GDC SUMMIT, MARCH 2016

WHY, HOW AND WHERE TO SOFT LAUNCH YOUR MOBILE GAME

WHO AM I?

- I've marketed hundreds of casual and mid-core games and worked with a number of great mobile game developers

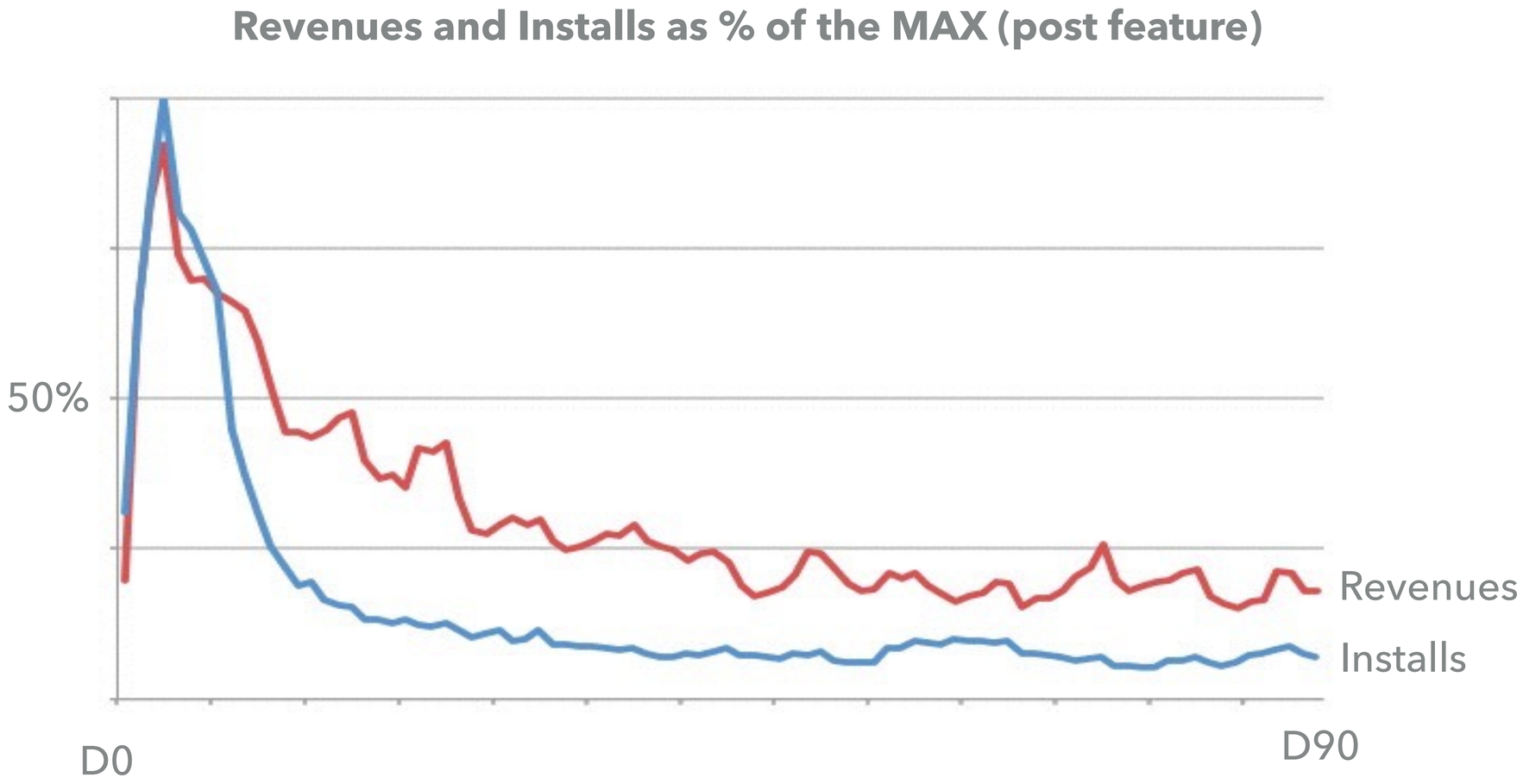
➡WHY SOFT LAUNCH?

WHERE TO SOFT LAUNCH?
HOW TO SOFT LAUNCH

WHY SOFT LAUNCH?

- You only have one launch opportunity and you want to have everything in place for that date
- You want to know upfront where you stand and what effort you should put into the global launch
- You don’t want to follow the same pattern that the majority of mobile game developers follow, which looks like this:

