



# Reviving Retention in Subway Surfers



## Problem Statement

You have joined as Game & Product Director, Subway Surfer team.  
Looking at your daily active users' trend from the year 2014 to 2022, you have only seen an increase of 10mn users. While talking to some of the users, you realize that your users only play on the app to pass their time and stop coming back after a few gameplays due to lack of interest.  
You wish to retain your users and create habit-forming mechanisms which ensure your users keep coming back and playing on the app.

## Goal:

To come up with Product features to be rolled out on the current platform (what are the user's current dislikes, what can ensure they get hooked to the game and keep coming back, what are the competitors doing which is working for them, etc.)

## Competitors:



Temple Run 2



Subway Princess Runner



Talking Tom Gold Run



Jetpack Joyride

## About game:

Subway Surfers is an endless runner game developed by Kiloo and SYBO Games. It was released in May 2012 for iOS and Android devices.

## Downloads

4 Billion+

## Total Revenue

\$155m

## Number of Active Users:

Year	DAUs (millions)	MAUs (millions)
2022	35	140
2014	20	<a href="#">Approx. Same</a>

## Overview

## Competitor Analysis

## User Personas

## Why Problem is Imp?

## Ideas

## Prioritization

## Feature #1

## Feature #2

## GTM Strategy

## Monetization

## Key Metrics

Feature	Subway Surfers 	Temple Run 2 	Subway Princess Runner 	Talking Tom Gold Run 	Jetpack Joyride 
Gameplay	Players run along a train track, avoiding obstacles and collecting coins.	Players run through ancient temples, avoiding obstacles and collecting coins.	Players run through a fantasy world, avoiding obstacles and collecting coins.	Players run through a city, collecting coins and avoiding obstacles.	Players fly through a science fiction world, avoiding obstacles and collecting coins.
Graphics	Cartoonish	Cartoonish	Cartoonish	Cartoonish	Cartoonish
Strengths	Simple and addictive gameplay, colorful graphics, frequent updates	Simple and addictive gameplay, challenging obstacles, detailed graphics	Cute characters, fun power-ups, challenging levels	Engaging story, challenging levels, social features	Varied gameplay, challenging levels, lots of content
Weaknesses	Can be repetitive after a while, not very challenging for experienced players	Can be difficult to control, not very original	Can be too easy for experienced players, not very original	Lacks a sense of progression, not very original	Can be too difficult for some players, not very original
What's Working for Them	The game is simple and easy to learn, but it is also challenging to master. The frequent updates keep the game fresh and exciting. The character customization allows players to express themselves and make the game their own.	The game is challenging and exciting, with a variety of obstacles and enemies to avoid. The detailed graphics and sound effects are immersive and engaging. The leaderboards allow players to compete with their friends and see who can get the highest score.	The game is cute and fun, with a variety of characters and power-ups to collect. The daily challenges provide players with a goal to work towards, and the coin doubler helps players collect more coins.	The game has an engaging story and characters, and the social features allow players to interact with their friends. The challenging levels keep players coming back for more.	The game has varied gameplay, with a variety of different levels to play. The challenging levels keep players engaged, and the lots of content provides players with hours of entertainment.



**Name:** Crazy Chris  
**Age:** 24  
**Occupation:** Graphic Designer

- Pain points:** Lack of customization options in the game causing her to lose interest.
- Needs:** Increased customization options for outfits and characters to express her creativity.
- New features that address needs:** The addition of increased customization options for outfits, such as changes in color of hats, shoes, outfit, haircut, color could provide Carla with the creative outlet she needs to stay engaged and interested in the game.



**Name:** Level-Loving Lisa  
**Age:** 22  
**Occupation:** Graduate

- Pain points:** Lack of variety and new content in the game causing her to lose interest.
- Needs:** New and varied content to keep her engaged and interested in the game.
- New features that address needs:** The addition of a level-wise completion mode and increased customization options for outfits could provide Chloe with the variety and new content she needs to stay engaged and interested in the game.



**Name:** Social Sam  
**Age:** 32  
**Occupation:** Marketing Manager

- Pain points:** Lack of social features and multiplayer options in the game causing him to lose interest.
- Needs:** Social features and multiplayer options to allow him to connect with friends and play together live.
- New features that address needs:** The addition of a social hub, weekly/monthly tournaments with friends, and the ability to form clans could provide Sam with the social features he needs to stay engaged and interested in the game.

