



Group 5

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## **Introduction**

Unravel: The Alternate Reality Game is based on the video game [Unravel 2](#), created by the Swedish game studio Coldwood Interactive. Choosing this video game, which takes place in a Swedish scenery with a cooperative mechanic, established a good framework for the case objective. Participants can collaborate and feel like they have an active role in the direction of the game, both by helping other players and by creating puzzles that they publish to the rest of the participants.

Additionally having the Yarnys (the characters that you play in the video game) as something for the participants to create outside of the digital media added the payment transaction that was a must-have in this case objective (more about this later in the project description).

## Project description

The following is what we prioritized to focus on, based on the case description:

- **Our challenge:** create an engaging and encouraging Alternate Reality Game design that is meaningful enough for people to play for a longer period.
- **The key element:** incorporate some form of payment into the design structure, therefore we needed to include a purchase of a product, in order for the participants to actually play the ARG.

There weren't many limitations to this case. However, this didn't mean it was easier, rather more challenging. In order to scope down we defined the next step:

- **The story:** what is the story and how can we make it engaging enough for people to come together and play it?

We needed to make sure that the game will be intriguing enough for people to continue playing. We still thought that we needed to narrow our scope, and in order to do this we decided on creating a side story from the co-op game Unravel 2.

In Unravel 2 you play a character called Yarny, which is basically a figure built by yarn. Hence we decided to collaborate with one of the biggest DIY stores in Sweden: Panduro. To play the game the participants have to purchase something from the store, i.e yarn, in order to gain clues to the puzzles and unlock the story. This is our payment transaction in the game.

## **Trailhead / Rabbit hole**

We have several ways of finding the experience:

- Stencils with no explanation but QR codes which lead to the game app.
- Posters with no explanation but “Unravel the ARG” and a QR code which leads to the game app.
- QR code + “Unravel the ARG” on a Panduro Receipt.
- QR code + “Unravel the ARG” on a Panduro product, like yarn.
- Commercials on social media and Unravel & Panduro websites.

The game presents itself as an adventure, with both puzzles, crafting, and social parts. The game Unravel has a big focus on collaboration, bonds, and friendships, which we have incorporated into the ARG experience. It's a feel-good experience!

This ARG is designed for people who like the video game Unravel, as well as people who like social games, or enjoy DIY and crafting. The puzzles and Yarny dolls are the main mechanics of the ARG, which we believe to be interesting to both the Unravel and the Panduro crowd.

Since this is a commercial ARG, intended to up the sales of Unravel and Panduro products, the game encourages participants to share the game with others. Participants can gain more clues by buying more craft items. Items you can use to create your own Yarny doll, for example, to gain more points, rewards, and social interactions. You are also encouraged to help other players and build a community, which helps the rest of the players, and eventually, some will create their own puzzles to share with others.

## **The community**

The community will help participants who have a hard time solving the puzzles. You can gain points or rewards when you help others, which is an incentive. The app makes it easy to find the “ask for help” button. Thus, creating a bond and a great community. You can also share your creations, and update your social circles on your adventures.

## Core Experience

The starting point for the ARG is the game Unravel 2 - a video game in which the protagonists, the Yarnys, collaboratively solve puzzles. The ARG also collaborates with the Panduro company, which functions as a connecting link for the experience. For Unravel, the ARG, we started with the following concepts:

- **The feelings:** Nature, love and bonding are three concepts on which Unravel is based, the yarnys, are small beings with a moldable metal skeleton and a soft woolen shell that is released sometimes to face challenges and thus solve them. They are also attached to the participant because each one has a human they take care of.
- **The story:** One morning Yarnys around the world woke up, confused to see that their squishy colored body had disappeared, and now they are unprotected only with their metal skeleton. The participant has to re-create the connections and the magical spark with love and bonding as the final goal. Players will have to solve the puzzles and give the Yarnys their yarn back.

## Core activity

There will be several puzzles that the participants try to solve.

