



INDEPENDENT GAMES
SUMMIT

Build Your Own Fan Club

How to use your email list

Chris Zukowski
Creative Director
Return To Adventure Mountain

GDC

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE

MARCH 18-22, 2019 | #GDC19

HALLOWEEN

1989



Caption: When I was 9, I was a total Nintendo Kid:



NINTENDO POWER

July/August 1990 \$3.99

Super Mario 2

20-Page Spectacular

Zelda – Second Quest
In-Depth Review

Baseball Roundup

Over 50 Pro Tips



HYRULE: THE LIGHT WORLD

The Kingdom of Hyrule has many regions and many secrets in each of those regions. The overworld shown here is just the surface. Caves, dungeons, castles and buildings contain many hidden levels. Explore each of the eight regions in greater detail in the following pages. If you fulfill the tasks here, you'll be ready to move ahead to the Dark World.



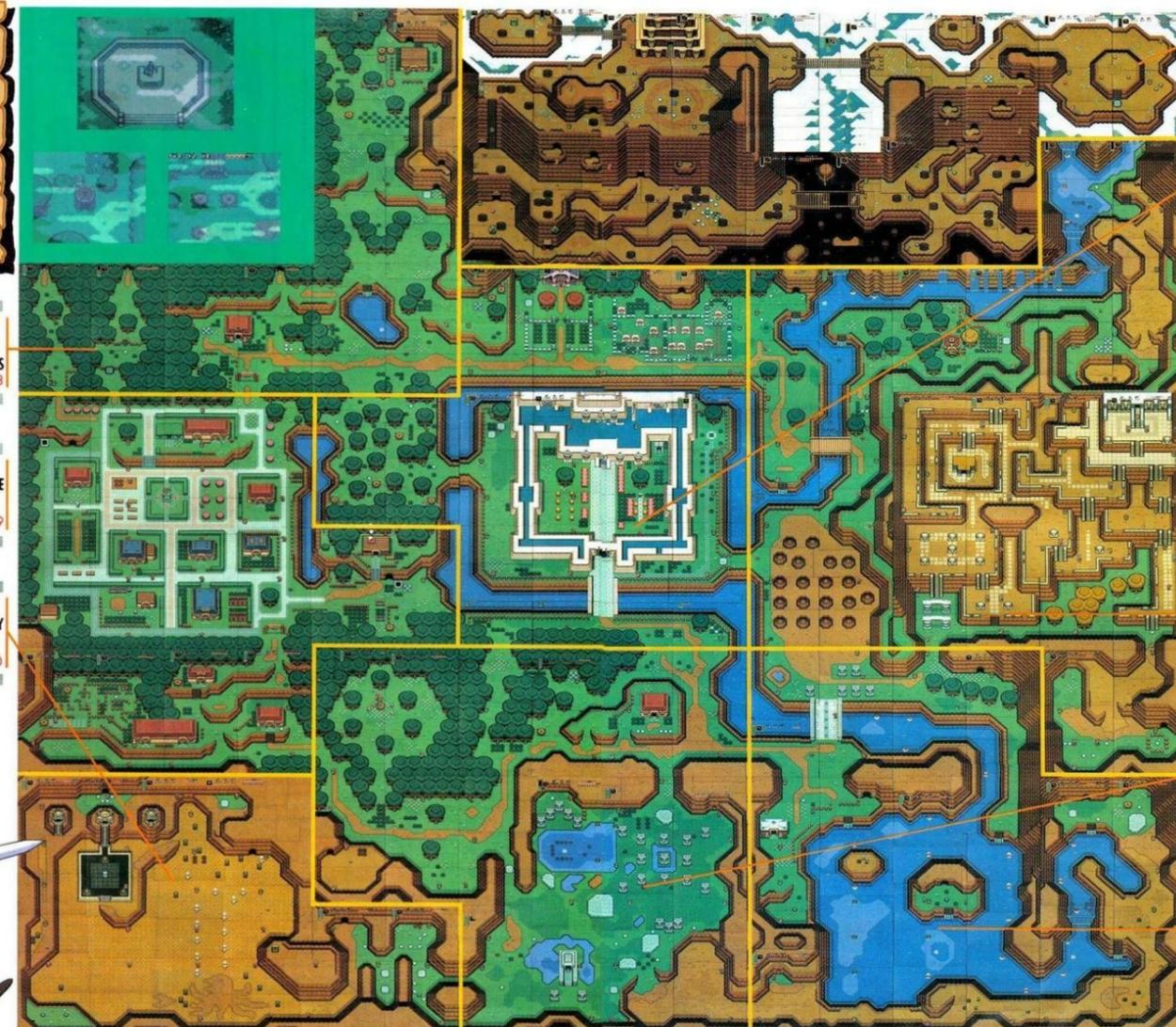
LOST WOODS & OUTER WOODLANDS
▶ PAGE 88



KAKARIKO VILLAGE & OUTSKIRTS
▶ PAGE 89



DESERT OF MYSTERY & THE CANYONS
▶ PAGE 90



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA
A LINK TO THE PAST

DEATH MOUNTAIN & THE FOOTHILLS
▶ PAGE 91



CASTLE OF HYRULE & SURROUNDINGS
▶ PAGE 92



EASTERN PALACE & VICINITY
▶ PAGE 93



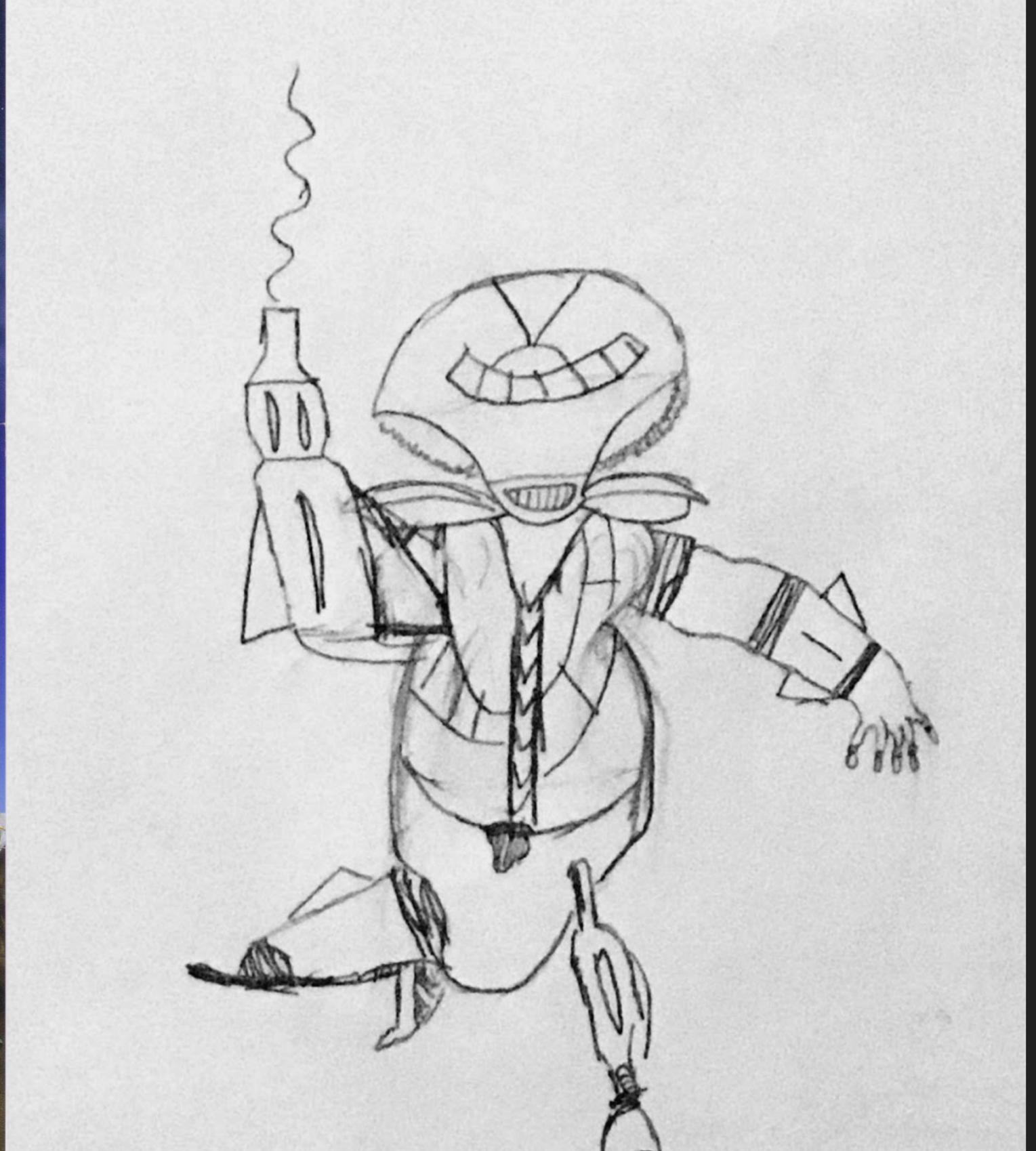
GREAT SWAMP & ENVIRONS
▶ PAGE 94



LAKE HYLIA & SURROUNDING SHORELANDS
▶ PAGE 95



Caption: And Nintendo Power was my bible. It was 100+ pages of just Nintendo Info.



Caption: They had posters that influenced my artistic ability

Graphics, Storwize, SVC, Dallas

USB Flash Drives -

Requirements for graphics
Need graphic of inserting a USB into the port

Enable Encryption

Welcome

USB Flash Drives

Summary



Insert 2 USB flash drives into the system.

[>Show details](#)

0 of 2 encryption keys detected

[< Back](#) [Next](#) [Cancel](#)

As soon as the usb drives are inserted the keys are detected

Next is disabled until the requisite number of USB flash drives are connected

Handwritten notes on a whiteboard:

- ID
- State
- Unassigned MDisks
- ndisk 0 ✓
- ndisk 1 ✓
- ndisk 2 ✓
- ndisk 3 ✓
- ndisk 4 ✓
- Pool 1
- Shield
- Arrows pointing from Unassigned MDisks to Pool 1
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 4
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 0
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 1
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 2
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 3
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 4
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 0
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 1
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 2
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 3
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 4
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 0
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 1
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 2
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 3
- Arrows pointing from Pool 1 to ndisk 4

Storwize: assign dialog

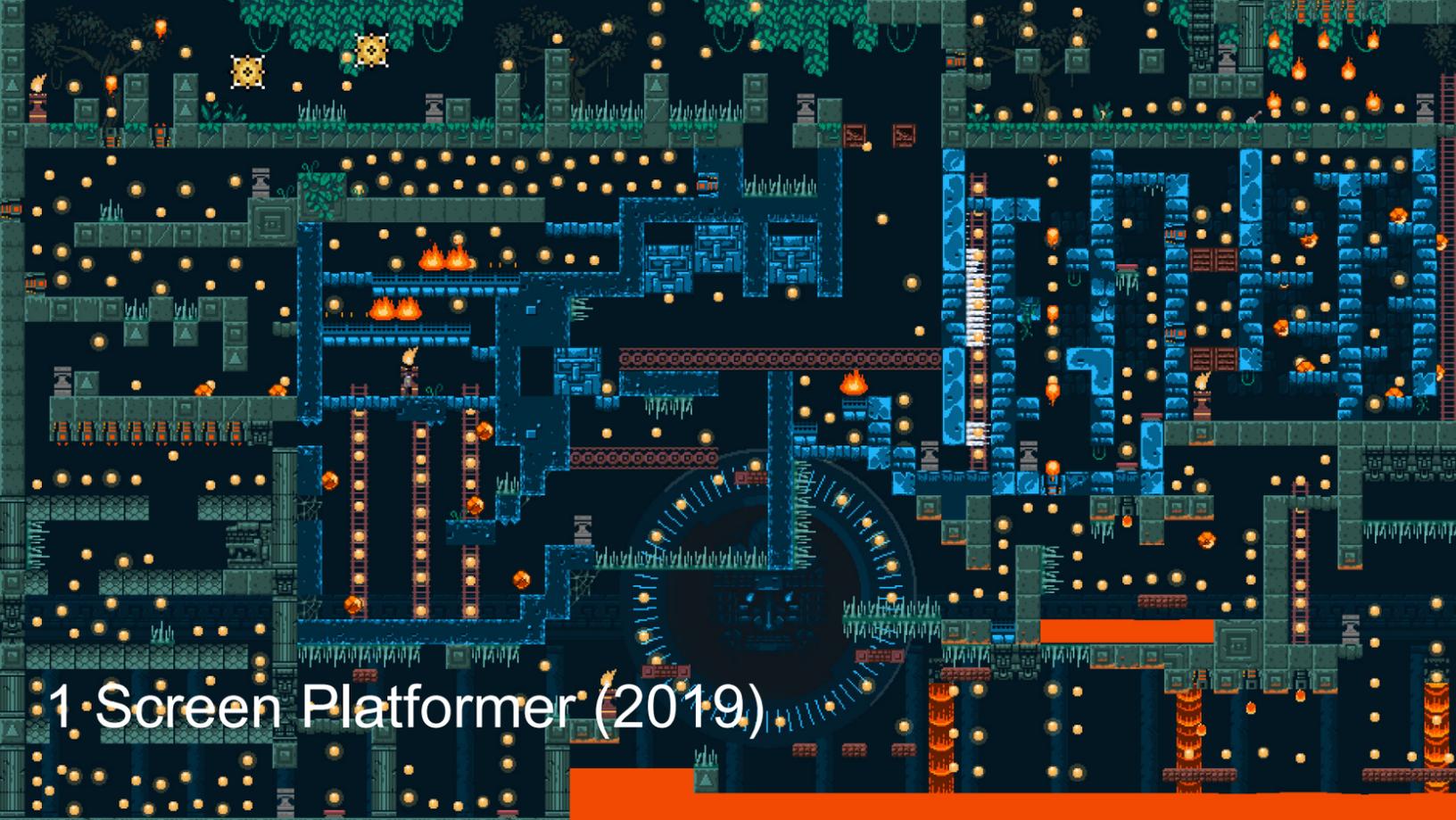


Common configurations are listed at top. Users could toggle between these presets

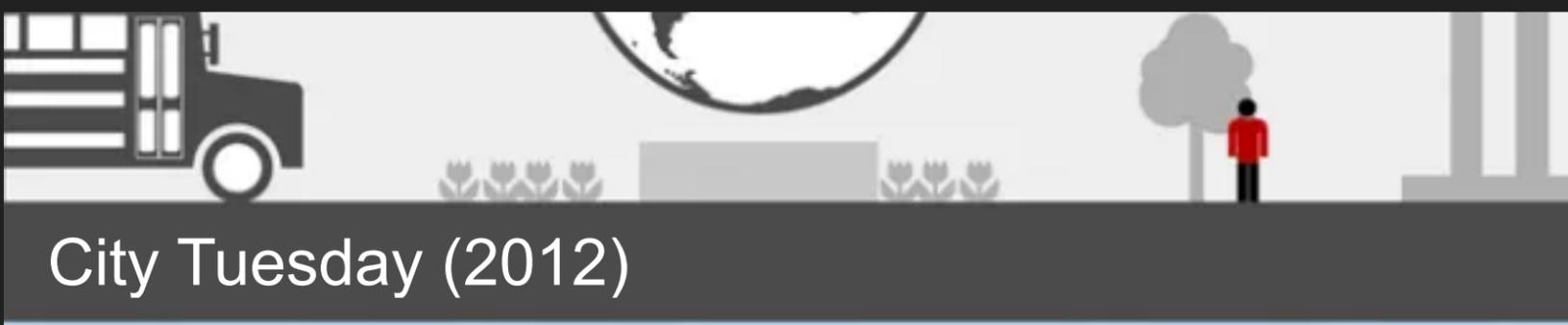


Caption: When I grew up I became a UX designer and study how people use technology.

Aligned spinner dialogs so users could quickly move down the list clicking up to add what they wanted.