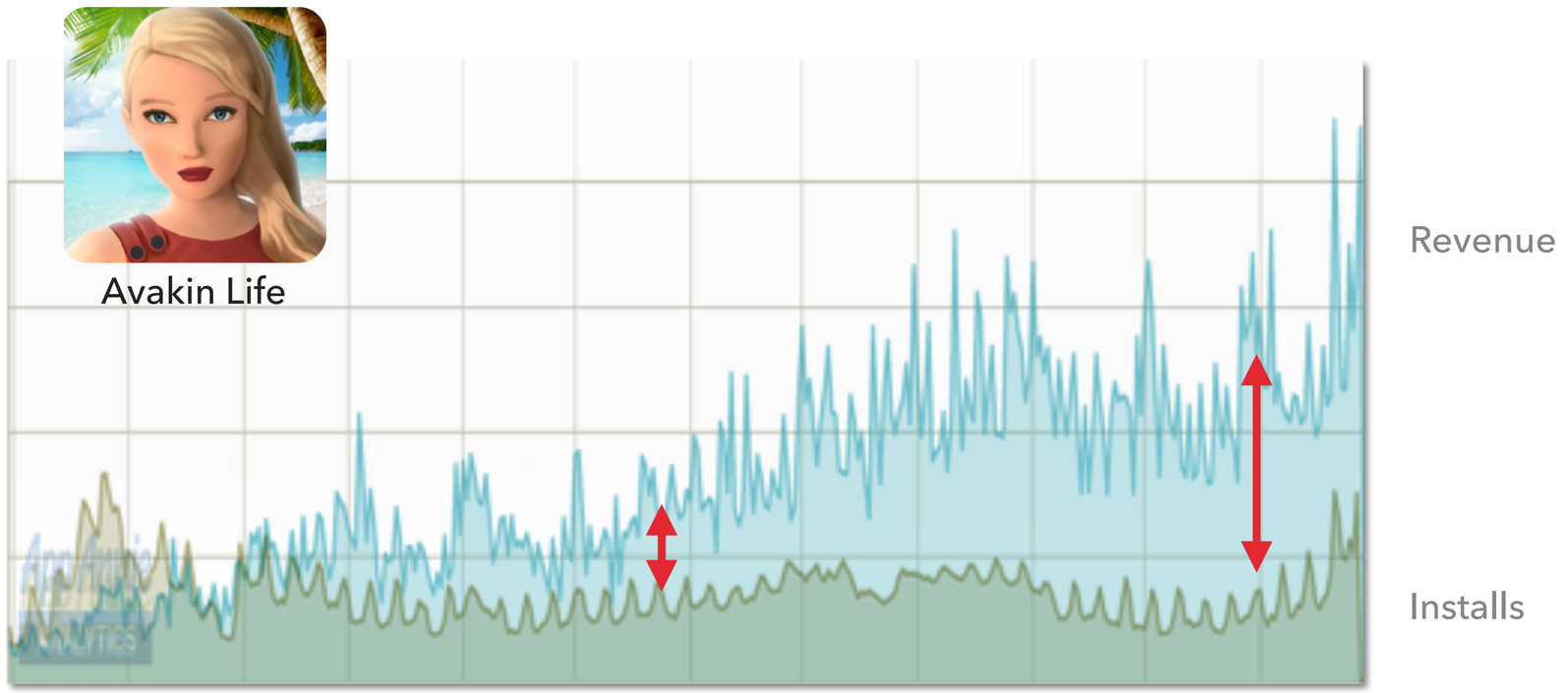
WHY SOFT LAUNCH?



prioridata, 2015

WHY SOFT LAUNCH?

- Games, that are successful see a different pattern:



