Alex Rogers

Launching and Marketing a Mobile Game:

Strategy and Consumer Perceptions

Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

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As indicated by the title, the focus of this thesis is on both launching and marketing a mobile game. It aims to understand the consumer and its perceptions, the optimal marketing mix, and the most efficient way of launching a mobile game. All of this is applied in a real world setting, using the up-and-coming mobile gaming company Boomlagoon as an example. The marketing mix, consumer decision making process, lean startup method, and chasm are all concepts which are taken into consideration throughout the thesis. They act as the basis for methodology.

Both in-depth interviews and a questionnaire are used to collect data. The research conducted is limited by sample size, due to the lack of resources available to the thesis author. In an optimal setting, the methodology applied in this thesis would contain more participants and research methods, in order to cross reference data and gain more depth to the information inferred.

Overall, the results indicate that Boomlagoon is on the right track. However, applying the theories and concepts reviewed throughout the thesis, while not guaranteeing success, should at least aid the company in understanding their consumer, developing marketing efforts, and effectively launching their product.

Keywords	PPPP (Marketing mix), EEEE, Consumer decision making model, Chasm, Technology adoption lifecycle, Revised Technology adoption lifecycle, Lean startup, MVP, Pivot, Persevere, Whole product model, Build-measure-learn feedback loop

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1 Introduction

In 2012, two ex-Rovio employees, Tuomas Erikoinen and Antti Stén, set out to emulate their previous success at Rovio. Thus, the mobile gaming company Boomlagoon was founded. Currently, they are tweaking their game and preparing for launch, which is projected for December 2012. While they have years of multidisciplinary experience from the mobile gaming industry to aid in their launch, their experience does not include marketing, which is a vital component in developing a successful launch strategy.

It would be futile to attempt to compress a whole marketing plan into a thesis considering the size of the first and the scope of the latter, respectively. Therefore, this thesis will focus on how to successfully launch and market a mobile game, and will take into consideration the consumer, the product, and other relevant aspects to facilitate launch. An understanding of these variables will be possible via an analysis of the marketing mix, consumer decision making model, and startup theories, along with the qualitative and quantitative research conducted to apply the aforementioned concepts. In essence, this thesis will attempt to understand the relationship between the mobile gamer and the mobile game.

2 Literature review

The intention of this literary review is to cover concepts, terms, and theories that will aid Boomlagoon in both launching and marketing their new game, Noble Nutlings. Considering that the game has already been developed, the focus of this review will be the tactical decisions[1] (product, price, promotion, place) required to launch a product. Thus, the marketing mix will be thoroughly analysed throughout this literary review,

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[1] "...Tactical decisions are normally taken when the physical and conceptual development of the new product has been completed (Bowersox et al., 1999; Kotler, 2000; Hultink, 1997, 1998), and therefore it is easier to modify in the final stages of development (Benedetto, 1999)." (Garrido-Rubio et al. 30: 2005)

along with its updated versions and coinciding theories and concepts. The marketing mix encompasses product, price, promotion, and place; vital interdependent components which guide the launch and marketing of a product, playing an integral role in the success of a product.

The aforementioned coinciding theories and concepts include target markets, product positioning, the technology adoption lifecycle, and the revised technology adoption lifecycle. These theories are paramount to the literary review, as they act as input in shaping the optimal marketing mix, directly affecting the success of a product's launch and marketing efforts.

A variety of sources have been utilized to compile the literary review. While the skeleton of the marketing mix originates from Kotler's Principles of Marketing, it is supplemented with Avlontis's Product and Service Management, and Murray's Strategy and Process in marketing. The concepts and theories presented throughout these books only conflicted with each other in terms of innate details. In addition to these textbook sources, a number of books and journals were used; The Future of a Radical Price demonstrated pricing methods based on the idea of "Free" selling (used often in mobile apps), and Crossing the Chasm described how to utilize tactical decisions when shifting from early adopters to the early majority. Journals included in the literary review covered a wide variety of topics, such as promotion (Promotion and Marketing Communications in the Information Marketplace) and launch strategies (Clustering Product Launches by Price and Launch Strategy), but they ultimately confirmed Kotler's theories. Additionally, Fetherstonhaugh updated the traditional marketing mix to fit digital marketing scenarios (PPPP > EEEE).

In order to understand what the marketing mix is, it is important to understand what marketing is. Kotler describes marketing as "a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others." To simplify, it is the method by which a business

attempts to anticipate and satisfy consumer needs and wants. In part, they achieve this by utilizing the marketing mix; product, price, place, and promotion are used to achieve a desired response from a target market. (Kotler et al. 914-915: 2005)

A successful marketing mix requires an understanding of both the intended target market and product positioning. A target market is the intended consumer for a company's product, while product positioning can be described as the product's personality. In essence, it is vital to understand who (target market) is purchasing the product, and how they perceive it (positioning). (Kotler et al. 2005: 666)

The gaming industry's target market can be segmented into eight groups, four of which are relevant to this thesis. Classification of these segments is based on gaming experience, the level of depth preferred in gameplay, and the amount of time the individuals of the segment allocate to gaming. The relevant segments are as follows:

- Newbie: Novice and inexperienced gamers.
- Casual gamer: Individuals with limited gaming experience who allocate small amounts of time to gaming. They tend to play games that are simple in design.
- Midcore (aka Core) gamer: This segment has thorough gaming experience and enthusiasm for the market, but does not use a significant amount of time playing video games. Midcore gamers spend less time than the hard-core gamer in their gaming related activities, but prefer more complex games than the casual gamer. (Iwata 2011)
- Hard-core gamer: While sharing the mid-core gamers' enthusiasm and affinity for complex games, hard-core gamers differ in the amount of time they spend participating in gaming related activities, and the sense of competition derived from gaming. This segment is more likely to participate in gaming events, such as conventions and tournaments, and even go as far as "specializing" in a specific game genre.

2.1   Product

First and foremost, a successful marketing mix revolves around the first "P," product. All other aspects are derived from the product; what methods of promotion will be used to best represent the product, what price coincides with the product and its attributes, and what is the best method of distributing the product.

2.1.1   Product attributes

Launching a successful product starts with analyzing what the product offers in terms of differentiation; what key factor or factors makes the product special. In other words, what benefits does the consumer perceive in terms of quality, features, style, and design? The aforementioned variables are known as "product attributes," and play a significant part in the success or failure of a product. (Kotler et al. 2005: 545)

Product performance is directly related to product quality; quality contributes closely to the customer's satisfaction and perceived value of the product. Furthermore, quality should be understood as being two interconnected variables: level and consistency. "Level" dictates how well a product functions and achieves the desired result. Kotler elaborates that level encompasses "(the) product's overall durability, reliability, precision, ease of operation and repair, and other valued attributes." It should be noted that quality level is measured from buyers' perceptions rather than conventional objective methods. Product consistency is more straightforward; it is concerned with how homogenously the company delivers a targeted level of performance. It can be deduced that, in terms of product consistency, companies from any end of the positioning spectrum can be recognized as offering higher quality. (Kotler et al. 2005: 545-546)

A simplistic way of differentiating a product is through its features. Features are unique, functional characteristics of a product which provide a perceived advantage to consumers. (Avlontis et al. 2006: 24) An example of a feature would be the iPhone's

touch screen feature; it allows the user to navigate through their phone via touch, thus differentiating it from conventional phones. Features play a vital role in achieving a competitive advantage for gaming companies; they enable the companies to vastly differentiate their product. For example, browser based games are being developed in 3D, while mobile games are integrating social networking and online multiplayer capabilities. (Cartagena Capital Newsletter 2011: 6-8)

Another attribute, style, encompasses the appearance of the product; distinctive styles allow for a distinct product. In fact, many products are differentiated or remembered for their unique style. Furthermore, style can supplement the value of the product in the eyes of the consumer if said consumer segment values style. (Avlontis, et al. 2006: 24)

While Avlontis presents a sufficient definition for style, he omits design completely. Design is described by Kotler as "(A) broader concept than style. Style simply describes the appearance of a product. A sensational style may grab attention and produce pleasing aesthetics, but it does not necessarily make the product perform better." Thus, design should be understood as not only the aesthetic aspect of the product, but also the functional aspect. An example of a successful product dependent on design would be the iMac. While its performance (quality) does not necessarily exceed that of a PC, its design and style are what differentiate and contribute to its success. (Kotler et al. 547-548)

2.1.2 New product potential

There are many factors and variables which should be taken into consideration when evaluating the potential success of a product. The most obvious approach to attaining success is by offering a product which is more superior and/or unique when compared to its competitors. This is achieved by offering higher quality, new features, etc. However, most products success is dependent on other variables, such as a good defi-

nition of its target market, functionality, and ameliorating market needs. (Kotler et al. 2005: 585)

2.1.3 Experience

While the original marketing mix lays the groundwork for marketing new products, many have criticized the concept as being out of date in today's technology infused business environment. For example, the first "P," product, is focused primarily on differentiating a good or service so that it is more appealing to consumers. According to Fetherstonhaugh, the fast paced, information rich business environment renders this differentiation obsolete within a smaller timeframe (6 months to a few weeks); the original notion of "product" was conceptualized in an era when features and benefits were difficult to emulate. Thus, the concept of experience has taken its place. (Fetherstonhaugh 2009)

Experience is concerned with the customer's journey rather than the product itself. Therefore, marketers should ask themselves questions such as "Do you know how customers shop for your category? Do you know who influences their purchases, and where and when their purchases happen? Do you know what happens after they buy?" (Fetherstonhaugh 2009)

2.2 Price

The term price is understood as an amount of money exchanged for a good or service. Kotler (et al. 2005: 665-666) has described two main factors and their coinciding variables to consider when setting price:

- *Internal: Marketing objectives, marketing mix strategy, costs*
- *External: Nature of the market and demand, competition, other environmental factors (economy, government, resellers, etc.)*

All elements of the marketing mix require coordination in order to develop a successful pricing strategy. (Calantone et al. 13: 2007) Additionally, an understanding of the target market is a prerequisite.