Caption: But I also make indie games

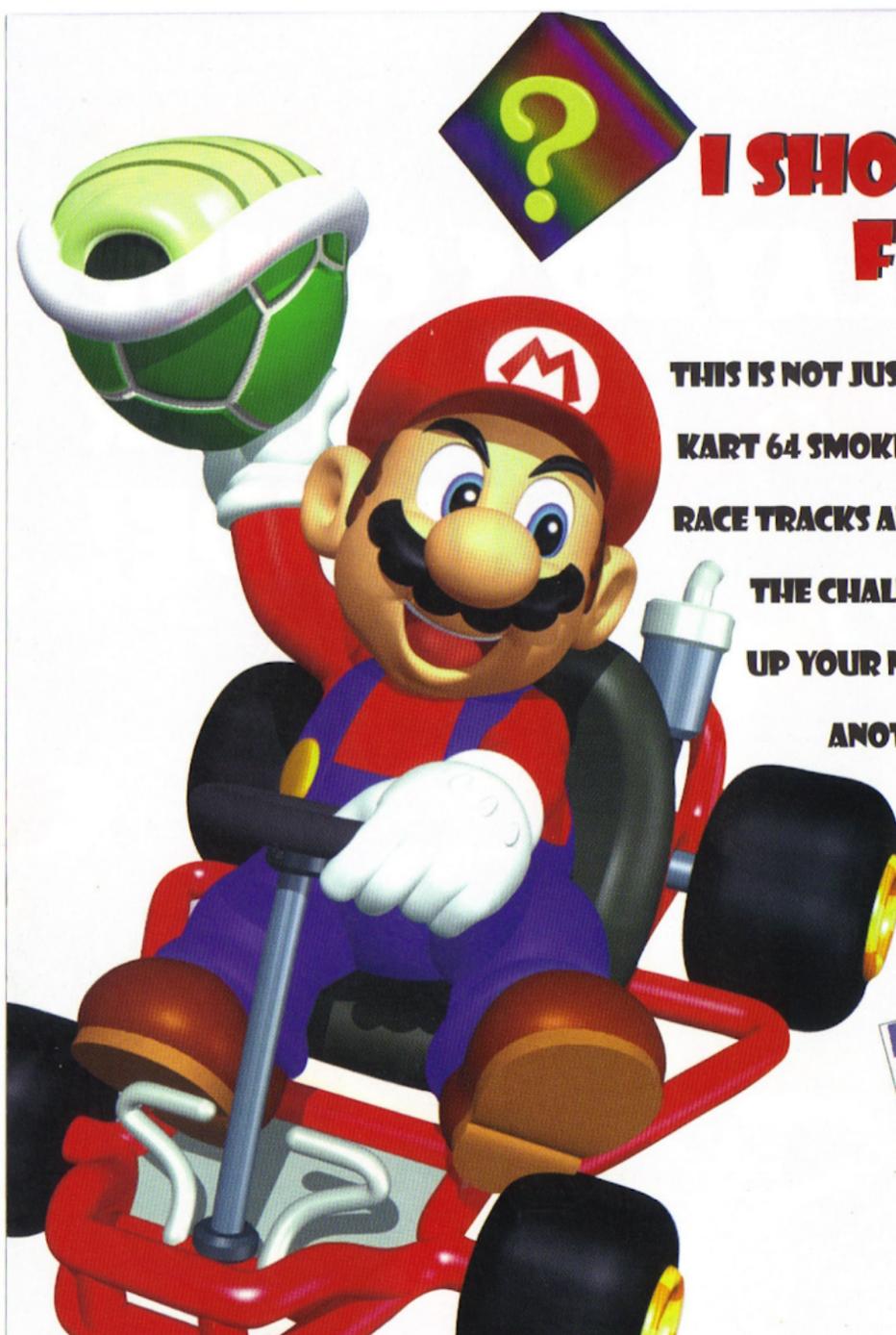


HowToMarketAGame.com/GDCC2019

Director's cut

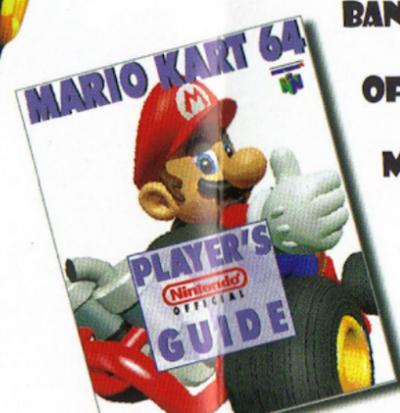
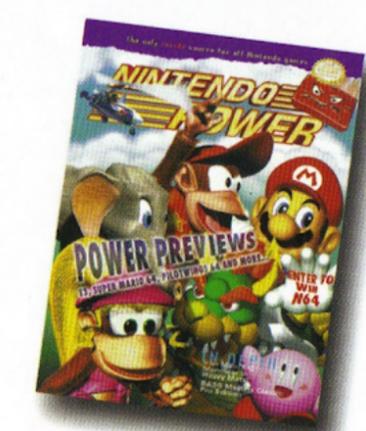
And a free book

Caption: I couldn't fit everything into this presentation. For an unabridged version of these slides and a free book go to this link.



I SHOT THE SHELL, BUT I DIDN'T FLING NO BANANA PEEL!

THIS IS NOT JUST ANOTHER RACING GAME. OH, NO, PARNELLI! MARIO KART 64 SMOKES TIRES LIKE NO GAME HAS BEFORE. SIXTEEN UNIQUE RACE TRACKS AND FOUR AWESOME BATTLE MODE ARENAS PROVIDE ALL THE CHALLENGE YOU CAN HANDLE. COMPETING IS EASY, JUST FIRE UP YOUR N64. HOWEVER, WINNING RACES CONSISTENTLY IS ANOTHER STORY. THE MARIO KART 64 PLAYER'S GUIDE IS YOUR TICKET TO SPEED! (AND IT'S A LOT BETTER THAN A SPEEDING TICKET!) WANNA LEARN WHERE ALL THE TRICKY SPOTS ARE? HOW ABOUT THE BEST PLACES TO DROP BANANAS AND SHOOT SHELLS? JUST SIGN UP FOR A YEAR'S WORTH OF NINTENDO POWER AT \$19.95* AND WE'LL SLIDE A COPY OF THE MARIO KART 64 PLAYER'S GUIDE RIGHT INTO YOUR MAILBOXABSOLUTELY FREE!



**SUBSCRIBE NOW.
CALL 1-800-255-3700**

*CANADIAN RESIDENTS PAY \$27.95.

SIGN ME UP NOW!

- CHECK HERE IF YOU ARE RENEWING YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
- MEMBER #
- YES! I WANT 12 ISSUES OF NINTENDO POWER PLUS A FREE MARIO KART 64 PLAYER'S GUIDE FOR \$19.95 U.S. (\$27.95 CANADIAN FUNDS)!***
 - YES! I WANT 2 YEARS OF NINTENDO POWER PLUS A FREE MARIO KART 64 PLAYER'S GUIDE FOR \$36.95 U.S. (\$51.95 CANADIAN FUNDS)!***
 - YES! I WANT 3 YEARS OF NINTENDO POWER PLUS A FREE MARIO KART 64 PLAYER'S GUIDE FOR \$49.95 U.S. (\$69.95 CANADIAN FUNDS)!* SAVE \$9.90 OFF THE ONE YEAR RATE!**
- *PRICES LISTED INCLUDE ALL APPLICABLE TAXES. PLEASE ALLOW 4-6 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY. ENCLOSE THIS ORDER FORM WITH YOUR PAYMENT OR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION IN A STAMPED ENVELOPE AND MAIL TO:

**NINTENDO POWER®
P.O. BOX 97043
REDMOND, WA 98073-9743**

CANADIAN RESIDENTS: REMEMBER TO USE AN INTERNATIONAL POSTAGE STAMP.
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY WITH INK

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------|--|----------------|--|--------------------|--|-------------|--|
| FIRST NAME | | | | LAST NAME | | | |
| STREET NUMBER | | | | STREET NAME | | | |
| CITY | | STATE PROVINCE | | ZIP | | POSTAL CODE | |
| PHONE NO. | | | | BIRTH DATE: MMDDYY | | | |

I'M PAYING FOR THIS MEMBERSHIP BY (CHECK ONE):

CHECK OR MONEY ORDER
PAYABLE TO NINTENDO (PLEASE DON'T STAPLE YOUR PAYMENT TO THE ORDER FORM. AND PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH. SENDING CASH WILL HOLD UP PROCESSING OF ORDER.)

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| VISA <input type="checkbox"/> | MASTERCARD <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| CREDIT CARD NUMBER | | EXPIRATION DATE | |
| CARDHOLDER'S FIRST NAME | | LAST NAME | |

Caption: Now that I make games, and study marketing, I realize Nintendo Power was a giant advertisement.

METROID

RETURN OF SAMUS™



Caption: But I don't mind. It was really cool!

TIPS ON NEW GAMES
STRAIGHT FROM THE PROS!

SUBSCRIBE TODAY
1-800-521-0900

©1992 NINTENDO OF AMERICA INC.



Caption: And now I want to teach you in this talk how you can market your game in the same positive way that Nintendo Power did.

FUNNELNELS

Caption: But first we need to start with Funnels.

↑ 51 points · 8 months ago

↓ The game actually had some organic buzz a couple years ago and then the devs fell off the face of the planet. I actually thought they quietly cancelled the project until I saw it on steam the week it released.

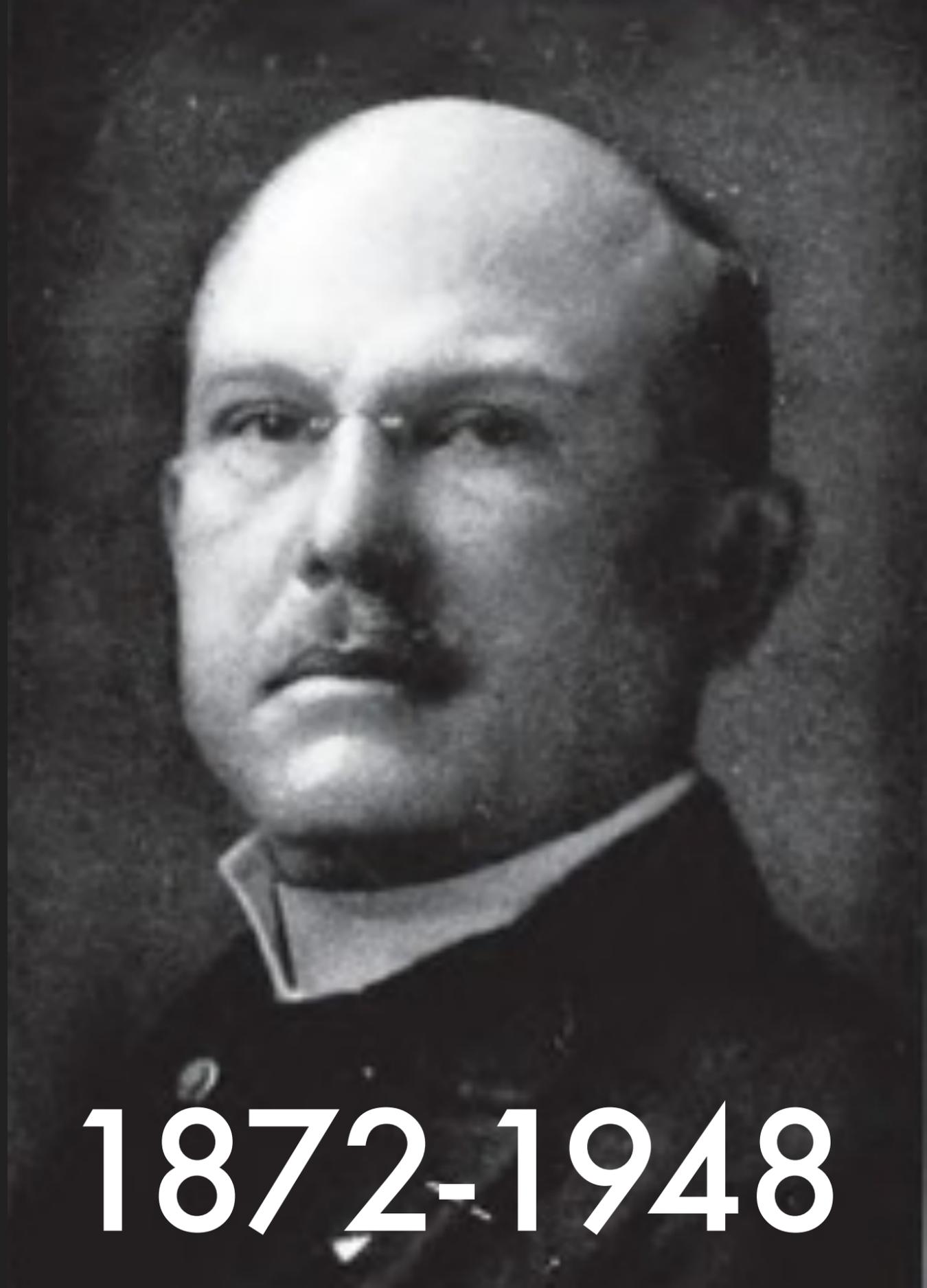
Share Report Save Give gold

Caption: This is a typical comment from a failed game postmortem.

Elias

St. Elmo

Lewis



1872-1948

Sales Funnel



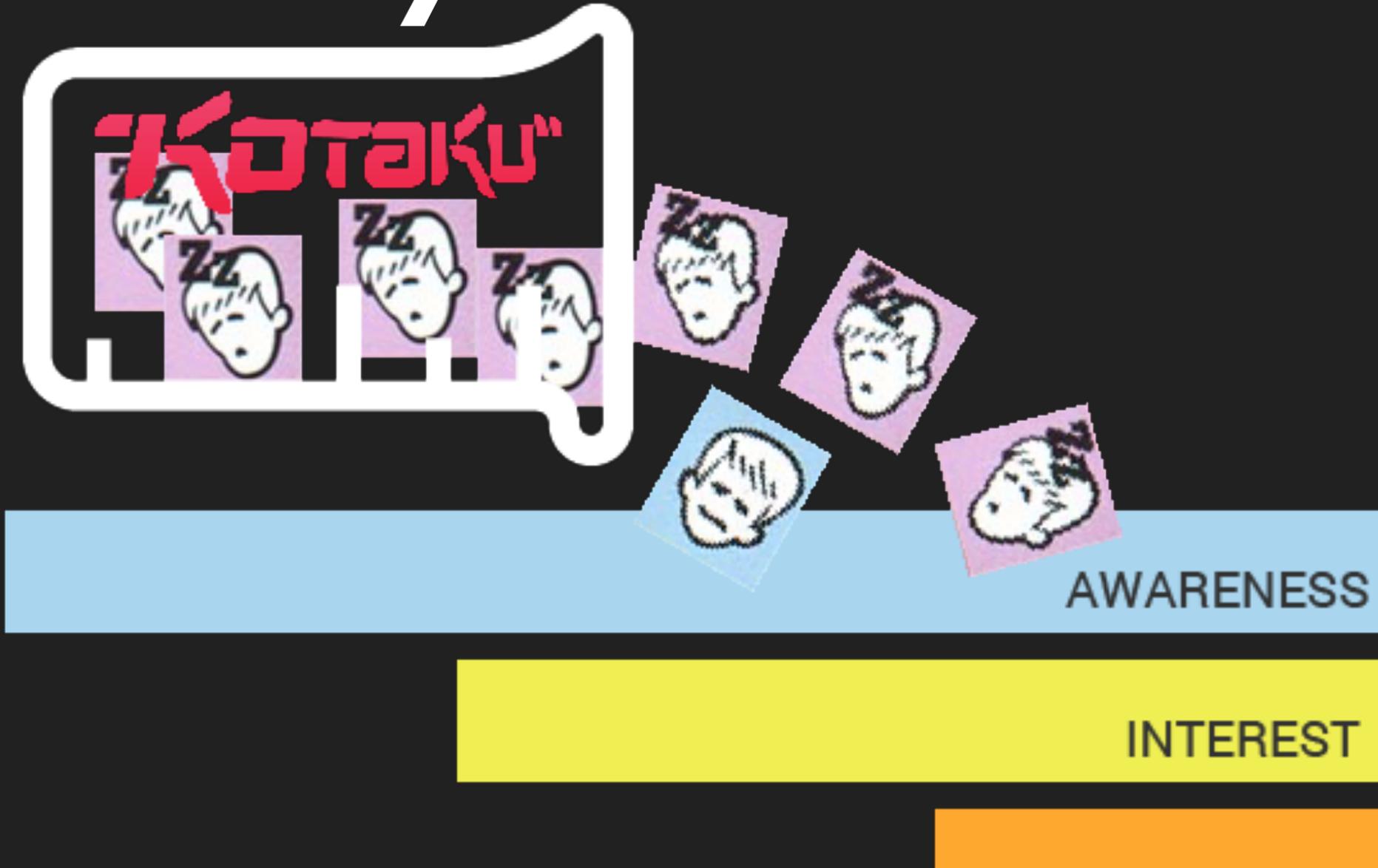
Caption: Elias St. Elmo Lewis invented the funnel. It has 4 stages.

Unaware Aware Interested Desire Customer



Caption: You can think of the funnel in terms of mental state of the customer.

This is why it is a funnel



Caption: It is called a funnel because potential players are “poured” on the top and they trickle down.

