

PRODUCT MANAGER CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Gökberk Ataer Bozdemir

TASK 1:

KEY SCREENS

	Solitaire Grand Harvest	Domino Dreams	Disney Solitaire	Candy Crush Solitaire
Login				
Home				
Settings				
Store	?			
Level Start				
Gameplay				
Level End				
Leaderboard	X	X	X	

GAMEPLAY LINKS (25+ LEVEL VIDEOS)

Solitaire Grand Harvest: <https://youtu.be/-AXZUDJeAmI>

Domino Dreams: <https://youtu.be/e2Wej4n10s8>

Disney Solitaire: <https://youtu.be/JsZuNOKczos>

Candy Crush Solitaire: <https://youtu.be/AkmAhFnIPU4>

UI/UX EVALUATION & COMPARISON

Solitaire Grand Harvest

Strengths:

- Very clean and minimal home screen with a direct “Play” button; perfect for players who want to quickly jump into gameplay.
- The farm mechanic adds a light sense of progression and harvesting unlocked farms after each level provides a reason to return and play.
- Coins earned through farming can be used for gameplay boosts, giving players a functional reward loop without too many distractions.

Weaknesses:

- No events or secondary features to create variety; may feel too flat over time.
- The in-game store was buggy and wouldn’t open, which severely disrupted the experience.
- Visually much simpler than other games and may feel underwhelming to players expecting more interactivity.

Differentiators:

- Combines solitaire gameplay with a farm-themed layer of progression.
- Offers one of the most distraction-free and accessible UIs for casual players.

Domino Dreams

Strengths:

- Features short animated scenes between levels that help build immersion and add visual engagement.
- Unlockable features like albums and challenges introduce goals and keep the player motivated to progress.
- Has a satisfying reward system that gives small bonuses the more you play.

Weaknesses:

- In comparison to the other games, I felt this one made resources harder to earn. I ran out of currency faster and more often.
- Some progression elements and mechanics unlock slowly, which may feel like a grind for players used to faster reward loops.

Differentiators:

- Uses domino tiles instead of cards; a fresh take that visually and functionally sets it apart.
- Strong use of progression-linked animations adds life to the UI and gives the sense of an unfolding world.

Disney Solitaire

Strengths:

- Just like Domino Dreams, the UI is smooth and responsive, with a polished layout and animated transitions between gameplay segments.
- The challenge and scene-completion system creates a clear goal: complete pieces of an animation and then unlock the full sequence.
- Offers the ability to rewatch unlocked scenes, which adds a sense of permanence and reward to progression.

Weaknesses:

- While the polish is undeniable, the UX felt nearly identical to Domino Dreams and arguably too similar for players who experience both.
- There's little mechanical innovation beyond the theme, which might limit long-term interest.

Differentiators:

- Disney theming and animations give it a unique charm and appeal, especially for fans of the brand.
- The scene-rebuilding mechanic adds emotional reward tied to visual storytelling, unlike the other games.

Candy Crush Solitaire

Strengths:

- By far the most feature-rich UI and supports leaderboard competition, teams, and social mechanics.
- Players can customize their deck and profile, adding a personal touch that the others don't offer.
- The collectible postcard mechanic adds an additional meta-layer of progression and keeps players invested in their accomplishments.

Weaknesses:

- The UI is crowded; for players who prefer simplicity, it may feel overwhelming or cluttered.
- There's a lot going on and new players might need time to understand all the features and flows.

Differentiators:

- Strongest social experience among the four games, with teams, leaderboards, and support systems.
- Deep personalization options like card back designs and custom names are exclusive to this title.

Overall Comparison

While all four games fall under the solitaire or casual puzzle genre, their approach to UI/UX varies significantly and serves different types of users. Solitaire Grand Harvest stands out for its simplicity and there's no unnecessary clutter, which makes it easy to just play and go. This minimalism, however, may come off as too barebones for players who enjoy richer interfaces. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Candy Crush Solitaire offers the most dynamic UI and layered UX, with social elements like teams and leaderboards, as well as robust customization, though this can be overwhelming for someone who just wants to relax with a quick card game.

