

Final Monetization Project

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Game Title: 7:77

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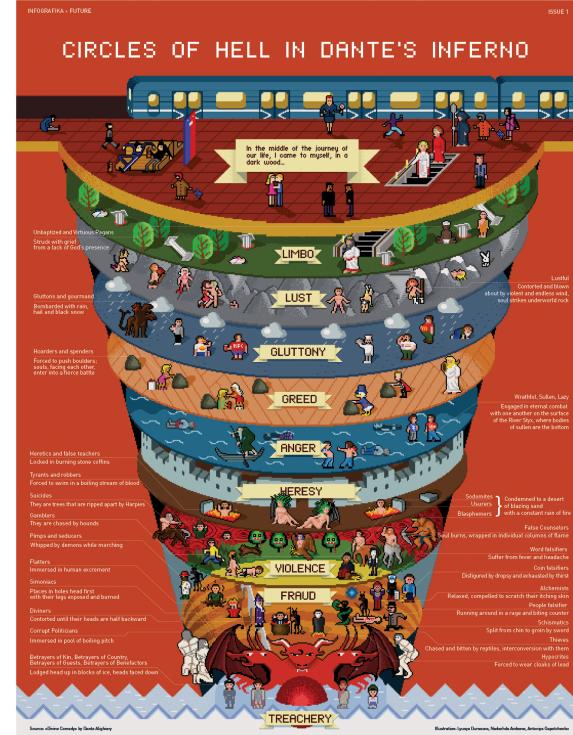
Concept Pitch

I plan to create a 3D roguelike game for the PC, similar in style to Risk of Rain 2. The game will be stage based, with seven different levels to traverse and seven bosses to defeat, with each one being one of the seven deadly sins. The game will be loosely themed around seven layers of hell, similar to the nine layers in Dante's inferno, and will have seven different base characters to choose from.

The gameplay loop will be relatively simple. The character will awaken in the deepest layer of hell and will attempt to return home. The character's personality will change drastically along the way, as they conquer the sins and become a better person. Each of the seven characters will have one deadly sin that is the most prominent.

Many roguelikes have found a large audience and huge success. For example, Hades and Hades II revolves around the Greek afterlife and has found a large player base.

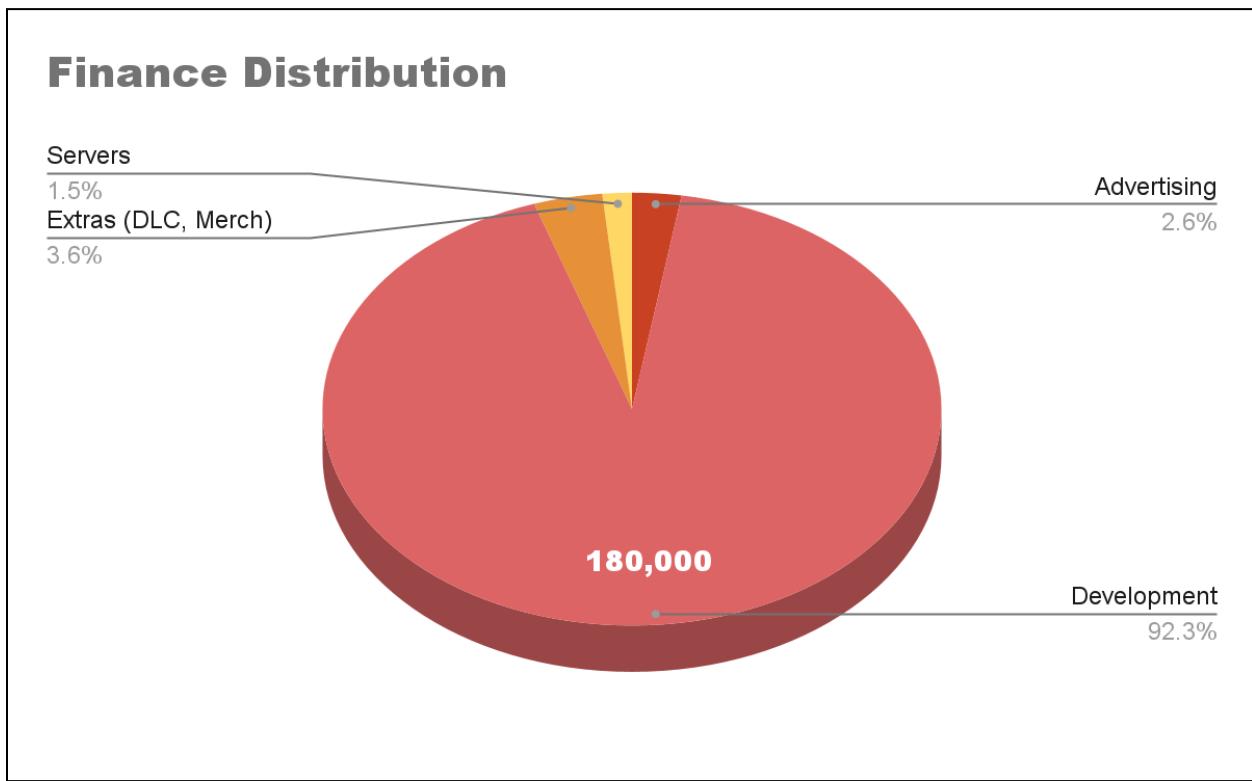
The camera work will be similar to Risk of Rain 2, pictured to the right. I like the 3rd person perspective and shooter aspect of this game. 7:77 simplified can be described as the child of Hades and Risk of Rain 2.