Initially, a company needs to decide upon an effective strategy for its product; this includes what target market to focus on, and how to position the product. (Kotler et al. 2005: 666) Thus, a company with an effective strategy can correctly price its product. If a company has defined its target market as "big spenders" and positioned its product to be perceived as a high quality product, the price should reflect the same perception. Kotler (et al. 2005: 666) notes that there are other objectives which may coincide with price, such as survival, profit maximization, market share maximization, and product quality leadership.

In addition to these objectives, the company's marketing mix strategy should be taken into account. Considering that each variable of the marketing mix is interdependent, it comes as no surprise that higher quality or numerous mediums of distribution should affect price. Of course, another contributing factor is cost; a company needs to profit from their product while retaining a desirable perceived price to consumers. (Kotler et al. 2005: 668-670)

Another variable which requires mention is demand and market conditions. As Kotler (et al. 2005: 673) states, "Whereas costs set the lower limit of prices, the market and demand set the upper limit." Demand coincides with consumer perceptions of price and value, and is affected by many variables, such as competition. It is important to understand consumers' perceptions, as they may or may not be rational. This phenomenon is ubiquitous; the price consumers are willing to pay may be based on actual or perceived value and/or benefits. (Kotler et al. 2005: 673-674)

Another major factor to consider when setting price is competition. In essence, a competitor's prices, costs, and offers should be used as input when considering pricing

options and strategies. Conversely, competitor reactions should not be overlooked; the strategy implemented by a company should be coupled with the foresight to understand how the coinciding competition reacts. Murray (et al. 1996: 318-319)

2.2.1 Pricing strategies

Considering the vast amount of traditional pricing strategies available in various textbooks, only relevant pricing strategies (pricing strategies which are applicable to Boomlagoon) have been included in this section. They revolve around the concept of selling for "free."

Often, games and apps are offered as a free download; they generate revenue through advertisements which the consumer observes while using the game or app. This strategy utilizes the concept of "cross-subsidies;" the consumer does not inherently pay a price for utilizing the product, but "pays" by other means (e.g. viewing the advertisement and then purchasing the related product, generating reputation by word of mouth meaning more purchases for the aforementioned product). This closely follows Anderson's concept of "the three-party market" in which the "third party participates in a market created by a free exchange between the first two parties." (Anderson 15-19: 2009)

Additionally, the "freemium" concept is applicable to the mobile game market. To elaborate, in a freemium model, the core product is offered for free (e.g. Angry Birds, Team Fortress 2); revenue is generated through the sale of "pro" models (ones with increased content/features) of the same game, or through the selling of individual content and features. (Anderson 19-20: 2009)

The aforementioned notion of selling individual content or features is known as "micropayments." Virtual goods are the commodity sold through these micropayments, ranging from new abilities to levels to facilitating in-game progress. While companies receive no payment for individuals playing their game, the game has the potential to

earn more than its traditionally priced counterparts. In fact, "it is estimated that virtual goods worth USD 6 billion will be sold in 2013." (Cartagena Capital Newsletter 1-3: 2011)

2.2.2 Exchange

As with product, price has become an outdated concept; it has been updated to the term "exchange." It differs from its predecessor by focusing on what consumers value and are willing to exchange for a product, instead of the amount they would pay for a good. In other words, marketers need to position their perspective on "what it takes for a consumer to give... precious things like their attention, their engagement, and their permission." Exchange is more long-term oriented than price, as it strives to achieve a fruitful relationship between consumer and producer. (Fetherstonhaugh 2009)

2.3 Promotion

The third concept belonging to the marketing mix is promotion. Promotion deals with communicating and exposing a product to its intended consumer, known as a target market or segment. The aforementioned concept of interdependency between elements of the marketing mix is just as applicable to promotion as with the aforementioned variables. In other words, promotional efforts should form based on the target market, product, and price. The whole of a company's promotions effort is referred to as its marketing communications mix (aka promotion mix). (Murray et al. 1993: 334)

There are numerous objectives which promotional efforts may attempt to facilitate:
- *Increase sales;*
- *Maintain or improve market share;*
- *Create or improve brand recognition;*
- *Create a favourable climate for future sales;*
- *Inform and educate the market;*

- *Create a competitive advantage, relative to*
  - *Competitor's products or market position;*
- *Improve promotional efficiency.*

(Rowley 1998: 384)

A company's communications mix, as stated previously, is an amalgam of said company's promotional efforts. These efforts are displayed in Figure 1 (Murray et al. 1993: 335).
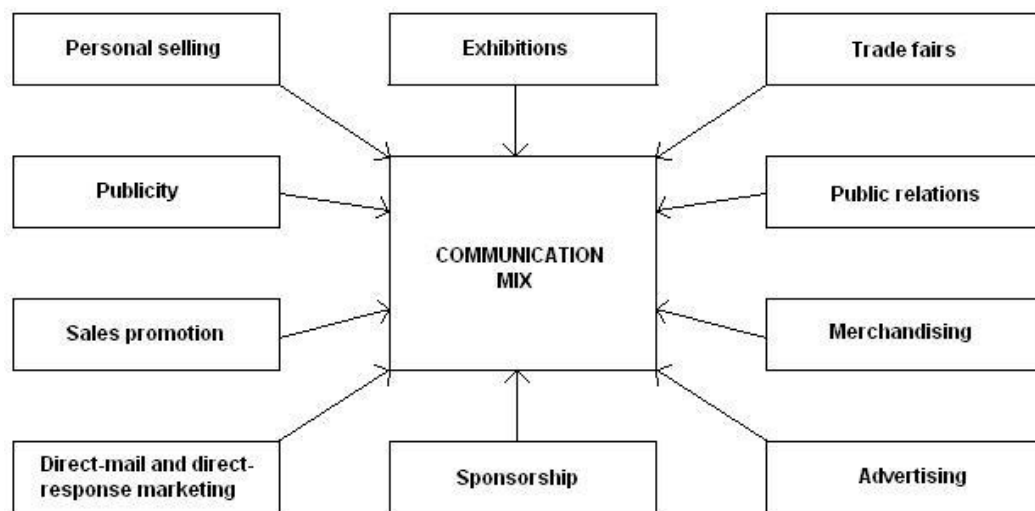
Communication mix - Murray and O'Driscoll (1996)

Figure 1

Figure 1 does not include word-of-mouth, which is a powerful tool in the mobile gaming industry. As Curtis (2012) states, "word of mouth (including social networks) accounts for more than half of all mobile app discovery."

A successful promotional mix is dependent on numerous variables; there are however two prominent factors to consider. First, it should be taken into account that mass markets are a concept of the past. As Kotler states, "(companies) are developing focused marketing programs designed to build closer relationships with customers in

more narrowly defined micromarkets." Therefore, companies should shift their focus from marketing to everyone to marketing to a target market or segment which is most likely to express interest and purchase their product. Furthermore, information technology is contributing to this segmented approach to marketing. Customers' needs and related information (in terms of the individual and household) has become readily available because of IT. (Kotler et al. 2005: 720)

Consequently, the shift toward segmented and niche marketing stands to reaffirm what has been stated numerous times in this thesis; a strong marketing mix is based on a thorough understanding of what market to targeted and how to correctly position the product.

2.3.1 Communicating effectively

Regardless of the level of exposure the target audience is in, the message communicated via the promotional mix should take into consideration four variables: choice of target audience, choice of communication objectives, choice of message, and choice of medium. (Murray et al. 1993: 336-338) Although steps beyond the aforementioned exist (budgeting, execution of the communication program, measurement of results, evaluation of results (Murray et al. 1993: 337)), these elements are closely tied into a Boomlagoon's operation and will not be evaluated in the methodology.