Lesson:

How a person moves
through a funnel

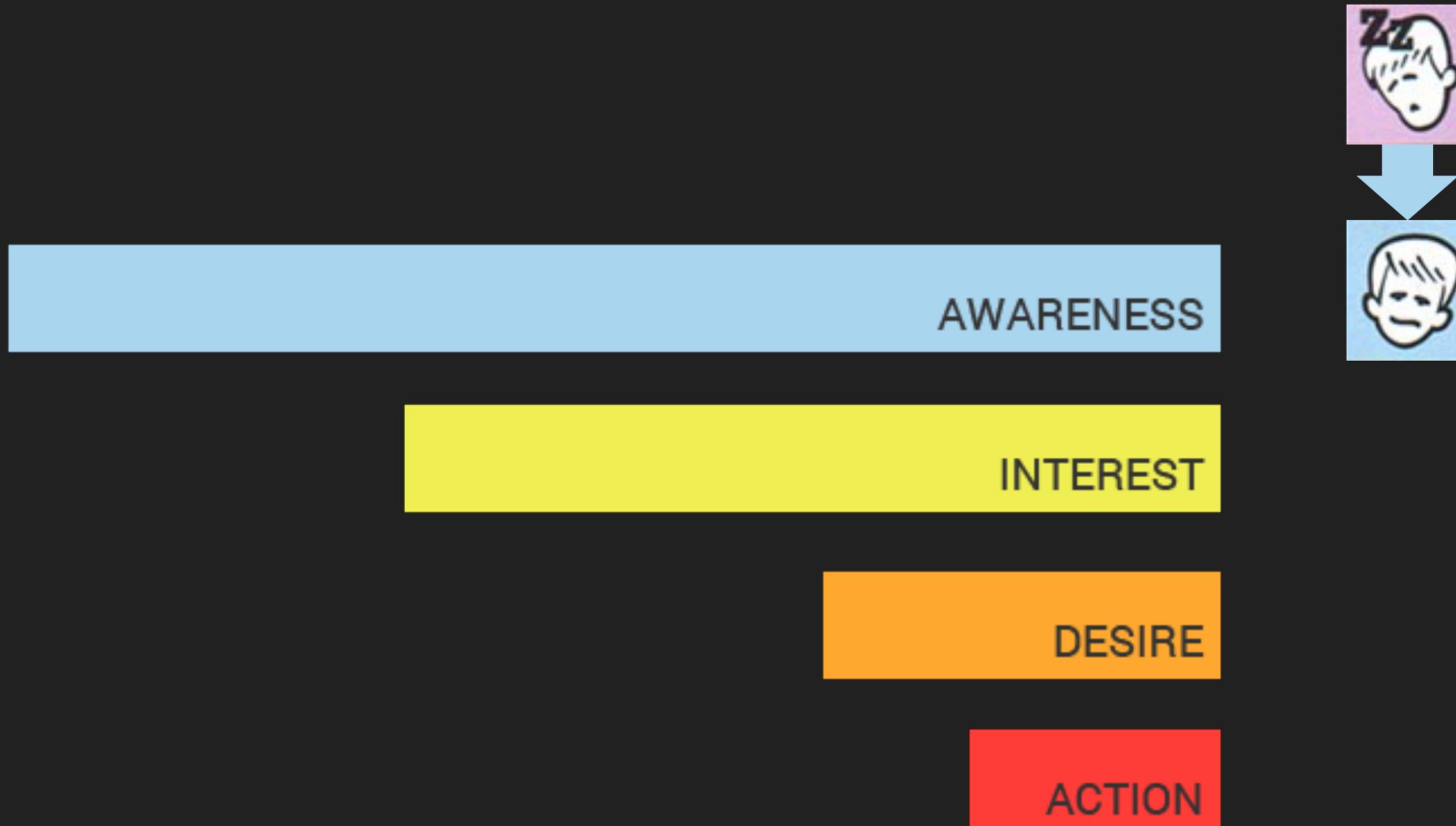
We are making an RTS

Caption: Let's follow Person A as she interacts with the marketing of a theoretical RTS.



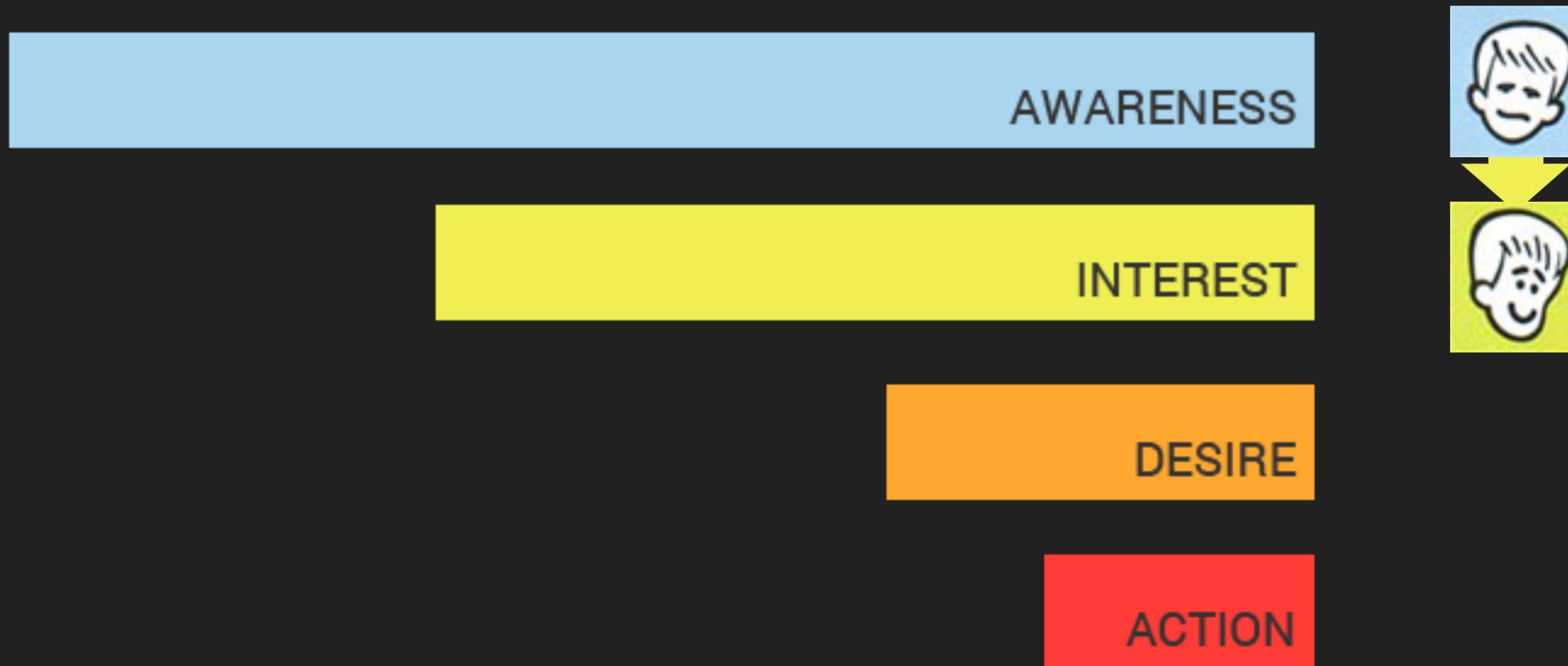
Person A

Reads a preview of our game



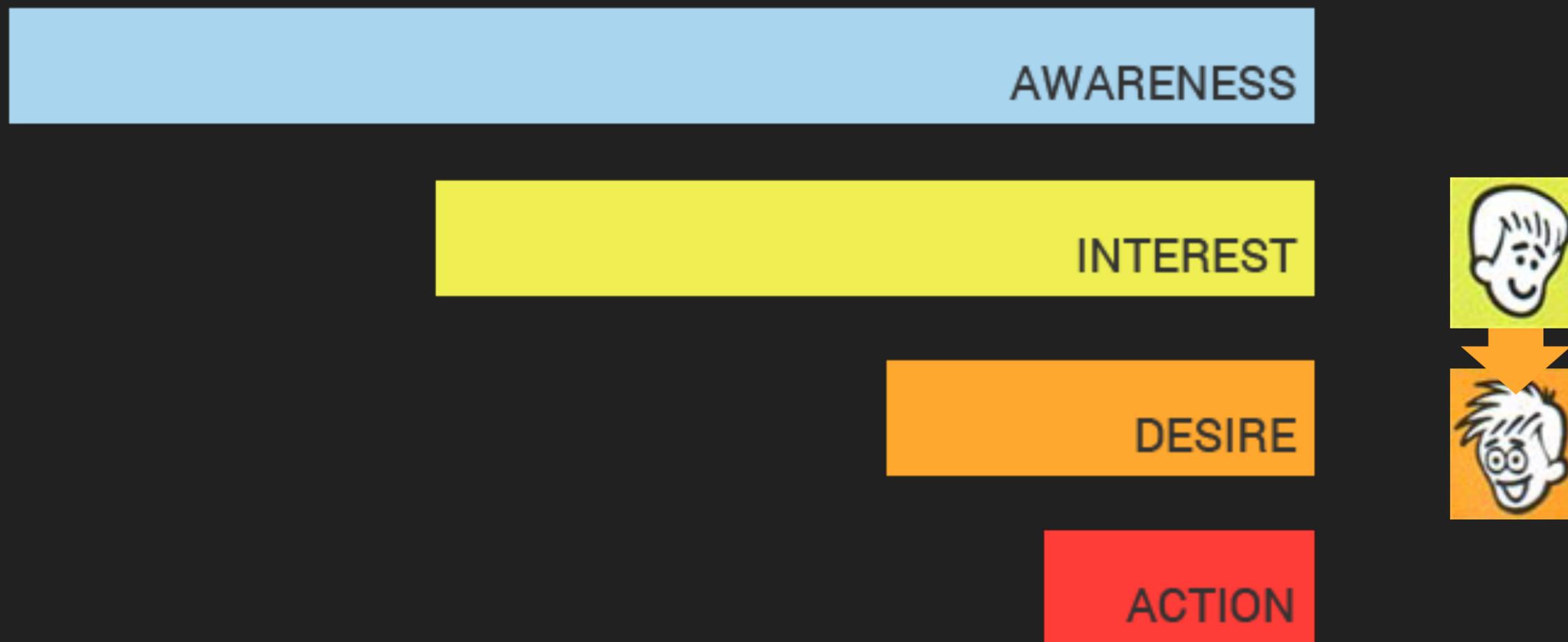
Caption: Person A goes from unaware to aware after reading a preview of our game.

Visits your website & finds FAQ



Caption: Person A becomes interested after reading our website.

Subscribes to your Twitch stream



Caption: Person A desires our game after watching us play it on twitch 3 times a week.

Game launches & she buys

Caption: Person A takes action on Launch day because we had good Call-to-actions in our launch-day stream-a-thon.

AWARENESS

INTEREST

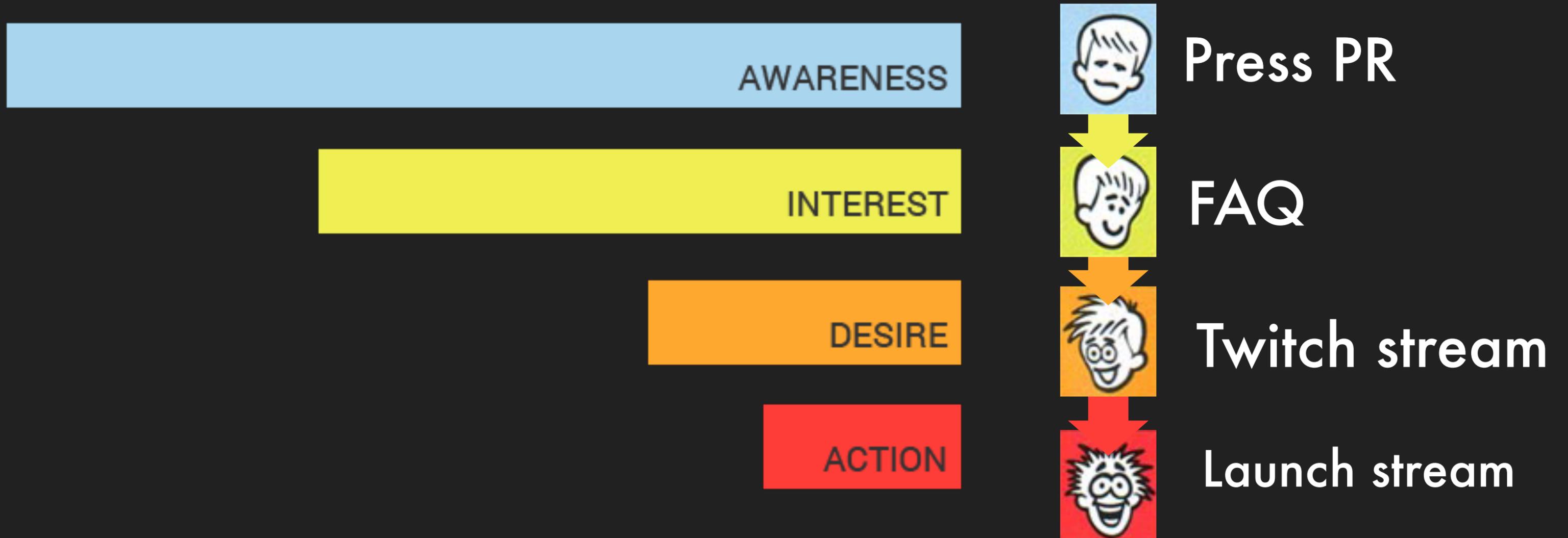
DESIRE

ACTION

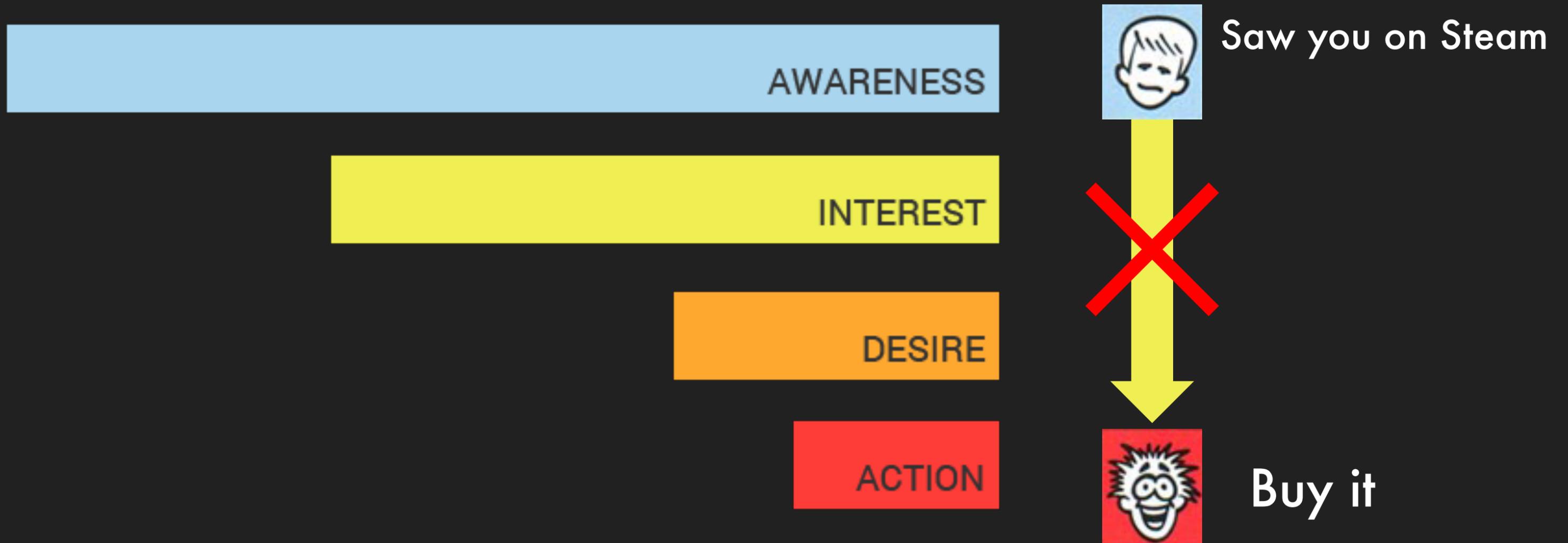


Checkpoint

Have something for people to consume at every level of the funnel.



This is nearly impossible





Caption: The only time someone sees something for the first time then buys it is at the checkout aisle of the grocery store.

EXPOSURE

does not

equal

sales

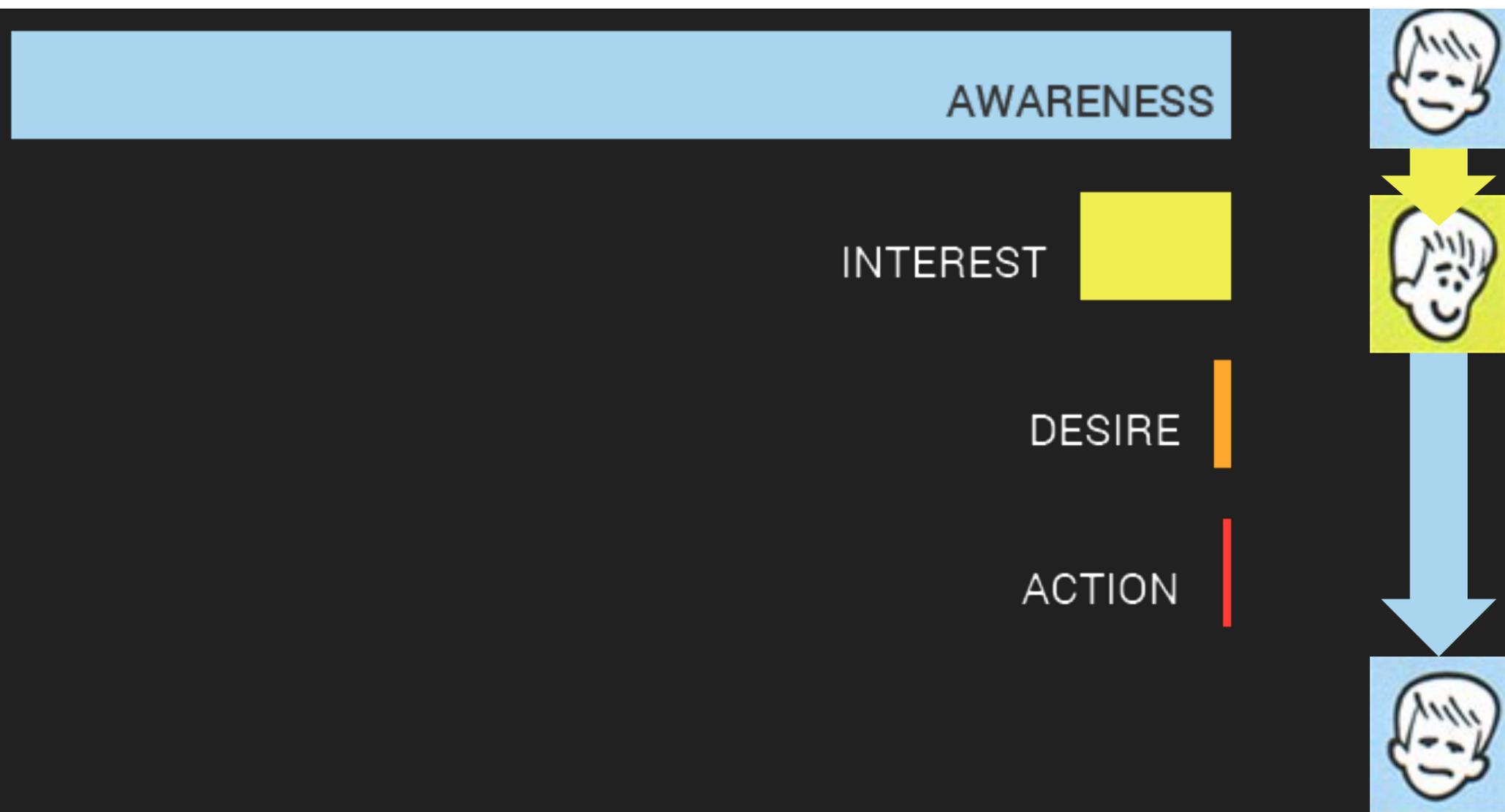


51 points · 8 months ago



The game actually had some organic buzz a couple years ago and then the devs fell off the face of the planet. I actually thought they quietly cancelled the project until I saw it on steam the week it released.

