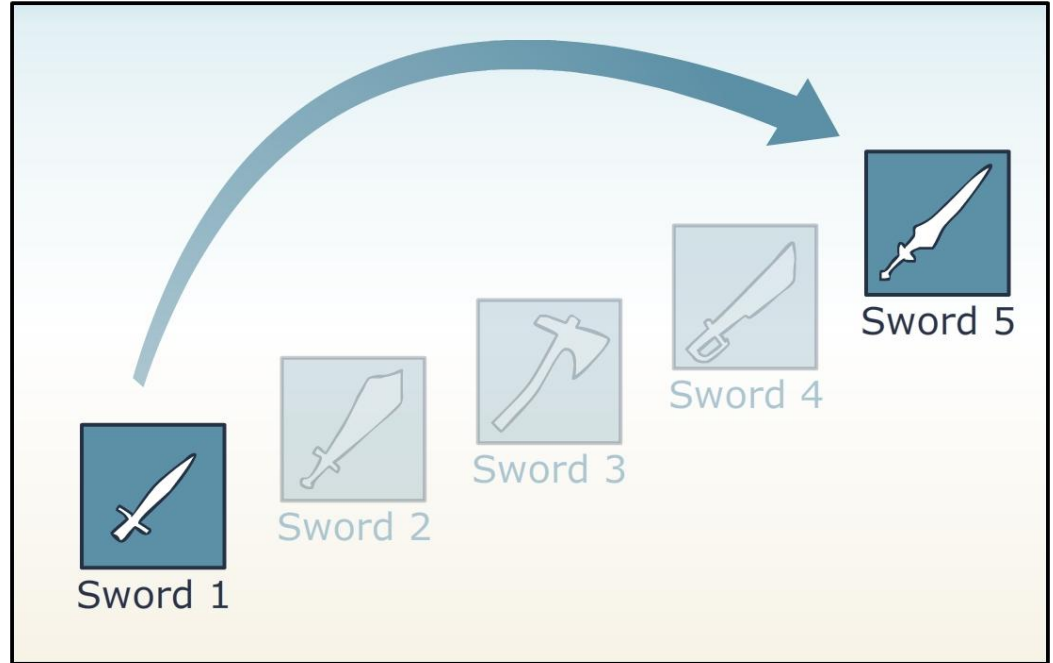
- Compelling RPG experience in 2-3 minute sessions

# Adding RPG Elements



# Buying Gear

- A lot of content gets skipped
- Burn through content too fast
- How to make every item valuable?





