

Focus Group Data

How we got our data:

As a group we emailed some of our friends with the set of questions below (focus group questions) and compiled their responses, we wanted a variety of relevant responses so we decided to send them to mostly gamers we know, but also friends of friends that we weren't sure how they'd respond or if they'd respond at all, which garnered only 2 responses being participants 2 and 9, we gathered a total 14 responses but these were the only ones deemed legible/relevant after a brief review of contents.

Focus Group Questions:

1. Have you ever played a sliding puzzle game before?
2. When was the last time you played a sliding puzzle game?
3. In your opinion, do you think sliding puzzles are too easy or too hard?
 - Could you explain why you hold that opinion?
4. Would adding a difficulty mode change that opinion?
 - e.g., increasing the size of the puzzle by adding more pieces?
5. How important is competitiveness to you when it comes to games?
 - Do you think having a leader board would give you motivation to play the game?
 - Do you think adding a timer or time attack mode would make the game more interesting/fun? Why or why not?
6. What other features do you think could be added to a sliding puzzle game to make it more enjoyable/interesting to play?
7. Is there anything we haven't touched on today that you would like to add?
8. Look at the following pairs of images:





- Which ones would you find more difficult to solve and why?

Participant 1

Q1. Yes, I have played a sliding puzzle game and I enjoy them a lot.

Q2. The last time I played a sliding puzzle game was about 1-2 years ago so I will be quite interested if a new game like that came out. Games like this should be introduced more in the present as it can help improve your brain and statistic skills.

Q3. Sliding puzzles can be difficult as sometimes you are given a certain amount of moves to use, so you start to think strategically on how to use them. However, most of the time it is easy as they hold the same concept of matching colours etc.

Q4. Adding a difficulty mode would intrigue me into playing the game more as the levels will be getting harder and more enthusiastic to play.

Q5. Competitiveness is very important to me as no one would like to be at the bottom of the leader board. Hence having a leader board will allow me to play constantly until I get to the top. Also, it would be a fun rivalry to have with friends and family to see who can get to the top. A timer will make the game more interesting as it will increase the pressure on people and cause you to think in ways, you haven't.

Q6. Features such as a catchy background music will allow people to think about the game more and also interest other people. Prizes and points given after difficult levels will bring people to complete the difficult level to receive the prizes and points.

Q7. Exploring what sort of other platforms, a sliding puzzle game could be played on. For the moment, it's available on both android and iOS devices (app store and google play store respectively). Not as popular on web browsers however, I believe it could be implemented within consoles games. For an example, a game like "Uncharted" which is a walkthrough type of game, could have a quest/mission for the character who must complete a sliding puzzle game in order to progress further in the storyline/mode.

Q8. The first one would be most difficult as I don't understand what the point of the game would be and I wouldn't know how to solve it.

Participant 2

Q1. No.

Q2. N/A

Q3. Easy. It seems like something simple, since it's just sliding a puzzle.

Q4. Perhaps. Yes, that would definitely make it more complex and seemingly challenging.

Q5. Important. Yes. Yes, because it puts a limit on how long I can take to play, so there's more pressure on me to play rather than taking as long as I wish.

Q6. The game providing pictures for me, rather than me choosing the picture, then it's more of a surprise.

Q7. No.

Q8. The second image, as it has smaller parts in the image so it would be more difficult to piece together.

Participant 3

Q1. Yes I have played a sliding puzzle game before.

Q2. I last played a sliding puzzle game 7 years ago.

Q3. The ones I played were easy.

Q4. Yes the difficulty mode would be a good addition based on the needs of the users.

Q5. I would add a leaderboard and timed mode in order to allow users to compete against themselves and others.

Q6. N/A

Q7. N/A

Q8. Top right & bottom right.

Participant 4

1. Yes, I have played a sliding puzzle before.

2. The last time I played one was when I was a kid probably around age 10.

3. I think that sliding puzzles are pretty easy. I think that's mainly because a lot of the ones that I've played were small size wise and I don't think that they make them that big. The small size of the board and number of pieces make them too easy.

4. I do think that having the option to increase the size would increase the difficulty. Having a larger area and more pieces to work with would make it more challenging.

5. I would say competitiveness both matters and doesn't matter to me. If it's not really part of a games system, then I don't think about it but if the feature is there then it makes me want to play more because I want to be on top. So, I think that having something like a leader board would give me more motivation to play. I also agree with the idea of a time attack mode since that adds another layer of difficulty to the game and the timer would also be fun.

6. I think being able to add your own images to solve would be fun. And maybe the feature to download some pre-existing images that are set in the game by default.