appannie, 2015

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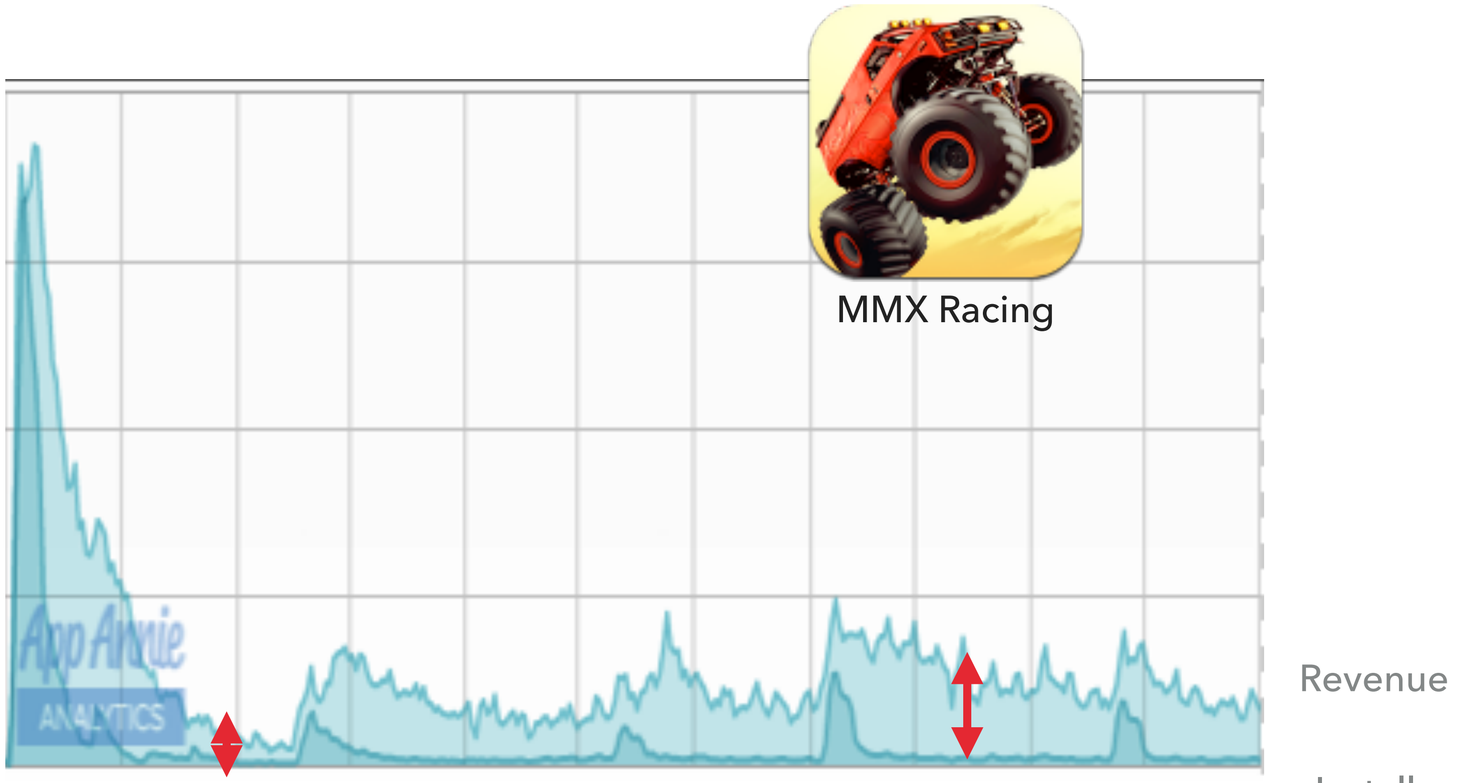
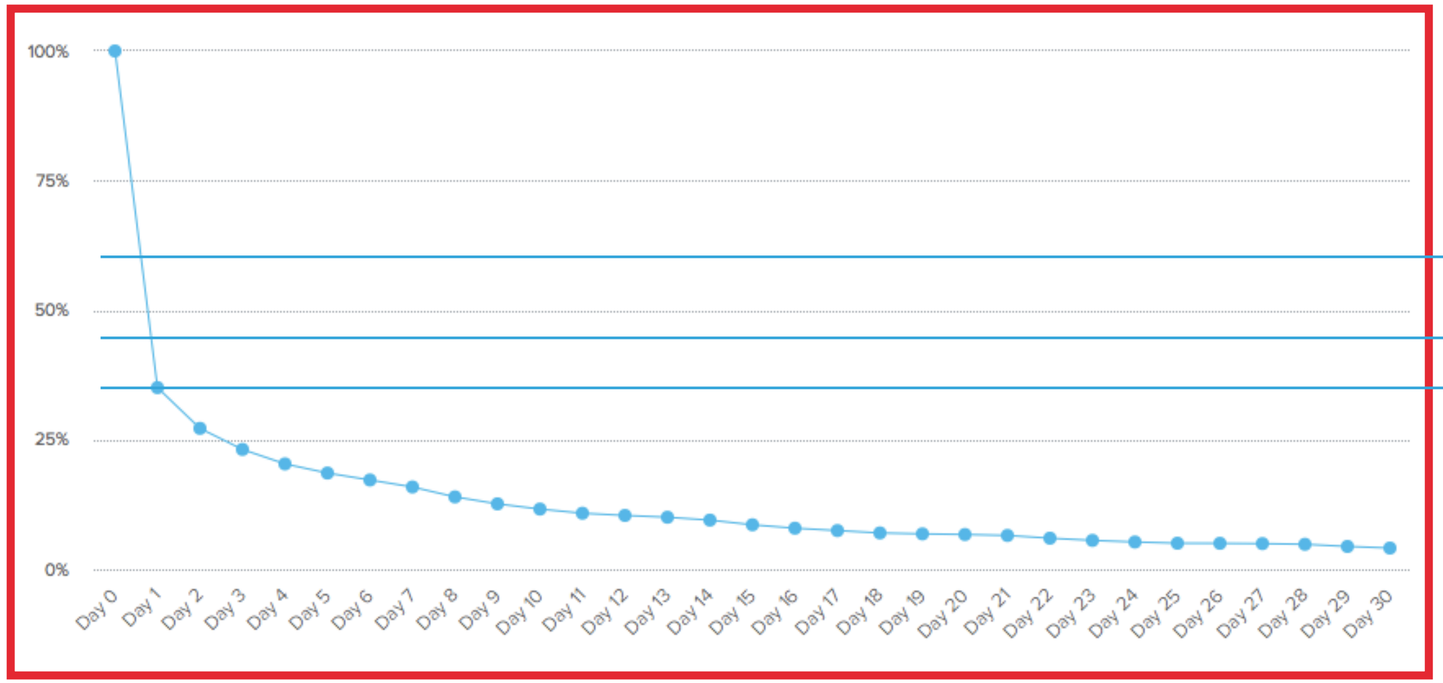


appannie, 2015

WHY SOFT LAUNCH?