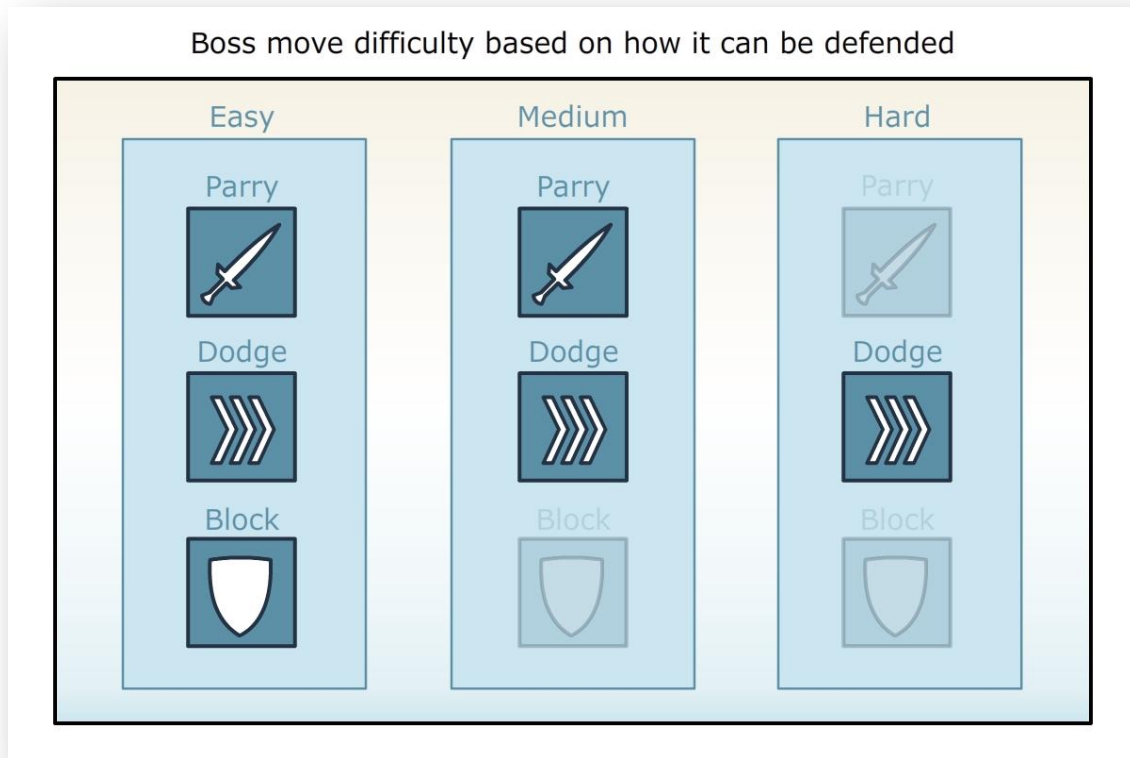
# XP In The Items



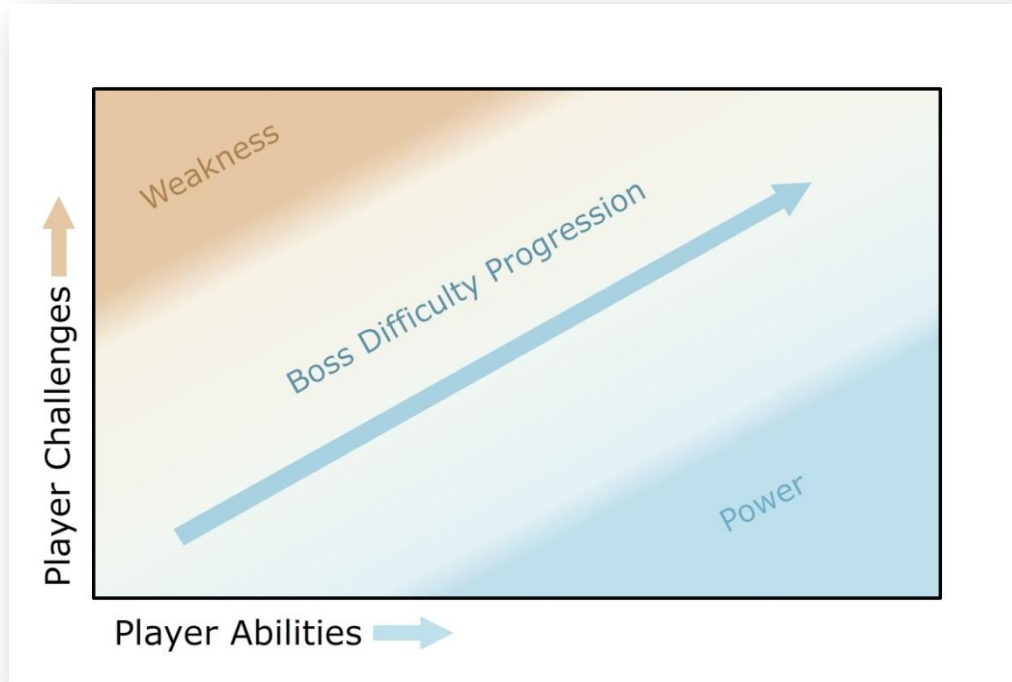
- Every Item contains unique XP value

# Enemy System

- Stat + move based difficulty ramping
- Matched to player abilities
- Granularity for balancing



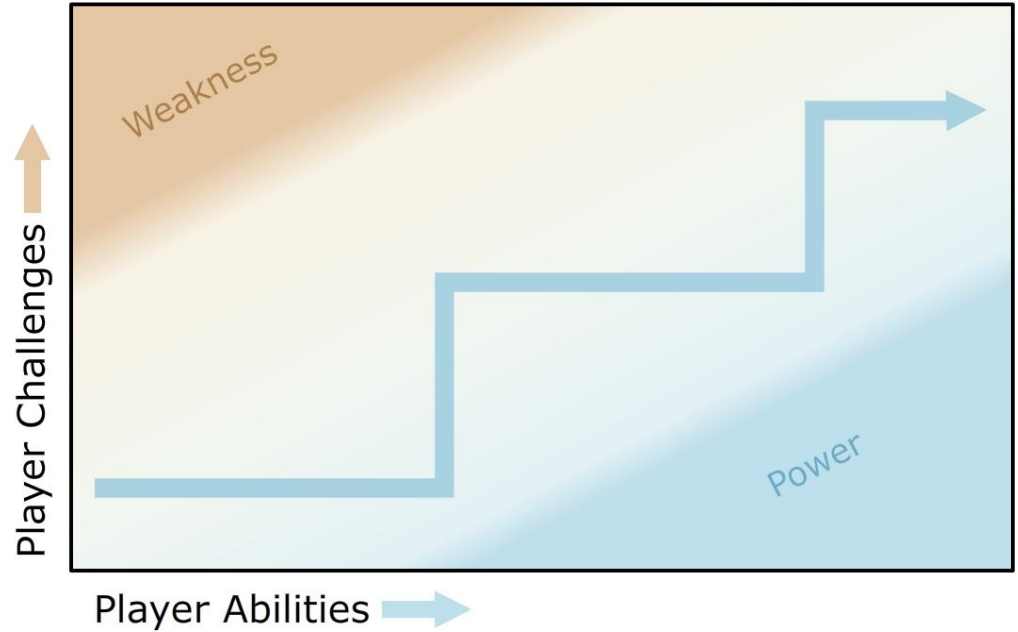
# Difficulty Ramping



- Constantly climbing curves can feel static

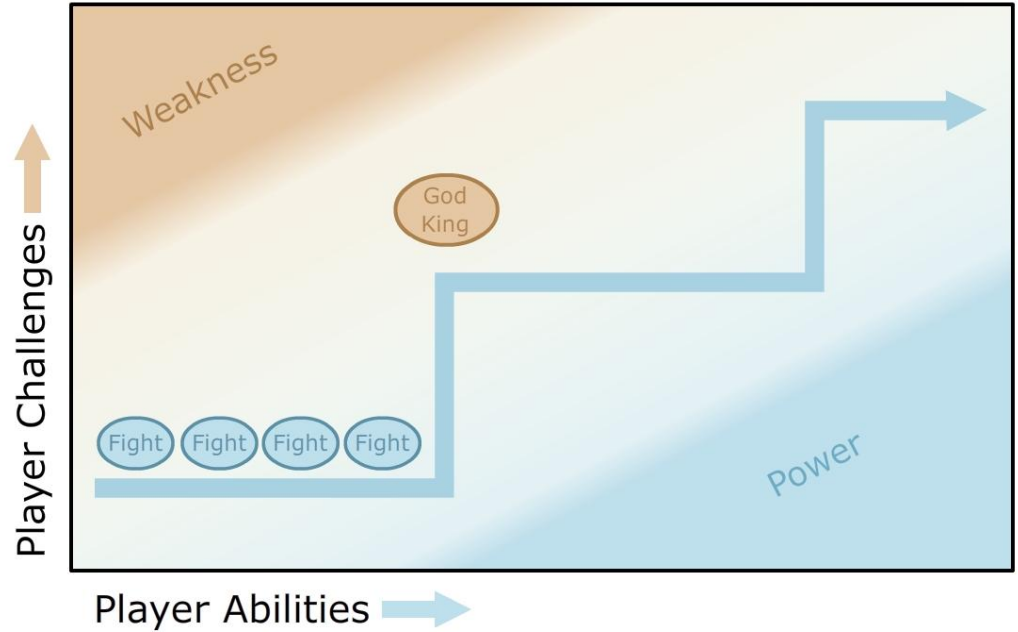
# Curves Need Steps

- Fluctuate between weakness, power
- Satisfying progression



# Quest Difficulty

- Regular boss difficulty is flat per quest
- Player moves from weakness to power



