

Goals and Genres

Goals

- Games are developed for a variety of purposes, and these can be for entertainment, social, educational, recruitment & training, health & fitness, consciousness & change, aesthetics & creativity, and marketing & advertising.
- **Entertainment:** Many games were developed purely to entertain the players, and many people play games to escape from the stresses of daily life or to relieve boredom. Some games are designed to involve players in in-game actions such as role-play, physical movement, and problem-solving. These allow players to take part in creating entertainment experiences.
- **Social:** When more than one person is playing a game, the players might be motivated to interact socially with their opponents or team members. This social interaction could exist in simple two-person games at an arcade or in massively multiplayer online games (MMOs), with thousands of people playing simultaneously.
- **Educational:** Games are developed to teach while they entertain. This feature in-game knowledge acquisition—where knowledge of certain topics (such as geography, math, and reading) is taught or accessed within the game itself.
- **Recruitment & Training:** Games have also been used by the military, government, and even for-profit corporations for recruitment and training purposes. Simulation games, which replicate processes, environments, and objects that exist in the real world, have been used by government and military institutions such as NASA and the Air Force to train astronauts and pilots to adjust to changes in the atmosphere and to navigate vehicles. Corporations have also developed games to help build their employees' leadership and management skills.
- **Health and Fitness:** Games created for health and fitness include those used for psychological therapy, physical rehabilitation, and even *exergames*—a subcategory specifically related to fitness. Many exergames are commercial products such as *EA Sports Active* and *Wii Fit*; even some music and rhythm games such as *Just Dance* could be considered exergames. Medical games include *Re-Mission*, which gives children with cancer a sense of power and control over their disease by battling cancer cells.
- **Consciousness and Change:** Games created for social consciousness and change (sometimes termed “games for

change”) might be created by non-profit, political, or religious groups to raise awareness of certain beliefs, attitudes, values, lifestyles, and causes. Examples of social issues covered by these games include poverty, human rights, global conflict, and climate change.

- **Aesthetics and Creativity:** Some games are created to elicit creative expression or aesthetic appreciation from players or are developed to express or share artistic ideas. *WarioWare D.I.Y.* for the DSi XL allows players to make their own games, music, and comics. *Guitar Hero World Tour* allows players to create and share instrumentals via its GHTunes Service.
- **Marketing and Advertising:** Some games are created to market a product or service to consumers. *Advergames* are specifically designed as advertising tools and used as an alternative to other web-based advertising, such as banners. Many of these games exist online and are created in Flash or Java tools. Advertisers pay sites to host these games, which usually feature the advertiser's brand. Another online form of game-related marketing is *advertainment* – in which sites developed to showcase a brand contain games and discussion forums, becoming a fun hangout for customers.

Genres

- Genres are categories based on a combination of subject matter, setting, screen presentation/format, player perspective, and game-playing strategies. In looking at your target market, consider what genre these people play because some players focus on playing one (1) particular genre.
- **Action:** The goal of most action games involves quickly destroying your enemies while avoiding being destroyed yourself. These games tend to be simpler because they focus on player reaction time. Simplicity is necessary for action games because the average brain cannot process much additional information in a fast-paced environment. People are motivated to play action games for the adrenaline rush involving quick reflexes and snap judgments—focusing on reflexive actions rather than reflective thoughts.
 - **Platformer:** The platformer action sub-genre focuses on players moving quickly through an environment—often jumping and dodging to avoid obstacles, and sometimes collecting items along the way.