As stated above, a successful promotional mix starts with a defined target audience. (Rowley, 1998: 385) However, the term "target audience" is broad. A target audience can be individuals, various cultures, groups, or the public in general. Once said audience has been targeted and understood, the company can begin to develop when, where, who, how, and what will be communicated through their message. (Kotler et al. 2005: 336) The message should be shaped based on what stage of understanding and exposure the consumer has experienced in regards to the product. (Murray et al. 1993: 336-338)

2.3.2 Communication objectives

Applicable communication objectives should reflect the desired outcome of the company's promotional strategy. (Murray et al. 1993: 337) While it is ideal to encompass all of the following variables into promotional efforts, it is not always realistic:

- Attention: This is utilized in the introductory phase of a product's life cycle. As the categorical name indicates, the focus of this stage is to garner attention.
- Interest: After consumers have been exposed to the product, it does not indicate that they will purchase the product in question. Their interest needs to be attracted by displaying the advantages and benefits of the product over its competition.
- Desire: While consumers may understand the benefits of the product offered, they still need assurance that it will satisfy their needs or wants.
- Action: Finally, the last stage of AIDA is action; consumers at this level desire the product at hand, but must be convinced to act or purchase the product.

(Kotler et al. 2005: 732)

2.3.3 Message

The content of a company's message should (as with many other variables) coincide with their target audience. Above all, in order to develop an effective message, it has to appeal to the target audience. Therefore, an understanding of what appeals to the target audience is necessary. (Murray et al. 1993: 338)

Consumer appeals can be organized into three categories:
- *Rational appeals - Message appeals that relate to the audience's self-interest and show that the product will produce the claimed benefits; examples are quality, economy, value, or performance.*
- *Emotional appeals - Message appeals that attempt to stir up negative or positive emotions that will motivate purchase; fear, guilt, shame, love, humor, pride, joy.*

- *Moral appeals - Message appeals that are directed to the audience's sense of what is right and proper.*

(Kotler et al. 2005: 733)

In order to select relevant mediums in which to promote a product, the nature of the product and its respective consumers should be understood. (Murray et al. 1993: 338) For example, if a new PC is to be released, promotional channels should be evaluated in terms of how effectively they reach out to targeted consumers. However, if the PC's function is gaming, the aforementioned tactic does not take into consideration the nature of the product. A gaming PC tends to have new innovations and developments which require in depth review by consumers; mediums which allow consumers to evaluate said innovations and developments would be most effective.

2.3.4 Evangelism

Promotion is not a concept with any inherent flaws. It has, however, been disfavored over "evangelism." No, the term does not refer to any religious practice; in this sense it denotes believing in a product. To reiterate, the mission and brand experience of a company's product should be inspiring so that consumers want to share its coinciding values and belong. This is achieved by encompassing emotion and passion into all promotional efforts. (Fetherstonhaugh 2009)

One of the many benefits of utilizing evangelism is that it's relevant to all channels of the promotional mix. Consumers are willing to disseminate information regarding a product via word of mouth, social media, and other methods because of their shared emotion and passion with the company and/or product. (Fetherstonhaugh 2009)

2.4 Place

The final element of the marketing mix is place, which is also referred to as distribution. Due to the nature of Boomlagoon's product (an intangible internet/mobile application), many physical aspects of distribution will be omitted from the literary review.

Kotler (et al. 2005: 857) states that "an individual firm's success depends not only on how well it performs but also on how well its entire marketing channel competes with competitor's channels." Thus, a company must strategically select it's modes of distribution.

2.4.1 Marketing channels

It is more common for companies to sell their product to intermediaries than to the end user. In fact, there can be many intermediaries between the producer of a product and the end user. This is referred to as a marketing channel (or distribution channel). (Kotler et al. 2005: 858) Notwithstanding, the modern gaming market has seen a rise in digital distribution, allowing producers to distribute their game through one intermediary (or in some cases, none).

The gaming market in general has numerous channels which distribute games. Initially, the most recognized methods for console and PC game distribution were via brick and mortar establishments or online stores which deliver directly to the consumer's domicile. However, in recent years a new medium of distribution has been used in conjunction with the internet; differing from online stores by distributing the product directly to the consumer's computer or console via download (digital distribution). While more traditional PC games are distributed through platforms such as Steam and Battle.net, mobile and arcade games can be found in Apple's App store, Android's Play store, and Window's Xbox Live Arcade. Additionally, some games are playable through both social media and gaming websites; these games are accessible through virtually any device capable of connecting to the internet. (Cartagena Capital Newsletter 1: 2011)

2.4.2 Everyplace

The final updated marketing mix variable is place to "Everyplace." While place is concerned with grabbing attention and shifting consumers focus to a product, everyplace strives to intercept consumers on their own terms. Instead of focusing on where or how to distribute a product, marketers should consider when consumers are receptive

to purchasing a good or service. This allows the consumer to be more open to purchasing a product and is less intrusive. (Fetherstonhaugh 2009)

2.5   The Chasm

2.5.1   Technology adoption lifecycle

While the marketing mix can be viewed as "how and what" to offer, the technology adoption lifecycle pinpoints "why and when" to offer the specified marketing mix. The technology adoption lifecycle (Figure 2) is a concept which elaborates how a successful product is accepted throughout its existence. (Moore 10: 2001)

Technology Adoption Life Cycle
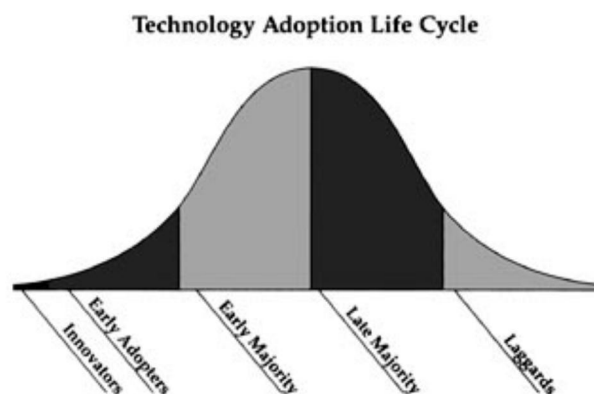
Figure 2 (Moore 2001: 10)

2.5.2   The Revised Technology Adoption Life Cycle

Moore (13: 2001) proposes an updated version of the technology adoption lifecycle concept, which contains "cracks in the bell curve." In other words, there are barriers which may prevent a product or innovation from entering into the next segment (innovators to early adopters and early to late majority). However, the aforementioned barriers are inconsequential in comparison to the "chasm." As illustrated in Figure 3, the chasm is between the early adopters and the early majority; the immensely varied characteristics of these two segments create a monumental obstacle. (Moore 15: 2001)

Originally, it was understood that the preceding segments of the technology adoption life cycle would act as input to the next segment. (Moore 2001 10-12) Notwithstanding, the aforementioned segments are in fact very different from their counterparts; the values of the early adopter does not coincide with that of the early majority, which creates the chasm. In essence, the early adopter and early majority differ in perspective. While the early adopter strives to find new innovations and products which are ground breaking, the early majority seeks improvements on already established products. (Moore 2001: 41-43)

The *Revised* Technology Adoption Life Cycle

Innovators   Early Adopters   Early Majority   Late Majority   Laggards
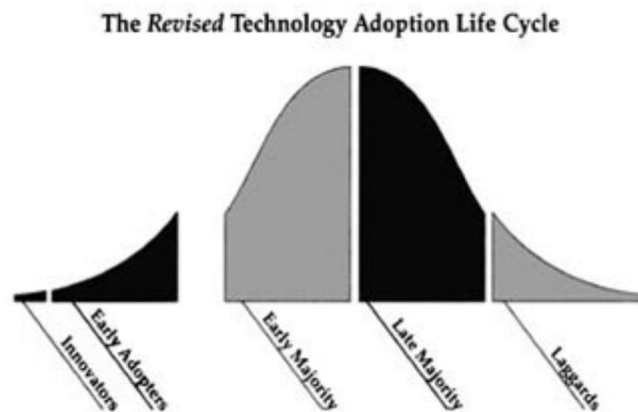
Figure 3 (Moore 2001: 13)

How is this relevant to launching a new product? The relevancy is in the approach; the approach a company utilizes to attract the innovators and early adopters will in most cases not be relevant for the early majority. Thus, an applicable strategy for early adopters is not an applicable strategy for early majority.