## Why is reviving retention important for Subway Surfers?

Reviving retention for Subway Surfers is essential. It ensures that players have a satisfying and engaging experience, which leads to positive word-of-mouth and attracts new users. It also maximizes monetization opportunities and contributes to the long-term success of the game in a competitive market. By addressing user dislikes, implementing effective hooks, and focusing on retention strategies, Subway Surfers can build a loyal player base and become a leading game in the industry.

### User Dislikes

- The game is repetitive after a while.
- The controls after certain score(when the character is speed) is difficult to master.
- The game can be too difficult for some players.

### Hooks

- The game is visually appealing and has a fun feel.
- The controls are simple to learn but difficult to master, which keeps players coming back for more.
- The game is constantly updated with new characters, boards, and challenges, which keeps it fresh.
- The game is social, allowing players to compete with their friends and see who can get the highest score.
- Create a sense of urgency. This could be done by adding a timer to the game or by having the player collect a limited number of coins before the level ends.
- Reward players for their progress. This could be done by giving players coins, power-ups, or new characters as they progress through the game.

### To focus on:

- Add a multiplayer mode. This would allow players to compete against each other in real time.
- Create a story mode. This would give the game more depth and provide players with a reason to keep playing.

## Brainstorming Ideas

### Game Modes:

Experience the thrill of the chase in two exciting modes

- Infinite Run:
  - In Infinite Run, test your skills and see how far you can go.
- Level Completion.
  - In Level Completion, challenge yourself to reach specific score milestones, Level Wise :)



### Clans:

- Form clans with other players and compete against rival clans in weekly and monthly challenges.
- Work together to achieve victory and earn rewards.



### Tournaments:

- Compete in weekly and monthly tournaments with friends and other players with different Game modes from around the world.
- Show off your skills and claim your place at the top of the leaderboard.



### Social Hub:

- Connect with friends and other players in our vibrant Social Hub.
- Share your achievements, compare scores, and join forces to take on challenges together.



### Customization:

- Express your unique style with a wide range of customization options for your character.
- Change the color of hats, shoes, outfits, haircuts, and more to create a look that's all your own.



## Rice Score Framework for feature prioritization

S.No.	Feature	Reach (%)	Impact	Effort	Confidence (%)	RICE Score	Priority
1	Clans	80	8	7	85	77.78	2
2	Customization	85	6	6	70	59.5	3
3	Social Hub	70	5	5	65	45.5	5
4	Game Mode	90	9	7	85	98.35	1
5	Tournaments	70	6	5	60	50.4	4

**Feature #1:****Original Gameplay**

**Score Screen:**  
For both of the modes, this screen remains unchanged

**Story Mode****Story Mode Button:**

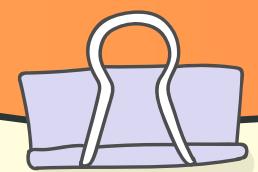
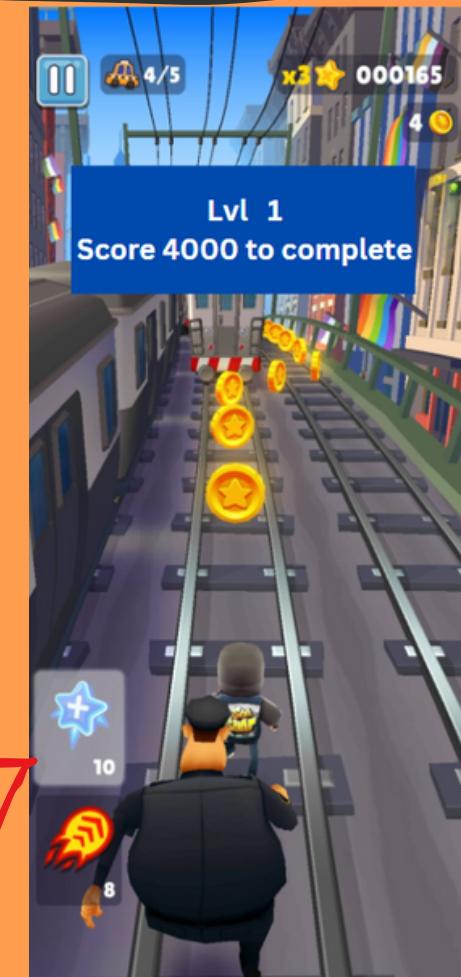
By clicking the "Story Mode" button, players will enter a captivating world where each level presents exciting obstacles and score milestones. This mode offers a refreshing departure from the endless chase of Infinite Run, providing structured gameplay and a sense of progression.