# The God King

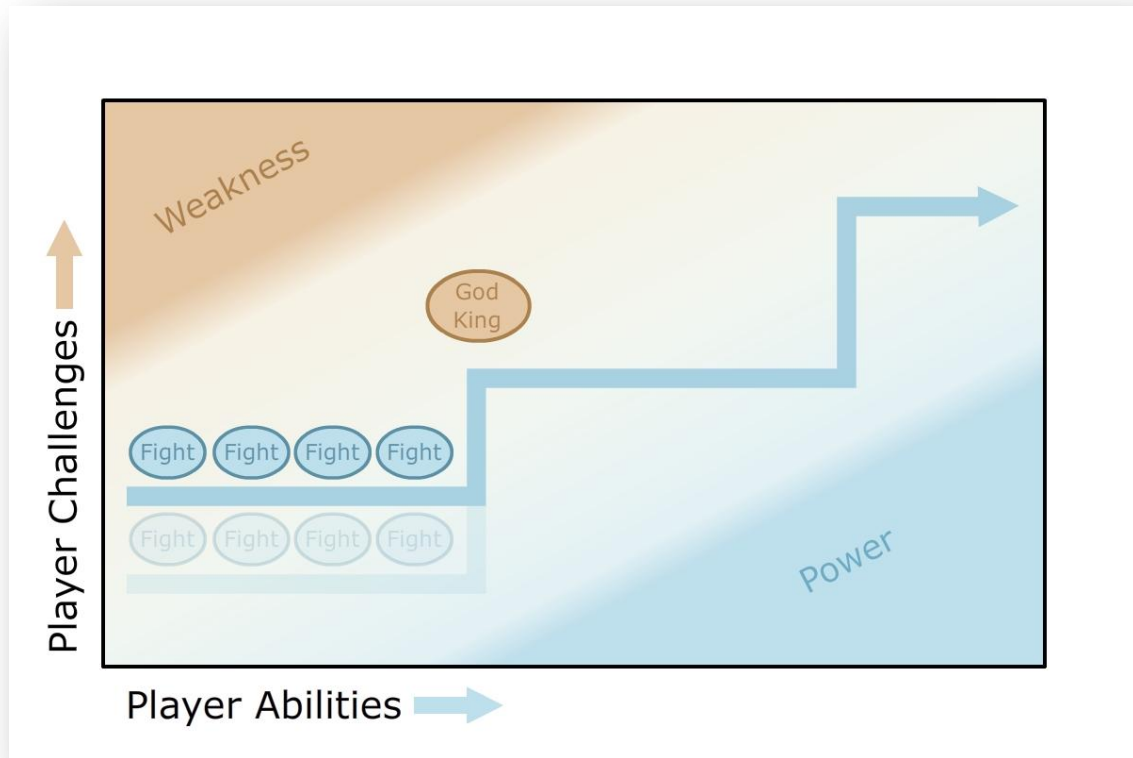


- makes the player feel very weak



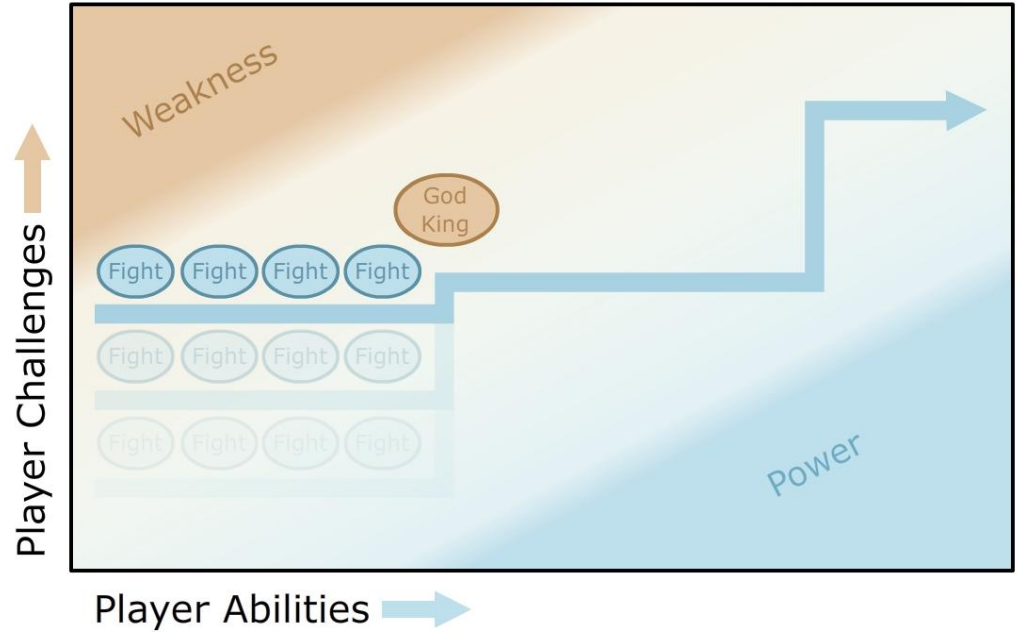
# Quest Difficulty

- Quest resets
- Bosses get harder
- God King the same
- Feel progress despite defeat



