What do crowdfunded game projects actually deliver compared to what they advertise they're going to deliver?

COMP230 - Ethics and Professionalism

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November 21, 2016

Crowdfunding has become increasingly popular as a way to fund game development in recent years, this paper reflects how games are marketed in crowdfunding and the ethics of not delivering on promises to backers.

1 Introduction

Crowdfunding has become a new popular way to fund video games as Kickstarter alone has provided funding for over 450 video game projects (as of 2013) [1].

This paper will compare a few recent game projects and analyze what they promised they were going to deliver and see what they actually delivered.

- **Game One: Star Citizen**
- **Game Two : Elite: Dangerous**
- **Planteary Annihilation**

- **Game Four: Godus**

Do crowdfunded projects over scope to gain money for a project, when they don't intend to deliver?

The backers often refer to themselves as "investors" in corwdfunded games, however this is not true because they do not gain a profit from the video game. Other times backers are considered to have pre-ordered the game.

Some crowdfunded games often increase the scope of the game after the game gets more funding, which in-turn sets back the release date of the game. A particularly egregious example of this is "Star Citizen" [2]. This title asked for 2.0M in funding, but as of November 2016 it has recieved over 132.5M. However this means that the scope of their game has increased remarkably and pushed the release date of the game back significantly (TODO: Find source for dates).

2 Not delivering on promises to backers?

3 Comparing what some games projects delivered compared to what they promised

A study found that most kickstarted projects manage to deliver their products, around 91% of all kickstarted projects succeed [3].

4 Advertising too much and delivering too little? (overscoping project)

[4]

5 Should developers refund players for not delivering on promises?

6 Conclusion

References

[1] B. Harris, "Kickstarter as a source of funds for computer games," *J. Comput. Sci. Coll.*, vol. 29, pp. 41–48, Dec. 2013.

[2] C. I. Games, "Star citizen."

[3] E. R. Mollick, "Delivery rates on kickstarter," *Available at SSRN*, 2015.

[4] C. Qiu, "Issues in crowdfunding: Theoretical and empirical investigation on kickstarter," *Available at SSRN 2345872*, 2013.