An example of a puzzle would be this:

The participant will find the ARG in several media: in the video game, in advertisements on the physical medium, in the form of secret messages on the street or/and on social media. Once the participant discovers the startup message, they will scan the QR code (as mentioned in "Trailhead / Rabbit hole) and will be directed to the game app, where they will be introduced to the game and gain instructions on how to play.

The first instruction presented is to obtain a ball of yarn specially created for the game. It can be bought at any Panduro store, and it will have a special label indicating that it is part of the experience. Once the QR code in the purchase receipt has been scanned, the player is directed to the first mission in the app. Participants will complete missions, either alone or with the help of the community (other participants).

Each time a mission is completed, the player gets a reward in the form of a badge and the possibility of sharing the achievement in the game community, which also has access to a leaderboard. In some missions they can also gain physical rewards, like more craft materials.

The end goal of the game will link with the previous concepts of friendship, bonding and creation.

## Physical Design

Unravel, the ARG, makes continuous use of the physical environment, from the beginning of the experience to the end. It begins with the advertisements on posters, labels or street art. The game can be played anywhere in a public space near Panduro stores. Panduro is a company that is currently the market leader for hobby materials in Europe with 103 stores in 6 countries, and because of this it takes place in several cities and accepts a large number of participants.

The game is scalable since the participants can create their own puzzles to share with the other participants. It's not one big puzzle, rather multiple puzzles, which gives you rewards, social interactions, and leaderboard points.

The experience itself is designed to make the player go outside and connect with both nature and other participants, a concept from the original Unravel game. It uses public spaces for puzzles and the private sphere for communication between participants in the chat, crafting a Yarny doll, or planning for another puzzle.

This game transcends physical and virtual media, thus creating a complex experience.

## Virtual Design

Players use an app to scan a receipt from Panduro, which then unlocks clues to a puzzle in the app. There are multiple puzzles that the player can participate in. If they get stuck, they can ask for help from the community, through the app's help forum. They also share their victories and creations with the community and claim rewards, both digital and physical.

The possibility that some users share inappropriate material is contemplated and for that the following solutions are proposed:

- The community can report pictures, which temporarily get blurred and then reviewed by an admin.
- If multiple people reported pictures they immediately get removed.
- In DM's the receiver needs to allow the message to be received.
- Use a filter service like Safe DM.

Depending on the puzzle, there are various ways of interacting with the ARG. Some puzzles demand participation from multiple people in different locations, some can be solved with IRL clues (but the player can still ask the community for help). The participants can also create puzzles to share with their fellow participants. This will create a holistic experience as the design connects several components.

## **Safety & Ethics**

To ensure the safety and ethics parts, a puzzle created by a participant has to be reviewed by at least 2 other qualified participants.

Our game is not much for destroying, rather building up both puzzles and team spirit, thus the “accidental destruction” is automatically avoided. Despite this players can always report trolls, who then will get banned if they get 3 strikes.

To remind players to be safe and respectful, we would incorporate warnings in the app.

Potentially we could set an age restriction, which limits the app in certain times, to avoid children going out late at night.

If people plan to meet up, we could give them the option to identify with BankID, in order to avoid people with malicious intent.

## **Unsolved issues / Tradeoffs**

We are aware that players could buy something from Panduro, scan the receipt and then return the product to get their money back. This could be solved by removing the right to return a product “since a part of the product has been used” if they have scanned it and obtained the clues.

Another problem would be that grown men skulking around playgrounds in some situations might not be the best idea. A potential grooming problem could arise, so this needs to be solved.

## **Result / Effect**

We expect that Unravel, the ARG, will create a friendly community which loves to share their experiences. This results in the participants purchasing more craft materials from Panduro in order to share their creations and create more puzzles, which then results in even greater experiences to be shared among the participants.