- You want to understand your key metrics against a benchmark



Retention Benchmarks

Casual

Arcade/Action

Strategy

WHY SOFT LAUNCH?

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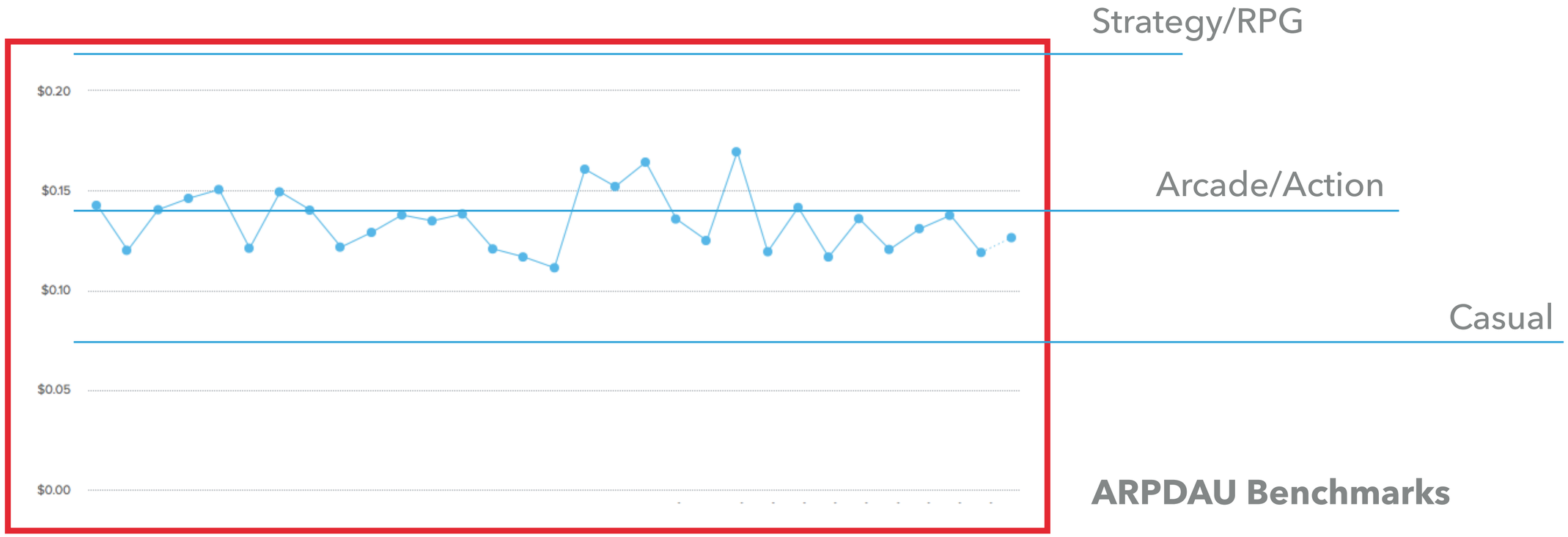

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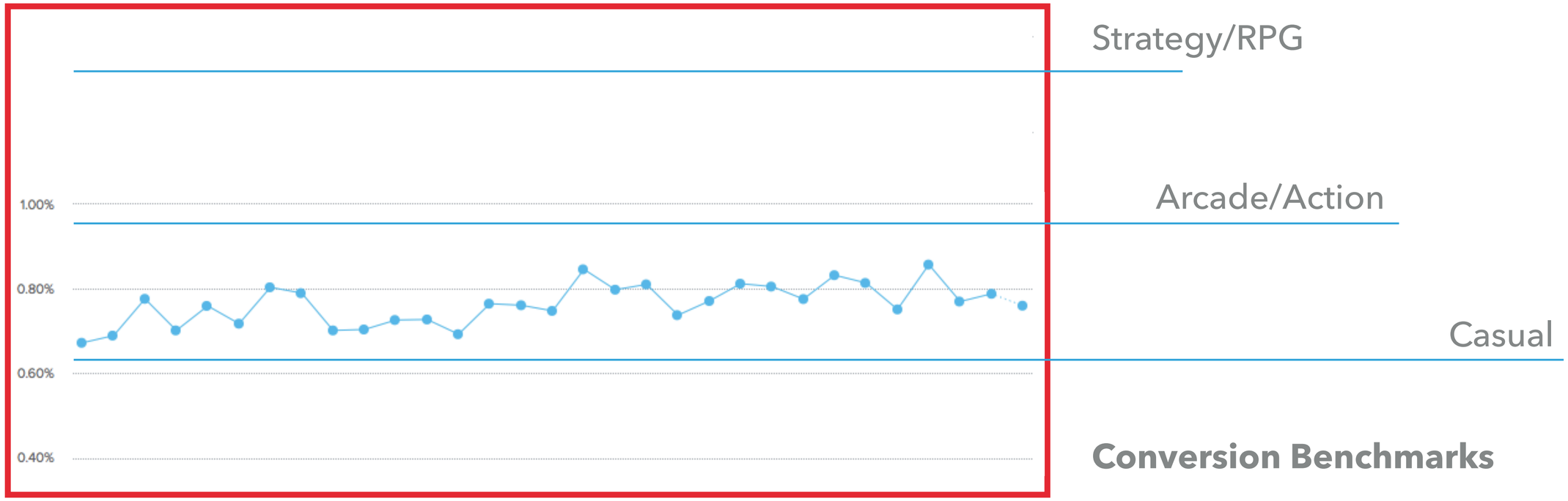

WHY SOFT LAUNCH?

