

CSC425 Deliverable 2: User Research & Problem Definition Submission

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Target User Group:

Consumers in the Video Game Industry

The main focus is consumers who want to do research on a game before purchasing, for example, someone debating whether to buy a game or not, but they hate FOMO mechanics. (Fear of missing out)

Problem Description

Many companies prioritize making as much money as possible over many other facets of game development. This can manifest as a variety of predatory tactics to get players to spend large amounts of money (such as gambling with “lootboxes”), fostering addiction with tactics to keep the player always online (drip-feed reward systems), among a variety of other tactics that take away from whether a game is actually worth the player’s time and money.

Evidence of the Problem

1. F2P games such as mobile games tend to have excessive grinds, or have the player spend money to make progress. An example of this is gacha games, games where you need to “roll” (often with premium currencies) characters or gear, with random chance often forcing players to spend money to keep rolling if they didn’t get desired items.
2. [A study by Japan’s SBMC Consumer Finance](#) had revealed that around 19% of 20 year olds in Japan have admitted to overspending on gacha games, with around 23% of those polled admitted to regretting spending money on gacha.

How might we help consumers know that a game they have purchased or installed isn’t predatory?

User Persona

Name: Jimbo Jimbothy

Age: 20s

Occupation: Common 8 hr 5 days a week job.

Goals: Wants to find games that are fun, but not prohibitively expensive and also respects player time.

Frustrations: Tired of time-locked progression and often feeling the need to spend real money for progression (battlepasses).

Tech Comfort Level: Moderate (Daily phone usage, frequent console/PC usage)

Ethical Lens Applied

Principle: Transparency to protect consumers

Application: This issue violates the principle of transparency by obfuscating true costs, probabilities, and psychological manipulation by preventing users from making fully informed decisions on gameplay and purchases, especially among vulnerable users.

Stakeholders Impacted: Consumers, regulators, developers committed to ethical game design, consumer protection agencies.

Professional Standard: ACM Code of Ethics 1.3: "Be honest and trustworthy"