



The Pixelles Method

How to Increase Game Dev Diversity NOW

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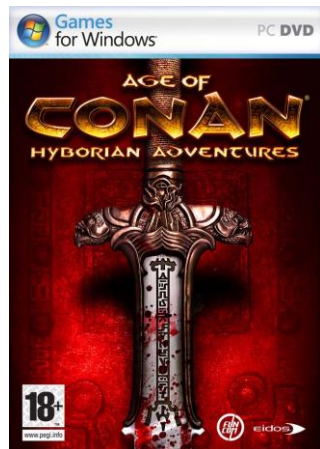
Co-Founder, Pixelles

Creative Director, Kitfox Games

critiques

Context

- Designer (Kitfox Games, Funcom)



Context

- Leadership: Rebecca Cohen Palacios & me
- Funding: Feminists in Games, IGDA Montreal
- Location: Montreal, Canada

What is Pixelles?

Pixelles

- “Incubator”: 10 women each make a game prototype from scratch in 6 weeks
- Mentorship: pairings of would-be female developers with folks in their “dream job”
- Workshops: tools training, jams

Results

Insert charts

Changing the World

Sometimes It Seems Impossible

- “We would have to change all culture, not just games.”
- “We have to wait 20 years.”
- “It starts when we’re babies.”

**EXCUSES AND
COWARDICE!**

More _____ Game Makers

Diversity is bigger than feminism.

Take this and run with it.

More _____ Game Makers

Two lines of attack

Areas of Growth

| Community | Industry |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Self-expression | Career-building |
| Experimentation | Stability |
| Collaborations | Networking |
| Safe Spaces | Prestige |
| Knowledge Sharing | Professional Skills |
| Art, Culture | Commerce |

Why Specialise in _____?

- More effective
 - Every group has special needs/interests
- More appealing
 - “Everything except cis straight able-bodied white guys” isn’t as catchy
- You can (should!) still be intersectional
 - As you know, your minority has a wide range of experiences & interests – include all backgrounds

Quick Note to _____ Devs

- Cis white straight able-bodied white men (et cetera) **can** be part of your thriving community.
- Accept their assistance if/when it helps.
- Decline when it is not.
- **BE VISIBLE.**

Quick Note to Cis Straight Able-bodied White Male Et Cetera

- Thanks for being interested!
- Give leadership to a _____ dev
- Assist
- Listen and support
- Signal boost their visibility

Changing the Community

Changing the Community

Areas of Growth

| Community |
|-------------------|
| Self-expression |
| Experimentation |
| Collaborations |
| Safe Spaces |
| Knowledge Sharing |
| Art, Culture |

Community

- Goal: More (& more visible) _____ makers
- Challenges:
 - Think game-making requires programming
 - Lack knowledge of tools/resources
 - “Never got around to it”
 - Creatively isolated
 - Imposter’s syndrome

Community: Incubator

- Step 1: Find \$800-1200
- Step 2: Find a venue available for 3 hours once a week for 6 weeks
 - Recommended: a small kitchen for snacks
- Step 3: Create & post & advertise application online

Community: Incubator

- Step 3: Create & post & advertise application
- Step 4: Sort applicants. Aim for diversity.
- Step 5: Find available evening for all applicants.

Community: Incubator

- Step 6: Host meetings ([curriculum on pixelles.ca](#)), with final deadline
 - Provide snacks
 - Be supportive! Cheer! Encourage peer-to-peer assistance.
 - **NOT A CLASS:** goal is self-sufficiency
- Step 7: Book showcase venue

Community: Incubator

- Step 8: Host & advertise showcase
- Step 9: Raise visibility of created games & new game makers!
 - Invite them to show at events, festivals, clubs, meet-ups, forums

Goal: More (& more visible) _____ makers

Changing the Industry



Changing the Industry

Areas of Growth

| Industry |
|---------------------|
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Industry

- Goal: More professional _____ developers
- Challenges:
 - Lacking skills/experience
 - Lacking professional network
 - Lacking role models
 - Pre-imposter's syndrome

Industry: Mentorship

- Step 1: Recruit mentors
 - Full-time employed professionals
 - As many disciplines as possible
 - Note down specialties, interests, past projects
 - Physical presence > long-distance > nothing

Commitment: 1 coffee. Q&A and portfolio/resume review *based on their personal experiences*. That is all.

Industry: Mentorship

Your (best) mentors are likely to feel

- undeserving
- inexperienced
- guilty

Reassure: Mentors don't know everything!

Industry: Mentorship

- Step 2: Call for protégés
 - Students
 - Similar professions (web, film, mobile apps, etc)
 - Juniors, QA, anyone

Protégé's responsibility to keep up communications & state the goals!

Industry: Mentorship

- Step 3: Make introductions
- Step 4: After 30-60 days, ask for status from both
 - Some will form bonds. Some won't.
- Step 5: Re-assign as needed

Industry: Mentorship

- Step 6: Recognise your mentors
- Raise visibility of successes!

The Point of This

YOU CAN DO SOMETHING

You have the knowledge. You're at GDC.

You have the interest. You're at this talk.

Start tonight. Start now. **NOW!**



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