Share Report Save Give gold



Why you need to think in funnels:

There is too much advice

AWARENESS

Streamers & Tweet a lot

INTEREST

???

DESIRE

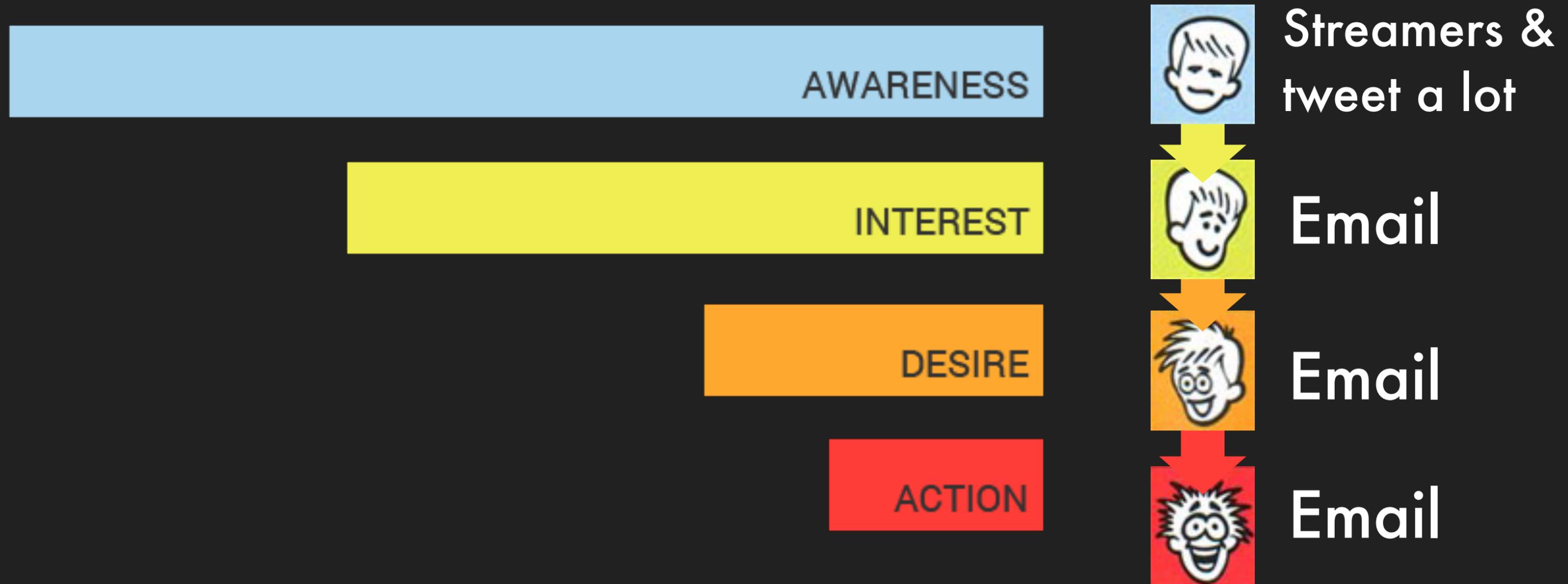
???

ACTION

???

Caption: Line all of the marketing you are doing against the funnel. Are you missing something in the Interest to Action stages?

Email & the funnel



Caption: The reason I like email marketing so much is that it is the perfect thing to fit in the mid to bottom of the funnel.

E M M A I L

M A R K E T I N G

Email Marketing is NOT the same as SPAM

~~SPAM~~

Email spam, also known as **unsolicited bulk email** (UBE), junk mail, or unsolicited commercial email (UCE), is the practice of sending **unwanted** email messages, frequently with commercial content, in large quantities to an **indiscriminate set of recipients.**

- wikipedia

Email Marketing is NOT

~~Emailing the press~~

Email Marketing = **Permission** Marketing

Subscribers must **consent** to join your list.

Subscribers can **leave** at any time.

If they unsubscribe you **never talk to them again**.



Caption: These are common tools used to run a mailing list.

"Ah, well I use Twitter for my funnel. I love twitter, social media is my thing."

4 Reasons

why email is so totally

awesome

compared to social media

Reason 1

You are not dependent on a big corporation who doesn't have your interests in mind



Caption: These used to be the best place to market. Now they don't exist.

Caption: This can happen to today's social media sites.



 **Amnesty International Australia** Like Page
Sponsored · 

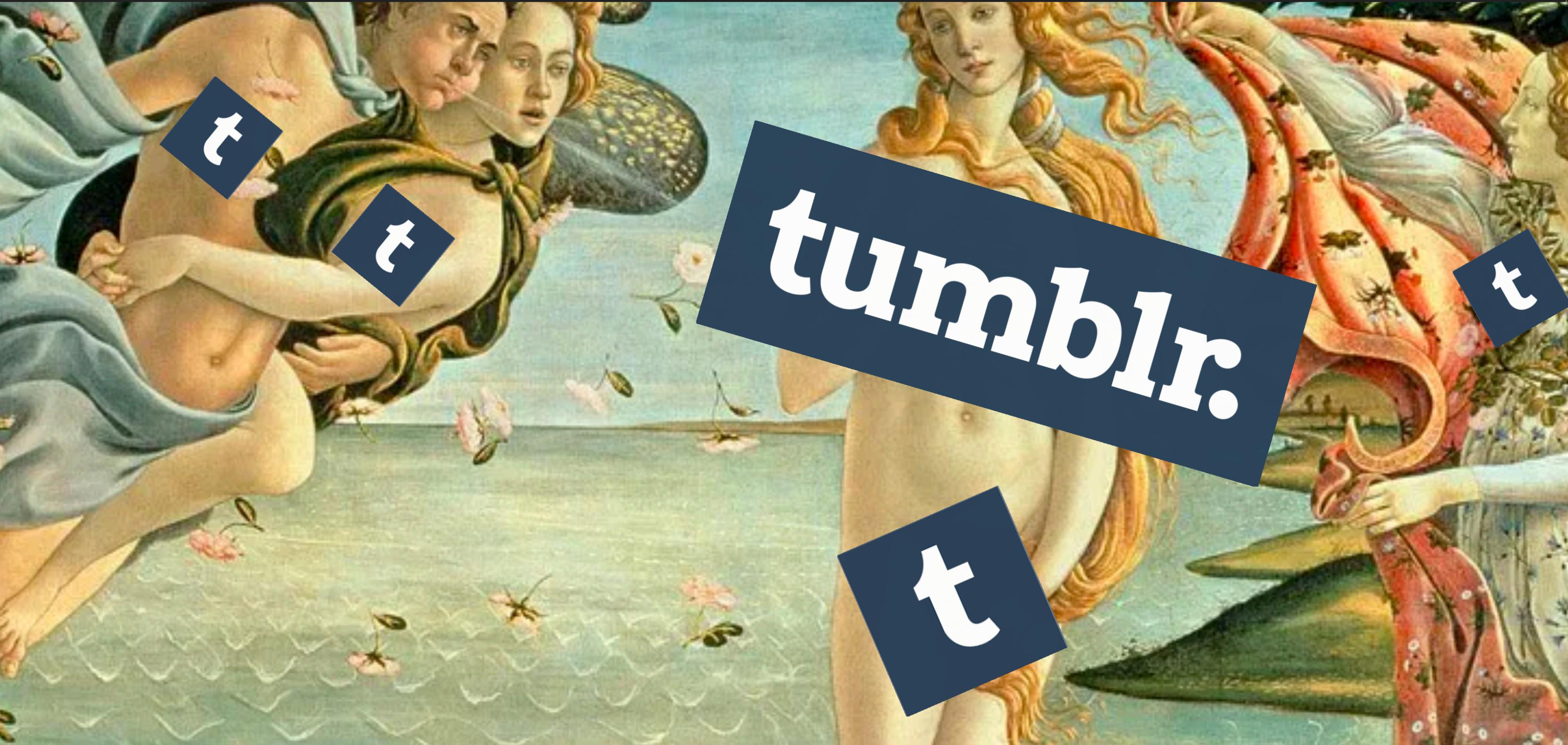
Social media platforms should amplify women's voices, not silence them.
#ToxicTwitter



Tell Twitter to enforce their policies around abuse online
Women are copping unrelenting, misogynistic abuse online from Twitter trolls. It's not okay and it has to stop. Tell Twitter CEO, Jack Dorsey, to stop the abuse of women on his social media platform.

AMNESTY.ORG.AU

Caption: Tumblr just lost millions of followers because of censorship changes.



12 Years of music

myspace.com
a place for friends



Caption: Myspace just accidentally deleted years of music uploaded by users.

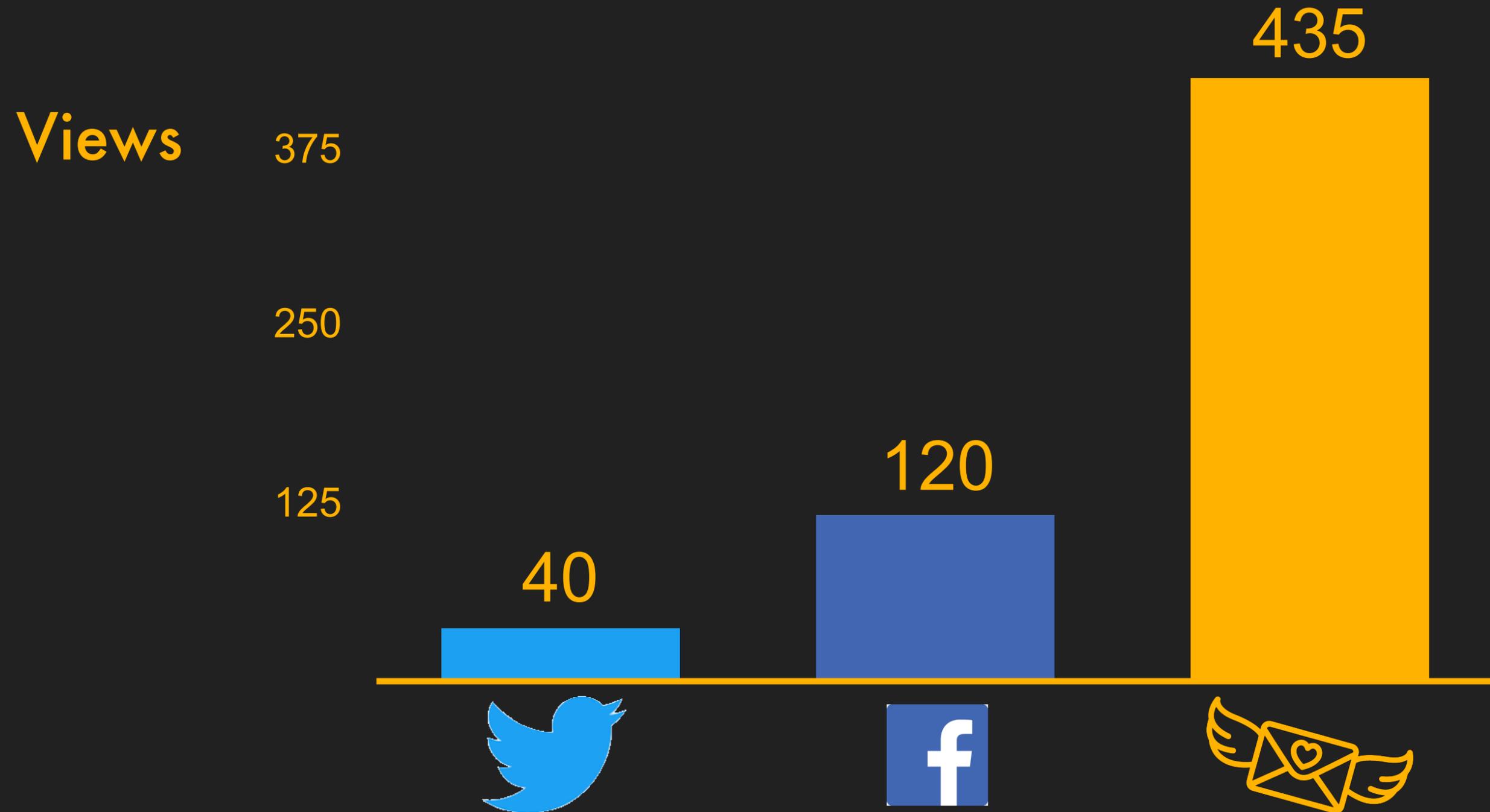
DON'T LET
CORPORATIONS
CONTROL YOUR
FAN BASE

Reason 2

Social media actually isn't
very good at getting your fans
to act and buy your games

If you had 2000 followers in each, how many will view your posts?

Email Marketing vs Social Media Performance in 2016 <https://www.mailmunch.co/blog/email-marketing-vs-social-media/>





<https://www.pixeljam.com/dinorun/>

The Dino Run 2 Exploratory Campaign



Pixeljam is making a sequel to its classic prehistoric racing game. To support the ongoing development and get some sweet dino loot in the process, click:

[Support Dino Run 2!](#)

Created by

Pixeljam

1,298 backers pledged \$26,556 to help bring this project to life.



Follow

The DINO RUN 2 KICKSTARTER Has Launched!

👉 goo.gl/osCzFq 👈

Join us on our development adventure...
Please Share & RT to reach the whole community!

🦖 We can do this! 🦎



Pixeljam Games <miles@pixeljam.com> [Unsubscribe](#) Wed, Jan 24, 11:00 AM ☆ ↶ ⋮

to me ▾

Join us on a crowdfunding adventure... [No Images? Click here](#)

Hello all,

The **Dino Run 2 Kickstarter** is now live!



[VIEW THE DINO RUN 2 KICKSTARTER CAMPAIGN](#)

This campaign is to fund the first phase of development, but we also have a solid plan to get to the final version. Read the campaign story for all the details.

If you are going to back it, please back it soon! The first few days of an all-or-nothing campaign are always critical.

Also, now is the time to tell the world (or old buddies that played Dino Run with you in the past) that the campaign is live. You can do this by

Caption: pixeljam games were perfect. They would Tweet and email the same Call-to-action and same messages at the same time.

Caption: At the start of the campaign, this was their following.

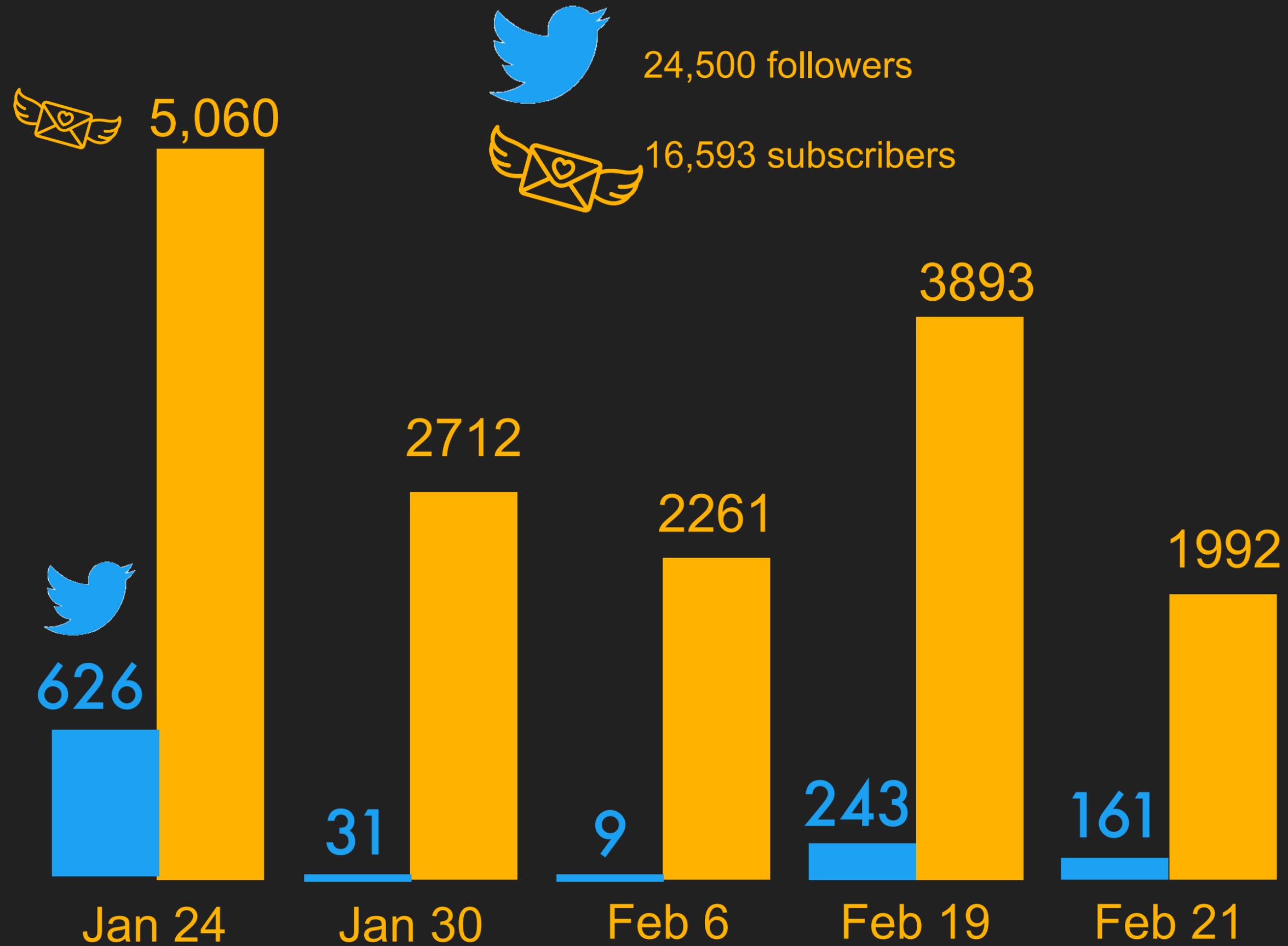


24,500 followers



16,593 subscribers

Clicks



Reason 3

You have more
functionality with email



Caption: When you tweet, you bark the same message to your entire funnel.