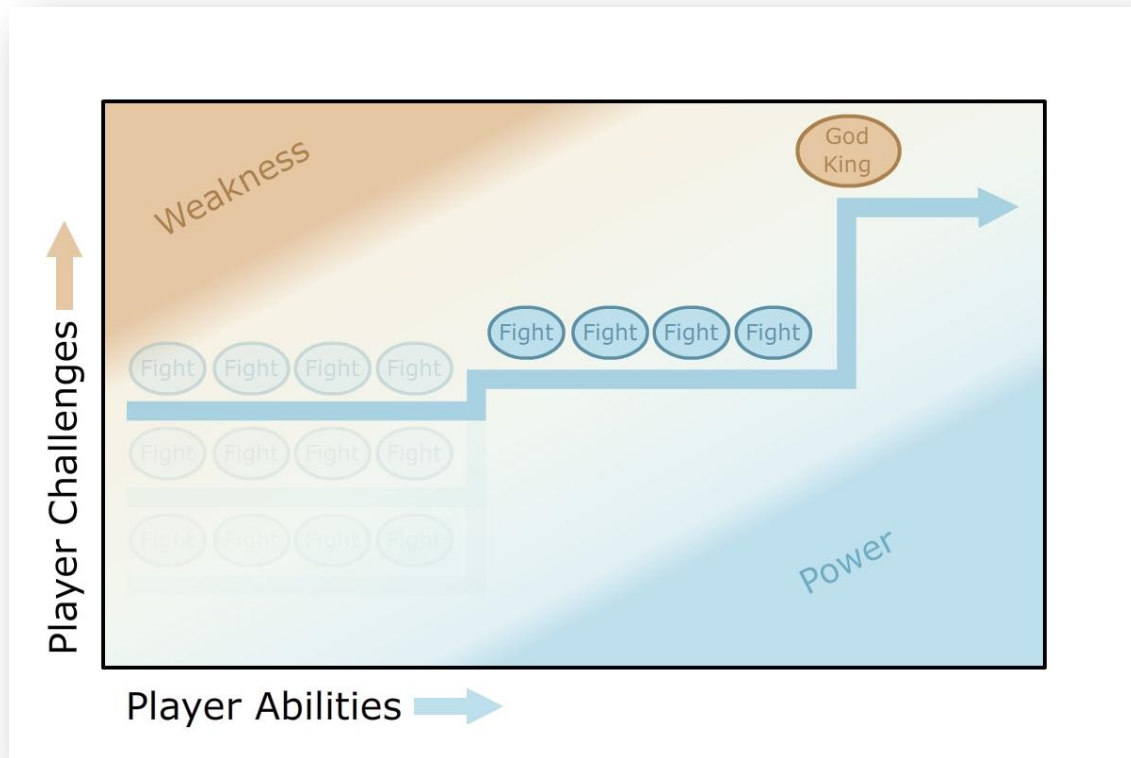
# Quest Difficulty

- Defeat God King on try 4 or 5
- Clear step of progress

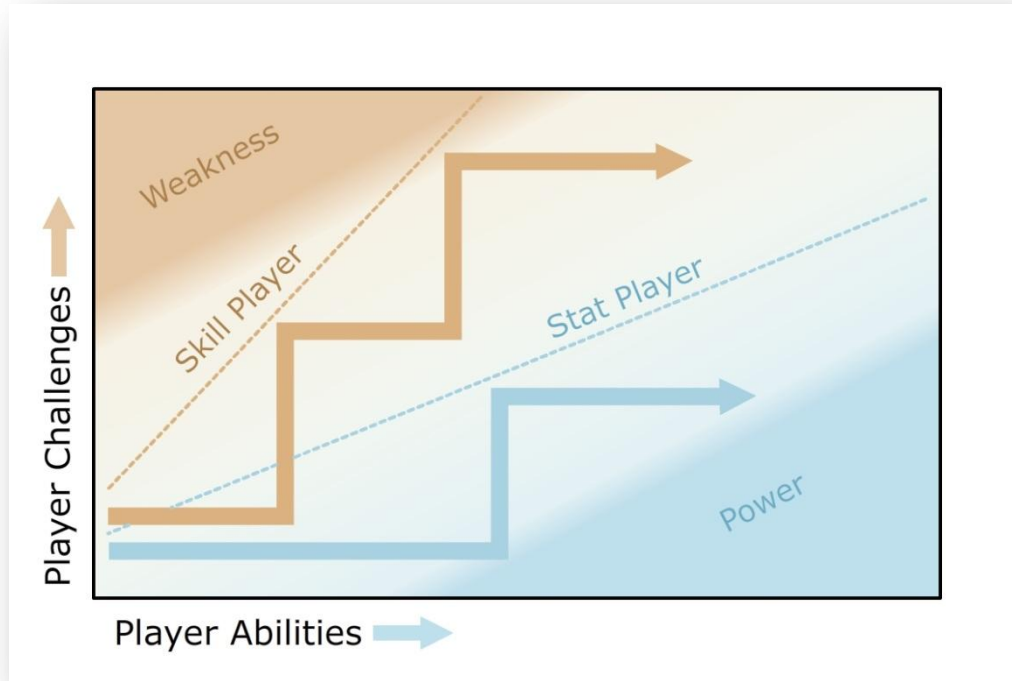


# Quest Difficulty

- A new step
- Lots of weapons still to master
- New boss moves to defeat



# Automatic Difficulty Ramping



- Steps automatically tune difficulty to varied player mastery

Core Combat