2.5.3 Crossing the Chasm

There are four concepts which are used to cross the figurative chasm (Moore 154: 2001)

The first of the four concepts is pinpointing the target customer, dominating its respective niche market, and expanding from that niche market. Potential consumers should

be evaluated and categorized until a final target (or multiple targets) has been chosen. This allows a company to focus its efforts on dominating a specified area rather than a whole market, in turn focusing its resources to one unified goal. After the niche is secured, expansion can continue. (Moore 65: 2001)

Secondly, the company needs to define its offered product via the whole product concept (Figure 4). The importance of the outer circles increases as the product moves from innovators and early adopters to the early late majority. Thus, the company needs to understand their product in respect to the various levels of the concept. (Moore 80: 2001)

The Whole Product Model

Potential Product

Augmented Product

Expected Product

Generic Product
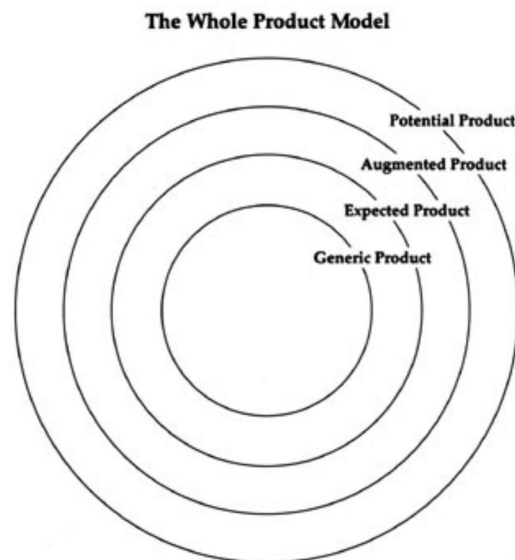
Figure 4 (Moore 2001: 82)

After the product has been classified in terms of the whole product, it is necessary to understand the competition and how the product is positioned in comparison to their offering. Product positioning "has to do with the perceived personality of the product by the customer." (Avlontis et al. 7: 2006) It influences the degree to which consumers value a product; its value is compared relatively, meaning that the competition's product and product positioning should also be understood. (Moore 110-111: 2001)

Lastly, a company needs to choose beneficial distribution channels and an applicable pricing strategy. While Moore lists numerous distribution channels, they are not applicable to the gaming environment and will not be discussed here as game distribution has been discussed in the section "Place." Additionally, the pricing strategies listed are irrelevant due to the nature of the product (relevant strategies are discussed in "Price").

2.6   Consumer Decision Making Process

There are many approaches to defining the consumer decision making process. While the economic, passive, and emotional views all maintain relevancy in evaluating a consumer's decision making process, the cognitive view is most applicable to games. In this model, the consumer is thought of as a "thinking problem solver." In other words, this model assumes that consumers seek and evaluate information regarding potential games, but does not assume (like the economic view) that all information is readily available or even sought by the consumer, or that the consumer's decision is based solely on marketing efforts (like the passive view).

In fact, consumers utilize heuristics to evaluate and choose a product. Heuristics are "shortcut decision rules which facilitate the decision-making process." An example of this phenomenon would be when a consumer buys a bar of candy; the consumer compares the candy to other candy in the vicinity but will not in most cases seek additional input. (Schiffman 550-551: 2004)The consumer decision making process is modelled in Figure 5.

The decision making process is used in conjunction with the problem solving hierarchy, which describes how much attention and involvement a consumer is willing to input to their decision making process. The three levels of the problem solving hierarchy are:

- *Extensive problem solving (high involvement): Important decisions warrant greater deliberation, usually higher expenditure*
- *Limited problem solving (moderate involvement): Known and familiar (modified or straight re-buys), usually moderate pricing*
- *Routinized problem solving (low involvement: Repeat behaviour often limited external knowledge, usually low pricing*

(Egan 55: 2007)

Figure 5 (Riley 2012)

2.7   Lean Startup

Vital to the success of any company is their method of launching a new product. Both the technological and gaming industry are being driven by innovative launch strategies. One such strategy, which focuses on startup companies, is the "lean startup" method. At the core of this model is the build-measure-learn feedback loop (Figure 5), which is the process by which entrepreneurs turn "ideas into products, measure how customers respond, and then learn whether to pivot or persevere." (Reis 2011: 9)

In essence, lean startup stresses that companies should launch their product in its min-imum viable product (MVP[2]) form, and utilize the build-measure-learn feedback loop to receive consumer input regarding the product's improvement., (Reis 2011: 76-77)
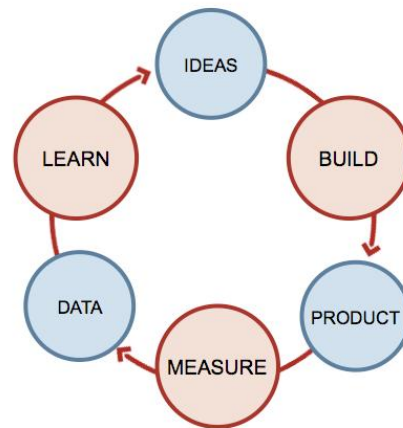
Pending the results of the loop, the company may opt to pivot or persevere. Pivoting, in the lean startup sense, is the restructuring of either the original product or strategy, while persevering means maintaining the original concept. It should be noted that pivoting changes the fundamentals of the product (who to target, adapting the product to the original target), and that improvements made via the build-measure-learn feed-back loop are not necessarily pivots, but may be viewed as enhancements (more fea-tures, increased user-friendliness). (Reis 2011: 149)

In order to measure the level of success the application of this concept has achieved, Reis recommends that companies use innovation accounting, which encompasses three steps. The first recommended step is to establish data on the company's current sta-tus using the MVP. Afterwards, the company should "tune the engine," or make im-provements on the MVP which do not affect the fundamentals of the product. Finally,

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[2] "The MVP is that version of the product that enables a full turn of the Build-Measure-Learn loop with a minimum amount of effort and the least amount of development time. The minimum viable product lacks many features that may prove essential later on." (Reis 2011: 77)
[3](http://lean.st/principles/build-measure-learn 2012)

the company should decide whether to pivot or persevere. While these are not concrete measurements, they allow a company to understand whether or not they are making progress. (Reis 2011: 117-118)

3 Methodology

The focus of the methodological section of this thesis is exploratory research (qualitative and quantitative) aimed at facilitating the process of launching and selling a mobile game. Exploratory research is used, as its name suggests, as a method of exploring the unknown (e.g. What target market is interested in the product). (Churchill, et al. 2002: 91) In the case of this thesis, it is applied with the intention of comprehending an effective launch strategy. To elaborate further, the methods applied in this thesis aim to find the optimal marketing mix, launch strategy, and an understanding of the consumer decision making process in regards to mobile gaming. In order to accumulate this data and infer information, the research will be presented from two perspectives; in-depth interviews, and a questionnaire. The purpose of applying both methods of research is to achieve a comprehensive perspective of the topic at hand, as neither method inclusively completes the task. Additionally, overlapping data received from the in-depth interviews and questionnaire will be cross referenced for assurance.

Before the methodology was conducted, Boomlagoon CCO Tuomas Erikoinen was interviewed (appendix 1) in order to assess what the company was aware/unaware of in regards to their marketing efforts. The interview questions covered their current marketing mix, product positioning, understanding of target market, and launch strategy. Additionally, the answers to these questions were used as input in forming both the in-depth interview and questionnaire.

3.1   In-Depth Interviews

Primarily, in-depth interviews (appendix 2) are utilized as a means of gathering qualitative data. Both the open ended questions and the depth of the answers received from participants are what make this method unique. In order for this method to be utilized effectively, questions should be open ended to allow a thorough answer from the respondent, and structured in a way that facilitates responses from the participant while taking into account probing. These elements should be combined to make the interview feel more like a conversation. Answers should be interpreted, and then paraphrased and relayed to the respondent to make sure communication is authentic and thorough. (Diehl 2012)

Originally, five individuals volunteered to participate in the in-depth interviews. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, the number of participants was reduced to three. These gamers were asked how much they played video games, and classified on one of four gamer levels, based on their response. The third respondent, a video game industry veteran and CEO of a consulting company focused on gaming classified himself as a "post-hardcore[4]" gamer. Since each participant was classified differently, they will be referred to as newbie, hardcore, and casual (post-hardcore) gamer.

Respondents were asked questions related to:
- The marketing mix in an attempt to understand the optimal product, price, promotion, and distribution in the eyes of a gamer. (Questions 1-11)
- Their decision making process via the consumer desicion making model (Questions 12-21)
- Boomlagoon's competition and how they perceive Noble Nutlings in comparison (Questions 4-6)

In order to garner effective responses, participants were asked open ended questions and given ample time to respond to accommodate their thought process. If the res-

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[4] In this sense, "post-hardcore" refers to his previous status as a hardcore gamer. The participant is now a casual gamer, but maintains certain hardcore insights.

pondent seemed unsure of the question at hand, or their own answer, probing techniques were used to clarify either variable. Probing techniques were also used if the respondent gave a vague answer, or one that seemed to have more depth to it. If answers could be interpreted in a variety of manners, or if it was necessary to ensure that communication was effective, the interviewer would paraphrase and relay the respondent's answer back to them in order to confirm what was interpreted.

It should also be noted that these in-depth interviews are part of the build-measure-learn feedback loop of the "lean startup method," in which the company receives feedback on their product and decides whether to pivot or persevere.