- should a premium game soft launch?

£3.99 Buy

This app is designed for both iPhone and iPad

Crashlands 9+

Butterscotch Shenanigans, LLC >

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This app is designed for both iPhone and iPad

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WHY SOFT LAUNCH?

➡HOW TO SOFT LAUNCH

WHERE TO SOFT LAUNCH?

HOW TO SOFT LAUNCH

- Best Practice - How to conduct a soft launch

PHASE 1

Goal:

Validate “pleasure” of core game loop

PHASE 2

Goal:

Validate key improvements

PHASE 3

Goal:

Validate market potential of game

HOW TO SOFT LAUNCH

- Best Practice - Where to get people

HOW TO SOFT LAUNCH

- Best Practice - How many users do you need?

$$n = \frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})z^2}{ME^2}$$

n = size of sample

p = expected percentage of players (e.g. 36.4% D1 retention)

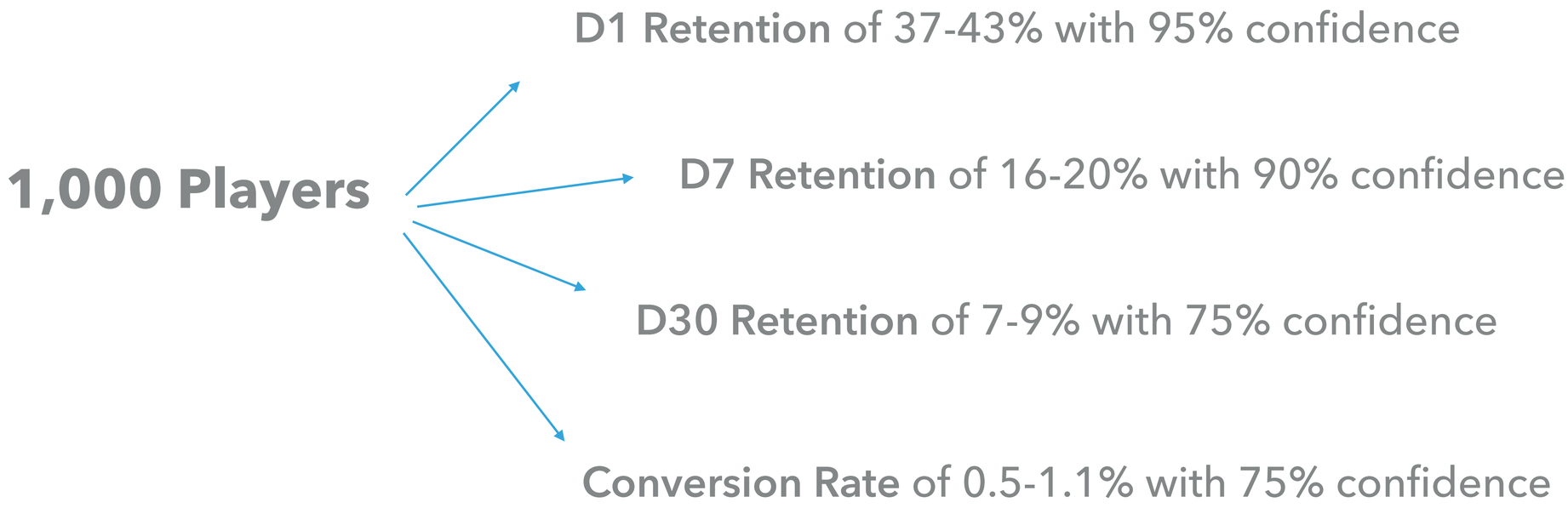
z = z-score (a fixed score that is based on confidence)

ME = margin error (describes a range, e.g. +/- 5%)

