Product Offering: Cloudflare Workers for Gaming

Understanding Cloudflare Workers

Cloudflare Workers provides a serverless execution environment, allowing developers to create entirely new applications or augmenting existing ones without configuring or maintaining infrastructure.

- It is a distributed computing product which means that content is directly uploaded to Cloudflare's Content Distribution Network (CDN) giving a thoroughly fast experience to the users.
- It does not require any caching setup and allows developer to create dynamic and interactive websites
- The Workers Sites offers the Workers Unlimited plan which includes 10 million requests, 1 GB of Workers KV storage, and 1 million KV reads and provides a pay as you go pricing for additional usage.
- The larger their network of users, the better their performance, security and reliability.
- Uses isolates creation within existing environment instead of starting a virtual machine every time a function is executed.

Where the Game Development Industry is headed?

The dawn of the *internet* era, created an environment for developers to distribute games digitally and led to development of a stable marketplace. The surging adoption of the internet and the popularity of social networks, has especially lead to a large and diverse user base in the Social Network Game Development Industry. As game developers need to cater to the *ever-growing user network* it is essential for them to have a *stable, secure* and *sustainable* environment to create, host and deliver real-time experiences at scale.

Measures to understand that the latest trends and needs of the game development market:

1. **The product team working on the Gaming offering should use the research phase of the product lifecycle to understand the sentiment of game developers and gamers through forums such as – Cloudflare community, LinkedIn, Gaming forums, etc. (as we would be primarily targeting independent game developers not associated with established studios)**

2. **Even more specifically through the Cloudflare's community page can be used to see discussion and engage experienced developers as well as other users to understand and validating our hypothesis while also creating a user archetype for our product**

3. **The information gathered from above research will be very useful in the design and build phase where we work with our engineers to curate Cloudflare Workers for Gaming keeping the customer persona created above as reference**

Product changes suggested based on current scenario of game development industry:

ISSUES IN THE INDUSTRY	ADDITION/CHANGES IN FEATURES
1. Method of Operation: The superfluid games industry is switching to remote operation leading to advent of virtual studios. This requires a cohesive and consistent working platform while developing the game and CDN servers to be active globally.	Provision of a collaborative working environment on *Workers* for game developers operating virtually from different parts of the world **[Cloudflare Workers already being a distributed network product is useful here]**
2. Impact of AI: With artificial intelligence ruling all facets of life the gaming industry is not far behind with a huge chunk of these games now utilizing this technology and developing themselves leading to better and more accurate real-world experience. Such games to be deployed on net require powerful and robust hosting and deployment services	*Workers* already uses Cloudflare's powerful network, however allocating a dedicated capacity on this network for the gaming offering would prevent a technologically compromised offering
3. Increased Risk Factor in Development: Today's audience has evolved in its taste and requirements leaving game developers with the tumultuous task of developing niche games which may be complex and expensive to build but get limited traction	Cloudflare Workers for gaming should aim to empower game developers and provide them flexibility such that they can take risks while catering to their user base. $^{\$}$

More about the Risk Hedging offering in Workers for gaming:

1. **Cloudflare Workers needs to provide a risk hedging solution to game developers who are unable to take risks due to a low financial backing, to be able to capture these users for the long run**
2. **Creating a pricing strategy which provides them with the flexibility and freedom to experiment with their creativity is a step in the direction of attracting more independent developers and small studios**
3. **Workers already offers a pricing structure {Initial Requests are free + followed by 'Pay Per Request' feature} which can be kept flexible over time.**

E.g. fixing a stipulated time for a new game to check the engagement and its growth. If a game is doing well, the game is kept on and more time and effort is invested in making better while Cloudflare gets some commission on the revenue. If the game doesn't do well, it is abandoned however Cloudflare does not charge any money for the same. This way Cloudflare Workers is showing ownership in its user's (game developer) cause. **However to ensure that this product and strategy is a success for Cloudflare, it is important to have a dedicated team to list out developer's to be targeted for the basic Gaming offering after the first sprint.**

Goals to check the success: It is mandatory to set basic engagement goals before the product is shipped for the first time. In fact during the building phase it the product launch should be announced in developer communities and based on the analytics of the response the number of additional features and changes built can be varied.

To ensure good quality: of the product customer feedback is essential. So even before the product is launched, experienced game developers (1-2) should be offered the product features as they are finalized during the testing phase. This can help in ensuring actual user needs are taken care of.

Possible Failure: in two ways – research about requirement is wrong (Product market fit issue) or the key traction feature (revenue sharing and Cloudflare acting as an investor of sorts) doesn't appeal the game developers