Domino Dreams, with its lively animations and gradually unlocked features, lands somewhere in the middle. It feels more active and alive than Grand Harvest but not as socially immersive as Candy Crush. I did notice that the economy felt a bit more restrictive here and I ran out of currency much faster, which affected flow. Disney Solitaire, while developed by the same company as Domino Dreams and almost identical in structure and flow, makes better use of storytelling through its animated scenes. The ability to collect and rewatch completed scenes gives progression a visual and emotional payoff that feels more satisfying. So while Disney and Domino may look alike, the emotional feedback in Disney makes the experience slightly more rewarding. Ultimately, which UI/UX stands out depends on what the player values most: simplicity, depth, story, or community.

Executive Summary of Core Gameplay Features

A concise overview of the main functionalities, user options, and gameplay-related elements across four solitaire-style mobile games.

GAMES	MULTIPLE LANGUAGE OPTIONS	LOGIN WITH ACCOUNT	VIBRATION ON/OFF OPTION	RULES	INTERACTION WITH OTHER PEOPLE (LEADERBOARD, EVENTS, ETC.)
SOLITAIRE GRAND HARVEST	✗	✓	✗	AVAILABLE IN SETTINGS MENU	✗
DOMINO DREAMS	✓	✓	✓	AVAILABLE IN SETTINGS MENU UNDER SUPPORT BUTTON	✗
DISNEY SOLITAIRE	✓	✓	✓	AVAILABLE IN SETTINGS MENU UNDER SUPPORT BUTTON	✗
CANDY CRUSH SOLITAIRE	✗	✓	✗	AVAILABLE IN SETTINGS MENU UNDER "?" BUTTON	✓

GAMES	ARE PREVIOUS LEVELS REPLAYABLE?	CUSTOMIZATION	GAME PIECES	REWARD SYSTEM
SOLITAIRE GRAND HARVEST	✓	✗	CARDS	Farms unlock with progress; generate coins
DOMINO DREAMS	✗	Unlockable avatars; random nickname selector	TILES	Wheel spin after levels and periodic rewards
DISNEY SOLITAIRE	✗	Unlockable avatars; random nickname selector	CARDS	Challenge-based rewards and periodic rewards
CANDY CRUSH SOLITAIRE	✗	Manual nickname + deck customization	CARDS	Challenge-based rewards and periodic rewards

Json Structure Mapping

As part of the main task, I carefully analyzed the video provided in the case study and manually mapped out the entire game level layout. This included all card values, positions, visibility states, dependencies, and special cards that trigger additional rows. Based on this analysis, I created a structured JSON file representing the complete logic and hierarchy of the level, not just the initial layout visible to players.

Additionally, for the optional bonus, I developed a custom GPT tool that transforms Excel or Google Sheets data into JSON format. The tool intelligently handles variations in column naming and defaults missing values where needed. It outputs a clean, downloadable .json file and eliminating the need for any manual formatting or intervention.

Both the manually created JSON file and the GPT link have been included as part of this submission.

(JSON file sent separately)

Bonus Tool

Custom GPT Link: (Clicking the link directly gives an error on my computer, but it works properly when copied and pasted into a browser.)

<https://chatgpt.com/g/g-682cbb3ca9c881919eb74bcdf4c21d20-excel-to-json-converter-for-game-layout>

TASK 3:

Economy Cracking

The game's economy balances risk, reward, and monetization. Players pay a 1,000-coin entry fee and can earn up to 1,202 coins through flips, streak bonuses, deck conversion, and level completion, resulting in a 120% reward-to-cost ratio and a slightly profitable loop that encourages continued play.

There are subtle monetization triggers: 5 free undos are given, after which each costs 200 coins. Wild cards cost 1,000 coins and become appealing when progress is blocked. A "+" button offers quick store access at high-pressure moments.

Efficient play is rewarded as unused draw pile cards convert into coins, adding strategic depth. Overall, the system is rewarding yet gently nudges players toward spending through soft caps and well-timed prompts.

economy_analysis_sheet:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AOIXE5qZH1aUJ2r5OCSvhgm_pk4ZMsVaStJgdnN71aU/edit?usp=sharing