

Indie Gamer Dev Growth with Cloudflare Cloudflare Workers for Gaming Product Plan

Product Thesis:

A market with growth potential that can use the scalability of Cloudflare workers is the indie game developer who is looking for resources to develop games that require lower initial fixed cost. According to a survey with the Game Developer's Conference, 53% of game developers identify as indie game developers. These developers seek solutions that allow for flexibility, scalability, cost efficiency, and developmental tools, which Cloudflare can provide through partnerships, developing tools, and educational support.

Development Recommendations:

- 1) Educational and Community Support: Ample documentation, community development, and sample tutorials are sought after by developers seeking resources. Developers run into many trouble-shooting issues with unique setups, and are not knowledgeable in all aspects of game development. In addition, perception of serverless game development is that it is difficult to build sustainable multi-player architecture on it. Providing experts, strong documentation, and sample code will drive traffic and trust. Advice on how to efficiently structure the game for serverless growth should be a point of focus.
- 2) Game Engine Partnerships: Partnerships with game development engines that streamline the process of game development to allow for seamless integration, and community support. Unreal4, Unity are popular engines there should be support for.
- 3) Backend-as-a-service: Integrations with a backend service manager like Gamesparks or Playfab will allow for needed additional features such as social and multiplayer functionality as well as ecommerce features.
- 4) Metrics API/Dashboard: Analytics metrics are very important to indie developers who need feedback on growth and profit opportunities. Providing an easy API solution on key metrics will simplify the process.
- 5) Cost Calculations: Developers have questions about what costs look like in a serverless situation, and helping developers to easily calculate in different scenarios and compare will provide more trust in Cloudflare as an efficient solution.
- 6) Direct Customer Support: Game developers often need more individualized solutions. Though expensive, this would likely drive fast support.

Evaluation and Metrics:

To evaluate new product developments, a couple methods can be used to both test the initial hypotheses and evaluate new features.

- 1) Game development challenge: Launch a challenge for game developers to use Cloudflare with a game engine partner. Challenge with customer support or forum experts will allow for trouble-shooting and feedback on where pain points are.
- 2) Focus group: Invite indie game developers of different types of games, codes, and needs to provide feedback on Cloudflare Workers integration, ease of use, management, cost, and educational support.
- 3) Game development community experts: Host q&a sessions with game development community veterans to troubleshoot and identify areas of growth. Also an opportunity to create sample documentation.
- 4) Interview and feedback surveys with Cloudflare early adopters: Early adopters can be hired as part of a network of community experts, as well as help to troubleshoot and find workaround solutions. Documentation should always include space to offer feedback.

Growth of usage and support will come through 1) community growth, 2) documentation growth, 3) strength of reviews in key media channels, 4) utilization metrics, 5) product mentions in gamedev forums. Awareness in forums and communities, sign ups for information and updates, and actual utilization are all indications of growing user base.

Risks:

- 1) Competition: AWS provides many services to game developers and offer fan engagement support.
- 2) Indie Game Dev Trends: Indie game development has seen growth in the last decade, but indie game developers still have trouble finding profitability long-term. The popularity of this segment is an assumption this document is based on.
- 3) External gaming market trends: Platforms and gaming trends could trend in ways that threaten new product developments.

Further Research:

With additional time and resources I would try the challenge on Cloudflare Workers , read AWS Gamelift documentation, Lumberyard documentation, read gamedev.net, thedevmasters.com, tigsource.com, domain focused forums for unity, ogre3d. Key areas of focus would be on game developer community skillsets, structural challenges, profitability and growth needs.

Research Resources:

- 1) Reddit r/gamedev was a key source of truth
- 2) AWS gaming: <https://aws.amazon.com/gametech/>
- 3) Cloudflare Workers documentation
- 4) GameSparks : <https://www.slideshare.net/AmazonWebServices/intro-to-game-development-operations-on-aws>

Final Notes:

I really enjoyed this challenge although I am not an expert in game dev by any means. I would love to get feedback on my plan regardless of the results. Finally thank you very much for increasing your intern pool size, despite the challenging market conditions. It's inspiring and a great example for companies and individuals alike. Cloudflare's clear bent on ethical growth challenges the status quo in the best way.