Social:
Marketing Pervasive Games
Mobile and Ubiquitous Games
ICS 163
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Content adapted from:
Pervasive Games: Theory and Design
Experiences on the Boundary between Life and Play
Marketing Pervasive Games

- The Power of Categorization
- Pervasive Game: An Ugly Duckling
- Case Study: Majestic
- How and Where to Market?
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Why don’t you get offered a pervasive game when you purchase a movie ticket?

Why isn’t a treasure hunt a kind of vacation package?

Why doesn’t Starbucks have a mobile scavenger hunt tied to their app?
Social: Marketing: The Power of Categorization

• It’s possible, why not?
  • Somethings are just not going to be mainstream hits...
  • ... but some could be

• Thinking about marketing as categories helps to frame this question
• Rather than thinking about pervasive games as

• Think about them as
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Rather than thinking about pervasive games as...

Think about them as...
• What is the genre setting example of pervasive gaming?
• What is the genre setting example of pervasive gaming?

- HARD-CORE
- KILLER
- MORE NORMS BROKEN
- MORE SOCIAL
- DISRUPTIVE
- TARGET:
  - COLLEGE STUDENTS
  - ORGANIZED
  - HISTORY SPEAKS TO RPG
  - Blends in existence
- CASUAL
- GEOCACHING
- MORE POPULAR
- MORE SOLD
- TARGET:
  - FAMILY FRIENDLY
  - LIFESTYLE/OUTDOOR/SY
Selling a product by using design principles suggests:

- Make it desirable
- MAYA
  - Most Advanced Yet Acceptable: a tension
- Leveraging known metaphors

- Utilizing known categories, but transforming them
• Imagine trying to market the first digital camera

• What is it?
Social: Marketing: The Power of Categorization
• Imagine trying to market the first digital camera
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• What is it?
Social: Marketing: The Power of Categorization

- Imagine trying to market the first digital camera
  - What is it?
    - a new kind of scanner?
Imagine trying to market the first digital camera

What is it?

- a new kind of scanner?
- a new kind of slide projector?
Imagine trying to market the first digital camera

What is it?

- a new kind of scanner?
- a new kind of slide projector?
- a new use for cassette tapes?
• Imagine trying to market the first digital camera

• What is it?
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  • a specialized computer?
Social: Marketing: The Power of Categorization

• Imagine trying to market the first digital camera

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  • a specialized computer?
  • a replacement for a film camera?
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Social: Marketing: The Power of Categorization

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    - a scientific instrument?
  - To market it you have to decide what it’s story is
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• To market it you have to decide what it’s story is
So what is a pervasive game?
So what is a pervasive game?
So what is a pervasive game?

- Hide & Seek
- Themes
- Adult
- Tag
- Extreme
- Lots of people at once
- Treasure Hunt
- GPS
- Real-world exploration
- Chat
- But
- A game
- Points
- Ambush
- Hostile
- Double Life
- Cult
- Method Acting
- Play-Theater
- Stage or Immersive
- No stage
• Picking the category makes other things fall into line:
  • What advertising style is appropriate
  • What media should be targeted
  • How to package the game
  • Where to sell it
  • Who to sell it to
  • How much money can be made from it
• You don’t buy a MacBook Air at a gas station
• World of Warcraft isn’t advertised on Cheerios
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Social: Marketing: The Power of Categorization

- Designed Lifestyle Products
  - charge a premium
  - If you are luxury you can move down market but not vice versa
Social: Marketing: Cognitive Economy

- People categorize in order to reduce mental effort
- Category exercise...
  - Find a partner near you, move if necessary
  - I’m going to show you a thing
  - You write down 4 categories for it in order on your own... imagine you are explaining to your mom or dad
  - Match with your partner for the first one that is in common
- Report to class
• People categorize in order to reduce mental effort

• Subway is a...
• People categorize in order to reduce mental effort

• A Frappucino is a ...
• People categorize in order to reduce mental effort

• League of Legends is a ...
• DRINK
• COFFEE
• ICED COFFEE
• HIGH CLASS COFFEE
• CAFFEINE-MILKSHAKE
• SODA