3.2   Questionnaire

Conversely, the purpose of conducting a questionnaire (appendix 3) is to retrieve quantitative data. Twenty-six respondents completed the questionnaire. While the questionnaire did contain open ended questions, it primarily featured multiple choice questions, ranking (1-5), and yes-no questions. In order to collect a large enough sample, the questionnaire was posted to both the author and Boomlagoon's Facebook pages. Due to the nature of Facebook, the sample collected from these pages may not represent Boomlagoon's total prospective target market, as the participants are either acquaintances of the author or established Boomlagoon fans. However, this should not diminish the validity of the questionnaire's results, as most participants are mobile gamers.

Questions 1-4 of the questionnaire intend to categorize the consumer into one of four gamer levels (newbie, casual, mid-core, and hardcore) in order to better understand each segment. These questions are vital, as each segment is anticipated to exhibit different tendencies. While it may in the future prove beneficial for Boomlagoon to understand other demographical aspects of gamers, the global nature of digital distri-

bution combined with the lack of available resources to this thesis inhibit any conclusion being inferred from such results.

As with the in-depth interviews, the questionnaire includes questions related to the consumer decision making model (5-14). The answers to these questions, when analyzed with the respondent's gamer level, will demonstrate how each segment behaves when foregoing the process of purchasing a mobile game. While questions 7, 8, and 10 do relate to the consumer decision making model, they are also applicable to the marketing mix. Additionally, other aspects of the marketing mix are covered in questions 15-17.

4 Results

4.1 Newbie Gamer

The first in-depth interview (appendix 2, blue text) gives insight into the "newbie" perspective of gaming. This respondent was categorized as a newbie because of the gamer's lack of gaming experience and lack of familiarity with the industry's products (was only familiar with angry birds). According to the respondent's answers, it can be inferred that the newbie gamer attempts to consume idle time and alleviate boredom. The newbie gamer considers Family/friend/colleague perceptions when seeking new games (as well as the internet), and evaluating them. Essentially, this in-depth interview demonstrates that the newbie gamer's inexperience causes her to seek out established, popular games, and/or the input of individuals to aid in her search. In addition to these influences, price and reviews also act as input to lesser extent. While this gamer tends not to participate in any post evaluation activity, the respondent will if prompted (i.e. if the topic comes up in conversation).

In regards to the product, the newbie gamer values the game mechanics (quality), customization (features), and art (style). However, this gamer felt as though the levels were too challenging and lengthy; suggesting that not all aspects of the game were geared towards this demographic. As alluded to in the previous paragraph, word-of-mouth and social networks are the two most prominent communication channels that influence the newbie gamer. Additionally, this gamer preferred Android's Play Store as a means of distribution. While most downloads on the Play Store tend to be free, the respondent noted that she would pay between two to three euros for Noble Nutlings, but would not purchase a premium version or other in game content.

4.2   Hardcore Gamer

Differences between the newbie and hardcore gamer's answers (appendix 2, green text) are vast. While the primary goal of the newbie gamer is to alleviate boredom, the hardcore gamer's needs are more complex; both nostalgia and achievement work in conjunction to motivate this gamer. Additionally, the convenience and (low) price are what make mobile games appealing to the hardcore gamer. As with the newbie gamer, the hardcore gamer tends to find games through acquaintances. However, when actively seeking games, the respondent considers prequels to games (e.g. original Angry Birds would act as input when downloading Angry Birds Space), price, and game mechanics. When evaluating games and their alternatives, the hardcore gamer first considers the name of the game and associated images, followed by reviews and ratings. After deciding on what game to download, the respondent claimed that the only variable that could hinder the process is if the game has been falsely represented. Lastly, the hardcore gamer tends only to review games if they were enjoyable, and in most cases shares enjoyable experiences with other gamers.

Game mechanics, achievement, art, vanity items, and replay-ability are all product related aspects which the hardcore gamer appreciates. The respondent also noted that

the game could be improved with alternative methods of completion (e.g. routes, power-ups, etc.); this gamer seeks a high quality game with a multitude of features. The hardcore gamer, in likeness with the newbie gamer, is exposed to a number of communication channels, but is most influenced via word-of-mouth and social networking. In terms of price, the respondent was willing to pay up to eight euros for a title such as Noble Nutlings, and preferred the Play Store for distribution.

4.3   Casual Gamer

Lastly, is the casual gamer (Appendix 2, red). This gamer plays mobile games for the purpose of distraction. In other words, mobile games act as a means of consuming the attention of the casual gamer, allowing for a shift in focus from regular everyday tasks, to something more amusing. Additionally, the respondent noted that the need to download new mobile games arises upon completion of previously downloaded games, boredom, and lack of interest in current mobile games. When searching for mobile games, this gamer consults top lists (e.g. top 10), Facebook friends, and gaming magazines. Furthermore, this gamer evaluates alternate mobile games based on art, replay-ability, price (no commitment to free games), and familiarity. After evaluating alternatives, the only left to consider is consistency. If the game represents what reviews, images, etc. have implied, the game is then purchased. Moreover, the casual gamer tends not to participate in any formal post purchase evaluation, but will share positive experiences with friends, Facebook friends, and other colleagues.

The respondent expressed an appreciation for the game mechanics, graphics/art, and replay-ability of Noble Nutlings, but noted that the game should include landmarks (so various sections of the level and the level itself are more memorable), and variations in speed. Communication channels which influence the casual gamer include word-of-mouth, top lists, social networking, and in some cases, gaming magazines. Additionally, the preferred mode of distribution for the casual gamer is the App store. Similar to the newbie gamer, the casual gamer would be willing to pay between one to two euros

for Noble Nutlings (also mentioned that free games take less consideration to download). However, this gamer would be willing to purchase extra content or a premium version of games deemed enjoyable.

4.4 Questionnaire

The results for the questionnaire can be viewed in appendix 3. Displayed next to the answers is the number of respondents who chose the answer. Questions which require respondents to rate using a scale display an average (based on the scale) rather than the number of respondents. Additionally, some questions allow for multiple answers, while others are open ended (the answers displayed are generalizations of answers which were posted numerous times) and have been indicated as such in the appendix. Out of twenty-six respondents, twenty-three considered themselves mobile gamers; these three non-gamers have been omitted from the results and analysis.

4.5 Analysis

The in-depth interviews, while providing significant answers to the analysis, primarily act as an example of lean startup. To elaborate, the MVP was tested by three participants, and their answers were used to consider whether Boomlagoon should pivot, or persevere. Two of the three (hardcore and casual) respondent's answers indicate that only minor adjustments are required, meaning that the company should continue to persevere. The newbie gamer, while more critical of the product, appeared to enjoy the core of the game, indicating that even with this demographic in mind the company should persevere (although more adjustments would be necessary). In any case, the fundamentals of the product should stay intact.

Out of the twenty-three gamers who responded to the questionnaire, fourteen considered themselves experienced mobile gamers. However, the results demonstrate that

experienced and inexperienced gamers prefer the same level of gameplay (Figure 6[5]). Additionally, there is no correlation between experience level and amount of hours used in mobile gaming (Figure 7). This data suggests that the traditional levels of gamer presented in the literature review (newbie, casual, midcore, hardcore) are not applicable to the mobile gaming audience. Thus, for the remainder of this thesis, gamers will be referred to as experienced and inexperienced mobile gamers. Both the casual and hardcore gamer from the in-depth interviews are considered experienced gamers while the newbie gamer is considered an inexperienced gamer (they will still be referred to by their original monikers).

Generally, mobile gamers concentrate on the quality and the design of a product, specifically the game mechanics and the art/graphics (appendix 3, question 8). This is supported by the in-depth interviews, in which each respondent appreciated both the game mechanics and the art/graphics of the game. In essence, a value in game mechanics is ubiquitous for mobile gamers. However, experienced gamers place more value in the art and graphics than inexperienced gamers (figure 8), and significantly more value in audio (figure 9). This perhaps suggests that experienced gamers conduct a more rigorous evaluation when deciding between mobile games. Furthermore, these results support Fetherstonhaugh's notion that product has been replaced with experience. Considering that both inexperienced and experienced gamers appreciate quality and design about the same, we must refer to Fetherstonhaugh's questions concerning experience: "Do you know how customers shop for your category? Do you know who influences their purchases, and where and when their purchases happen? Do you know what happens after they buy?" All of these questions are answered by comparing the questionnaire data with the consumer decision making model (figure 5, pg. 20).

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[5] Figures 6-12 are located in appendix 4

- Need Recognition: The top answers to question 5 and 6 (appendix 3) demonstrate that mobile gamers download games to consume idle time, and to entertain themselves (i.e. for fun). Additionally, the accessibility of mobile games allows them to fulfil this need.

- Information Search: Most gamers find out about games (question 7) via friends/family, social networking, and gaming websites, and seek (question 8) high quality (game mechanics), unique design (graphics/art), and to a lesser extent replay-ability.

- Evaluation of Alternatives: In order to decide between mobile games (question 9), gamers take into consideration user reviews, images associated with the game, top charts (top 10), and input from friends/family about equally. Furthermore, mobile gamers tend to download free or demo versions, so that alternatives can be tested.