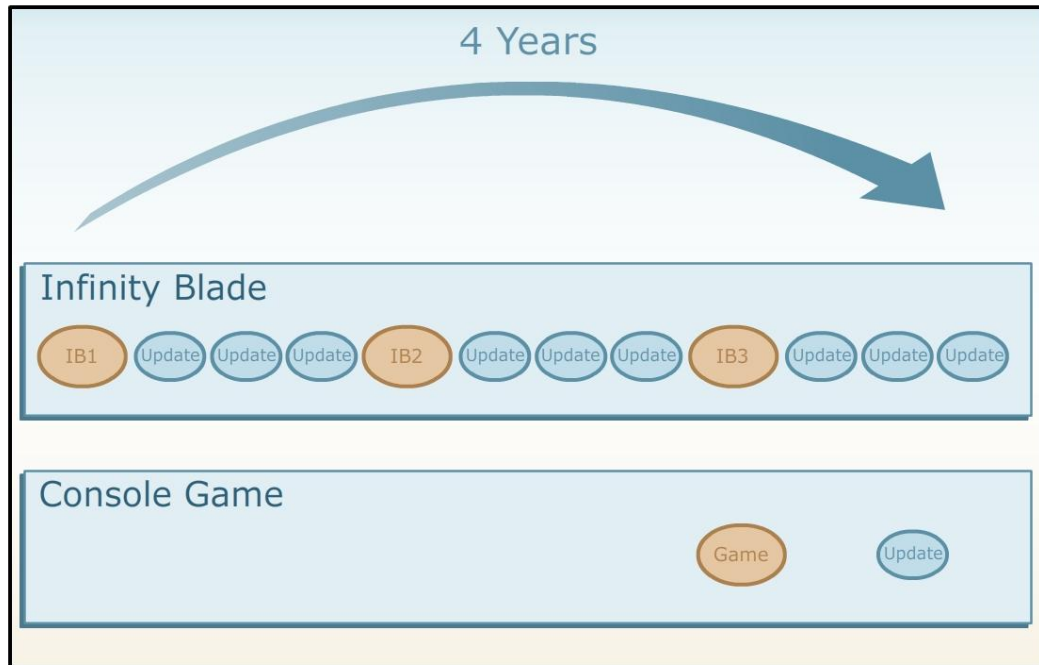
Metagame

**Analytics**



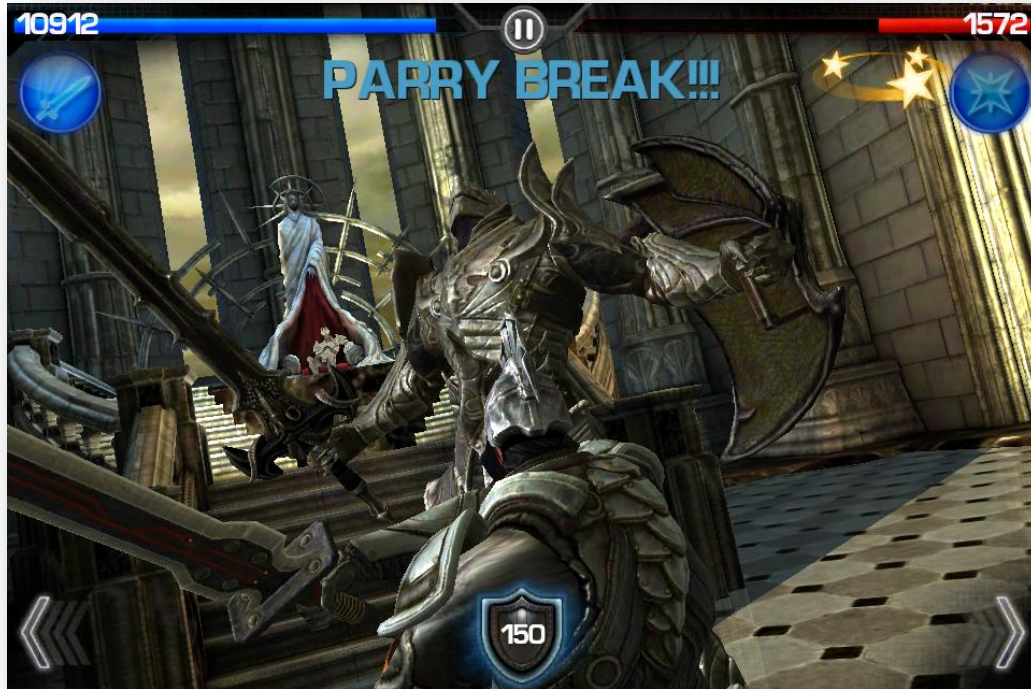
# Release + Update Iteration

- Mobile can iterate with players very quickly
- Iteration speed powers refinement
- Analytics make smarter updates



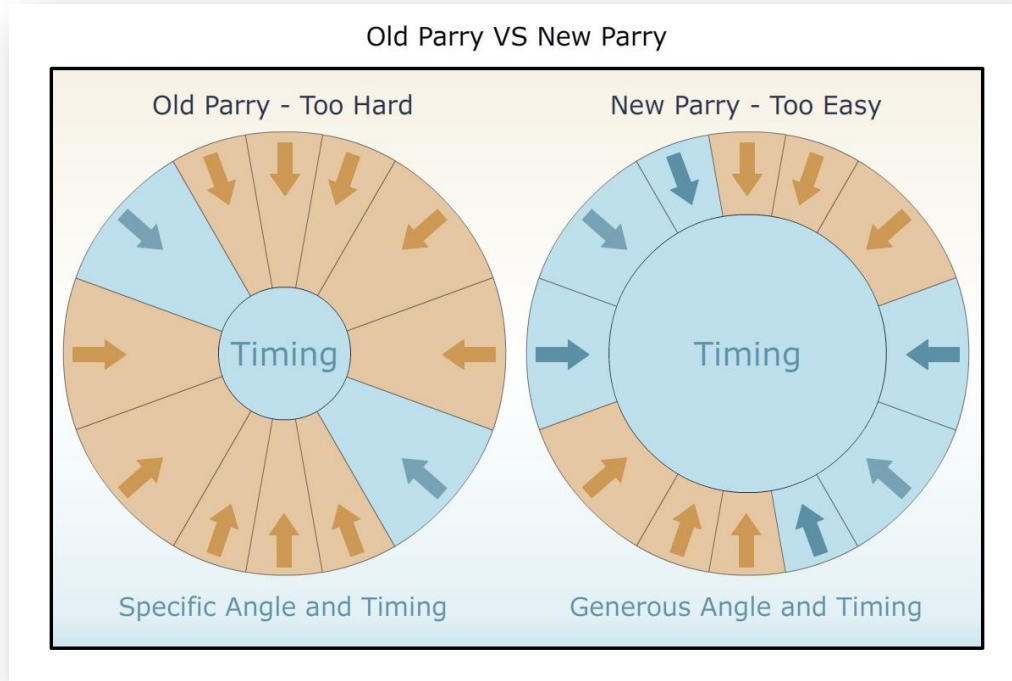


# Parry Refinement



- Parry was the most fun for us
- Too hard for players
- Refined to be more accessible