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS

• COMPETITIVE GAME
• COOPERATIVE GAME
• ONLINE MULTIPLAYER GAME

• SOUL SUCKER/LIFE KILLER

• NOT FREE-TO-PLAY GAME

• PROFESSIONAL
• HIGH ELECTRONIC SPORT
• ONLINE CAPTURE THE FLAG
Social: Marketing: Cognitive Economy

• People categorize in order to reduce mental effort

• Killer is a ....
• People categorize in order to reduce mental effort

• PacManhattan is a ....
PS
GAME
GAME
PLAYER GAME
LIFE KILLER

PAC-MAN/HASTAN
- POKÉMON TAG
- REAL LIFE VIDEO GAME
- ART PERFORMANCE
- EXERCISE
- ACTING
- VIDEO GAME INSPIRED
- MEDIA ARTS
Cognitive Economy is a 2-edged sword

- People quickly understand known categories
- Things that break categories are very hard to explain
- Things that aren’t important enough won’t get their own category
Social: Marketing: Perceived World Structure

- Categories come with expectations
Social: Marketing: Perceived World Structure

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- What kind of container does perfume come in?
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Social: Marketing: Perceived World Structure

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Categories come with expectations

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- Where do you find milk in a grocery store?

- What kind of container do marshmallows come in?
Social: Marketing: Perceived World Structure

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  • Where do you find milk in a grocery store?
  • What kind of container do marshmallows come in?
  • Which of the following are in food courts?
Categories come with expectations

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• Which of the following are in food courts?
  • Panda Express
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    • Cheesecake Factory
    • Domino’s Pizza
• Categories have some quality that defines them
Social: Marketing: Category Essence

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Social: Marketing: Category Essence

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- Could Halo 4 be made into a pervasive game?
Categories typically have an archetype

What is the quintessential:

- fast food restaurant?
- 4-wheel drive vehicle?
- landmark?
- card game?
- role-playing game?
Categories typically have an archetype

What is the wanna-be:

- fast food restaurant?
- 4-wheel drive vehicle?
- landmark?
- card game?
- role-playing game?
• Categories have relationships
  • not set in stone
  • sometimes competitive, sometimes complimentary
  • some brands cross categories

• Interesting examples:
  • reviews of new games
  • Wii
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Entertainment has a clear-cut place in our lives

- Well-defined categories
- Different than “work” for example

Pervasive games by their nature blur categories

- Marketing challenge
- don’t fit neatly into
  - “entertainment” vs “work”
  - “online” vs “offline”
  - “awake” vs “asleep”

- They don’t function as a “reward after work”
Social: Marketing: Ugly Duckling

- What are categories that pervasive games do fit into?
- If that can be made into a **designed lifestyle product** then it could be marketed
  - these have a cognitive economy
  - they fit into a world structure
  - that have exemplars
Social: Marketing: Is this reality?

- Do they need a category different than “entertainment”?
- Where do you sell something that interrupts “work”?
- Sometimes you can’t pick when you use this product
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Social: Marketing: The Power of Categorization

• Marketing Majestic
  • Electronic Arts ARG
  • Large marketing budget
    • $20 million budget
  • $10 month to play
  • After signing up the game “was cancelled”

Dear Majestic Player,

Due to a fire at our Anim-X studios, we at Electronic Arts are forced to suspend the online game MAJESTIC until further notice. We are currently doing everything in our power to restore service as soon as possible.

We will keep you informed of our progress; in the meantime please follow developments on this event at The Portland Chronicle’s website: http://www.portlandchronicle.com.
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Game Archeaologist
• Marketing Majestic
  • game was critically appreciated, genuinely innovative
  • considered exceedingly easy to play
  • 800,000 registered for pilot information
  • 71,200 followed through: 15,000 left after first season
  • even fewer signed up for subscription
  • reworked as a box game
  • second episode came out a month before 9/11
  • suspended as a result
  • had to be 18+ to play
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- How and Where to Market?
Merging the categories of video game and designed lifestyle product

Leveraging the categories of obstacle course and geocaching

For pervasive games to break out they need a clear and compelling story and category

It’s like blank meets blank
  - points of parity
  - points of difference
Social: Marketing: The Alternative to “Entertainment”

- **Rewards**
  - **Entertainment**
    - video games
    - concerts
  - **Leisure**
    - sports
    - having coffee with friends
    - pervasive games
Social: Marketing

- Familiar Pervasive-Like Games Marketed