- Purchase: Gamers will purchase/download games during idle time. (question 11)

- Post-Purchase Evaluation: Most gamers share positive gaming experiences with their friends. About half of the sample review games. Of these reviewers, most indicated that they review via App or Play store. (questions 12-15)

Experienced and inexperienced gamers maintain dissimilarities throughout the consumer decision making model. Figure 12 displays how experienced gamers are more likely to be habitual downloaders than inexperienced gamers. Other dissimilarities are presented in the following paragraphs, from a marketing mix perspective.

Most gamers are accustomed to paying anywhere between zero to five euros for their mobile games. While inexperienced gamers tend to download free games, experienced gamers, on average, pay between five to six euros for mobile games. Ten out of twenty three gamers noted that they download virtual currency and/or in game content, yet it seems as though experienced gamers are the ones downloading premium versions of games (figure 10). The in-depth interview participants' answers confirm

this; while the newbie gamer (inexperienced) expressed no interest in downloading a premium version of a game, both the casual and hardcore gamer (experienced) mention that they would download a premium version if the game is enjoyable. Exchange should also be taken into consideration, as it answers "what it takes for a consumer to give... precious things like their attention, their engagement, and their permission." In this case, it is evident that most mobile gamers are exchanging boredom or idle time for mobile games.

In terms of distribution, the App store is heavily utilized by experienced gamers. Inexperienced gamers are not defined by their preference in distribution; they use the App store, Play store, and Internet about equally to download their mobile games. As place has been upgraded to everyplace, it should be taken into consideration when the consumer prefers to be intercepted. From the questionnaire data, the only inference that can be made is that mobile gamers prefer to be engaged during idle time.

It is evident when analysing these answers that the most important communication channel for mobile gamers is word-of-mouth, in both the traditional sense, and via social networking. Nevertheless, experienced gamers differ from inexperienced, as they are more likely to use gaming websites as input (figure 11). This perhaps suggests that experienced gamers are the innovators who seek new games, while the inexperienced gamers are the early majority merely following the experienced by word-of-mouth and social networking (also word-of-mouth). In updating promotion to evangelism, it is apparent that not only should the product be communicated effectively, but so should the Boomlagoon's emotion and passion. As stated in the interview (appendix 1) with Tuomas Erikoinen, the product is intended to be "quirky;" the communication utilized should display this quirkiness.

5   Conclusion

The first step Boomlagoon should take in regard to their marketing is to define its target demographic. Using the experienced and inexperienced demographics, or another more effective categorization, the company needs to understand who its consumer is. These demographics, for example, are very different in regards to their respective consumer decision making process. While the aforementioned demographics do share similarities (appreciation of game mechanics, communicating via word-of-mouth), the apparent dissimilarities indicate that each demographic would be approached differently. Targeting will allow all other aspects of the marketing mix to be built effectively. For example, if the company were to decide that it wanted to target experienced gamers, the analysis provided in this thesis would indicate that these gamers value graphics/art and audio more than inexperienced gamers, and would be more likely to pay for a mobile game than their counterpart. Thus, the company would model their marketing and mix based on the target consumer needs.

In terms of product, the game only requires minor adjustments based on the in-depth interviews and chosen target demographic. Moreover, price should also be based on the targeted demographic. Both types of gamer purchase in game content or virtual currency, but only experienced gamers tend to pay for games and premium versions. This indicates that regardless of demographic, virtual currency or in game content should be included in the game. Not only do these demographics differ in how much they are willing to pay, their preference of distribution is dissimilar. Lastly, the majority of promotion in the mobile gaming industry is word-of-mouth (both traditional and via social networking). This indicates that, using the concept of evangelism, Boomlagoon should excite its target demographic so that they want to share their positive experiences with others, leading to more consumers. In other words, they should dominate a niche and expand from there.

Considering that the mobile gaming industry is an established industry, Boomlagoon will not be targeting innovators or early adopters, but rather the early majority. In essence, this means that their product should be an improvement on established products, rather than an innovation. Noble Nutlings is in fact an improvement on established mobile games; Boomlagoon is on the right track in consideration of the chasm. They should however define their product via the whole product concept, to better understand its potential and limitations. As is evident throughout the in-depth interviews, the company should persevere with its product. However, they should continue to receive feedback (via post-evaluation processes such as App Store reviews) and use it to constantly improve their game.

In conclusion, Boomlagoon should target a niche and define its product with the whole product model, expand via word-of-mouth and other promotional efforts (achieved with evangelism), and constantly update their product based on consumer needs. Their product should also be priced and distributed based on the target demographics' preferences. Currently, the company is on the right track; with a few minor adjustments and new considerations, Noble Nutlings will have great potential.

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Interview with Tuomas Erikoinen

Who would you define as the end user of this product?

I think it's going to be pretty wide; the original game was hardcore but the new game is much more casual. While the graphics are aimed at younger kids, it's really for anyone.

What perception do you want individuals to have of your product / What personality does your product have?

We want individuals to see our product as high quality. It has this "huggable, quirky" quality to it.

What input has been used to develop the product? Is input consumer insight, past experience, competition?

We've received no consumer insight yet, so past experience and competition have been used as input. Other games that aren't necessarily our competition but we're familiar with have been used as well. Ex. Tiny wings, snuggle truck, bad piggies, amazing alex, angry birds

What makes Noble Nutlings unique when compared to other games? (quality, features, design)

Noble Nutlings takes elements from different games and uses them together to make a unique experience. One unique quality of our game is inviting friends to play the same level the player just completed, which changes based on how the player completes the level (obstacles scattered, etc.)

Who do you admire in the industry? Who and what games have you taken inspiration from?

Angry birds, Amazing Alex, Bad Piggies, Fruit Ninja, Jetpack Joy ride, Tiny Wings

What type of marketing/promotional efforts are you using to launch the product?

Our background as key members of Rovio, along with press releases and hopefully reviews because of press release, are what first come to mind. We will also have investor press releases, and game developer conferences (although unsure of the level of exposure at these conferences), but other than that there are no plans for future promotion so far.

What acts as input to your promotional efforts?

Experience; how things were done at Rovio.

What would you say is the primary goal of your promotional efforts?

Get as big of a user base as possible. The primary goal of this game is to become recognized as a company, and also bring recognition to the game. The second goal is to monetize on the user base, and then to learn from the experience.

What pricing strategy do you intend to use for Noble Nutlings?

The game will follow the Freemium model. Virtual currency, double virtual currency (each functions differently), and direct purchasing are all micropayment models we have considered.

What platforms do you plan to use in distributing the product?

Top priority: iOS,

Second priority: android, windows 8 phones,

Last priority: mac, pc, flash games, Facebook

Does the company have an intended launch strategy?

Before the Noble Nutlings launch, we intend to make a trailer displaying the graphics and gameplay, and participate more actively on social media

At launch, we'll use press releases and get the name out however possible. We haven't really committed to any paid marketing methods.

What are you plans to grow the user base?

In order to grow the user base we will showcase the trailer, use social media, and try to convert social media followers into users.

How do you measure the success of your product? What does success mean? Milestones?

Success for us would be attracting a big fan base, and a bonus would be to monetize on that big fan base.

Milestones: nonexistent

How do you receive feedback for your product?

We plan to use focus groups, and use a marketing research company which tests the game through consumers.

If consumer impressions/reviews are negative, what course of action do you plan on taking to increase sales/downloads?

If impressions are negative, we will change variables based on input from consumers.

In-depth Interviews

1. What was your favorite part of Noble Nutlings?

   I think when I was able to control it in the air it was fun. The fact that you can change the wheels and the cart is a good thing. Also the colors. The animation and feeling of hitting the blocks was nice.

   I liked being able to control the speed of the cart. I would prefer to have zoomed out vision because sometimes I'm going full speed and I can't see. Otherwise I liked the acceleration and deceleration feature.

   The speed, it feels funny when it goes fast. But the issue with speed is that whatever happens happens, it's hard to control. The levels could give hints as to what is coming next.

2. What was your least favorite part of Noble Nutlings?

   I think there were too many hills for me. The levels should be shorter, but it may be my patience.

   The Camera angle could be different because it affected timing

   I was kind of frustrated not being able to collect all the nuts and having to play the level again. If the level was easily memorable it would be easier. It would be nice to have some visual symbol as to what is happening in the level.

3. What would you change about the game?

   I would change the length of the levels.

   The camera angle, being able to see further, and vanity items and customization of other visual aspects would be cool. Also, decorations should be achieved before completing game. It should be linked in with achievement.

   The visual references and the level design should be more memorable. It would be cool to add in some snapshots in the game (rollercoaster).

4. How would you compare Noble Nutlings to mobile games you're familiar with?

   I think this game has potential; maybe it just needs good marketing. I think angry birds was addicting because it was famous.

   Dead trigger is addictive and I play more than I should. I keep going back to get the weapons and rank up. (rank up > cash > weapons). I assumed the game would contain more customization (weapons, accessories, etc.) The game is not as challenging as other games I'm familiar with.

