

GAME PROMOTION & MARKETING

COURSE 7 – CROWDFUNDING

Teacher: Salim Larochelle

Email : saru@salimnoatelier.com

Twitter: [@FlyingCarpetsG](https://twitter.com/FlyingCarpetsG)

What is crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is when a large group of people (backers) fund a specific project by pledging money, often through a online service such as Kickstarter.

Backers can receive **gifts** (rewards) from a Crowdfunding campaign,
BUT crowdfunding is not a store!

Money pledged by backers can be lost if the project is unsuccessful!

Note:

Is alpha funding considered crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding for games

Crowdfunding is becoming a common funding strategy for indie games; it is one of the easiest way to get funding for your game project. However, it comes with its own benefits and risks.

Benefits:

- You get **money** to make your game that you don't have to pay back!
- You get **visibility**, so this is also a marketing strategy
- It can confirm if there is a **market** for your game
- You can collect **information and feedback** from your new fans (backers)

Crowdfunding for games

Risks:

- You might be putting your **reputation** in danger if the project is unsuccessful
- Backer can take **legal actions** if your project is proven to be a scam (new rules)
- It might not be worth the money and the time if you don't **budget** your rewards correctly



Some major crowdfunding sites

- Kickstarter
- Indiegogo
- SquareEnix Collective

Note: why not put your game on all the sites?



Kickstarter VS Indiegogo

Kickstarter

- **More popular** (about 5x more traffic)

Indiegogo

- You can get funding even if you don't reach your funding goal (**flexible funding**)
- **Accessible** in more countries for project creators
- **Easier** to get paid (PayPal)
- You can get funds for a **wider range of projects** (not only creative)

Note:

While the “flexible funding” option might be safer, the “all or nothing” option might encourages backers to pledge more

Kickstarter

Kickstarter

Kickstarter is the **most popular** crowdfunding platform.

Project creator choose a deadline and a minimum funding goal. If the goal is not met by the deadline, not funds are collected.

Money pledged by donors is collected using Amazon Payments. Kickstarter and Amazon takes 10% of the funds raised.

There is no guarantee that people that post projects on Kickstarter will deliver on their projects, use the money to implement their projects, or that the completed projects will meet backers' expectations.

Kickstarter: <https://kickstarter.com/>

Kickstarter and games

Kickstarter has been a very present in the gaming industry as a new way to fund game project.

There has been big success:

- Double Fine's Broken Age
- Castle Story

But also disappointments and scams:

- Code Hero

Note: What do you think of Kickstarter for funding games?

Working on a Kickstarter campaign

Some misconceptions....

Managing a Kickstarter campaign is **a lot of marketing work!**

It's not only making a page and waiting for the money!

This is **several months of work.**

There is a lot of planning that need to be made **before** the Kickstarter, and a lot of work **during** and **after** the campaign!

Before your Kickstarter

Before your Kickstarter

To make sure that your campaign is effective:

- **Build a community** before Kickstarter using social media and participating to events
- Make sure that your game is a state where people can see the **gameplay full potential and beauty** (this shows that you already invested your time into the game)
- **Use other funds** before Kickstarter to make your prototype pretty (waste money to make money)
- **Email friends for feedback** and to spread the word
- **Inform the press** and show the private video and alpha build to the press 1 week in advance
- **Hype** the start of the kickstarter with picture days in advance
- **Make your video**

Your Kickstarter page

Your page should include:

- One liner and **short game description**
- **Video**
- **What makes your game unique**
- **Gameplay** description
- **Art** description
- **What we did so far**
- **What is left to do** (what are the funds used for)
- **What will be in the final game** (scope: time to complete, platforms, areas, bosses)
- **Why Kickstarter?** (funding situation)

Your Kickstarter page (cont.)

Your page should include:

- Description of the **team**
- **Pictures** and description of the **rewards**
- **Stretch goals**
- **Celebrity quotes**
- **Closing comment**
- **Link to social medias and community forum**
- **Risk and challenges**

Note:

One good example: [Moon Hunter](#)

Some Kickstarter Strategies

Some strategies (from Salim with love):

- Make it **30 days** or less so people don't lose interest
- Know that project with a goal of **1000\$ to 10000\$** are the most successful
- Make key people play your game, and **get quotes** from them if you can.
- Most people spend **25\$**, so make sure that reward tier has good value
- Have the **stretch goals follow a Level Up curve** for early positive feedback
- **Ask for the minimum** that you need to finish your game
- Focus on the **story around a project** or the **fantasy of the game** itself
- The **stretch goals should be very appealing** to the fans and have realistic cost

Note: Jotun

Kickstarter Video Strategies

- Show the fantasy of the end product with a convincing **cutscene**.
- Show **gameplay** as soon as possible!
- Point out what is missing with **visual cue**
- **1:30 min** is the best length for a intro video
- Including a **second video** with more details is important for those who wish to get more information
- **Show people playing** and enjoying the game at events
- **Be yourself** and genuine

Note:

Castle Story's video

During your Kickstarter

During your Kickstarter

- **Send reminders** on day 1 to the press, Facebook groups, Twitter, LinkedIn groups, Forums
- **Use updates strategically** to keep the project interesting at keep moments
- **Inform about updates** not only on Social Medias, but on forums and groups too
- People are most excited at the **start and at the end**, so big announcement should be made during that time. Key times are 30% (of goal), 50%, 15 days, 75%, 90% and 100%
- Always have **pictures** in updates
- **Start tweeting and using social media** when you are about to reach a next goal
- Focus on promoting the **next stretch goal** after funding the project

During the Kickstarter (cont.)

- Use **#screenshotsaturday** on twitter and Reddit to pass the word on the kickstarter while showing the progress
- **Reply** to everyone
- Start a Steam **Greenlight** during the Kickstarter to trade traffic for both
- **Design and hold off interesting story and news** during the campaign to keep the press interested (new deal, new partner, etc.)
- **Use the success on Kickstarter** and Greenlight as leverage to get a deal with console maker during the campaign

Note: Nintendo deal story

After your Kickstarter

After your Kickstarter

- **Transform your Kickstarter page as an info page with links** just before the end so that fans are guided to other ways to fund and support the project
- Don't forget to keep doing **updates** after the Kickstarter to keep fan interested and to have them follow future games
- Use the money to go to Las Vegas and have fun; YOLO right? (Ah ah kidding, don't do that)

Note:

Funny Kickstarter story about money

Homework

- Work on assignments from other courses
- Enjoy the weekend!

Bibliographies

Dropbox link to course presentations:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3zhrwn6nxrr5ywh/AACKUZSxAv30yzCH9qopVmlia>