

Project Points Requiring Additional Funding: Airships Marketing Plan

This CFP application is for additional funding of CHF 20 000 to help execute the following marketing plan.

Current State

Sales of the game have been mostly driven by a few powerful YouTube channels. Most importantly, Stuff+, who has made dozens of videos over the years, including one that had 180 000 views. Other channels with a large number of views include Lathland, Deluks and Bluedrake42 in English as well as Dan Field in French and 皮老 in Chinese.

The game appears to be a good fit for YouTube because it allows channels to create their own content and tell their own stories. Viewers can see the large number of possibilities in the game and purchase it for themselves. This is the opposite of cases like "That Dragon, Cancer", where to watch a video of a game is to basically consume the game's entire content.

Written media, on the other hand, has had very little impact. The game has been featured in a local newspaper and a few small websites, but no larger outlets like Rock Paper Shotgun, Polygon, PC Gamer or similar. The main reason for this is likely the game's early access status as well as a lack of media connections.

Apart from spikes caused by popular videos, sales have grown mostly organically.

Market Size

To estimate the maximum market size for the game, I used SteamSpy to look at sales numbers for successful similar games:

From the Depths	226 000
King Arthur's Gold	381 000
Stronghold HD	390 000
Besiege	2 023 000

On the basis of these numbers, a likely maximum market size is 400 000 sales, maybe up to 2 million. Note that this does not mean that Airships is expected to sell 400 000 units! It means that right now, the game has sold about 10% of the copies it's possible to sell, which means there is still plenty of room for expansion.

Launch Marketing Push

This marketing plan aims to push the game to more widespread visibility during and immediately after the launch. This means making potential customers aware of the game, ideally repeatedly through different channels. Repeat exposure leads to the "mere exposure effect" or to put it colloquially, "Oh, I've seen that game in a bunch of places, I should check it out".

Channels

Press

As stated above, this has had very little impact so far. While the press don't really drive sales directly, they do spread awareness of the game with influencers. To access this channel, I will employ a game PR company. I'm currently in talks with Evolve PR and Premier. Evolve state that their services start at \$3 000 a month. Estimated cost: 9 000 CHF.

YouTube

YouTube has been the major driver of sales so far. There still exist a lot of prominent YouTube channels that would be a good match for the game. Three measures will be taken:

First, working together with existing YouTubers who are covering the game. This may take the form of a special launch event, launch day matches, giveaways, interviews, etc.

Second, working with a prominent YouTube personality, Bluedrake42, on leveraging his social network to directly sponsor content with channels such as Blitz. Estimated cost is CHF 5000 for sponsored content.

Third, working with Nevaly, an influencer marketing company, to reach additional YT channels suitable for the game. Estimated cost: CHF 12 000 for sponsored content and fees.

The YouTube videos, sponsored and otherwise, will be spaced to appear within a few weeks of the game's release.

Targeted YouTube Channels

Name	Related Content Shown	Subscribers
Flabaliki	Management and sims	242 000
iSorrowproductions	Strategy	119 000
Many a True Nerd	Indie, management, sims	275 000
Quill18	Strategy	445 000
Seniac	Simulation, building	187 000
SplatterCatGaming	Rimworld, Prison Architect	391 000
TheXPGamers	Indie PC Games	307 000
WeaselZone	Rimworld, Prison Architect	399 000
Mr Falcon	Indie, FTL	112 000
Blitz + network	Totally Accurate Battle Simulator, Indie	1 036 000

Exhibitions

Airships has been previously exhibited at Gamescom, A MAZE, and Fantasy Basel. The top priority is to exhibit at an event in the US, to connect with the large number of existing and potential customers in that country.

I will apply to Indie Megabooth for PAX East 2018. Indie Megabooth state that the expected cost of a booth excluding travel is around \$5000. A round-trip ticket to Boston from Zurich is about CHF 700, so the total cost of travel and stay for two people to man the booth would be about CHF 1700. The estimate for Indie Megabooth is hence CHF 6700.

In addition, the game will be exhibited at a second location, either in Europe or Asia, at an event of a similar scale. Bringing Airships to gamescom in 2016 cost CHF 6000, so this is the estimate for the second exhibition event.

I will be working closely with the chosen PR agency to secure coverage for these booths.

Social Media

Here, the plan is to leverage the existing fan base to publicise the release on Reddit, Twitter, Facebook and elsewhere. This will take time, but does not involve any fees, and it works better than trying to artificially create a social media buzz.

Total Costs

3 months full-time work @ CHF 48 000/yr	12 000
PR Company	9 000
YouTube, Bluedrake42	5 000
YouTube, Nevaly	12 000
PAX East	6 700
Gamescom	6 000
Total	50 700

Financing

Pro Helvetia	20 000
Game Sales	30 700
Total	50 700

Links

[SteamSpy](#)

[Evolve PR](#)

[Premier](#)

[Nevaly](#)