   The graphics are high quality in both games. I think the speed and rhythm of the game is good. The game could have a change in tempo (slow parts, fast parts, etc.).

5. What features would you like included in the game?

   More characters included into the game, and also enemy characters.

   To have the ability to choose your method of completing the level.

I would like to characters to be more interesting. What makes them interesting, or what motivates them?

6. What other mobile games do you play?

Angry birds

Dead trigger, save private sheep 2, can knock down, alchemy, agent dash, bad piggies

Kingdom rush, plague inc,

7. What do you enjoy about these games? What do you dislike about these games?

I like the colors and the visual side of angry birds. This game is good also, but maybe it should be more colorful.

If you have a meeting or something and have to wait for an hour, they take up time. The games aren't sociable, but they kill time. I enjoy being able to control something, so I look for more physics based games. I dislike how short they are. I think the amount of extras and gameplay should be the same.

Kingdom rush is like an intellectual challenge, which is also in NN. You have to plan ahead in KR, and try again and again just like Noble Nutlings. In kingdom rush there are times that are frustrating, but it has to do with the level design and the opposition. When the game gets to hectic I don't enjoy it.

8. Where do you purchase/download these games from? (iphone, ipad, android, facebook, computer)

Samsung tablet

Android

Ipad, iphone

9. What do you think is the biggest influence on whether or not you'll download a game?

Price. I may download if my friends/family suggest it, but it depends on the game and the price. If all of my friends are playing it and the reviews are good, I may download it myself.

I check the replayability and other aspects of the game and compare it to the amount of memory it takes up.

I think graphics are important in attracting attention. It needs to stay true to its genre, top quality. And of course, other people's references and top lists.

10. If you play a game and enjoy it, what do you do? If you play a game and dislike it, what do you do?

If I enjoy I game I tend to tell my friends about it. I would not voluntarily tell them, but I would give out my opinion if the topic came up.

Wait for the update. If I disliked it and had downloaded it, I would delete it but would most likely leave it at the deletion.

Continue playing and waste many hours on it. I recommend games if I know it's a game that the person will want to play. I definitely don't waste time rating the game if I don't enjoy it, I just quit and forget about it. If it was expensive, complain about it via facebook, friends.

11. How much would you pay for Noble Nutlings?

   2-3€

   8€

   1-2€

12. If the game was offered for free but charged for extra content, would you purchase it?

   No

   I would probably purchase the physics driven aspects (affect gameplay). If it were purely vanity, I would not purchase it. I would consider other levels depending on the price and amount of levels. If there were virtual currency involved, I would buy vanity items. If it was direct purchase, I would be hesitant to buy. Virtual currency is better, since it lets me get more than just vanity items.

   I think I would, especially if they are amusing. If I can share it on facebook (favorite cart etc.) I think it would increase the incentive to buy. Being able to show off the vanity item is important.

13. Why do you play games?

   When I have idle time or I'm bored I use it to entertain myself for a while.

   I would do my homework as fast as possible, and then have more time to play. I became better at school because of this system. While my gaming skills increased so did my grades.

   Because compared to other entertainment, it's not linear; you get to make choices and use your brain to try to figure out what's going to happen and how should I prepare and respond to the situation. They also take my mind off of working.

14. Why do you download/purchase games?

   So I can play it anytime I want, since I have my Samsung with me

   It is a lot easier than buying game CDs.

   I finished kingdom rush, so I may go look for another game. Boredom or lack of interest in other games make me download new ones.

15. How do you find out about mobile games?

   I find out about them online, and I found out about Rovio in digital marketing course from my lecturer.

   Through friends is how it all got started

   Top 10 lists, facebook friends, game magazines sometimes include mobile games,

16. What do you look for when finding new mobile games?

   I just hear about it from my friends or advertisements.

   The first aspect I look into is cost, then previous games. For example, I want infamous 2 because I played infamous 1. Also, the game mechanics

Artwork is very important; if its shoddy, I won't look into the game. I'm looking for depth and replaya-bility in the game after the artwork.

17. How do you decide what game you will download?

I will check which one is most played and most famous so I don't get left out.

The name of the game is one thing that would drive me to download. Next, it would be the images posted on the page.

It depends on whether or not I've heard of the game before; I may seek out a game I've heard about. The free ones will come first because there's no commitment. And of course artwork. Variations on familiar games are always interesting.

18. If there are multiple games that appeal to you, how do you choose between them?

I would try the newest game to see what features they have.

Probably if I had a quick glance of it, I think publicity would be one of the main factors (reviews, ratings). Again, I go back to the game mechanics.

Free ones are obvious choices. It may be depending on my mood; if something looks similar to what I've been playing I may go towards something different. Or inversely, it may be that I'm looking for more of the same.

19. Are there any factors which may change your mind after you've decided what game to download?

The time it takes to download the game may stop be from downloading it, because like I told you I don't like waiting.

If something is implied but not delivered (indicated by reviews or images), I will immediately stop the download.

I doubt it. Unless I see something in the description that contradicts what it is.

20. Do you review games?

No

If its something really awesome, like dead trigger, I do. Even if I hated the game, I don't give bad re-views. If I really enjoy a game, I may post something on Facebook about, but I'd aim at my gamer friends.

Not necessarily review, but I may share my experience on facebook.

21. Do you share your gaming experiences with anyone? If so, who?

Yeah, I tell my friends and my Facebook friends. Maybe family if they're into gaming.

Rarely, but if I do it is with other gamers

Yes, friends, facebook friends, colleagues

Questionnaire

Total number of participants: 26

1.   Do you play mobile games?
Yes   23
No (excluded from rest of statistics)   3

2.   On average, how many hours **a** week do you play mobile games?
0-2   9
3-5   10
6-8   2
9 +   2

3.   Do you consider yourself an experienced mobile gamer?
Yes   14
No   9

4.   What level of gameplay do you prefer in mobile games?
Easy   3
Moderate   13
Challenging   6
Difficult   1

5.   Why do you play mobile games? (Open ended)
Accessibility
For entertainment
Consumes idle time

6.   How significantly (on **a** scale of 1-4, **1** being the least significant and **4** being the most significant) do the following influence you to play mobile games?
To alleviate boredom   2.83
Because it's a habit   2.04
Just for fun   3.13
Friends/Family play them   1.65

7.   How do you find out about new mobile games? (multiple answers)
Social Networking   14
Gaming websites   13
Advertisements   4
Friends/Family   18
Magazines   7
Other:

8.   What are the most important variables (on **a** scale of 1-5, **1** being the least important and **5** being the most important) to consider when looking for new mobile games?
Replay-ability   3.17
Graphics/Art   4.09
Social features   2.04
Game mechanics   4.43
Audio   2.35

9.   How important (1-5, **1** being the least important and **5** being the most important) is the following in helping you decide what mobile game you will download?

User reviews	3.61
Images associated with the game	3.78
Videos associated with the game	3.17
Input from friends/family	3.61
Top 10 (or other charts)	3.74

10. If there are multiple games that appeal to you, how do you choose between them? (open ended)
If it belongs to a top list (top 10)
Reviews/Ratings
Test all and then choose

11. When do you purchase/download mobile games? (open ended)
During idle time

12 **&** 13. Do you review games? If yes, where do you review them? If no, continue to the next question

Yes	11
Social media	1
Blog	1
Gaming website	0
App or Play store	9
No	12

14. Do you share your gaming experiences with anyone? If yes, with who? (multiple answer)

Family	8
Friends	20
Colleagues	13
Social Network	3

15. If you answered yes to the previous question, what types of games do you share with others?

Games I enjoy	21
Games I think others would enjoy	12
Games I did not enjoy	2

16. How much do you tend to pay (on average) for new mobile games?

Nothing	6
No more than 2e	7
No more than 5e	8
No more than 8e	2
No more than 11e	0
More than 12e	0

17. Do you ever purchase virtual currency or in game content (more levels, weapons, etc.)?

Yes	10
No	13

18. Have you ever purchased **a** "premium" version of **a** free mobile game?

Yes	15
No	8

19. Where do you download/purchase your mobile games from?

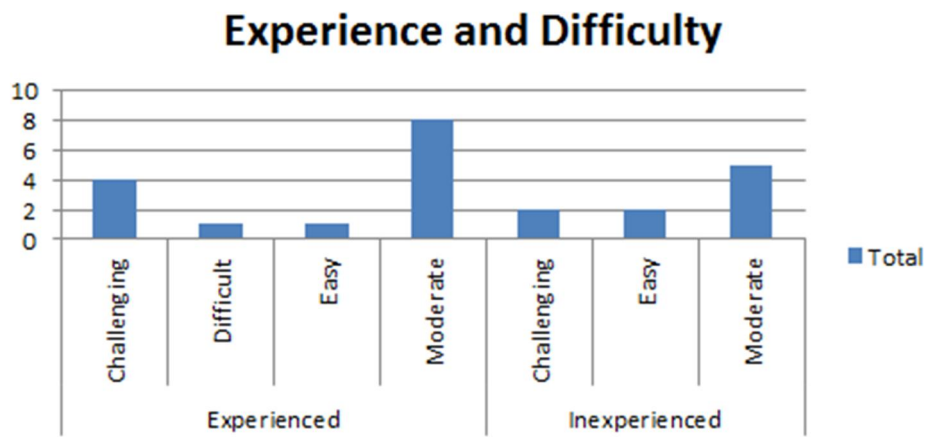|	
Windows phone store	3
Facebook	1
Play store	8
App store	16
Internet	7