Laser targeted email



Caption: The Indie studio Butterscotch Shenanigans were great about using targeted email marketing.



BUTTERSCOTCH SHENANIGANS



Secret

Unlockable
Side Quest



Caption: Their biggest game was Crashlands. However they had several games before that they wanted to cross promote.

Caption: So they ran a test. They hid a character from their other game Quadropus Rampage. Half of the players who found it were notified in-game. The other players who found it received an email.



5910

Unlocked

2470

Notification

Only

3440

Emailed

Caption: The email group received the following email.



WHAT CRACKS, !?

Congrats on unlocking the Tack Jones perk by stacking 4 artifacts as you dove into the ocean depths! Your back must be sore from carrying all those magical items. Why not take a moment to rest with some **QUADROPUS LORE?!**



The Quadropi are a sentient race of 2-tentaclarmed, 2-tentaclegged cephalopods that roam the oceans of Woanope. They typically make their homes on reefs and live in small, extremely territorial groups. The fierceness of this race, combined with a lack of general sociability, has marked the species with a long

history of tragic warfare that has left little room for a full-fledged civilization to develop.

Tack, the protagonist in Quadropus Rampage, is the first Quadropi to learn to control and channel his rage. It's through his pet and therapy beast, Bingo, that Tack has discovered how to be productive and more sociable. And what good timing, now that the reef is under attack by an insane demi-god!

If you like Tack, Bingo, and the world-vibe from Quadropus Rampage, you'll be thrilled to know that Tack and a whole crew of Quadropi make an appearance in Crashlands, our award-winning RPG ([App store](#) | [Google Play](#) | [Steam](#)).



Introduced the game



App Store link

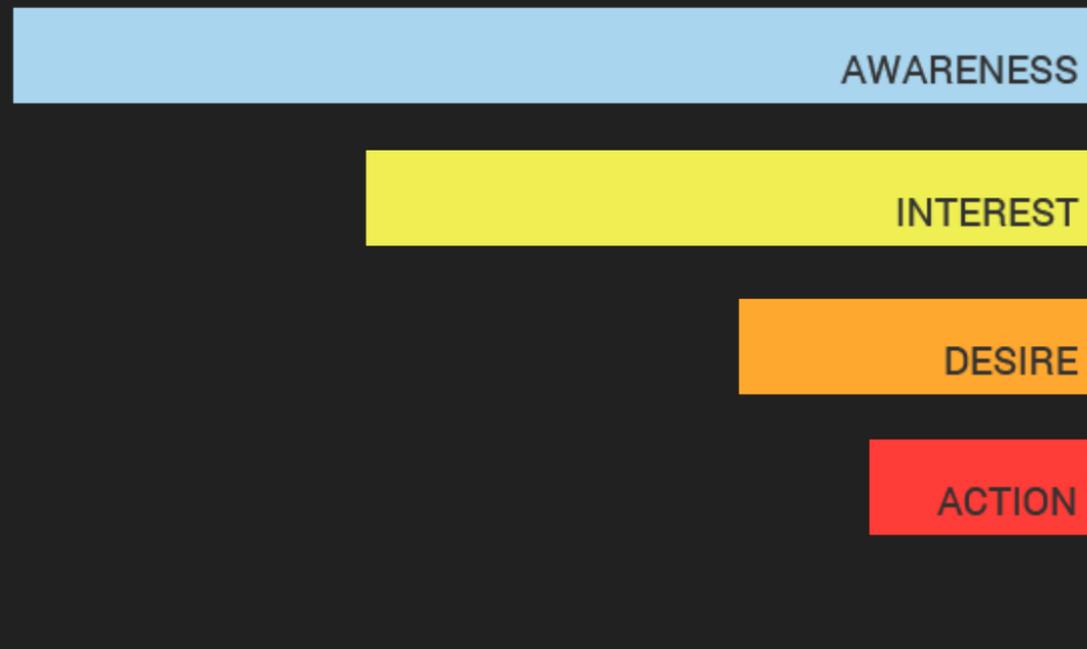


An emailed Player was

2.8x

More likely to get the game than a non-emailed player

GAME A



GAME B



Caption: When you use targeted email marketing to players at the bottom of the funnel you can efficiently move them to your other games

Reason 4

Install base

Twitter = 330,000,000

Facebook = 2,200,000,000

Email = 3,800,000,000



Source: Statista, Social Network sites worldwide as of April 2018
Source: The Radicati Group, Inc: Email Statistics Report

Marketing benefits of the two platforms

| | Email | Social media |
|--------------------|-------|--------------|
| Personal Ownership | + | |
| Click through rate | + | |
| Features | + | |
| Install base | + | |
| Virality | | + |

Caption: Yes yes, social does have virality. But not much else

Email is a **dominant strategy**

So how do you
actually use email
marketing?



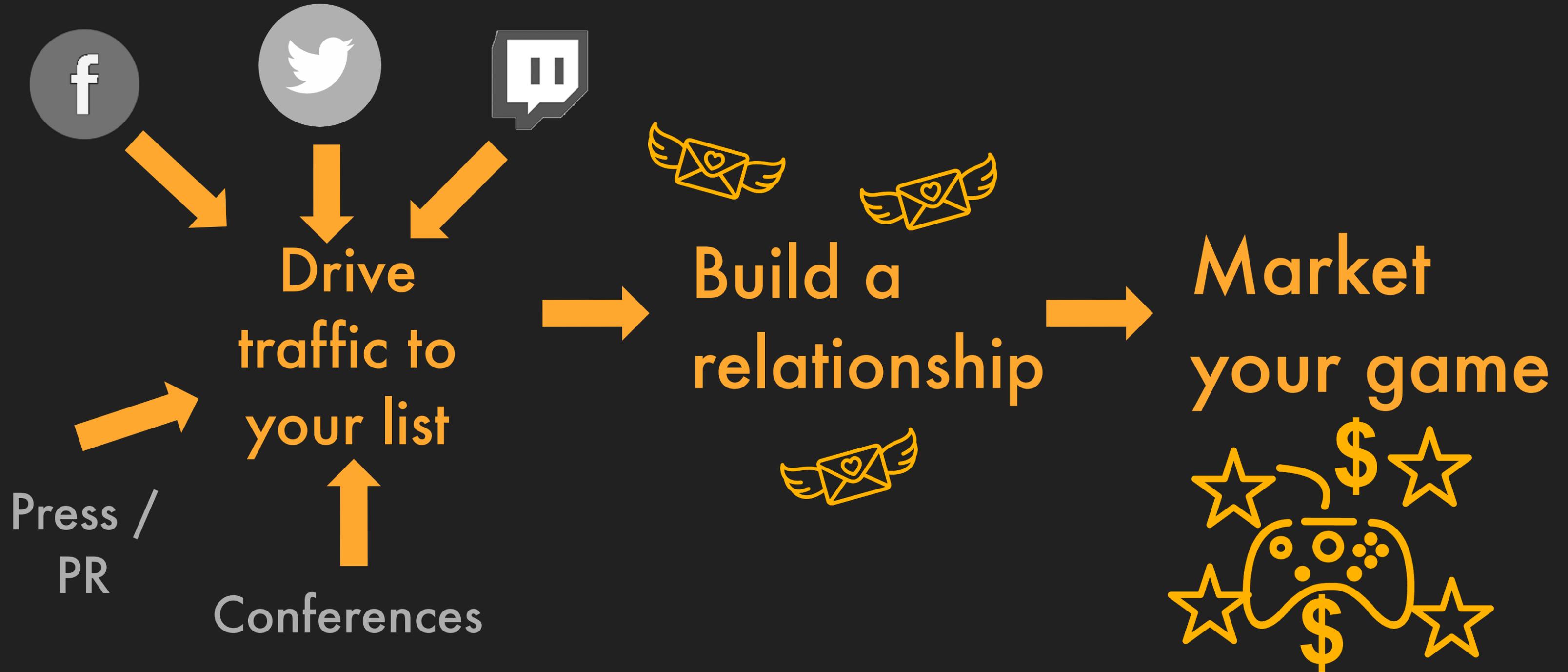
The Official
Beatles **FAN CLUB**

First Floor, Service House,

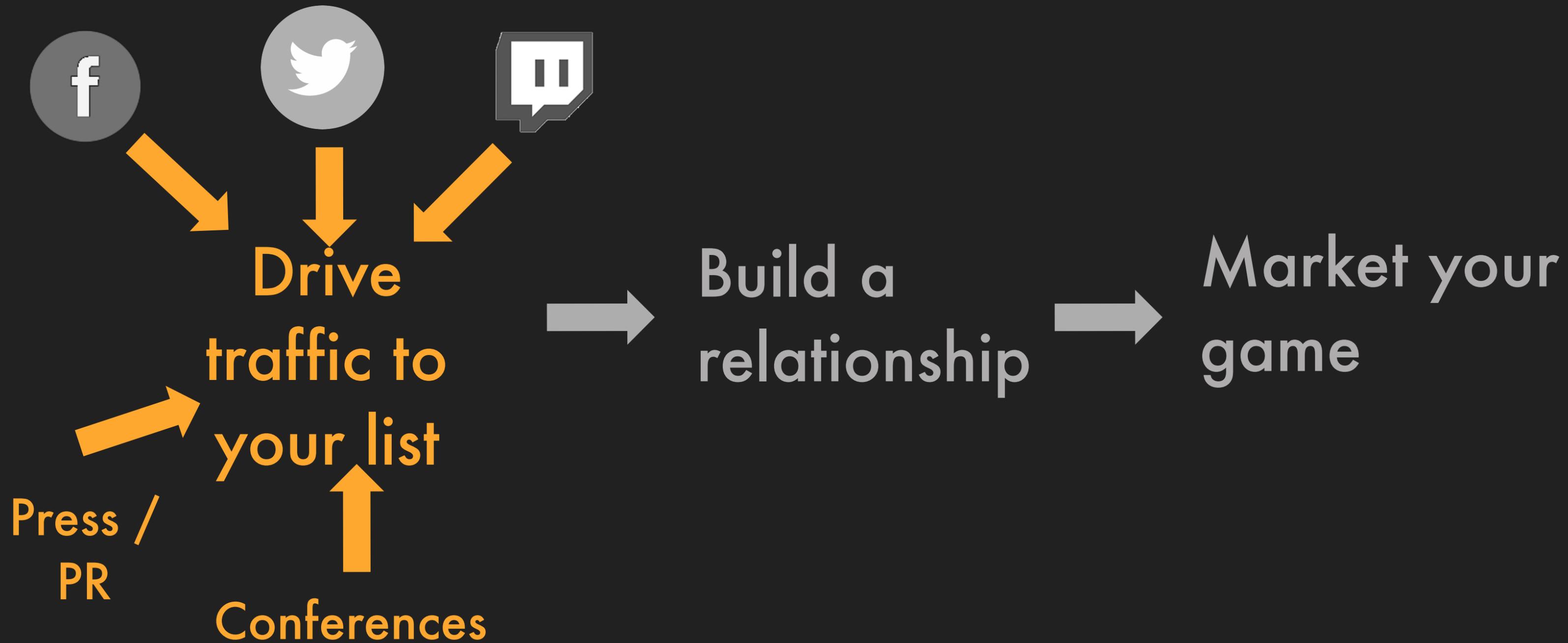
13 Monmouth Street, London, W.C.2

Caption: Treat people who are on your mailing list like they are your biggest fans.

Caption: 3 step process to market your game using email.



Caption: Step 1 - Drive traffic from your lower-performing social media to your high-performance email list.



Caption: Don't hide your newsletter signup at the bottom of your website.

NEWSLETTER

SUBSCRIBE

I only email you when I have a new game

Your email address

SUBSCRIBE

Caption: Don't tell people you will never email them. People who sign up WANT to hear from you. They like you!



Caption: Emailing your list only when you launch a game is like saying "Thanks for your phone number, I will only call you when I need \$20"

LEAD MAGNET

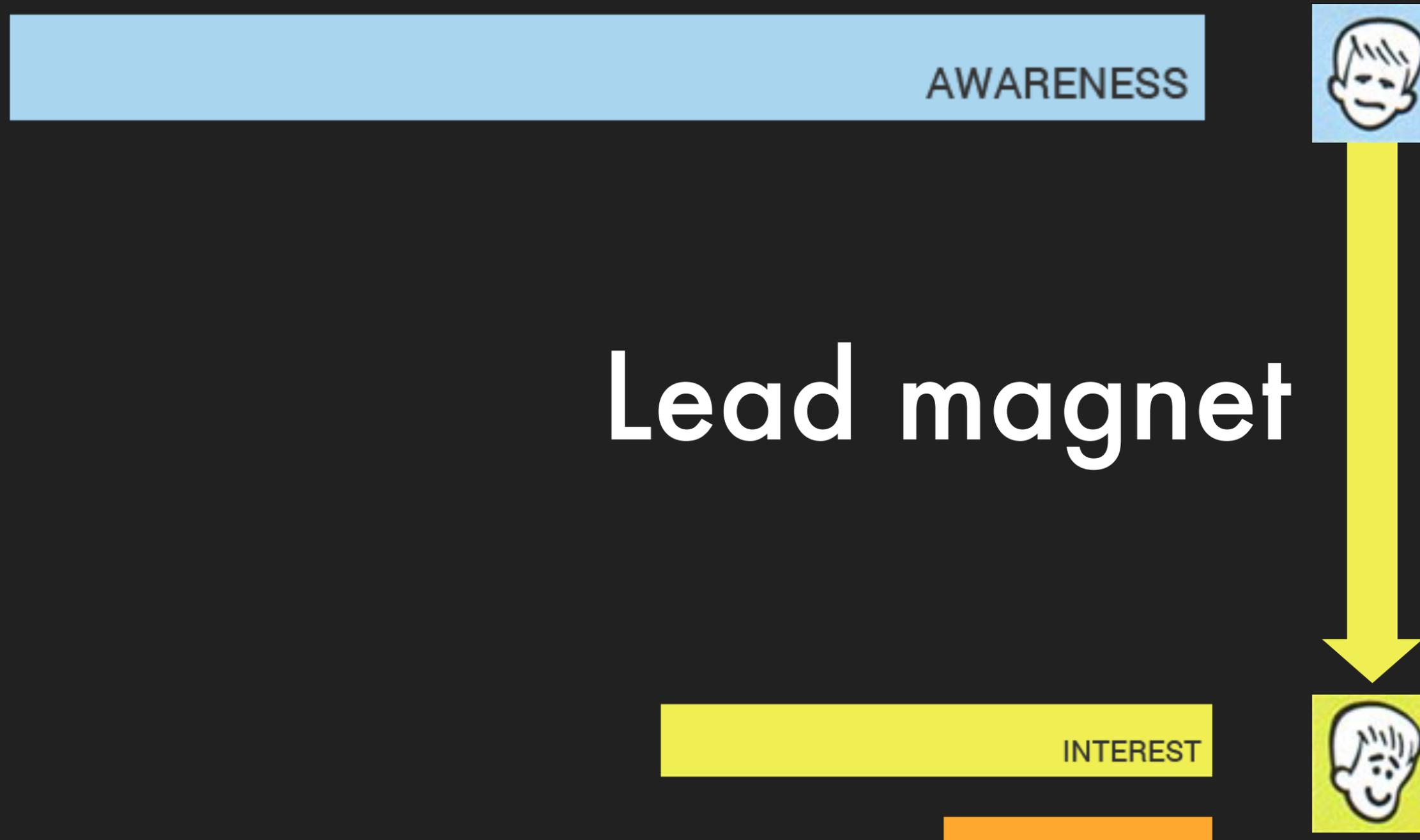
A small incentive in exchange for a person's email address.

