Team Five Guys

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Deployment Plan

After some discussion, our team came to the conclusion that the smartest method of deployment for Progmon would be through the Steam Store. We concluded this based on the fact that our product is not a mobile application, which rules out the Android and Apple App Stores, and it is not a console game, which rules out the Xbox/Microsoft Store and the PS Store. Steam also has the advantage of being very widespread and more easily accessible than the Microsoft and Apple App Stores. As for the price of our product, we felt that selling at a price point of $2.00 would yield the most rewarding returns, both in terms of possible profit and accessibility to a much wider range of potential buyers due to such a low purchase cost.

The process of publishing a game for distribution on Steam is rather straightforward thanks to Steamworks Partner Program. The basic requirements for becoming a Steamworks Partner are as follows: signing some digital paperwork, paying the $100 product deposit fee, and providing Steam with your bank, tax, and personal identification information so that Steam knows exactly who they are going to be doing business with. Once this has been completed, we can access Steamworks and begin the process of deploying our product into the Steam Store. Inside of Steamworks, there are a handful of tasks that must be completed before Steam will allow us to publish our product on their Store. The first step here is to build our store page to sell our product to potential customers. This page should include information about the game itself as well as any information that a potential buyer might need to know in order to purchase and play our game. Next, the product must be uploaded to Steamworks and some various Steamworks features must be configured to ensure our product is capable of being downloaded properly from the Steam Store; one of these Steamworks features is deciding on a price to sell our product at, which we decided to be a crisp, cool $2 dollars. Once all of this has been completed, Steam requires a 30-day waiting period between the date in which the product deposit fee was paid and when we are able to officially publish our product on the Steam Store. This 30-day time frame is intended to allow Steam enough time to review our information that we provided them earlier and for them to verify that we are who we said we are. Secondly, Steam requires that two weeks prior to releasing our product, we must set-up a “publicly-visible ‘coming soon’ page” so that our product can begin the process of building an interested audience of potential buyers. The purpose of this two-week period is to allow both Steam users and us to begin interacting with each other in a mock situation so that the product creators can prepare for the official release. Once both of these periods have ended, Steam will hand over the keys to our product and flip the switch on their end to officially list our product on the Steam Store. This means that we are now able to sell our game and update it as often as we wish to update it.

In terms of the information that Steam requires from their content creators prior to giving them control of their product and the ability to publish and update their product, they detail what they are looking for in the digital paperwork and deposit fee. For banking information, Steam requires a routing number, bank account number, and bank address so that Steam can send the profit from each sale of the product to the correct content creator. It is very important that the bank information that we provide Steam with is listed under the same name that was provided in the legal identification earlier. For tax information, Steam requires that all Steamworks partners provide ample information to allow them to determine the creators tax status and withholding rate which can be found in your W-9 form for United States based content creators, or in a W-8BEN form for content creators located outside of the United States. As mentioned above, an initial product submission fee of $100 is required for each product that is to be publicly distributed on the Steam Store. This fee is non-refundable, but will be paid back to the publisher once the game has accumulated $1000 in Adjusted Gross Revenue on the Steam Store.

The Steam community and Steam Store have a short list of rules and guidelines that each and every content creator must abide by. The most important item on this list is that Steam Direct is currently only accepting content in the form of video games and VR experiences. Luckily for us, our product is video game, and is therefore a valid product to be sold on the Steam Store. Furthermore, Steamworks provides a list of content that they do not allow to be published in the Steam Store:

1. Adult content that isn’t appropriately labeled and age-gated.
2. Libelous or defamatory statements.
3. Content you don’t own or have adequate rights to.
4. Content that violates the laws of any jurisdiction in which it will be available.
5. Content that exploits children in any way.
6. Applications that modify customer’s computers in unexpected or harmful ways, such as malware or viruses.
7. Applications that fraudulently attempts to gather sensitive information, such as Steam credentials or financial data (e.g. credit card information).

With the exception of the programming environment (Python3.7.4 and Pygame 1.9.4), our product was created by our own efforts. Because of this, it was rather easy to abide by the guidelines set by Steam. This means that our product does not infringe upon any of the above guidelines which also means that Progmon is now able to be represented and sold in the Steam Store which can be accomplished by going to <https://partner.steamgames.com/steamdirect> and clicking on “Sign In” to begin deploying our product to the market via Steam Direct.

At this point, Progmon is currently being sold in the Steam Store for a mere $2.00, but maintaining a fanbase is vital to the success of any product. To help maintain our fanbase, it is vital that we advertise our product in various places. Initial advertising could be those that have already bought the game tell their friends and family about the game; this is how most entry-level games begin building their name and is likely what we would do as well. To help maintain our current customers, providing consistent updates to the game that add new Progmon, attacks, items, special abilities, or even features such as the ability to select a whole party of Progmon to play with and against. Two features we ended up not implementing were a damage calculator and a Progmon type system that would enable attacks to be less effective, normally effective, and more effective – this would add a new level of excitement and purpose to the game. Another possible feature could be the ability to fight against bosses or fight in a tournament with tougher and tougher competition with each round. To better immerse our customers in Progmon, we could create more sprites for each Progmon and each attack so that you can watch the lightning as Electric Cat uses Lightning Bolt on Final Boss, or watch as Fire Dragon’s health bar slowly rises up to full health after using a Restore Potion. Perhaps we could network two computers together to create a human versus human interaction that would allow people to play against each other from different locations. The list of possible future features is truly endless as the environment and style in which Progmon was created allows for modularization of the current features, making adding new features a not-so-daunting task.