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SimCity BuildIt - What did I Learn as a Game Designer?

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About Me

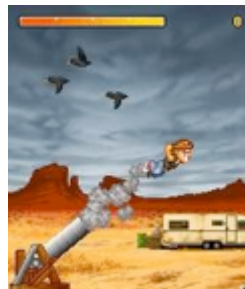
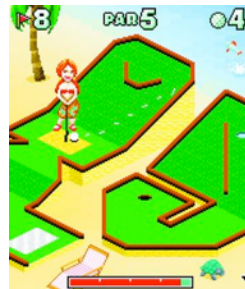
- Creative Director at tracktwenty

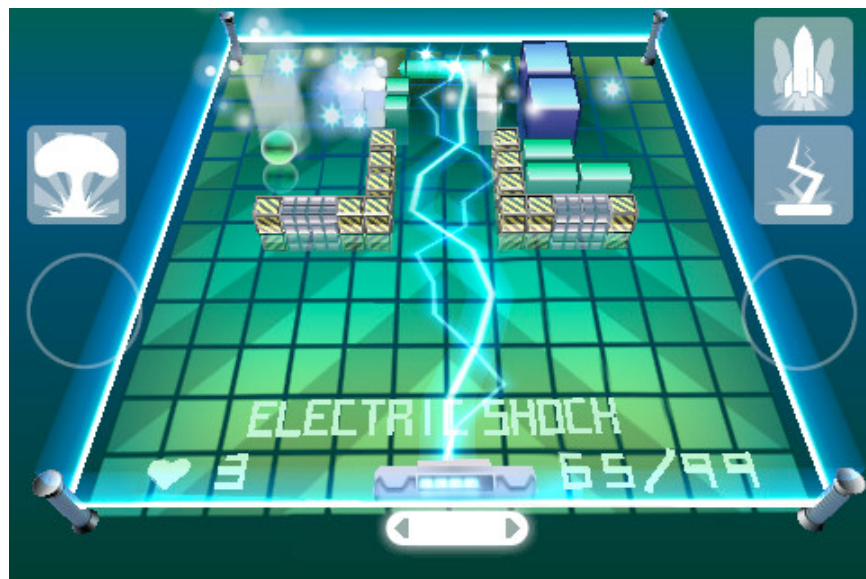




About Me

- Game Designer since 2003







SMARTPHONE & TABLET GAMES

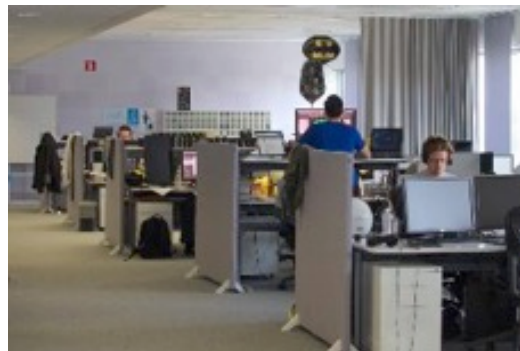
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EA tracktwenty

- EA's mobile game studio in Helsinki, Finland
- Established in 2012
- Fully focused on Mobile



SIMCITY

BUILD IT



Tap on the blue thought bubbles and collect important Special Items.



Overview

- 4 Design Challenges
 - The Trickiest Design Dilemmas
 - What did I learn as a Game Designer?
- What was Really the Key to Success?
 - Key takeaway?



1st Design Challenge: Classic IP





Pros



Cons



1st Design Challenge: Classic IP

- What did I learn?
 - Understand the DNA of the IP, design from scratch
 - Platform defines how the game should play
 - Adaptation or “port” won’t be enough
 - Communicate – Don’t forget expectations of fans



2nd Design Challenge: F2P





2nd Design Challenge: F2P

- What did I learn?
 - Offer value to players – think players first
 - Make them want to play and... pay
 - Launch is just a beginning. Both new content and new features are must for a live service



3rd Design Challenge: Mobile UX





3rd Design Challenge: Mobile UX

- How to fit all information on a small screen?
- How to build a city with touch controls?
- How to support mobile UX?





3rd Design Challenge: Mobile UX

- What did I learn?
 - Design == UI
 - Simplify, simplify, simplify
 - Abandon conventions from old platforms
 - Touch Controls need countless iteration rounds
 - Embrace typical mobile usage patterns, e.g. short sessions, playing when commuting...



4th Design Challenge: Open-Ended Simulation





4th Design Challenge: Open-Ended Simulation

- What is time?
- What happens to your city when you close the app?
- How is your City talking to you?





4th Design Challenge: Open ended Simulation

- What did I learn?
 - Illusion and perception are more important than what's happening under the hood
 - Don't overdo
 - Communication is the key... UX/UI!



Success Factors??





Importance Of Team Culture

- Trust
- Passion
- Never give up

No F2P Horror

- Don't waste your time with insignificant questions
- Team wide passion for F2P





Design Process Revisited

- No Lone Designer
- Everybody's a Game Designer
- Brutally Frank Design Culture





Importance of User testing

- As early as possible
- Magic If...
- As a Player...
- Players First





Wrap Up!

- Leverage the pros of the IP
- Importance of Team Culture
- Maximize Design Agility
- User Testing For The Win!





Key Takeaway?

Importance of User testing





Thank You!

Questions?

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