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Week 6 Writeup – Task Flow: Overhauling Steam Publishing

The primary user group can be divided into three categories. Solo developers looking to publish their game, small independent companies, and larger development companies. The goal is to make the publishing process simple without needing to create new accounts at every collaboration and to make the publishing process more equitable.

The current issue with how publishing is done through Steam now is the user has to login through their Steam account. Which makes sense, if you are going to publish on Steam theoretically you are going to already be on Steam. However, if you are apart of a small group there is not a way to have the team to publish without creating a new account for the team. This overcomplicates an already complicated process of publishing. Additionally, if someone does many collaborations but no necessary teams somebody will be getting lost in the process. After getting through that hurdle regardless of being a solo developer or a triple-A company the process is identical. While nothing is wrong with this on the surface, a triple-A company has a lot more resources than that of one person who could be doing this as a passion project. With a payment being expected to be published it is not equitable for those to be the same price and could discourage many from publishing creating a less diverse game market.

To improve the current flow starting off with making the overview something that can passively be viewed. Currently compared to a site like itch.io which has the whole process visible no matter what step someone is at, Steams publishing Steamworks has the publishing process behind different “checkpoints”. This can make the process more intimidating, but it also makes it difficult to fulling explore the current task flow without going through the publishing process personally. The main change would be with the initial step of the publishing process. The focus is on the three main groups of people who are publishing and putting them first. Having the first prompted question being related to the demographic and then having the rest of the process reflects that choice. Prompting the user if they are a solo developer, collaborating or in a small team, or if a large corporation is publishing. Then if the user inputs they are collaborating prompting them for their teammates account to also be listed and then continuing from there. This keeps communication clear in the first place and makes sure everyone gets represented. Then managing the review and monetary process based on the specific sub-group.