This can be measured through the **hard values**:

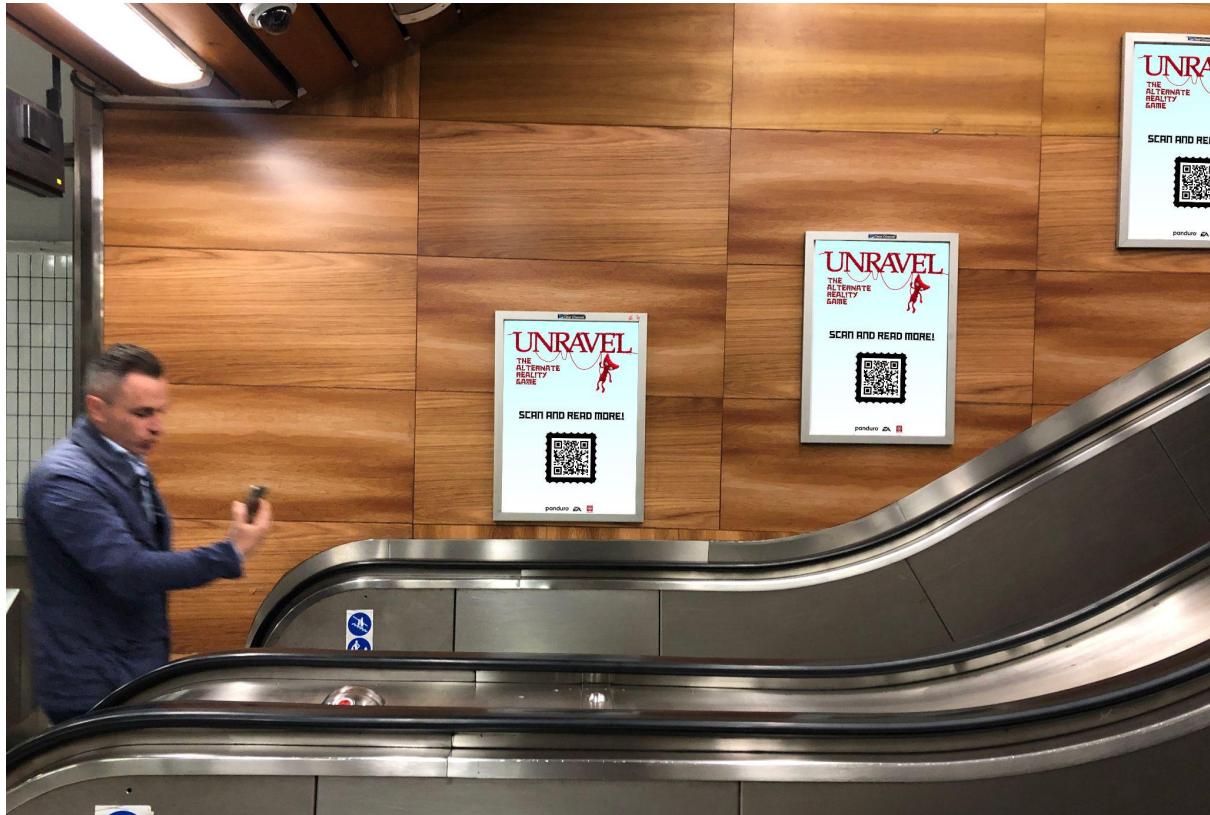
- How many people scan the posters that are placed around the city.
- Panduro's increased sales.
- Active members of the community.
- How many people complete the puzzles.
- Amount of hashtags on social media.
- The number of participants in the community Leaderboard.

And through the **soft values**:

- Customer perception of our brand, through recommendations, sharing and comments on social media.
- Customer engagement, through shared Yarnys creations.
- Customer loyalty in the form of regular customers who shop at Panduro and scan their receipts.
- Customer satisfaction through positive comments on social media.

## Attached Files

- Poster ad
- Receipt with special text + QR code
- Yarn ball with special label + QR code
- Yarnys
- Graffiti ad with QR code
- Prototype overview
- [Prototype link](#)
- Trailer (separately attached)



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