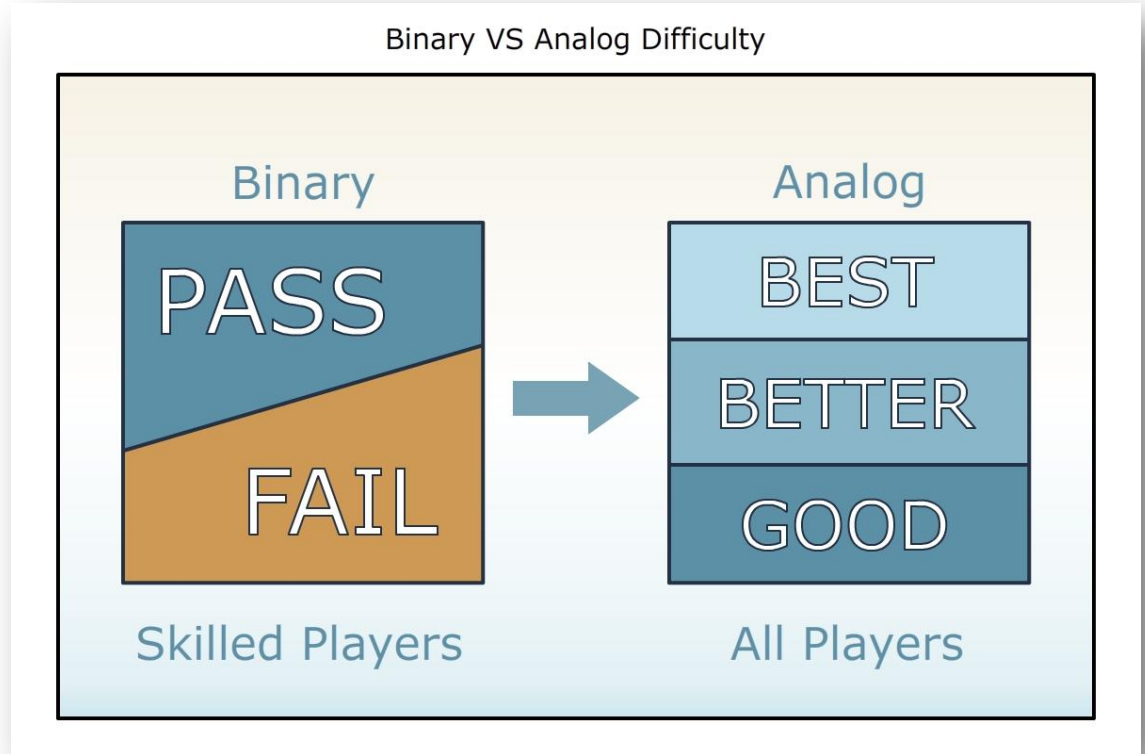
# Parry Refinement



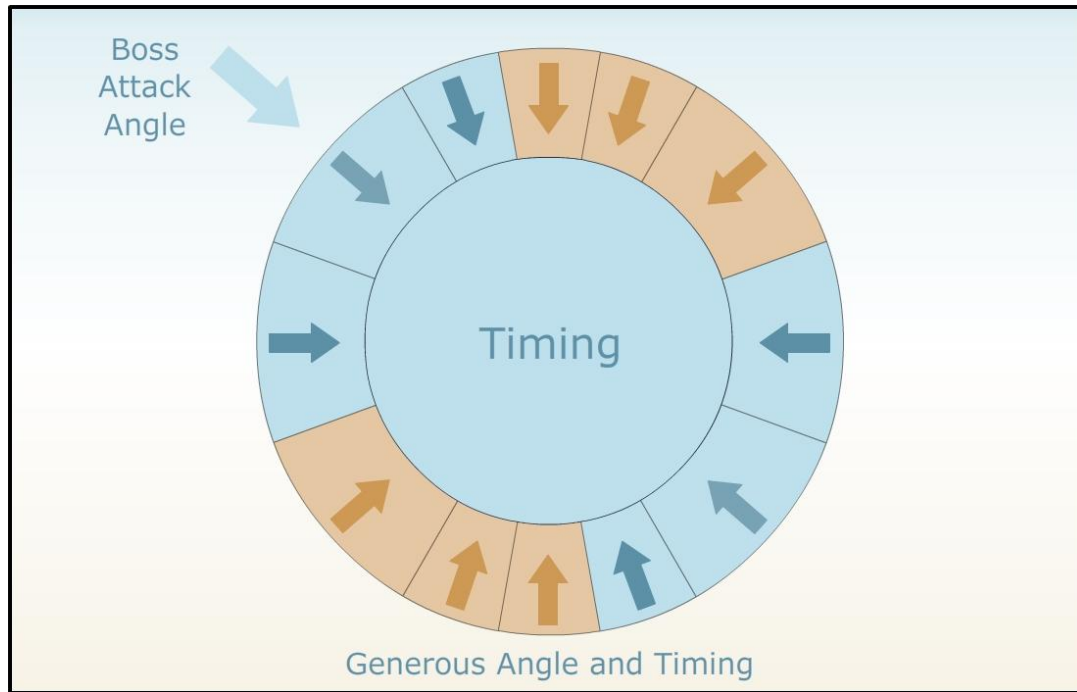
- Accessible to all, but boring for skilled players

# Analog Challenge

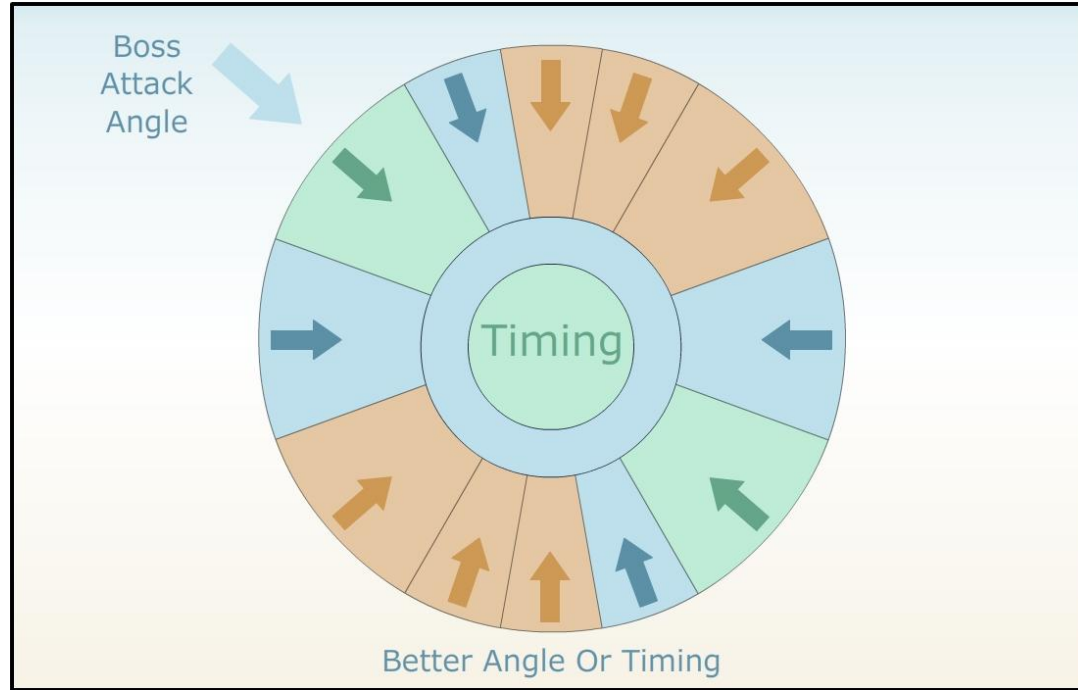
- Binary is hard to balance
- Analog is accessible to more players
- Still challenging for skilled players



