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Case Study 2 – Kingdom Rush

Having a cartoon-like animation style similar to a Miniclip or online game, Kingdom Rush provides a simple visual appeal which is great for children and casual gamers. This type of setting is inviting for players looking to play a game while passing time or when they are bored. Kingdom Rush does a great job providing a large variety of actions the player can take to eliminate the enemy team while keeping simple aesthetics and animations. In result, the player will likely not be overwhelmed by the large variety of items in their arsenal. This is a good way to keep the player engaged in the game and encourage them to take different actions to get a higher score.

One great mechanic Kingdom Rush implements is showing the different components at the player's disposal to the player as they become available in the game. This makes the player's arsenal simple to manage, although not necessarily any easier since the player still must adapt to using these mechanics against the enemy team. The many different item types result in a well-designed arsenal for curious players looking to achieve a great score and finish off enemy types in fashion. Only a simple arsenal is needed to finish even the most difficult levels, so the additional features encourage the player to continue trying the game and experience different tactics. This example of meaningful play is likely why the game has achieved its level of popularity and provides a great challenge to have the top score.

The game's informative system of introducing new component types as they appear keeps the concept simple to work with. This doesn't make the difficulty game any easier, however. Although the difficulty may seem easier in the beginning levels since you're already familiar with the enemies, towers, and item types, still you must experiment with new tactics to get through all levels without having your tower take a hit. If the game didn't introduce and familiarize the player with the new component types, it would take longer for the player to understand what each component does, although it wouldn't make the difficulty any worse. Either way, the player would have to learn how each component works by experimenting with the item and tower placement. Narrowing down the time required to understand each component is a great tactic used by the game to set up the experience for a casual gamer or a child.

The primary player type targeted by Kingdom Rush is an achiever as the most prominent challenge in the game aside from winning is achieving a better score on all levels. To have success in this, the player must experiment with different item types and towers to defeat the enemy as soon as possible. Once all levels are completed with three stars, an achiever can be proud knowing that they've mastered the game. Completing a level with a flawed strategy will not achieve a great score. This can keep the player motivated to learn from their mistakes and try new methods to achieve a high score!

Kingdom Rush is mostly catered to casual gamers. Although hardcore gamers will often get a better high score in the game by using a more developed strategy, the repetitive layout of the maps and difficulty of the game makes for shorter play sessions. Again, although hardcore gamers can achieve a better score, the difficulty of the game is relatively easy if the goal is only to beat the level. The items, towers, enemies, and controls are well-explained throughout the course of the game, making it simple to manage one's arsenal during a given level. This shifts the player's focus from what items they have to what strategy they should use, which sets the game up well for casual as well as hardcore gamers.