www.pilotsoftlaunch.com/sample

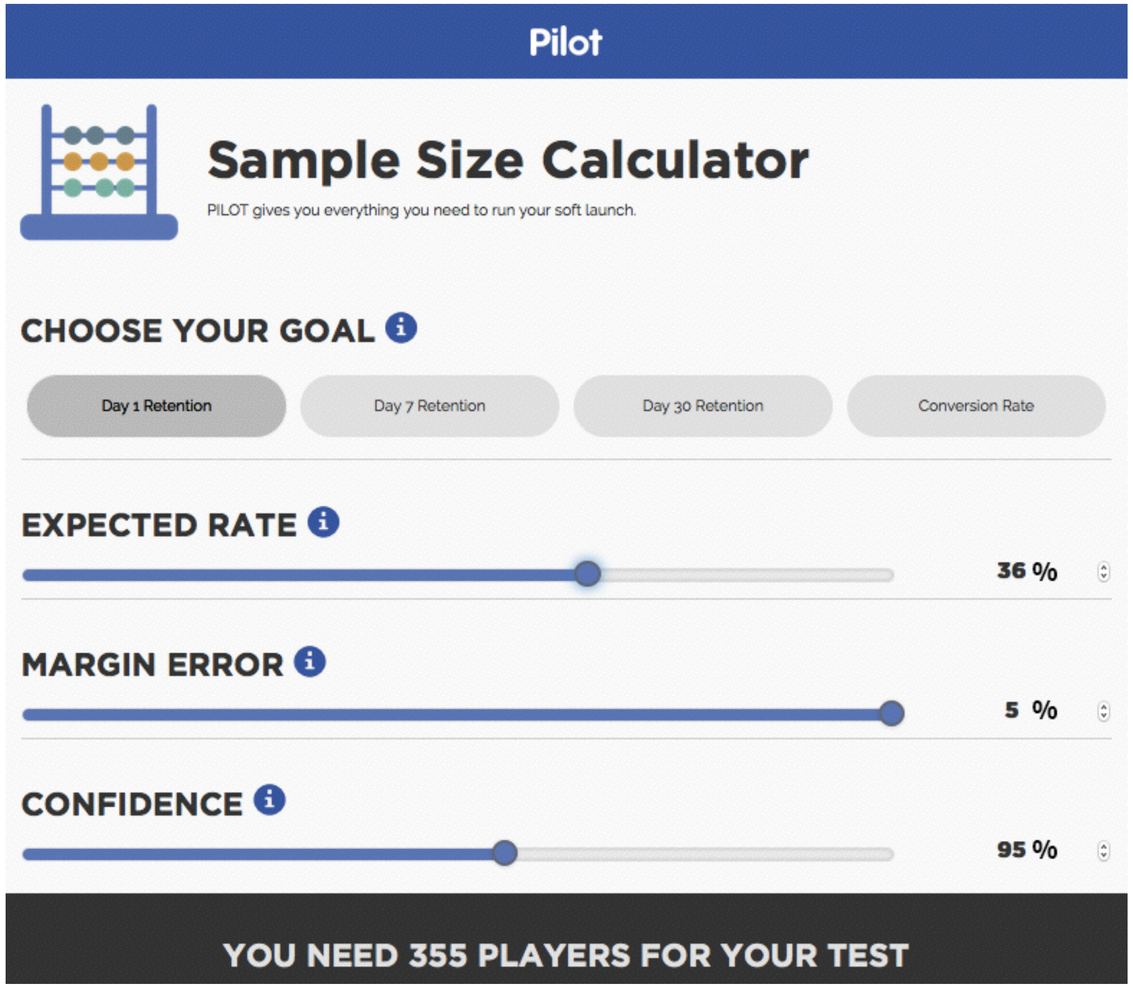
HOW TO SOFT LAUNCH

- What can 1,000 players already tell you about your game?