7. There's nothing extra that I can think of

8. a) I'd find the image on the right harder to solve since the lines of the patterns are really close together. Solving that may take some time but I feel like the image on the left would be more fun to solve.

b) I think image on the left would be harder to solve but not by that much. I think both images would be fun to solve. This type of pattern seems like it would be more fun to solve than the first one but in terms of the two pictures I'd prefer to solve the image on the right.

c) The image on the right would be harder to solve. This one even more so than the first pattern. I don't know how enjoyable this one would be. I would much more prefer to solve the image on the left as it is genuinely a nice image.

Participant 5

Q1. Yes

Q2. I played this game mainly when I was younger, about 7 years ago.

Q3. In my opinion I believe it depends on how small or big or how many blocks there are. The bigger the blocks the easier it is to solve the puzzle, whereas the smaller the blocks, the more detailed and challenging the puzzle will be to solve. However, the puzzle I solved was quite easy due to it being a kids puzzle.

Q4. I believe that adding a difficulty mode can make the game more challenging. For example, having a picture that has patterns can make the player really think about where each piece goes due to the similarity of each piece due to the puzzle being a pattern.

Q5. In my opinion I think that having a leader board helps motivates you to play the game as it gives you the boost to try and beat an opponent's ranking and high score. This is an important factor to playing a game as it helps you remain engaged in game as you have challenges (opponents) to overcome. Yes, by adding a timer it puts the gamer under pressure to put the puzzle together under timed conditions. This can also give you an adrenaline boost which can be fun to players and can connote to being a good game enjoyable. However, it may be frustrating for some who cannot work under timed constraints well.

Q6. No

Q7. No

Q8. In my opinion I think that picture 5 can be difficult to solve as there being various gradients and shades, which can be confusing to put together. To add to this there is a reflection which can make it even more difficult to solve.

Participant 6

Q1. Yes

Q2. 10 years ago

Q3. Depends. Small ones are easy, bigger ones are a bit hard.

Q4. Yes.

Q5. For me, gaming is about gaming with friends, so winning or losing doesn't really matter. Leader board, timer or time attack for puzzles games will make it more interesting, as it would make it more intense.

Q6. As there is usually a picture on the sliding puzzle, it would be fun to have different themes before you start the game, e.g., Gamer, Sci-fi, Film, sports etc, and the player would be able to select it before starting the game.

Q7. Nope

Q8. Cause there are a lot of patterns and a lot of colours, and the shapes are wavy I'd say the pattern ones were harder

Participant 7

Q1. Yes, I have played sliding puzzle game before in computers and on phones.

Q2. It has been a long time I haven't played this kind of game since going to secondary school

Q3. I think that sliding puzzle are mostly easy but hard sometimes when the picture in the puzzle is quite confusing and every block of the puzzle look quite similar.

Q4. Yes, increasing the size of puzzle will increase the difficulty.

Q5. From my perception competitiveness is necessary in the games to feel quite superior from others as if there is only one person is playing without competition then it gets boring and doesn't excite you to play more. Adding a timer will definitely make the game more interesting because it gives the player challenge.

Q6. I think to make it more interesting we can try to put gif in it so when a user completes the puzzle the gif starts in the loop.

Q7. No, I don't think there is much you can do.

Q8. I think images on the right are the most difficult to solve because when it's grid into the blocks then it would be very hard to decide where the block should be because of the similar patterns in the blocks.

Participant 8

Q1. I have

Q2. Suuper long ago, mostly the ones they'd give you on keychains at Legoland

Q3. Neither honestly, they are what they are, kind of mindless but better than staring at a wall

Q4. Maybe, but I prefer fighting games so I don't know how invested this kind of game could really make me

Q5. As I said I like fighting games so I'm very competitive, competitive against myself or the world is something I see the appeal for but just isn't for me, If I'm competitive I prefer it to be just me vs my friends.

Q6. Lore, I feel like any game can make it if there's something to theorise about under the surface, but I get that's a big ask

Q7. Not really, in all honesty it's a simple concept and you covered all the stops

Q8. Probably the pattern ones as they're harder to recognise, but I think that makes it less fun

Participant 9

Q1. No

Q2. -

Q3. Not sure never really given them a go, my brother used to though but I never liked the look of them

Q4. Probably not, not too interested in something that 2D

Q5. I'm not all that competitive, leaderboards feel a bit out of reach so I don't bother looking at them

Q6. I couldn't tell you

Q7. nah

Q8. Definitely the squiggly ones, make no sense

Participant 10

Q1. yeah

Q2. Long ago, sorta see it as a 2000's thing

Q3. Easy, that felt like the point in them

Q4. Maybe, but it seems like a forgotten kind of game but maybe kids would enjoy it

Q5. In the games I play I look for it but I don't think I would care in a game this simple, again maybe for kids it could drive them, when I was a kid I spent £1000 on my mums credit card on clash of clans because I liked the look of new towers so I think kids will be happy with anything if it makes them feel special

Q6. Not much, micro-transactions if you're mean enough

Q7. nah

Q8. I could solve them all if they were gridded fairly, but the lines and shapes ones would probably get me as a kid