**Story Mode Screen:**

And then this lands the user into level selection, initially only 1st level will be open, others will be locked, as the game progresses, levels get unlocked. Further to make it interesting and engaging we can even add 3 stars to it, based on the high score the user made with level score

**Gameplay:**

Then it takes to game page, first it pops up the target score that to be made, based on the actual score he made, we can progress his level or let user be in the same level, Like if user gets >=2 stars out of 3, then only proceeds to next level

**Game Modes:**

Experience the thrill of the chase in two exciting modes

- Infinite Run:
  - In Infinite Run, test your skills and see how far you can go.
- Level Completion.
  - In Story Completion, challenge yourself to reach specific score milestones, Level Wise :)

**Feature #2:**

Join forces with friends and fellow surfers in Subway Surfers to form Clans. Compete against rival Clans, earn rewards, and boost player retention by fostering a strong and engaging community within the game.

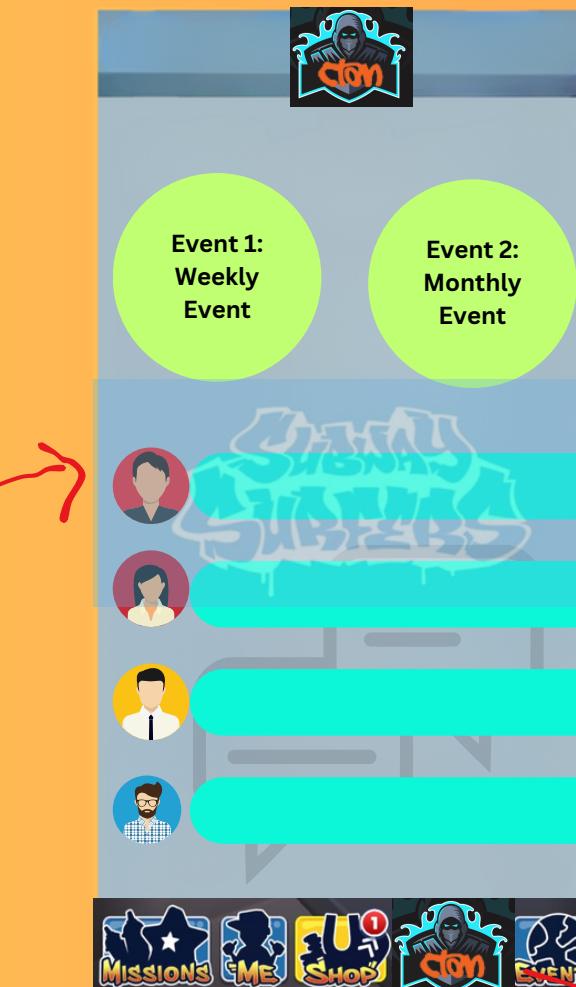
**Clans**

Adding a separate dedicated clans section for more user engagement, which then redirects the user to clan page, in which we can even add a different events which will be between opponent teams which will be having similar number of trophies.

Trophies are defined by number of (+wins-loss) matches



\*We can then make a Leaderboard dashboard based on the points, and for further simplification, we can make it demographic wise\*