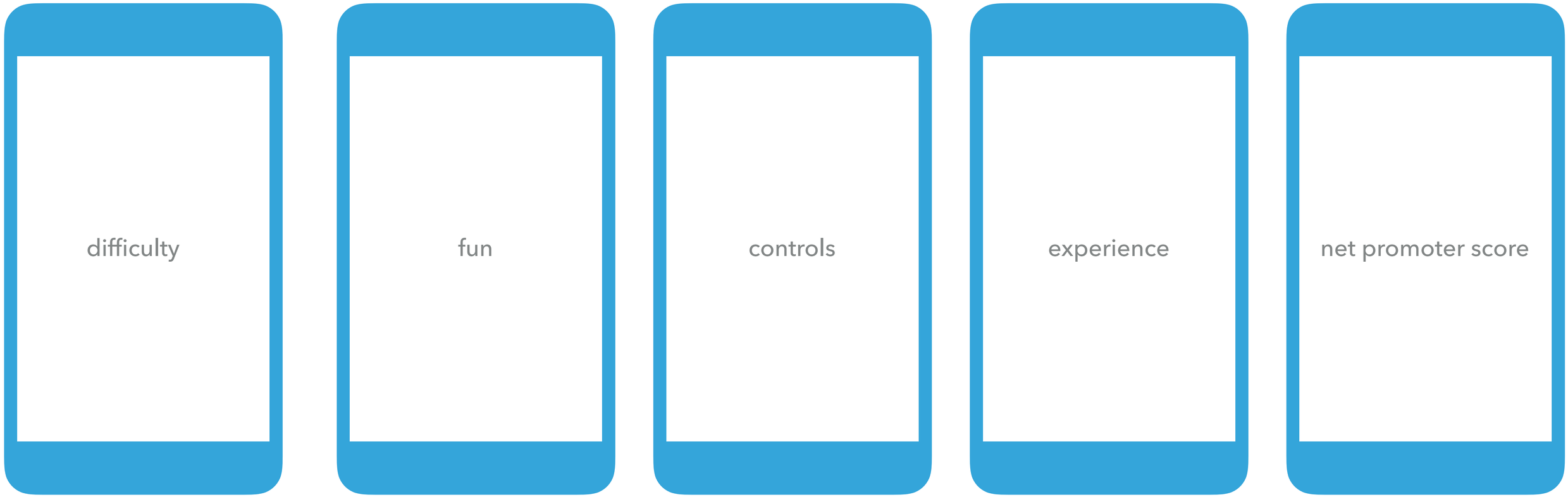
HOW TO SOFT LAUNCH

- Check out pilotsoftlaunch.com/sample



HOW TO SOFT LAUNCH

- Best Practice - How to use surveys for player feedback



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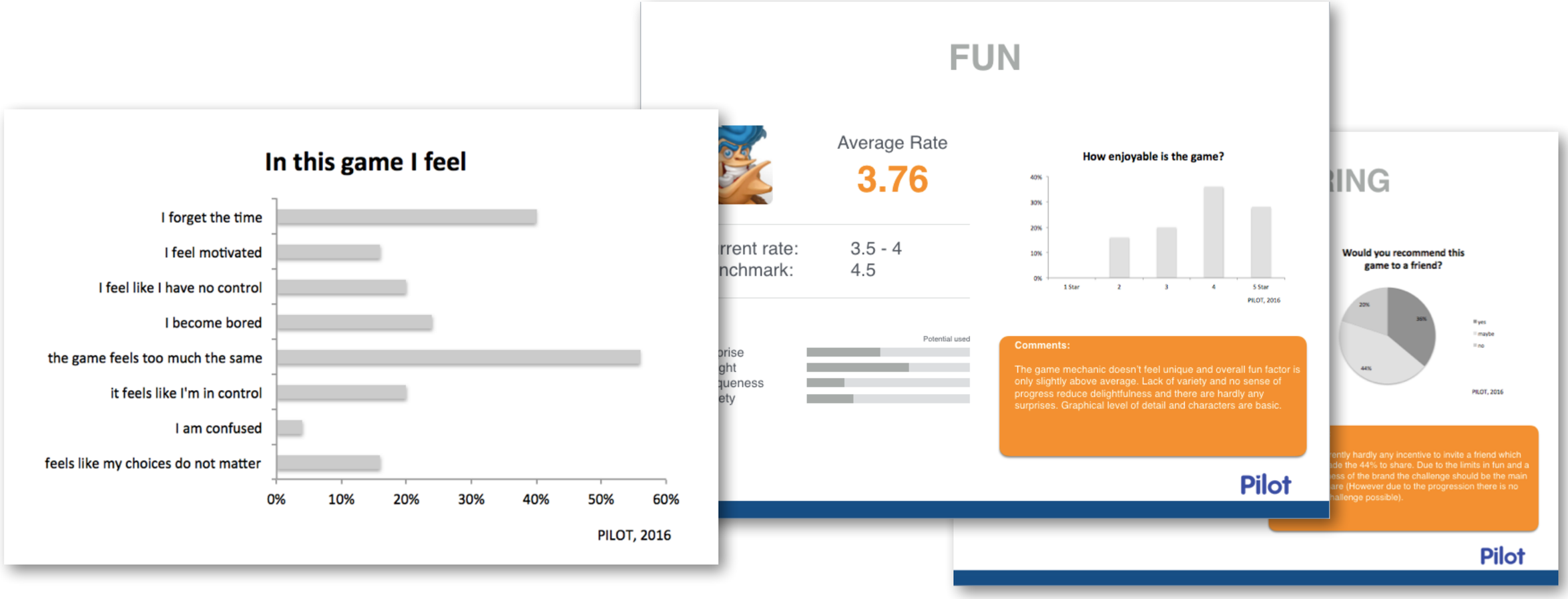

WHY SOFT LAUNCH?
HOW TO SOFTLAUNCH

➡WHERE TO SOFT LAUNCH?

WHERE TO SOFT LAUNCH?

Look at the right markets that

- have high affinity of genre
- are cost efficient
- are a language fit
- meet the OS and device requirements

WHERE TO SOFT LAUNCH?

Draw Path - Android soft launch

Country	In-Period Downloads	In-Period Revenues
United States	80,569,034	$805,747
Brazil	14,311,717	$27,335
Russian Federation	12,650,413	$54,253
Turkey	10,862,293	$19,152
United Kingdom	8,538,306	$55,956
Germany	8,015,354	$87,426
Mexico	6,756,183	$38,405
France	6,715,338	$43,639
Japan	5,716,051	$11,376,958
Canada	4,327,619	$55,491
South Korea	4,276,208	$720,691
Thailand	4,180,236	$56,897
Italy	4,010,008	$36,628

