Career Focus - Competitor Analysis Document

## Overview

When planning your future after graduation, it is important that you avoid relying on assumptions and carryout thorough research to inform the decision making process. There are a variety of approaches that might be used for this task but as game developers we already have a set of techniques and processes that can be very useful. One such research technique is called a competitor analysis. According to, Jovan Johnson in an article for Gamasutra[[1]](#footnote-1):

“The goal of competitive analysis is to look at what your competitors are doing and use that information to decide how you are going to proceed with your game development and marketing endeavours.”

The process allows you to investigate what’s going on in the industry and then respond accordingly. In the context of this document, avoid the negative connotations of the term ‘competitor’. Instead, we might consider it coequal analysis, peer analysis or potential co-worker analysis. We are simply peering into the industry and trying to find the people or organisations that we might like to work with in the future.

## Activity

This document is based on a pretty standard competitor analysis template. The only omission is that the market segmentation section has been left out.

To complete this document, find three examples of individuals or companies out in the industry. They should have a role or position in the industry that aligns with your current aspirations for the future. Once you have made your selections, carryout research to fill in the various sections of the table below. Leave the last column about yourself until the end and then use your research to inform what you write about yourself. Use the SWOT analysis section about yourself as a chance to reflect on your performance over the course of your degree. Be as honest as possible and use the research carried out about your competitors to inform what you write about yourself.

To conclude the document and as a response to your research, create five SMART goals that will focus your efforts in order to prepare yourself for the future after graduation.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **#1 COMPETITOR** | **#2 COMPETITOR** | **#3 COMPETITOR** | **YOU** |
| **Overview**  **&**  **Profile** | Markus Persson  Programmer and founder of Minecraft | Owen McCarthy  Principal programmer at Frontier | Cloud Imperium Games  Developer of Star Citizen | Alastair Rayner |
| **Competitive**  **Advantage** | Lots of experience in Java.  Their game is available on almost every platform. | Has Msc in games development.  Been at Frontier for 9 years. | Developing a very ambitious game.  Has a very large studio.  Only available on PC | A few media profiles.  Proficient in C++ and Java.  Have knowledge in Python, C#, MySQL and more.  I am young. |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **#1 COMPETITOR** | **#2 COMPETITOR** | **#3 COMPETITOR** | **YOU** |
| **Target**  **Market** | A game that had not been created before.  Creative people. | Existing theme park games. | PC gamers.  Space sims. | Indie games company.  Big games company.  Any games company really. |
| **Marketing**  **Strategies** | Community engagement (youtube etc.). | Building off an existing player base.  Using the gap in the market because the production of park sims had stopped for a while.  Has a background in physics that helped get a job in game programming. | Crowd funding.  Outsourcing lots of the game.  Lots of media coverage of how the game is progressing. | Social media profiles, such as linkedin, Facebook, Portfolio website etc. |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **#1 COMPETITOR** | **#2 COMPETITOR** | **#3 COMPETITOR** | **YOU** |
| **Products**  **&**  **Services** | Minecraft.  Scrolls.  … | Planet Coaster. | Star Citizen. | Some Portfolio games that have been made at uni. |

## SWOT Analysis

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **#1 COMPETITOR** | **#2 COMPETITOR** | **#3 COMPETITOR** | **YOU** |
| **Strengths** | Very well known. | Lots of experience.  Background in physics that helps him with physics programming. | Large funding from crowdfunding.  Large market presence in the space sim market place. | Good knowledge of programming in some languages. |
| **Weaknesses** | Recently stopped working on his game, and sold it to Microsoft. | No online media profile that I could find. | Lots of negative press.  Overscoped game.  Long time till game is released. | Lack of work experience.  Not great at public speaking |
| **Opportunities** | Can build upon the game for a very long time. | Can work on lots of physics based games systems. | Has a lot of income from crowd funding. | Friends in the industry.  Friends that want to start an indie company together. |
| **Threats** | Lots of competing games are being made, some that are a lot better, and may grow in popularity. | Working in a niche part of the company. | Bad press can stop income for the game. | No experience in the industry. |

## Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound (SMART) Goals

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **GOAL 1** | Find an indie company that would like a programmer to help with their game, I will talk to lots of the BA over the next few months to discuss if any of them have plans to create an indie company. |
| **GOAL 2** | Find 3 potential MA courses that look interesting over the next month to apply for. |
| **GOAL 3** | Over the course of the final Bsc year, contact some games companies that are hiring and see if any of them offer me a job. |
| **GOAL 4** | Create at least 2 more small portfolio games over the 3rd year, this can be done in some of the game jams that take place over the year. |
| **GOAL 5** | Get better at programming in Java and C++, I will measure this by the time it takes me to create a game in C++ or Java in the game jams. |

## Useful Resources

**Competitor Analysis:**

Udemy Article - <https://blog.udemy.com/competitive-analysis-example/>

Jovan Johnson - Gamasutra Article: [link](https://www.gamasutra.com/blogs/JovanJohnson/20150529/244635/How_to_Beat_Out_Your_Mobile_Games_Competitors_with_Competitive_Analysis.php)

<http://blog.clientheartbeat.com/downloads/Competitive-Analysis-Template.pdf>

**SMART Goals**

Mind Tools article: <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm>

1. .https://www.gamasutra.com/blogs/JovanJohnson/20150529/244635/How\_to\_Beat\_Out\_Your\_Mobile\_Games\_Competitors\_with\_Competitive\_Analysis.php [↑](#footnote-ref-1)