Caption: Instead, get them on the list with a lead magnet.



Caption: A lead magnet is like that super social person at your office who has a small candy jar. It is just an ice-breaker.

Discoverability is not hard. Interest is.

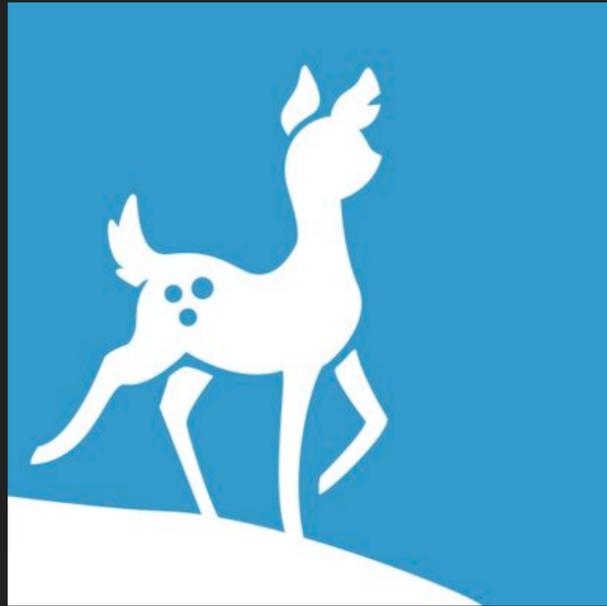


Caption: Going from Awareness to Interest is the hardest thing in marketing your game.

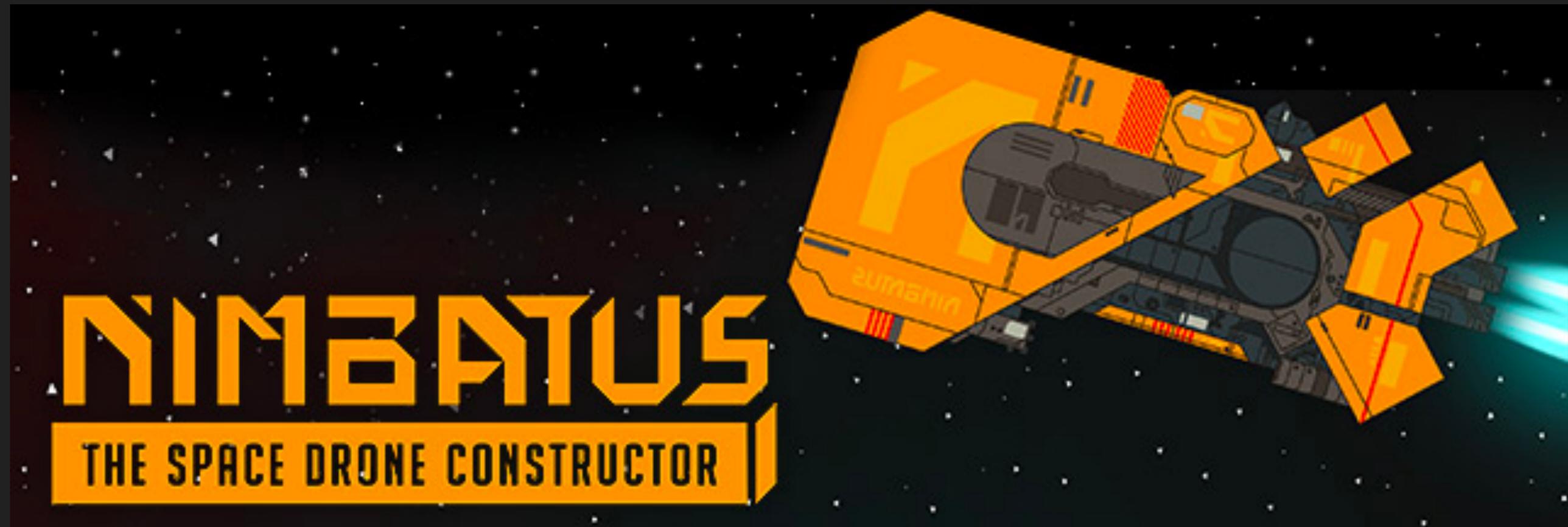
Example

lead

magnet



Stray Fawn



Get the Nimbatus demo

The Early Access version is now available on [Steam](#) and on [Humble](#)!

Please sign-up below to receive a download link for the demo.

This is a preview demo for our Kickstarter campaign, it will not be updated in the future.
The demo is available for Windows, Mac and Linux.

If you don't receive an email with the download link in a few minutes, you can write us at info@strayfawnstudio.com and we send you the link.

Please note that this will subscribe you to our newsletter, which you can cancel at any time 😊

Email Address

Get the demo

Caption: Stray Fawn used a beta signup to gather 50,000 subs.

Give away your Soundtrack

Caption: You can also give away things like your soundtrack.

Within your
game



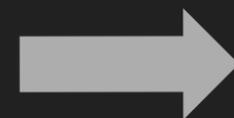
Caption: I added a bonus room to my game Zombie King that is available to email list subscribers

Drive
traffic to
your list



Build a
relationship

Market your
game



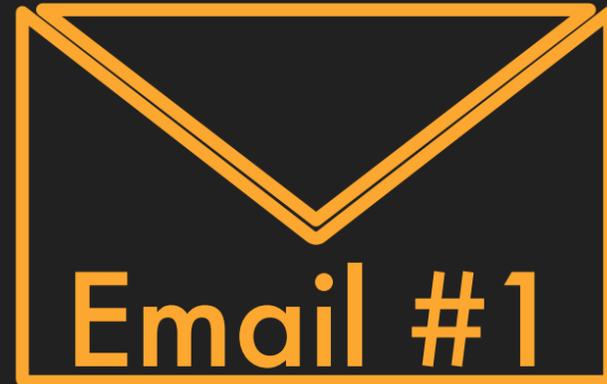
AUTO RESPONDNER

A sequence of emails that are sent on a regular schedule to new subscribers

Join list



Sunday



Monday



Tuesday



Wednesday

Caption: Auto-responders are pre-programmed sequence

Autoresponders slowly introduce you



Welcome to list



Tips about your game

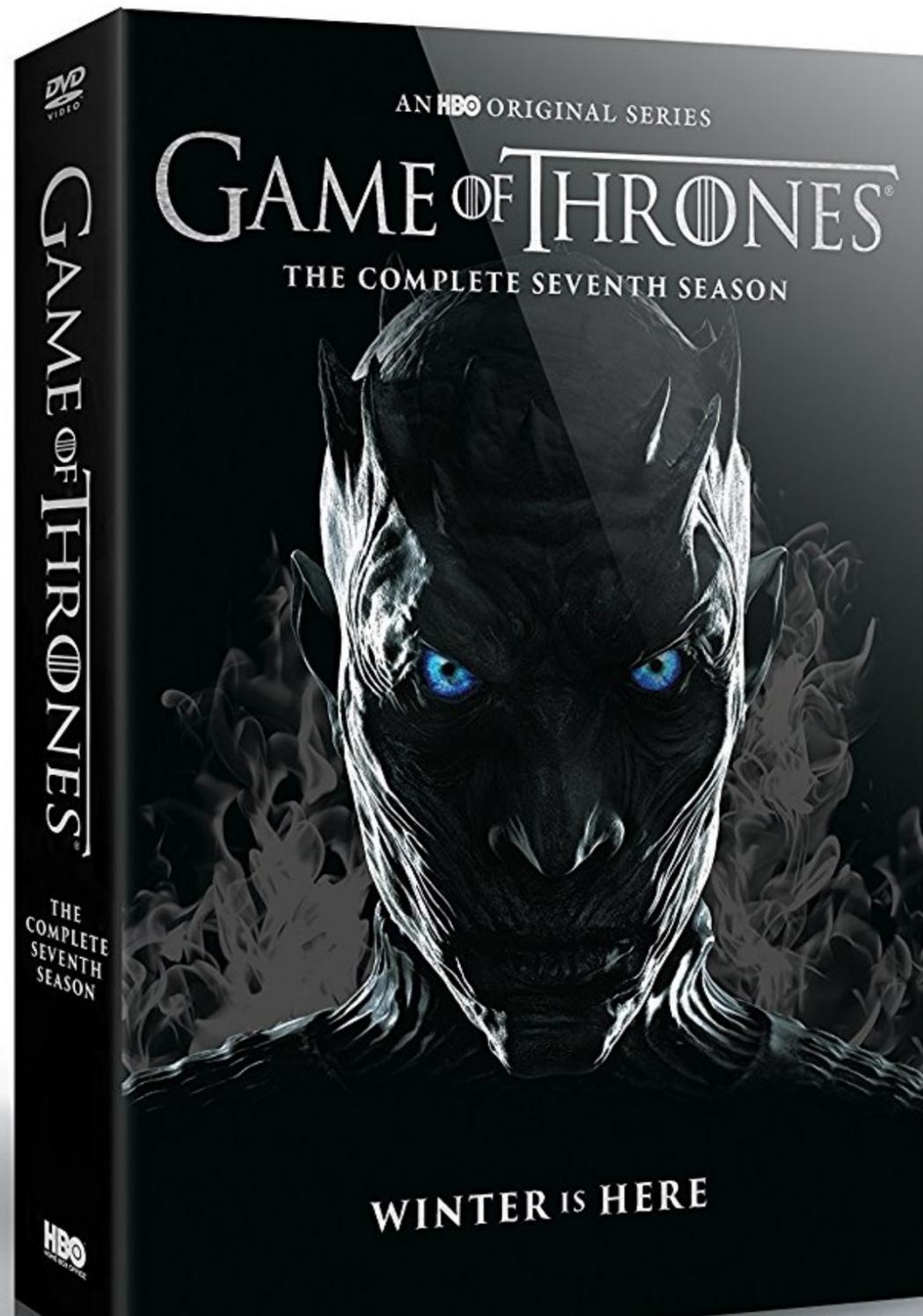


About my company



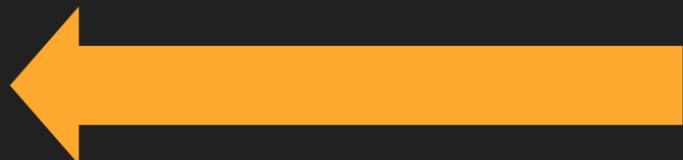
About me





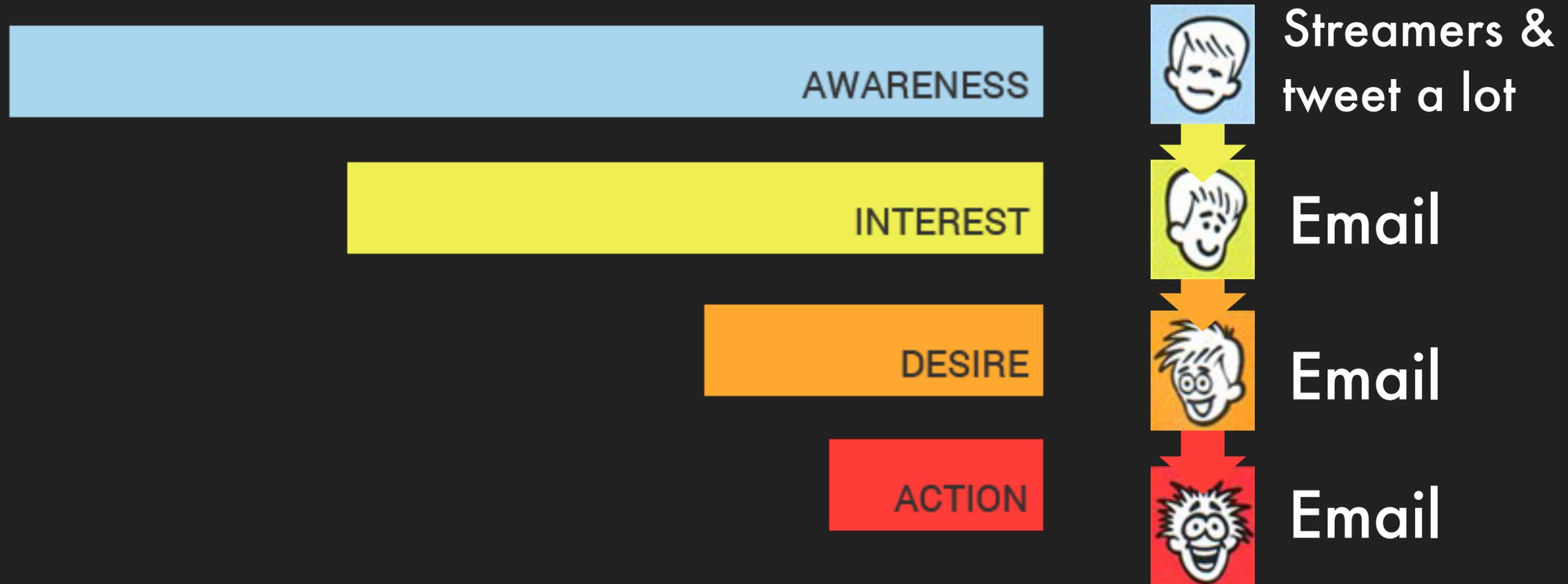
Caption: An auto responder catches subscribers up to your studio's history just like catching up to a show by watching previous seasons.

Autoresponder Zombie King

|  Subject | Open Rate | |
|---|-----------|---|
|  Welcome to list | 51.8% | |
|  Remind them of code | 44.2% | |
| Day later reminder of code | 46.2% | |
|  Tips for earning money | 52.1% | |
| How to beat hard levels | 48.6% | |
|  Where I got the idea to make it | 53.2% |  |
| Interpretation of the ending | 43.0% | |

Caption: Worried about all these emails? My best performing email was deep down into the sequence.

Email & the funnel



Caption: A well-written autoresponder moves people down the funnel

Drive
traffic to
your list



Build a
relationship



Market your
game



SELL! SELL! SELL!

No

GIVE-GIVE-GIVE-ASK

Caption: Don't email too much sales content. Instead, maintain a ratio of 3 non-sales-pitch emails for every 1 email with a sales pitch