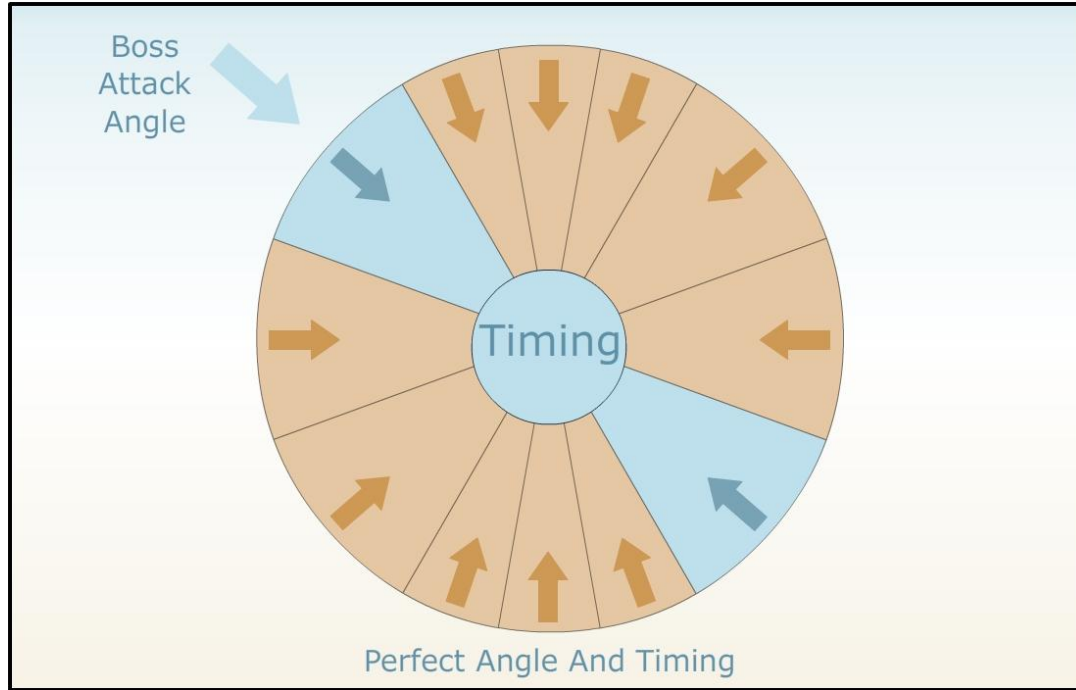
# Regular Parry



# Great Parry



# Perfect Parry



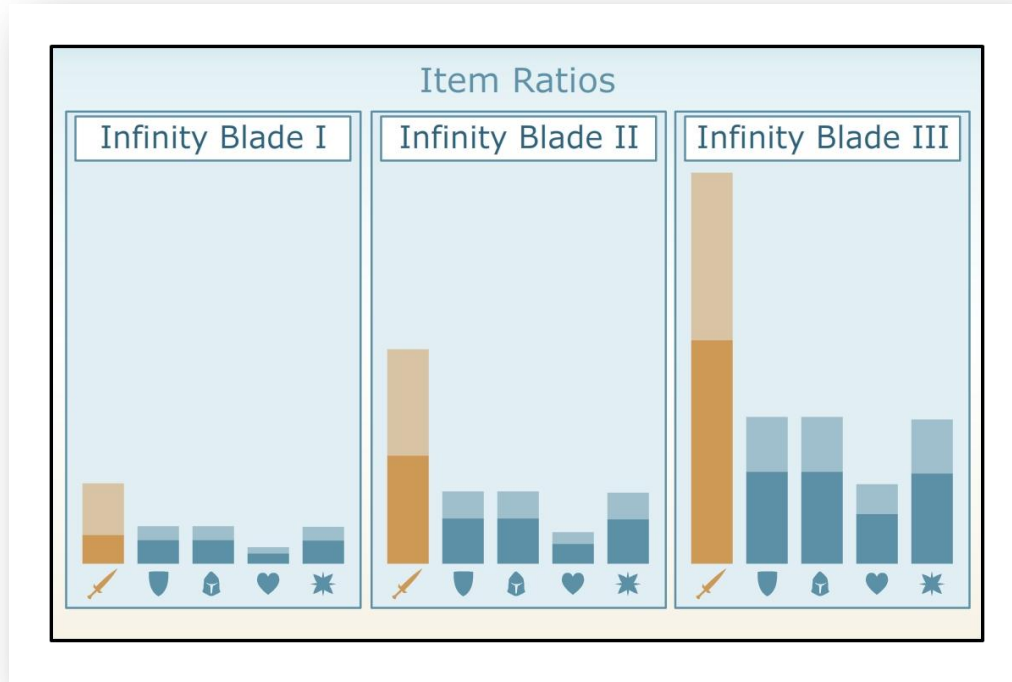
# Clear Feedback



- Refined parry system with power of analytics and updates



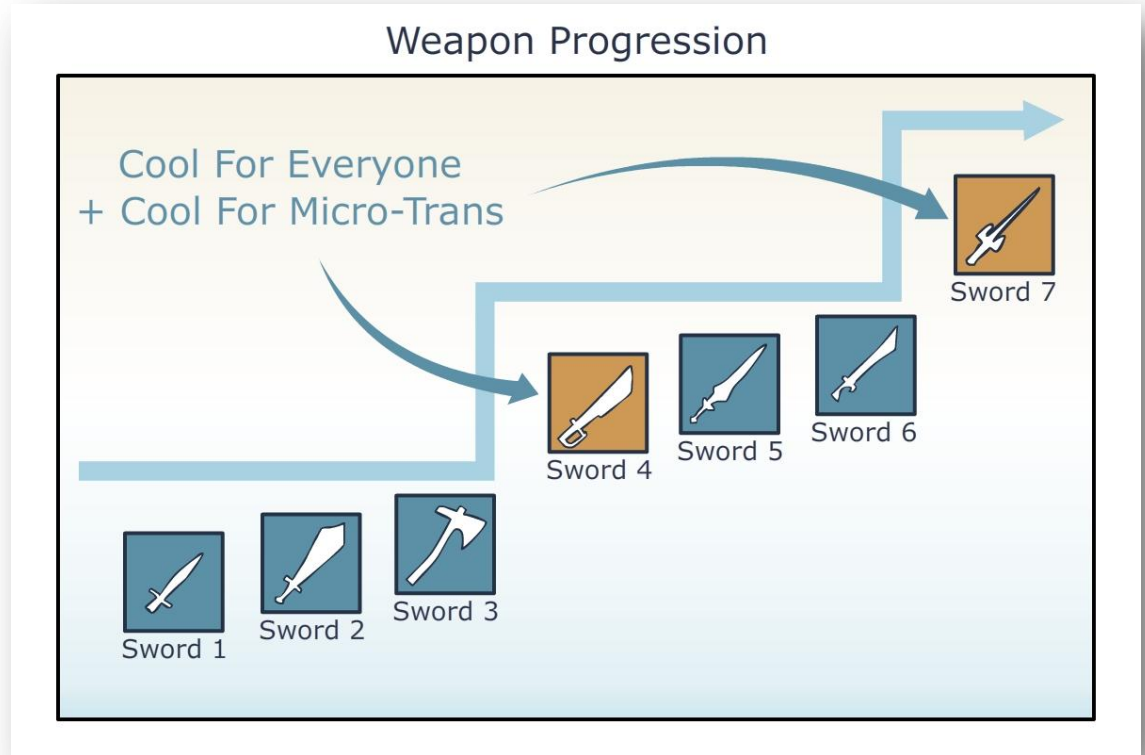
# Content Focus



- Players like weapons, give them weapons

# Weapon Tiers

- Tiered weapons are more fun for everyone
- Tiered weapons also do better in micro-trans

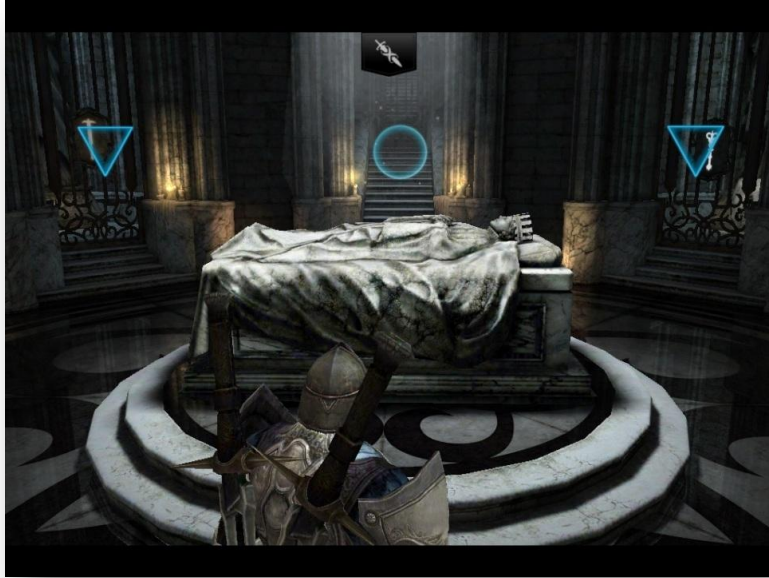


# Add Value



- Weapon + key

# Add Value



Infinity Blade II: tomb room



Infinity Blade III: fan room

- Add value to regular items by making them into keys