The color palette and theme are similar to Hades, pictured on the right.

Business Information

Assuming that this game will be made in a home studio, we should try to keep the costs as low as possible. Our two biggest comparables are Hades and Risk of Rain 2. Hades is a considerably larger game, one not made in a home studio, so its costs are not relatable to my situation. However, Risk of Rain 2 is different. It had a starting budget of 100 dollars, and was able to generate 30k from kickstarters to ultimately fund their game. The game has now made a little less than 250 million total. These are the numbers we should be aiming for. Given that the game styles between 7:77 and Risk of Rain 2 will be very similar, I would set a kickstarter goal for 180k. This is obviously way more, but only for the reason that I want my developers to make minimum wage. Our starting costs can be higher, since we need to have something unique and put together to promote on kickstarter, so we'll start with 5k. Total budget of 205k. Assuming we have similar success to Risk of Rain 2, we can expect up to 300 million in profit. Below is an estimate of how we might divide the funds.



When it comes to advertising, this is what we are displaying on kickstarter. It has to be polished and professional so that it can draw attention and gain funds. We can offer different tiers of donors some in-game goodies, like having a non player character named after them or include their name in an easter egg. I plan for the game to have a multiplayer aspect, so we need to set aside some money for the servers. Most of it goes towards development. We should aim to have a pretty small team, to keep the game personal and costs low. I plan to have a team of 6-8, with specific people to work on art and music. Extras can be anything including wiggle room, but ideally the funds go towards expansions or merch.

As for the pay of the developers, given that I estimated the game to take 2 years to make with the team, assuming they work every available work day, would be around 15k a year. I want to make sure my developers have livable wages, so that they can contribute to the best of their ability at work. Since we plan to work from home, there shouldn't be any overhead costs like electricity or water bills.

Our target demographic can be both the casual gamer and the hardcore one. The casual gamer will look at the game in its simplicity, since each run is different the playtime can be relatively short and somewhat forgiving. They will find it fun to learn the game and find accomplishment in finishing new levels. The hardcore gamer will aim to play the game optimally, finding shortcuts and taking ideal power ups. They might even get into speedrunning, and always aim to beat their previous runs. The age range would be teenagers to young adults.

Monetization Structure

We will follow a similar monetization structure to our comparables. As an overview, our game will include the following monetization:

- Paid Game
- Downloadable Content
- Game Editions
- Merchandise
- Collaborations

These are long tail monetization techniques, meaning that they are non predatory and foster trust in our players. Our game aims to promote ethical and stable monetization, while still making a profit. These different things all appeal to different aspects that gamers enjoy. Some people like to collect limited items, some like harder gameplay, and some like silly references to other games. Below I will go in depth on what each monetization method means, how it is ethical, and why we chose this over alternatives.

Paid Game

This is pretty typical of a PC platform game. Even though prices in the game industry are rather high right now, typically being around 60 dollars, we should market our game lower, for 30-40 dollars. Why? We are not an established studio, and we simply don't have the trust to price for higher. When players see a lower priced game they are more inclined to buy it, even if the studio is new. 30-40 dollars will still make us a profit, and it will help us build a playerbase for our upcoming games. An example of this working is a game that inspired this, Risk of Rain 2, who priced their game for around 30 dollars. Since our game costs more to make, it makes sense to raise the price to compensate.