Comparative Charts

Experience and Difficulty

Figure 6

Experience and Hours Played

Figure 7

Experience and Graphics/Art
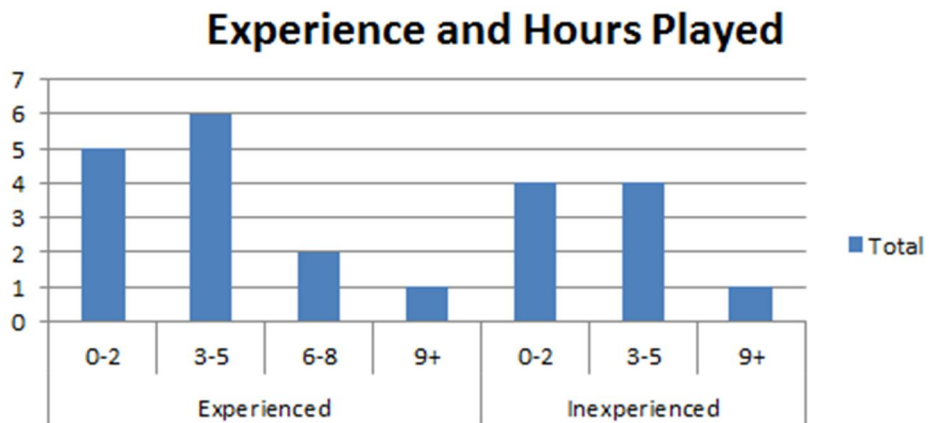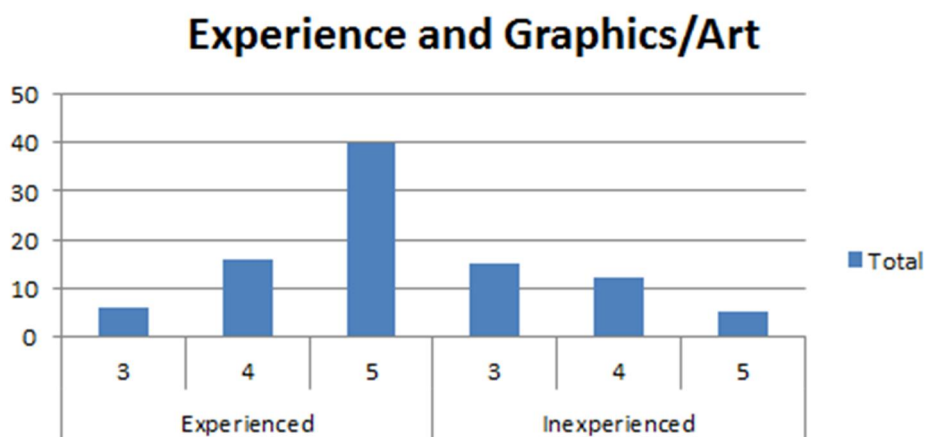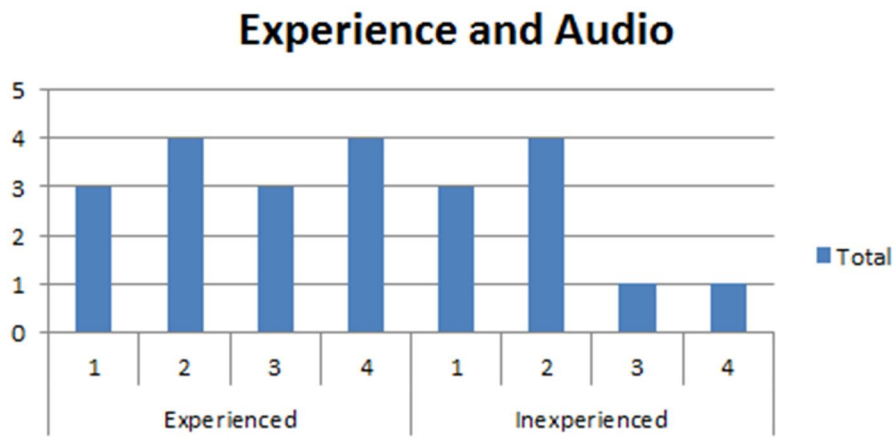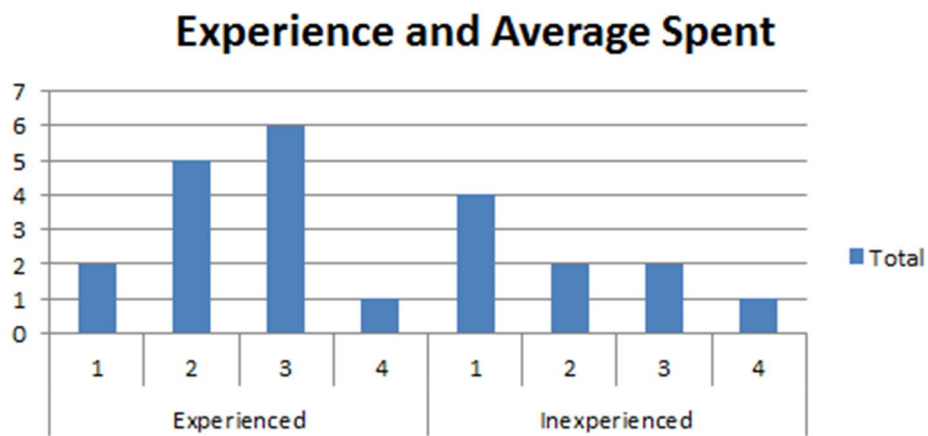
Figure 8

Figure 9

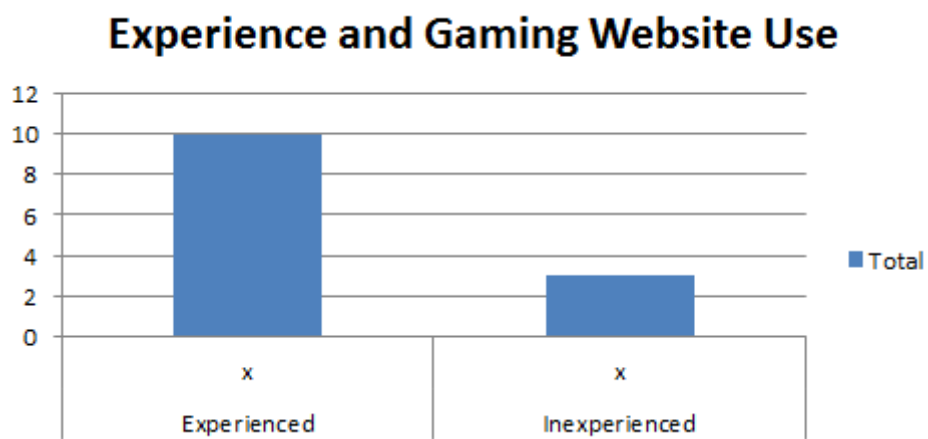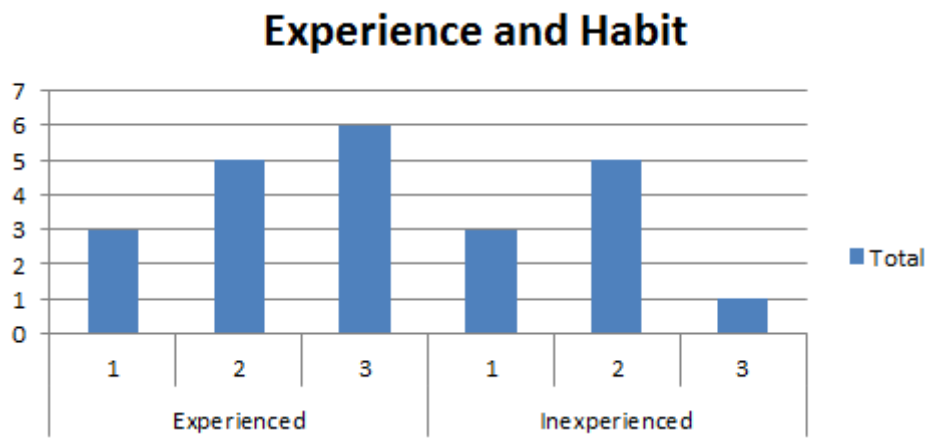(1 = Nothing, 2 = 2 €, 3 = 5€, 4 = 8€)   Figure 10

Figure 11

Figure 12