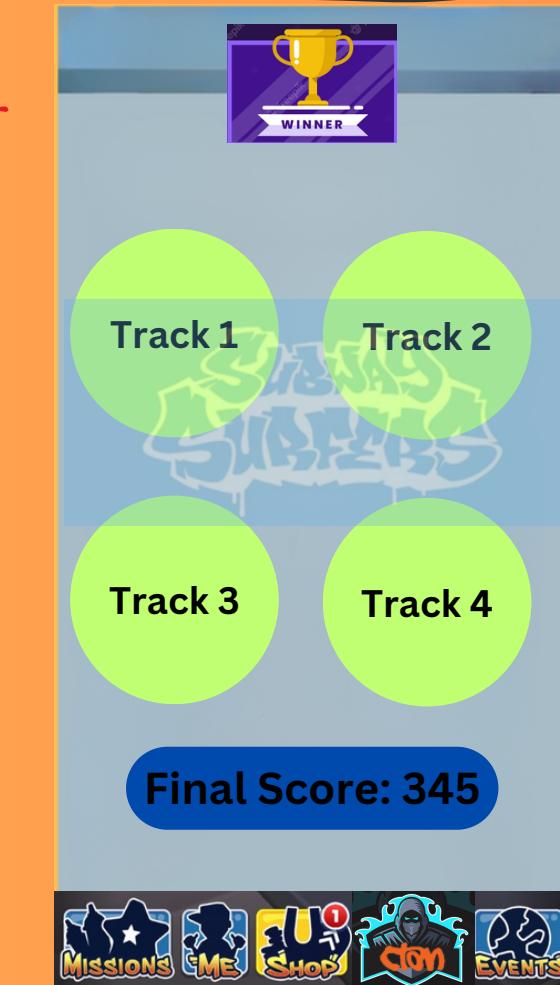
**Chat and Event Page**

In this page, clan members can chat with each other, discuss about events, any stuff, but following the protocols. And right to the above its the Events, which then directs to particular happening events.

**Clans**

In Event 1 and Event 2,

- We can make different tracks and for each track we can have like 100 points, and adding all of them gives users final score
- Based on the leaderboard, whichever team score is high at the end of events, they +wins points, and the one which lost get -loss points

**Clans:**

- Form clans with other players and compete against rival clans in weekly and monthly challenges.
- Work together to achieve victory and earn rewards.

## Market Research

### Clans

- Conduct competitor analysis and user research to understand the demand and preferences for clan features in similar games.
- Split the target market into zones based on demographics and user behavior.

### Game Modes

- Analyze popular game modes in similar games and assess their appeal to the target audience.
- Determine the right balance between challenging gameplay and accessibility for different skill levels.

### Customization

- Conduct user surveys and market analysis to identify popular customization options and trends in the gaming industry.
- Understand the target audience's preferences for character customization.

## Feature Development

- Develop robust clan functionality that allows players to form clans, compete against rival clans, and participate in challenges.
- Create engaging social features and communication tools within the clan system.

- Create two exciting game modes - Infinite Run and Story Mode Completion.
- Test and fine-tune the gameplay mechanics to ensure an engaging and enjoyable experience.

- Offer a wide range of customization options for characters, including hats, shoes, outfits, haircuts, and more.
- Develop a user-friendly interface that allows players to easily personalize their characters.

## Beta Testing/Pilot Launch

- Launch the clan feature as a pilot in selected regions or with a limited user base.
- Gather user feedback and make necessary improvements based on their experience.

- Release a beta version of the game modes to gather feedback from a selected group of players.
- Analyze their feedback to identify areas for improvement and to enhance the overall gameplay experience.

- Release a beta version of the customization feature to a selected group of users.
- Gather feedback on the available options, user experience, and any customization-related issues.

## Optimization

- Track key metrics such as clan participation, engagement, and retention.
- Continuously optimize the clan feature based on user feedback and data-driven insights

- Make necessary adjustments based on user feedback to optimize the game modes.
- Introduce new levels and challenges to keep players engaged and motivated.

- Analyze user feedback and make necessary improvements to enhance the customization feature.
- Add new customization options based on user requests and market trends.

## Final Release

- Expand the clan feature to all users and promote its availability through in-game notifications, social media, and other marketing channels.
- Encourage existing players to join or create clans and incentivize clan activities with rewards and achievements.

- Launch the fully developed game modes to all users.
- Promote the availability of different game modes through in-game notifications, social media, and community engagement.

- Launch the finalized customization feature to all users.
- Highlight the customization options through in-game promotions, tutorials, and social media campaigns.