Your email list

Your subscribers

Your subscribers

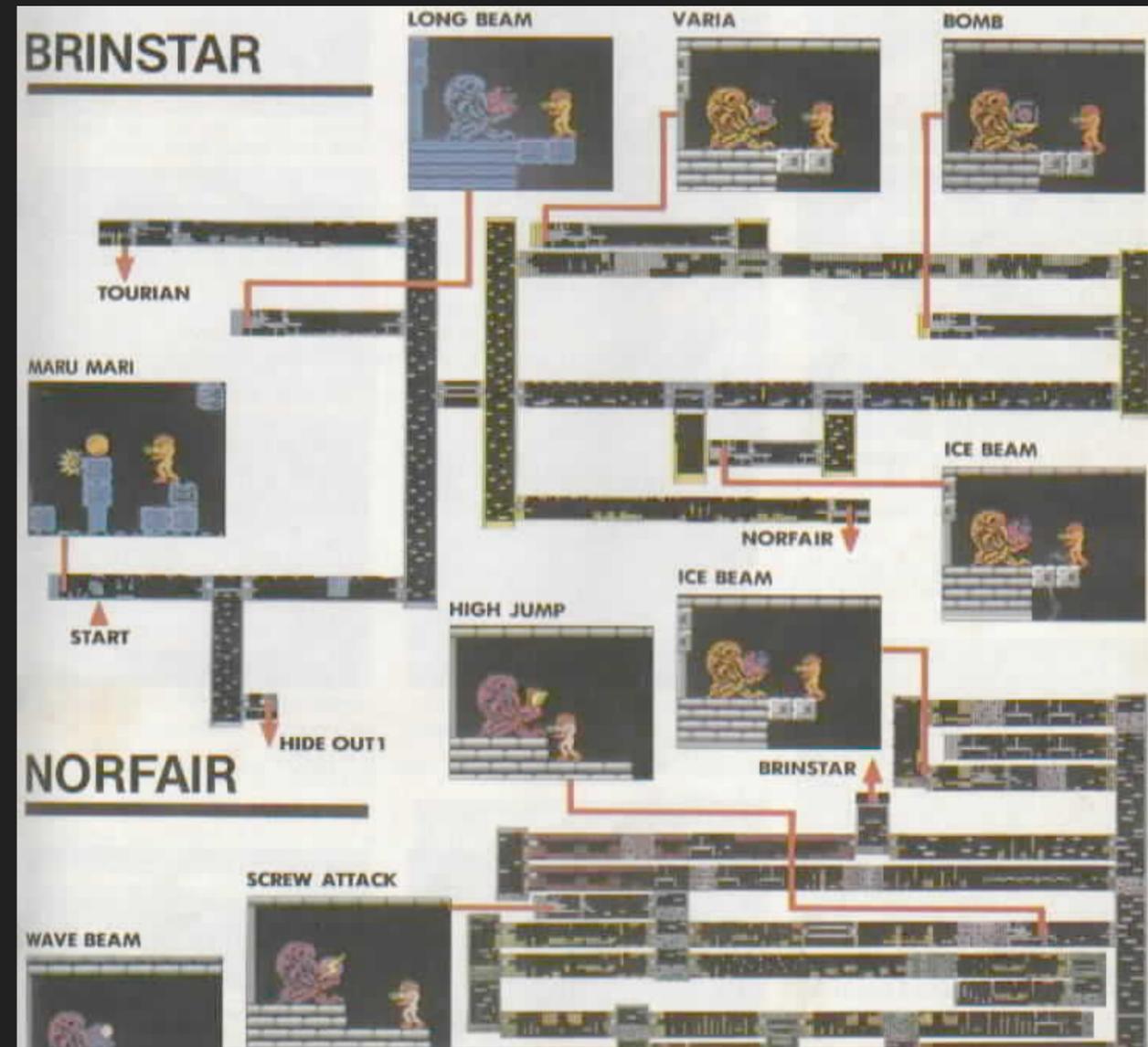
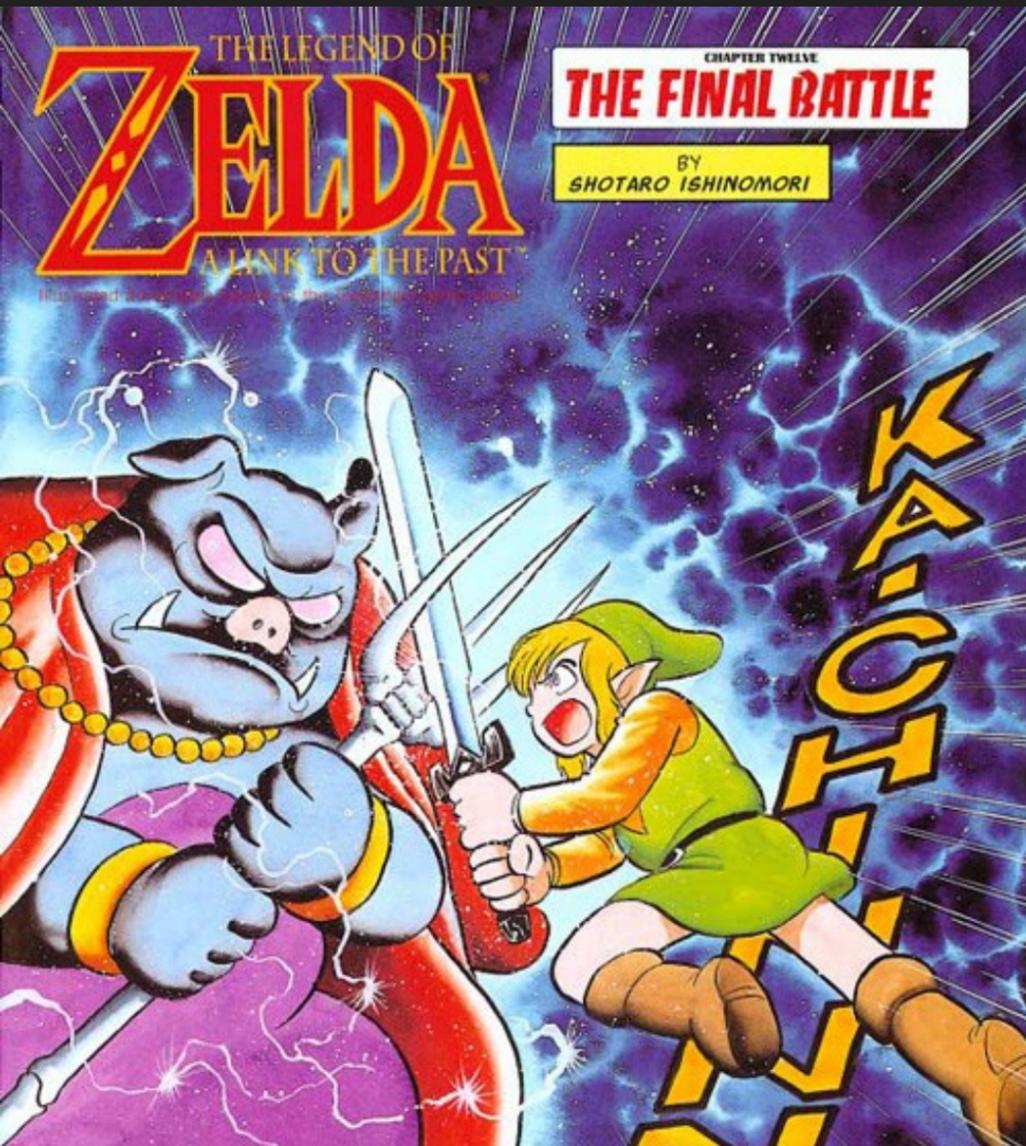
Your subscribers

Norman
Rockwell



DESIRE

GIVE GIVE GIVE



This is a page from 'Nintendo Power' magazine, featuring 'Classified Information' for two games: 'Rabuki' and 'Thunderbirds'. The page has a yellow background with a red 'CLASSIFIED INFORMATION' stamp and a 'NINTENDO STOP SECRET POWER' stamp. The 'Rabuki' section is titled 'FROM AGENT #934 Chip Exchange' and describes a strategy for exchanging chips for extra energy. The 'Thunderbirds' section is titled 'FROM AGENT #454 Stage Skip' and describes a strategy for skipping the end of a stage. Both sections include screenshots from the games and a 'DND, I'VE LOCATED HOOD'S BASE' stamp.

Caption: Nintendo Power was great about giving away stuff without trying to advertise to you.

Boyfriend DUNGEON



Kitfox Games

Caption: Kitfox games did “Give-give-give” very well with their kickstarter for Boyfriend Dungeon.

Hey, gorgeous.



Sunder here from [Boyfriend Dungeon](#). AKA your favorite sword. Heard you signed up to get some love letters from the crew, while you're prepping for the dunj. That's pretty cute... letters are classic romance, you know? You can call or write to me anytime you're feelin' bored. 💕

I'd rather hear about you to be honest, but if you insist, I'm Sunder. 🌹 I own a

Don't just grab me, okay?



Hey, cutie. I know the tradition is "choose your weapon", but I get some choice here too, okay? And I'm choosing today to write to you, so you better appreciate it!

Valeria here, from [Boyfriend Dungeon](#). I'm not really *from* Verona Beach exactly, but I moved my art studio out here a few months ago and I have no

You've got sharp taste.



Greetings, dear reader. I have been persuaded to write you a "love letter"... and I find myself hesitant. There is no purer form of romance than a finely written bit of prose, and yet I barely know you. I hope this is only the beginning of our

Hey.



Caption: Kitfox games sent you weekly emails containing love letters written by the dateable weapons.

Caption: The love-letter emails worked so well. Here is a letter that a fan sent to the Kitfox team.

RESULTS:

Dear Kitfox...

I'm signed up for the newsletters
and I never got the Isaac one?

And I would like to because **I love these
character love letters.**

So could I maybe be
resent one.

Caption: This letter writer is clearly in the DESIRE phase.

INTEREST

DESIRE

★
ACTION



This is your fanclub treat it like one



MYTH:
PEOPLE DON'T
WANT YOUR
EMAIL

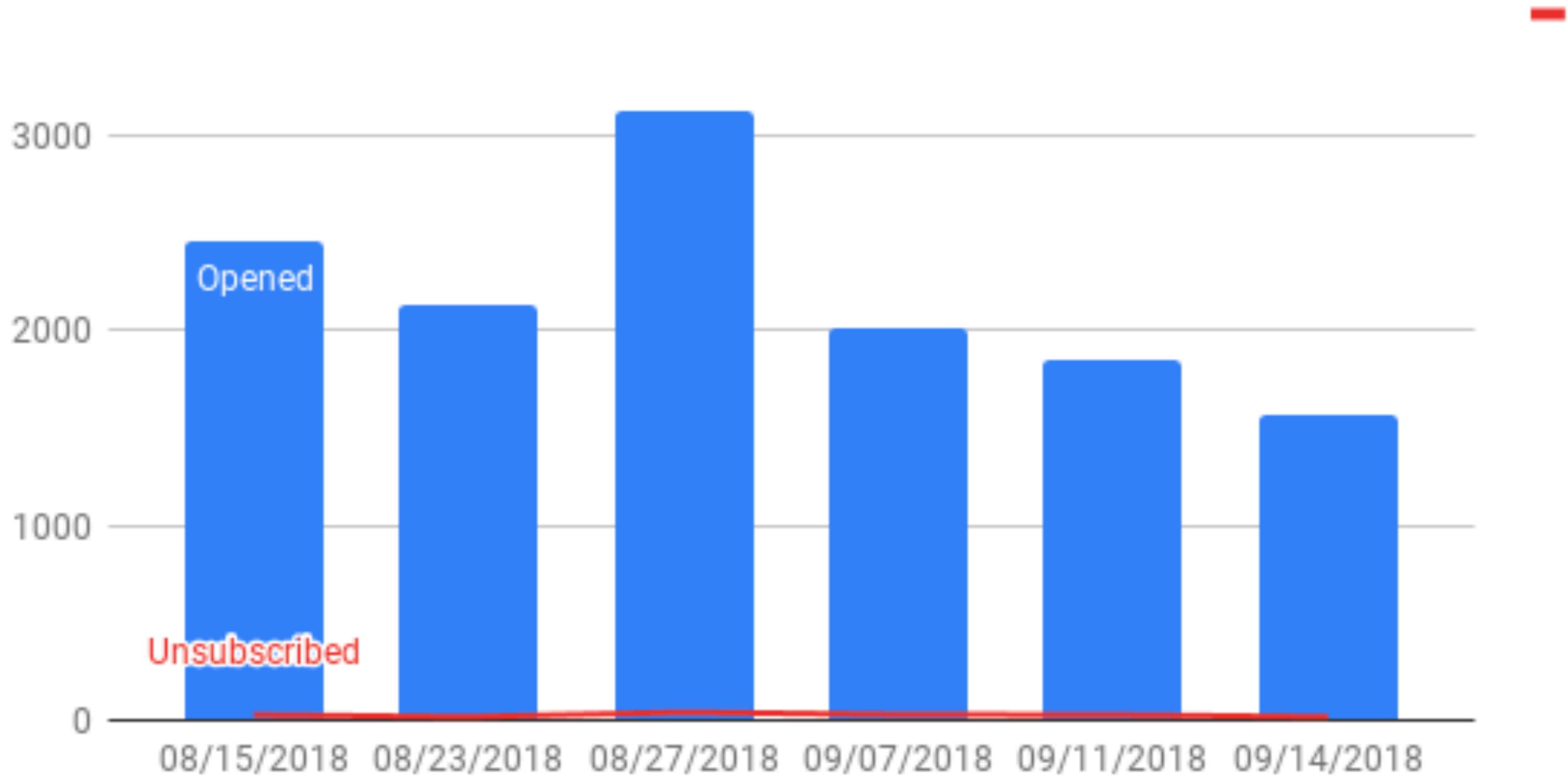
A **very rare** dispatch...

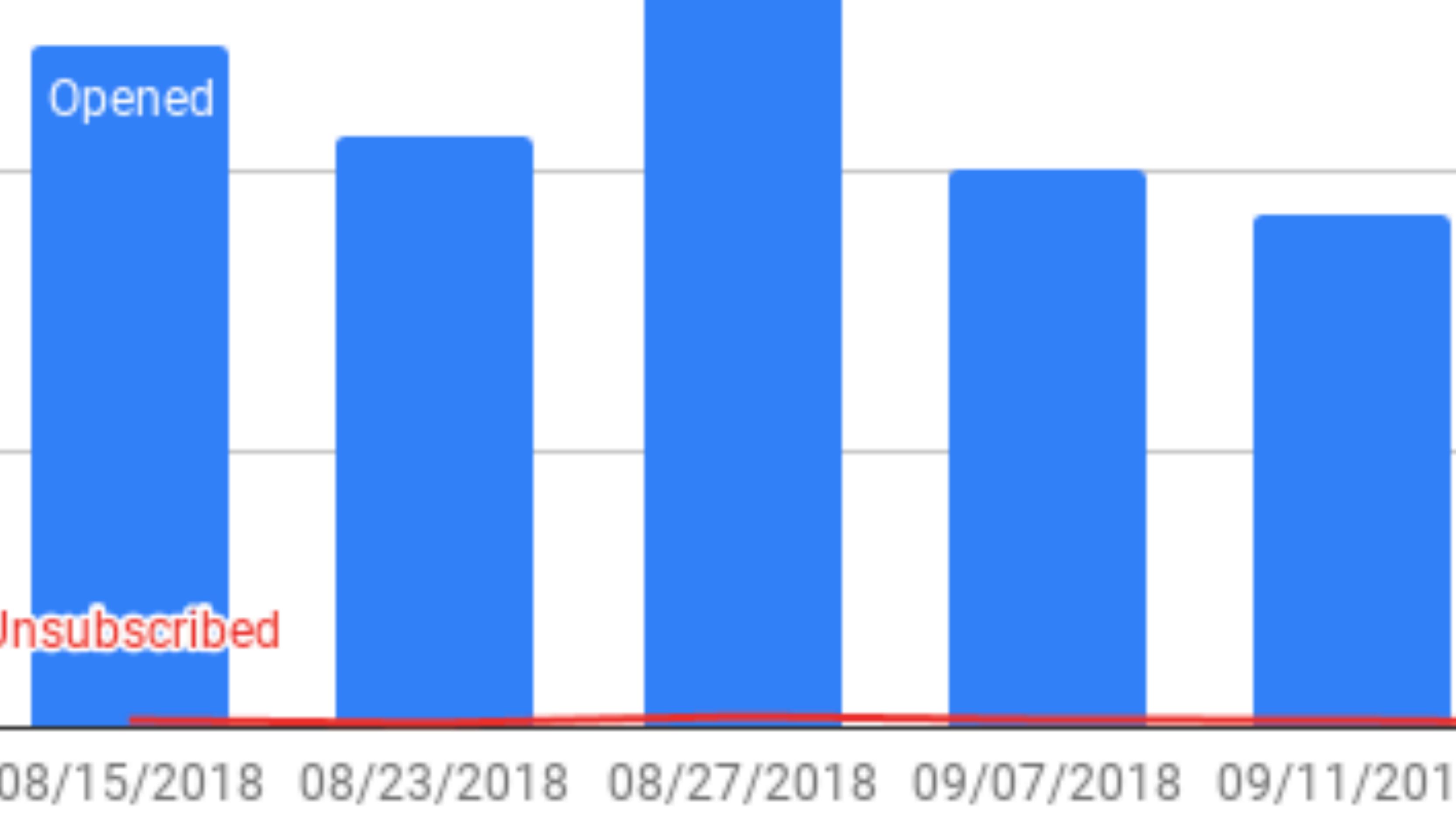
I hope you don't mind getting this email...

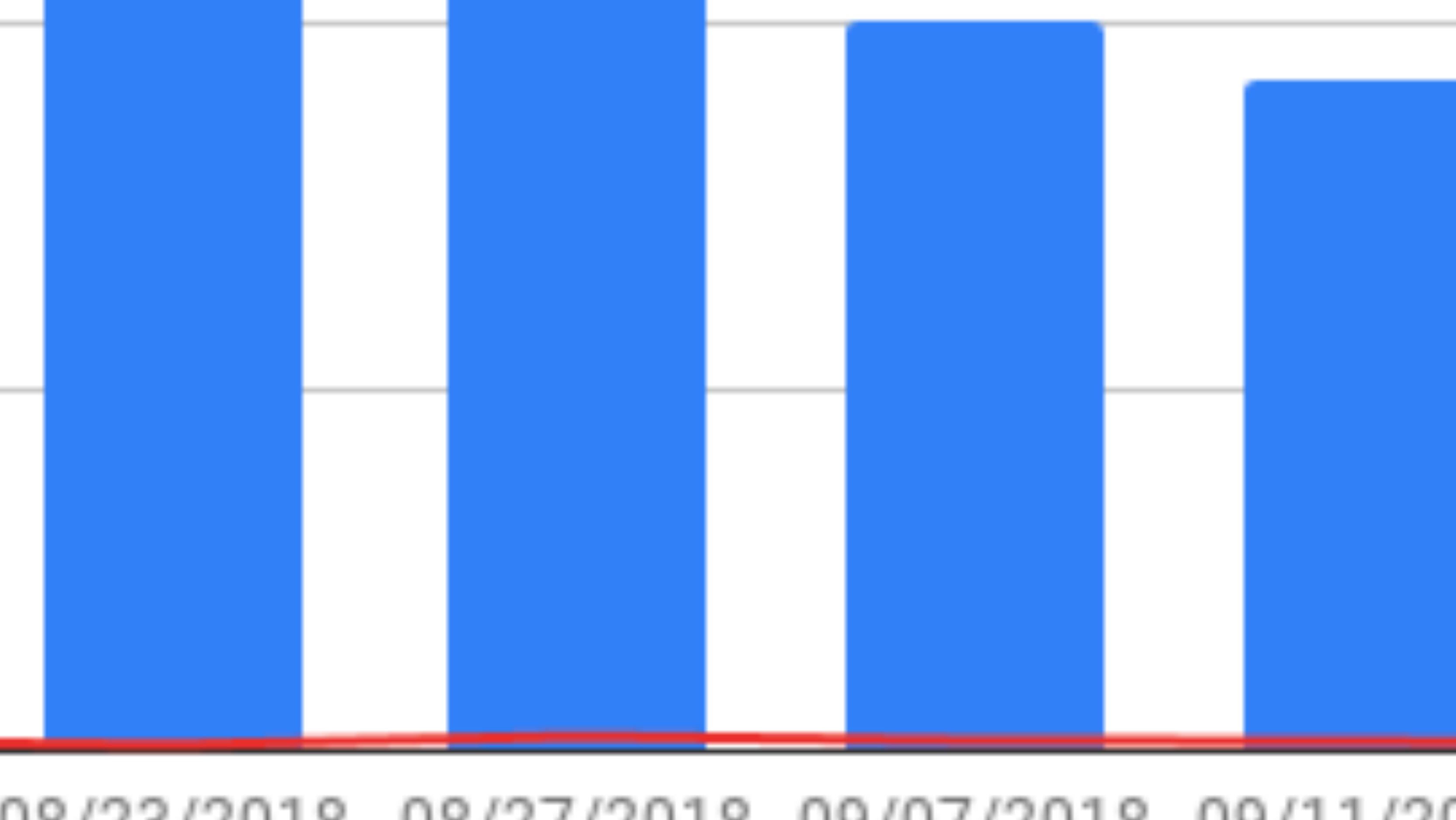
Hi everyone! I'm **invading your inbox once again** with some thoughts on my latest release

Caption: Don't write emails to your fans that apologize.