- **Shooters:** The shooter action sub-genre focuses on combat between a player and the other characters in the game world—usually in the form of shooting with guns and other weapons controlled by the character's hands
 - **First-person shooters (FPSs):** the player has a first-person perspective and cannot see his or her character onscreen. The player can see the character's weapons, as well as the other characters in the game.
 - **Third-person shooters:** Allow players to see their characters, along with the rest of the game world. An advantage of third-person shooters is that the player has a much wider perspective than in an FPS—which is limited to straight-ahead vision
- **Racing:** The racing action sub-genre also uses a first-person or third-person perspective. The standard scenario involves the player's vehicle (usually a racecar) racing one or more opponents on a variety of roads or terrains. The player attempts to make the vehicle move as quickly as possible without losing control of it.
- **Fighting:** Many fighting games are two-person games in which each player controls a figure on screen and uses a combination of moves to attack the opponent and to defend against the opponent's attacks. These games are often viewed from a side perspective, and each session lasts only an average of 90 seconds.
- **Adventure:** Adventure games are all about unraveling stories, exploring worlds, collecting, navigating mazes, decoding messages, and solving puzzles. Unlike action games, adventure games are usually turn-based—allowing the player to have time for reflective thoughts.
- **Action-Adventure:** action-adventure genre is the only hybrid genre that has distinguished itself as an accepted genre. The action component allows for quick, reflexive movements as the character dodges and hunts down enemies—while the adventure component adds conceptual puzzles and story elements to the game. Pure adventure gamers are not usually interested in action-adventures because they are used to the slower pace of adventure games. The action-adventure hybrid has attracted a new audience as well as some pure action players.
- **Casino:** Gambling has been shown to be addictive, and some game developers are considering incorporating gambling into more sophisticated electronic games. Casino games, which are often electronic versions of popular games—such as roulette, craps, poker, blackjack, and slot machines—are found in on-ground casinos. The addiction motivation is closely tied to gambling, and many online versions of this genre are run by online gambling sites.
- **Puzzle:** Although puzzle elements appear in many game genres, a pure puzzle game focuses on the player solving a puzzle or series of puzzles without controlling a character. There is little or no story surrounding in puzzle games, which can be either real-time or turn-based. The pattern-based puzzle game *Tetris*—one of the most popular puzzle games of all time—is played in real-time, involving a fast-paced game-playing experience.
- **Role-Playing Games:** Like adventure games, RPGs are characterized by containing strong storylines—but RPGs also contain player-characters that improve throughout the course of the game. Themes in RPGs are usually variations on “save the world”—such as finding the person responsible for a murder, rescuing someone who has been kidnapped, destroying a dangerous object, or killing monsters. Combat is one way in which the heroes advance—gaining strength, experience, and money to buy new equipment.
- **Simulations:** (Sometimes referred to as sims) attempt to replicate systems, machines, and experiences using real-world rules. Types of simulation games include vehicle, participatory, and process sims.
 - **Vehicle Simulations:** The player usually operates complicated machinery (often vehicles such as jet fighters, ships, or tanks). In addition to being developed for entertainment purposes, adaptations of these simulators have been used widely by the military for training and recruiting purposes.
 - **Sports and Participatory Simulations:** Engages the player to experience the simulation as a participant within it. The *sports* genre is a type of participatory sim because—like other sims—sports games often accurately reproduce real-world rules and strategies associated with the sport. Players vicariously participate in their favorite sport—as a *player* and often a *coach*. This allows players to experience “wish fulfillment”—to become extraordinary athletes, and to accomplish things they might not be able to in real life.
 - **Process Simulations (Construction & Management):** Process simulations involve real-world systems or processes.

These games are also known as *construction* and *management sims* (CMS), or *toy* games. The goal in process sims is not to defeat an enemy or opponent, but to build something within a process. These games are considered constructive—involving building and creating—rather than destructive. To win these games, players need to understand and control these processes.

- **Strategy:** Strategy games have their origin in classic board games such as chess, where players are required to manage a limited set of resources to achieve a particular goal. The player's resources (troops, weapons) become central to the game experience, and the strategy in these games is based on comparative resources and decisions between opponents.
 - **Turn-Based Strategy (TBS):** In TBS games, resource management involves discrete decisions such as what types of resources to create, when to deploy them, and how to use them to the best advantage. The player's ability to take the time to make these decisions is part of the game's appeal.
 - **Real-Time Strategy:** These games incorporate a real-time interval. RTS players are under such constant time pressure that they do not have the opportunity to truly ponder a move. Common issues in RTS games is *micromanagement*—the process of rapidly balancing sets of resources (troops) containing several features. Since the game moves quickly in real-time, one set of resources might flourish while others fail because the player cannot feasibly focus on all sets at once. The player must employ a certain level of *multitasking* to avoid some of these disasters.
- **Massively Multiplayer Online Games (MMO):** These games enable hundreds or thousands of players to interact in a game world simultaneously they are connected to via the Internet. There are several variations in the MMO genre, and these are massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG), massively multiplayer first-person shooters (MMOFPSs), and massively multiplayer real-time strategy games (MMORTSs). One common issue in MMO is the player's misbehavior. Some players are simply rude while others harass, cheat, or even commit fraud, providing a more serious threat to others' enjoyment of the game.

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