## Business Opportunity & Monetization strategy of the new features

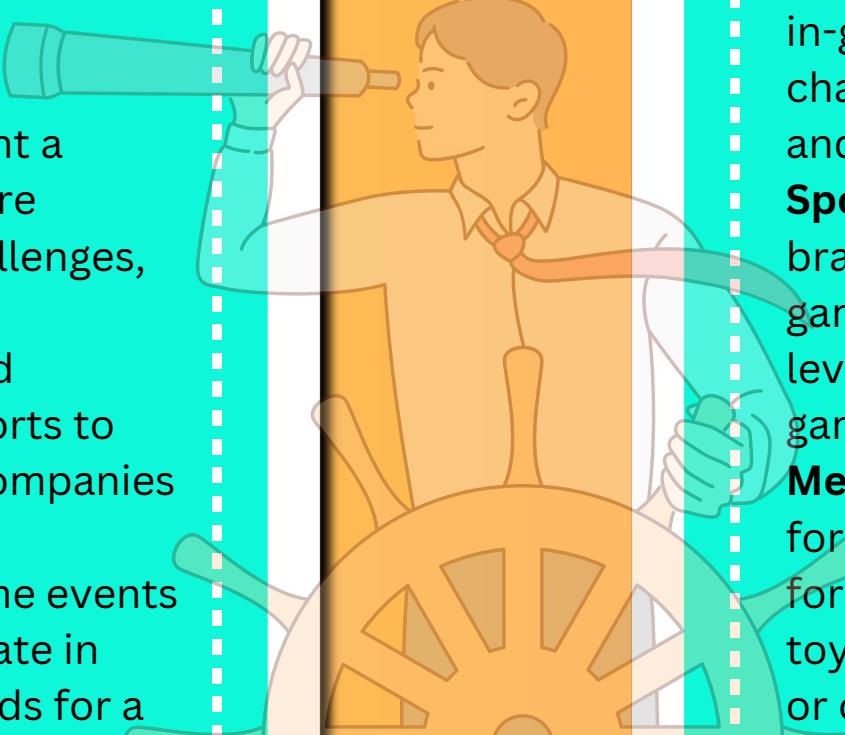


**Premium Version:** Introduce a premium version of the game with additional features, levels, or ad-free gameplay. Users can purchase the premium version for a one-time fee or through a subscription model.

**Season Passes or Battle Passes:** Implement a seasonal or time-limited pass system where players can unlock exclusive rewards, challenges, and content by purchasing a pass.

**Data and Analytics:** Utilize player data and analytics to offer targeted insights or reports to advertisers, brands, or market research companies for a fee.

**Limited-Time Events:** Organize limited-time events or promotions where players can participate in special challenges or unlock unique rewards for a limited period. Provide opportunities for players to purchase event-specific items or boosters.



**Cross-Promotion:** Collaborate with other popular games or brands to cross-promote their products within Subway Surfers. This can be done through in-game collaborations, sponsored levels, or character crossovers, allowing for mutual exposure and potential revenue sharing.

**Sponsored Content:** Partner with advertisers or brands to incorporate sponsored content into the game. This can include branded items, themed levels, or sponsored challenges that align with the game's aesthetics and storyline.

**Merchandise and Licensing:** Explore opportunities for licensing Subway Surfers' brand and characters for merchandise, such as clothing, accessories, toys, or collectibles. Create an official online store or collaborate with existing retailers to sell branded merchandise.



## Key Metrics

### Clans

- Active Clan Participation:** Measure the number of players actively participating in clans over a specific period of time.
- Clan Growth Rate:** Track the rate of new clan formations and member acquisitions.
- Clan Challenge Completion:** Monitor the percentage of clan challenges completed by the members.



### Customization

- Adoption Rate:** Track the percentage of players who engage with customization features.
- Popular Customization Items:** Identify the most frequently chosen and purchased customization items.



### North Star Metric (for new features)\*

### Player Engagement Index

- Daily Active Users (DAU):** Measure the number of unique players actively engaging with the game on a daily basis.
- Retention Rate:** Track the percentage of players returning to the game over time.
- Session Frequency:** Measure how often players launch the game and engage in gameplay sessions.
- Lifetime Value (LTV):** Estimate the revenue generated by each player throughout their lifetime engagement with the game.



### Game Modes

- Session Length:** Measure the average duration of gameplay sessions.
- Level Completion Rate:** Track the percentage of players who successfully complete levels or score milestones.
- High Score Achievement:** Monitor the number of players achieving high scores or breaking records.

### Tournaments

- Participation Rate:** Measure the percentage of players participating in tournaments.
- Tournament Completion:** Track the rate of tournament completion by participants.
- Tournament Rankings:** Monitor players' rankings and their progression throughout the tournament.



Thank  
You

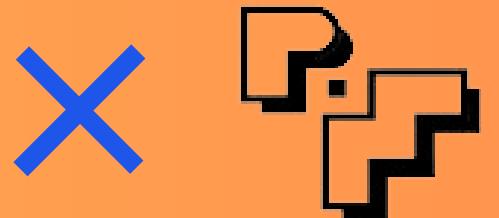
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Product Challenge #144