Downloadable Content

Somewhat typical of a paid game is to have paid downloadable content. The content will not change the base gameplay, but will instead add some variety. There can be new zones, new

characters, and new bosses. The DLC should be half the price of the game, maybe less depending on how much new content there is. Since there are 8 to 9 layers in the original Dante's inferno, the DLC can include these new layers and include new characters. New enemies and bosses will be included as well. With this idea, we can have two different DLC packs, each being half the price of the game itself. We can release them in a pack with the game for a discount to encourage people to buy them. DLC will typically be marketed towards people who have played the game and want more, so we should aim to make the content challenging and different.

Game Editions

For the collector, this is a must have. Game editions are only valuable to collectors, and we should aim to have this be a real world copy, not strictly digital. It should have some defining factor that sets it apart. I think it would be interesting to include signatures of the developers on the cover. This edition has no gameplay changes or character changes and instead is more of a trophy for those who wish to have it. It should be visually appealing. It can also be slightly more expensive as it has the base game included along with other goodies. We can sell it for 60 dollars. We can also have another edition that has the DLC included, and we can price that one higher (but still at a discount since it is a bundle) for 80 dollars.

Below is a picture of the Dark Souls III collector's edition. I think it would be interesting to include an artbook and some figurines with ours, similar to theirs. We should also aim to include the soundtrack disk as well.



Believe it or not, the Dark Souls III collector's edition sold in stores for 800 dollars. Since it is a big studio and well known franchise, this makes sense. We cannot afford to sell at these prices, since we are a new studio, but we can raise our prices more depending on the success of the game.

Merchandise

We have a plethora of things we can sell as merchandise. Soundtrack disks, figures of characters or bosses, T-shirts, mugs, hoodies, etc. We should also aim to collaborate with other companies as a form of advertising. For instance, we could do a collaboration with Youtooz, since we share a common audience of young adults with nerdy hobbies. We could also consider Pop Figures, since they have a similar audience and also appeal to the collector stereotype. We should aim to collaborate with companies that have similar target audiences for the biggest payoff. We can offer anyone who buys from these companies a discount if they own the game. Doing this can increase player trust and help build community.

Collaborations

Similar to keeping in our target audience, collaborations are a good way to increase our player base. We can attempt to collaborate with other roguelike games, such as Dead Cells, Risk of Rain 2, Hades, and more. We can have special cosmetics and easter eggs throughout the game. Nothing should change the core gameplay, but just add some new things for players to discover and nerd out about. All cosmetics should be free. The main point of the collaboration is to grow our community and branch out to gamers who might be interested in what we have to offer.

Pictured below is the collaboration between Risk of Rain 2 and Dead Cells. The skin is completely free and simply a reference to the character in Dead Cells. We should aim for something similar in our collaborations. It should be noted that the collaboration went both ways: Risk of Rain 2 got a Dead Cells skin and Dead Cells got a Risk of Rain 2 skin. Both games get traction in the other, allowing for a meshing of community



Fostering Community

The biggest part of our game. The most important. We need to have a good relationship with our community if we want to continue to produce high quality non predatory games. We should offer up copies of our game for Twitch streamers to stream, we should host giveaways, we should take player advice on updates and DLC, and we should make sure that everything is fairly priced. As a roguelike game, I believe this game could have a place in the speedrunning community, so we should also try to appeal to them. We should have a public discord server to encourage people to make new friends and play multiplayer. The game should uplift the community so that the community can uplift the game.

Timeline

Our project timeline should look something like this:

- Putting together a slice for kickstarter: 6 months
- Hashing out basic story and gameplay loop: 3 months
- Finding artstyle and soundtrack: 3 months
- Developing game: 2 years
- Releasing editions, DLC, and merch after

It's important that we advertise our game throughout and release at the right time on the hype cycle so that we don't lose any potential players. We should try our best to stick to the timeline to avoid anger and doubt in our community.

Recap

Our game is a 3D roguelike for the PC which aims to use non predatory tactics to make money and grow a community. It will appeal to both the casual gamer and the hardcore gamer, and have DLC, merchandise, collectors editions, and collaborations. It will aim to price items fairly and somewhat affordable, and it will have its place in streaming and the speedrun community. The game also has multiplayer aspects, which will be encouraged on our public discord server.

AI generated concept art

Below is some AI generated art for the feeling of the game. I wanted to include this since everything above is just references to other games. I wanted something that could be applicable to the game itself. The art is of the character slowly crawling out of the depths of hell.