Caption: This graph is the number of opens and unsubscribes for the Boyfriend Dungeon emails.







09/22/2019

09/27/2019

09/07/2019

09/11/2019



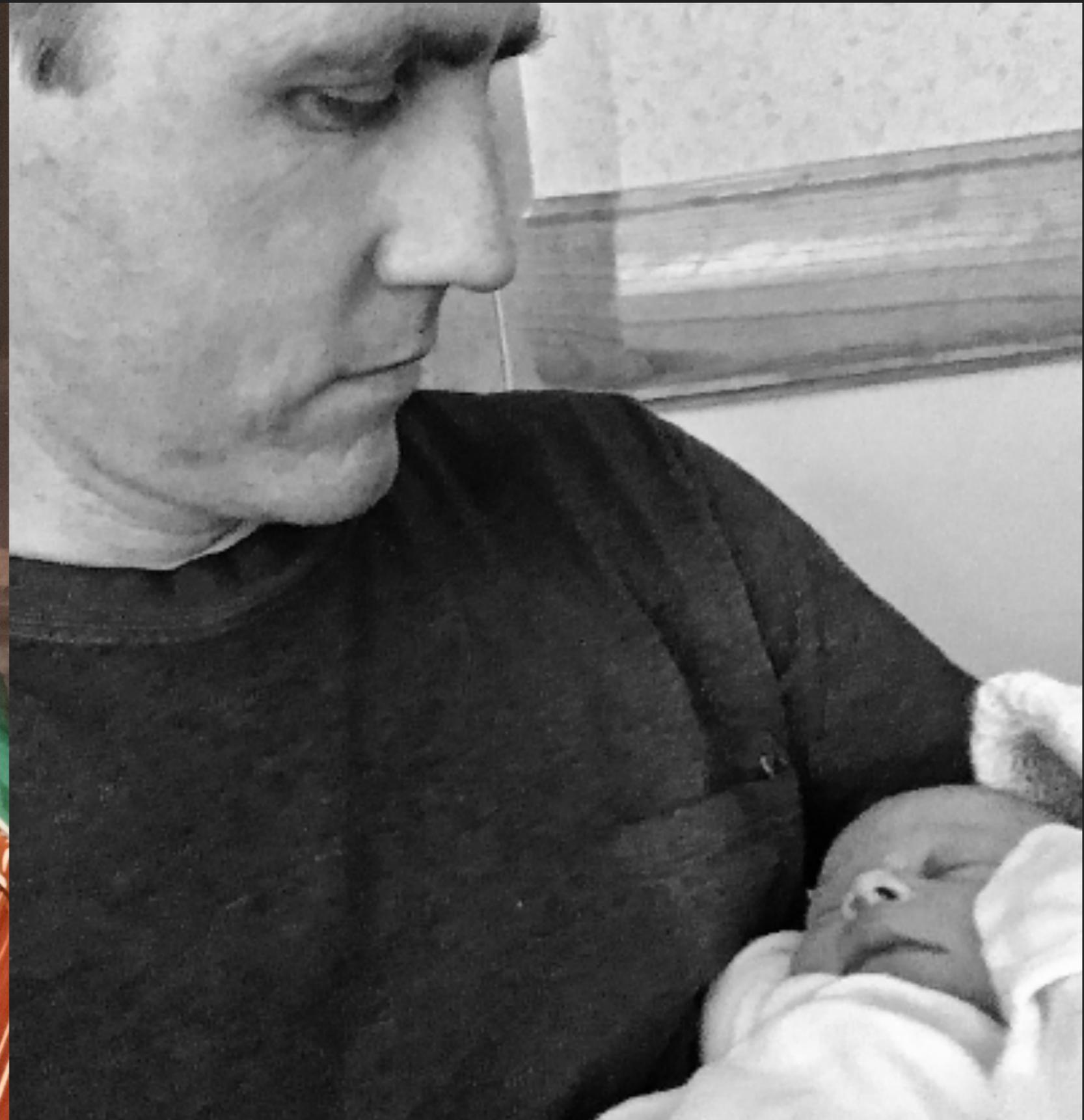
8 08/27/2018 09

6 unique emails to 6868 subscribers

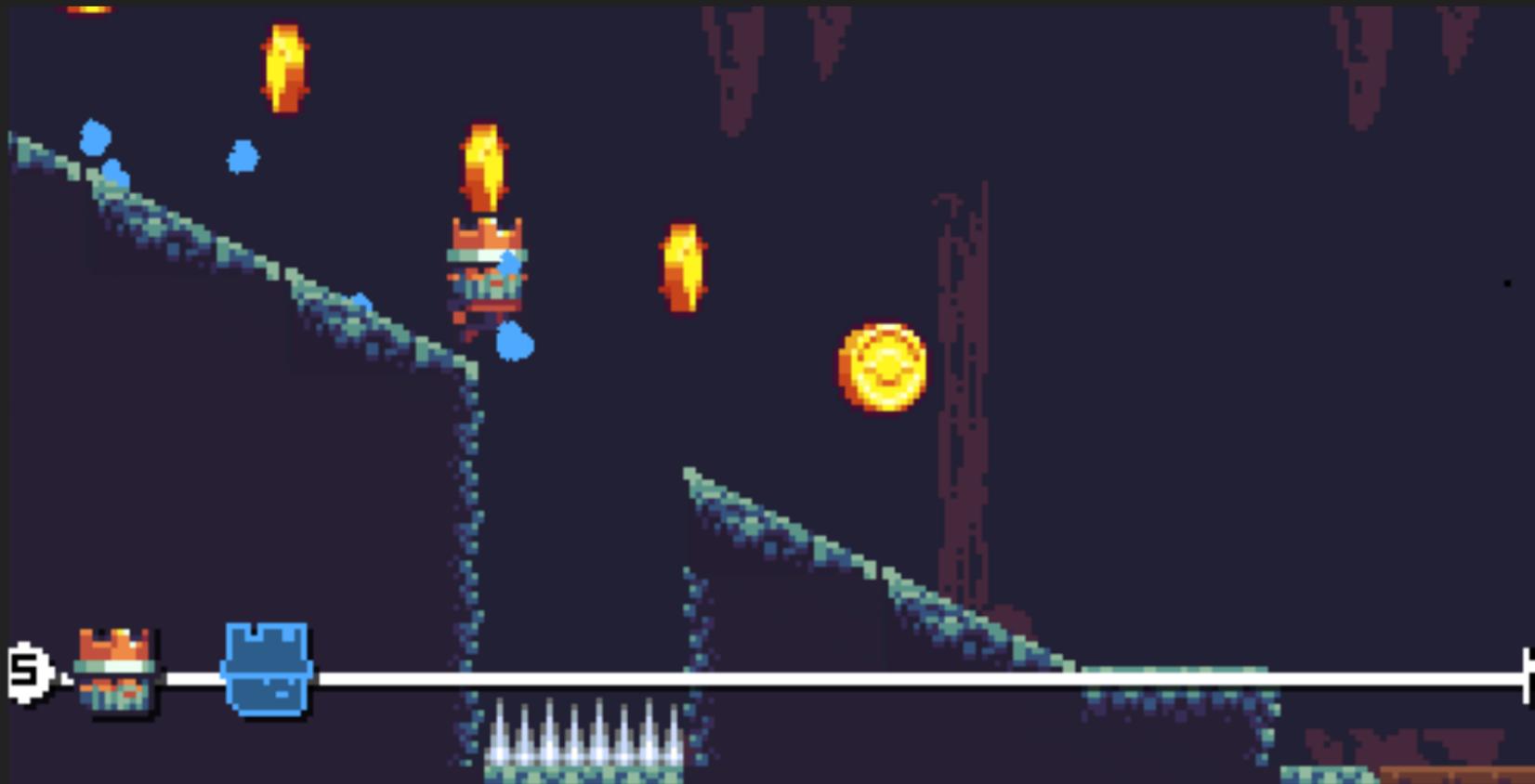
2% Unsubscribed

Story Time

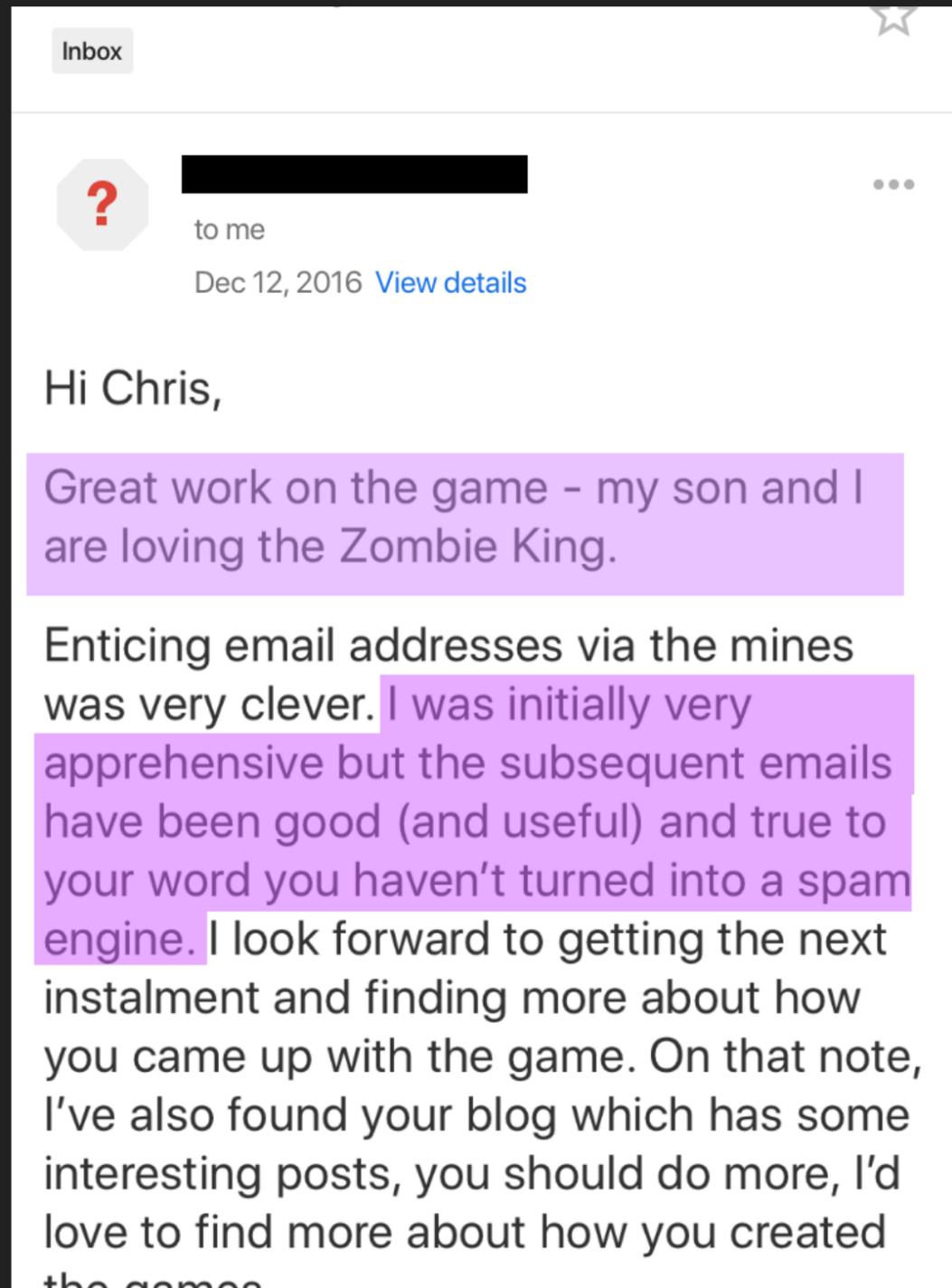
Caption: I now have a son of my own.



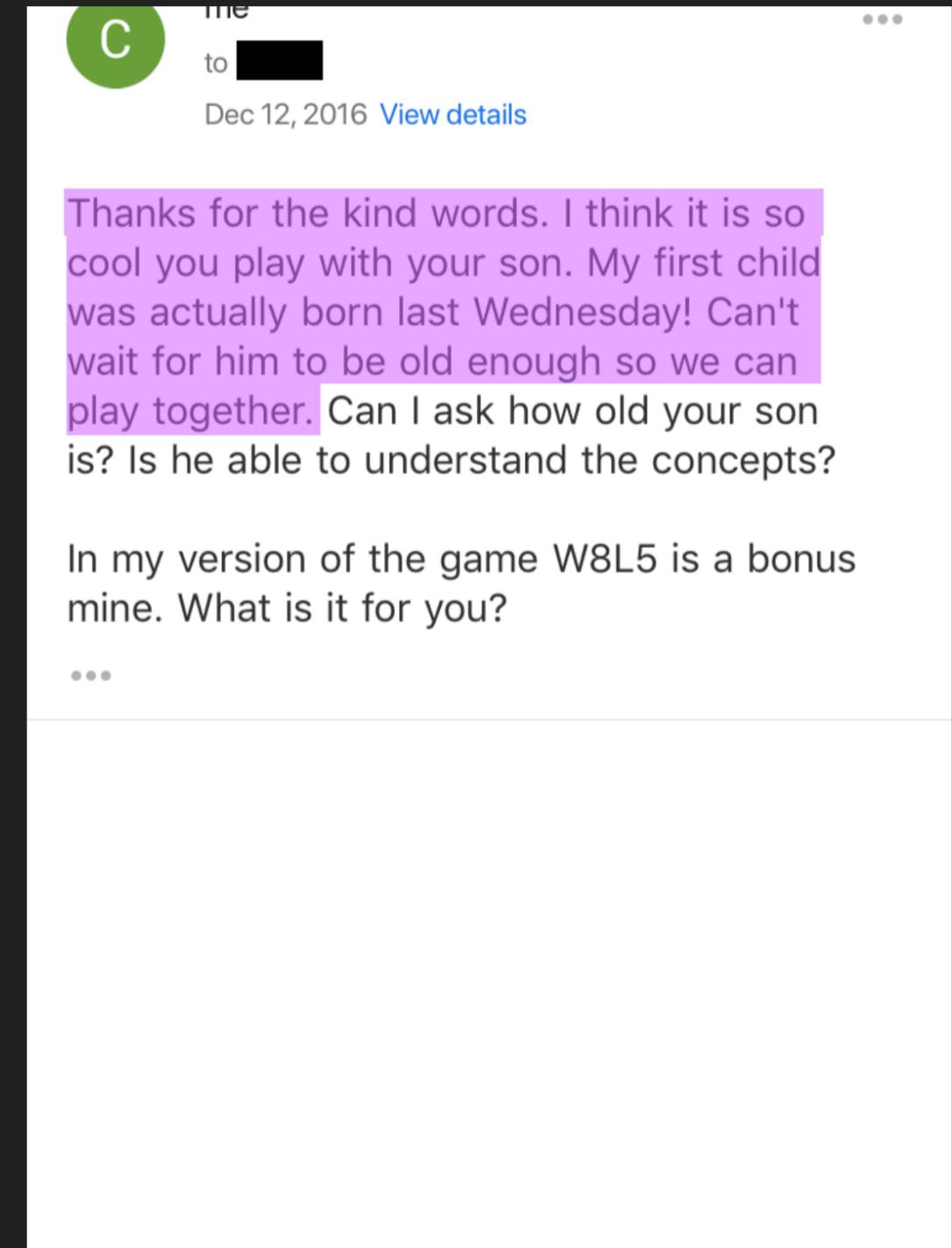
Caption: I released my game Zombie King 1 month before he was born.



Caption: While I was trying to get him to sleep I would answer support emails like this one from another father.



Him



Me

Caption: Turns out our sons have the same first name.

I have tried a lot of marketing strategies but none have been so good that I was able to bond with another father.



to me

Dec 12, 2016 [View details](#)

Congratulations to you and your partner, fatherhood is amazing and gaming together is a lot of fun (Super Mario 3d World on the Wii U with [REDACTED] 7 and [REDACTED] 5 has been the best multi player local co-op game that we have played to date).

[REDACTED] is the big fan of your game and gets the concepts well enough. As with most games these days, he now owns me and shows me how it is done.



me

to [REDACTED]

Dec 12, 2016 [View details](#)

What a coincidence! My sons name is [REDACTED] too. He is actually in my arms as I type this

Be genuine.

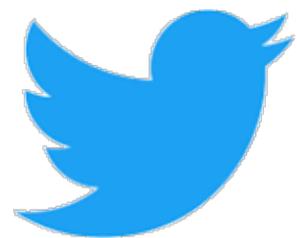
Communicate with people in a kind way.

Connect.

Caption: I love talking about email marketing. Please let me know if you have any questions.

HowToMarketAGame.com/GDC2019

iamchriszukowski@gmail.com



@adventuremtn