# Stat Skills



Infinity Blade II: Stats

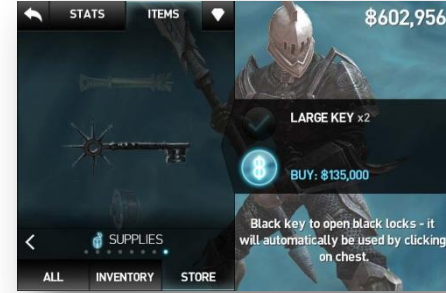


Infinity Blade III: Stats + Skills

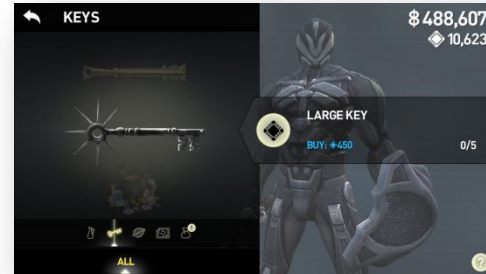
- Add lasting interest with stepped stat skills

# Separate Currencies: Chips & Gold

- Players were getting stuck and balancing was difficult
- Added value for players and balancing for designers



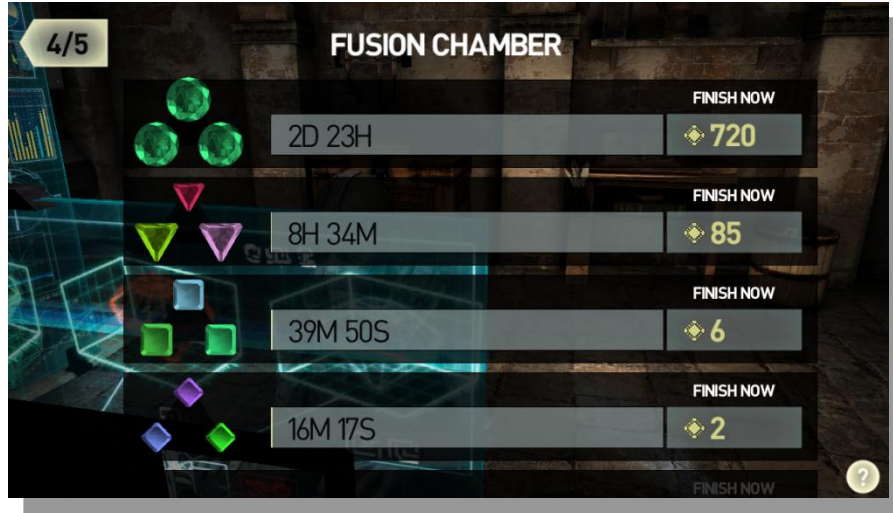
Infinity Blade II: keys cost gold



Infinity Blade III: keys cost chips



# Permanent Upgrades



- Permanent multipliers have special value



# Dragons



•One last giant step

Core Combat

Metagame

Analytics



# Thank You

# CHAIR



POWERED BY



UNREAL  
TECHNOLOGY