

Taking Your Games to Market

Tom Higgins - Product Evangelist

Why Casual Games?

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- **Revenue Potential**
Clearly the casual games market is expanding at a rapid rate and that makes casual game development a viable business for a wide range of developers.
- **Available Distribution Channels**
There are a number of publishers and online game portal websites that you can use to publish your casual game title.

Distribution Channels

If you're in a position to be working with a client paying for game development then the distribution options may not be a specific concern. But for those creating games without a paying client there are two primary ways in which you might distribute your games.

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- Self-Publishing

Might seem like a good idea at first, but for those new to the business it may not be the best way to go. In this case you not only take on development, but also marketing and sales to attract customers, both of which require additional time, effort and expertise.

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- **Use an existing publisher or online portal**
For a lot of developers this *the* way to go, it lets you focus on development while utilizing the publisher's or the portal's existing marketing machine and existing customer bases, leverage their efforts for your own benefit!

Working With Publishers and Portals

Preparation and development...

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- Think about your target audience
What kind of game are you making and who do you envision playing it?

Working With Publishers and Portals

Preparation and development...

- Think about your target audience
- Keep it simple
A key element in casual games that succeed are that they are easy to learn yet still difficult to master.

Working With Publishers and Portals

Preparation and development...

- Think about your target audience

- Keep it simple

- Make it familiar

Another key element for success is keeping the user interface and controls as standard as possible.

Working With Publishers and Portals

Preparation and development...

- Think about your target audience
- Keep it simple
- Make it familiar
- Reward the player
You have to keep players interested and engaged and along with ensuring great game play, rewards are a way to keep them involved.

Working With Publishers and Portals

Preparation and development...

- Think about your target audience
- Keep it simple
- Make it familiar
- Reward the player
- Think about replayability
Design your game so that it's fun to play repeatedly, you want your users to come back for more.

Working With Publishers and Portals

Preparation and development...

- Think about your target audience
- Keep it simple
- Make it familiar
- Reward the player
- Think about replayability
- Reach for a wide audience
Design your game so that it appeals to a wide audience as that will increase the number of potential players.

Working With Publishers and Portals

Preparation and development...

- Think about your target audience
- Keep it simple
- Make it familiar
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- Reach for a wide audience
- Focus your efforts
Avoid spending too much time on things users will likely skip the second time through, instead focus on those elements that really add to the game play.

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- Reach for a wide audience
- Focus your efforts
- Test early and test often
It's critical to test your game early and often, in terms of both product quality (bugs/issues) and playability.

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- Come prepared
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Understand the publisher or portal you're approaching, at least to know who their target audience(s) might be and the types of content they tend to focus on.

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- Understand the business model(s)
While exact business models may vary depending on who you work with, in general they follow the same trends:
 - Up-front payment
 - Sales revenue share
 - Advertising revenue share
 - Premium player opportunity

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Who can you work with?

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- Ultimate Arcade
Yet another extremely popular online game portal site offering online web player content. They too have an extremely large and diverse catalog of games.

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- Big Fish Games
- GameHouse / RealArcade

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- Ultimate Arcade
<http://www.ultimatearcade.com>
<http://www.ultimatearcade.com/submit/>
- Big Fish Games
<http://www.bigfishgames.com>
<http://www.bigfishgames.com/company/game-developer.html>
- Game House / Real Arcade
<http://www.gamehouse.com>
<http://www.realarcade.com>
<http://gamedevs.realarcade.com/GameSubmission/index.jsp>

Questions?