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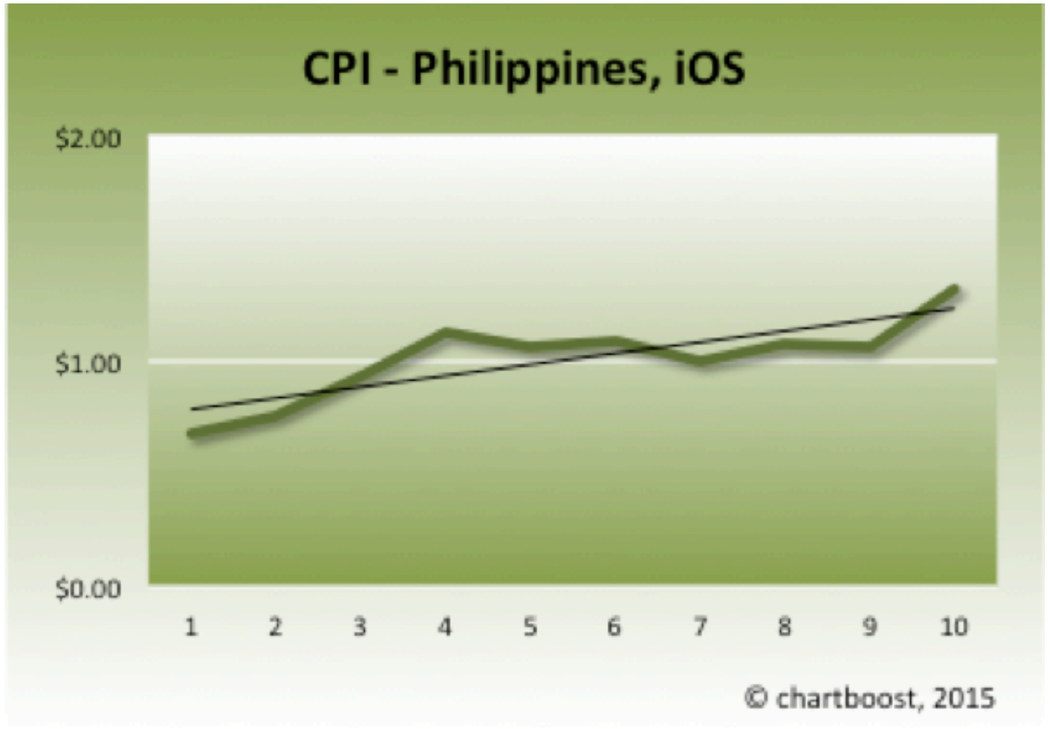
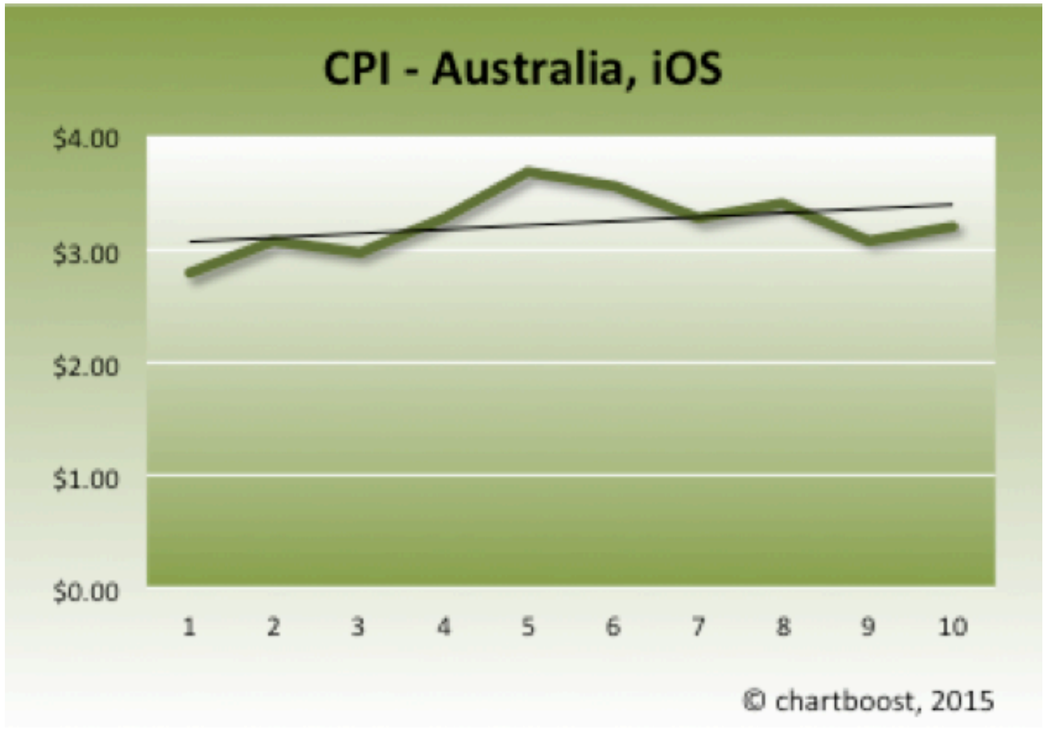
WHERE TO SOFT LAUNCH

- Check and monitor the prices: https://www.chartboost.com/insights/





HOW TO SOFT LAUNCH

- Best Practice - How to conduct a soft launch

Raid HQ

PHASE 1

Launch in PH, VN, NL

Validate D1 and D7

3 builds

relatively cheap

PHASE 2

Launch in NL, DK, SE

Validate retention and conversion

2 builds

reasonably priced

PHASE 3

Launch in AU, CA

Validate retention and conversion

1 build

expensive

mobilize

THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION

@_oliverkern_

www.mobilizemygame.com