



# Market Research

Megan

Rachel

Matt

Callum

Marine

Direct Competitors	Synopsis	Strengths	Weaknesses	Demographic	Link
Job Simulator (VR)	VR game where you are a robot working in an office trying to do mundane tasks (hard with the fact it is VR so there is physical hilarity). Fits theme of office sim, puzzle and humor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong visual theme and style (robots working in an office, stylized 3D art)</li> <li>- Humor is conveyed through physical mechanics</li> <li>- Tasks and main gameplay leave room for freedom and interpretation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exclusive to VR (equipment and monetary barrier)</li> <li>- VR can be disorienting or nauseating for some players (visual balance issue)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Casual/Sim</li> <li>- All ages</li> <li>- Specific game demographics not available</li> <li>- VR demographics for US</li> <li>- 8-34 yrs (47 %)</li> <li>- 35-54 yrs (47 %)</li> <li>- VR Users (generally higher social-economic income households)</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.gameuidatabase.com/gameData/">https://www.gameuidatabase.com/gameData/</a>
Red Tape	Point and click adventure game, where player has been chosen to experience 9 circles of employment satisfaction. Player works their way through Hell Inc to meet the Devil.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good story to follow.</li> <li>- Dialogue only, no puzzles, making it easy to play and therefore cozy.</li> <li>- Self-aware and silly.</li> <li>- Unique visual design</li> <li>- Linear story</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Art style can be off-putting.</li> <li>- Too short.</li> <li>- Tasks were all fetch quests</li> <li>- Not enough corporate satire</li> <li>- Some controls were awkward.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Casual</li> <li>- 18+</li> </ul> <p>Based on brief playtest of the game:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Those that work in an office</li> <li>- Those with a mild understanding of Dante's Divine Comedy</li> <li>- Those who like office/corporate humour (think The Office US)</li> </ul>	<a href="https://store.steampowered.com/app/21842/">https://store.steampowered.com/app/21842/</a>
The Stanley Parable	PC game where the player assumes the role of a generic office worker named Stanley, guided by a nameless narrator who tries to dictate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visuals take on a semi-realistic style, not directly what we're going for but it works for appearing like a generic office</li> <li>- Satiric game</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited gameplay controls, the player can walk and occasionally interact with very select objects, loses a bit of player</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Casual</li> <li>- Single player story driven game fans</li> <li>- 18 - 30 year old age range</li> <li>- People who enjoy games with a sense of humour, there's</li> </ul>	<a href="https://store.steampowered.com/app/221910/">https://store.steampowered.com/app/221910/</a>

	the story where the player can choose to obey or not. Commentary on the mindless office drone who is expected to just go along with it	that roughly matches our approach, trying to put a somewhat comedic approach to the mindless office life - Repayable multiple times to get each ending	agency this way - Mundane colour palette, obviously this works for the style of game but there's nothing particularly eye catching, the game is saved by its premise	probably a word for this, I'll just say 'satirists'	
Grim Fandango	Point and click adventure puzzle game, older game (1998) but one of the first 3D 'point and click' style games.	- Good narrative and dialogue - Good characters	- Considered 'too difficult' by some steam reviews, relies heavily on trial and error of just trying every possible combo of items	- 13+ ESRB rating - Adult humour	<a href="https://store.steampowered.com/app/31679/">https://store.steampowered.com/app/31679/</a>

Games of similar/adjacent mechanics or Theme	Synopsis	Strengths	Weaknesses	Demographic	Link
Unpacking	Slice of life game where you are unpacking your place of living through periods of your life (environmental story telling heavy)	- Use of environmental art and design to facilitate storytelling - Actions are intuitive and uses only basic mechanics - Narrative draws emotional response from player - Strong use of sound FX	- Relies on player's emotional buy-in to environmental narrative (not for all cozy gamer demographics) - Game loop can get repetitive (players have stated cost of game \$20 doesn't feel fair for length of game)	- Casual/Cozy - All ages - Specific demographics for game not available - General player age range diverse (children to +60) - Console/PC	<a href="https://www.gameuidatabase.co/">https://www.gameuidatabase.co/</a>
Helltaker	Puzzle game, trying to create a harem of cute demon girls through completing puzzles in hell (shares thematic setting of hell)	- Strong overall visual aesthetic and character design - True free to play - Challenging puzzles for a free to play game	- Some users found final boss battle to be unbalanced - Dodging mechanic regarding boss battle chains had multiple negative comments	- Puzzler/Dating Sim - Public demographics not available - Demographics (official Reddit) 1.4k Male, 133 Female, 79 Non binary or other - 18+ rating to access content on Steam (no official	<a href="https://store.steampowered.com/">https://store.steampowered.com/</a>

				commercial rating was given) - PC Users - True free to play	
Persona 5	RPG & Battle mechanics, revolves around a protagonist and group of friends trying to change peoples hearts by completing metaphorical dungeons in each person's subconscious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong storyline and narrative writing</li> <li>- Strong UX aesthetic and character designs</li> <li>- Great original sound track (nominated for NAVGTR Awards)</li> <li>- Gameplay is diverse and rewarding (combat serves a narrative function)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UX/UI can be overwhelming at time visually (game intentionally has a very flashy and dramatized art style)</li> <li>- Narrative content can be triggering for some players</li> <li>- Combat loop after some time can become tedious and take away from overall game experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JRPG</li> <li>- +17 (Rated Mature ESRB)</li> <li>- Players (Japan demographics) 52.6% 20 - 29 yrs, 56.5% male, 43.5% female</li> <li>- Console/PC Users</li> </ul>	<a href="https://store.steampowered.com">https://store.steampowered.com</a>
Stardew Valley	Considered the ultimate cozy game, it a life simulator where the player goes about becoming part of a community while growing their farm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong, divergent storyline. Strong UX</li> <li>- Visual design is done well through pixel art.</li> <li>- Very easy to pick up and play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No tutorial</li> <li>- Some found the grind and need to keep track of tasks difficult.</li> <li>- While combat is minimal, can be offputting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10+ (ESRB rating E)</li> <li>- Console and PC</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.stardewvalley.net/">https://www.stardewvalley.net/</a>
Good Job!	Game set in an office, the objective is to progress through the floors by completing office tasks by any means that you can think of. This might be better off in the direct competitors section but it feels different to our puzzle-esque game.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Art style is very cartoony, essentially looks like the Portal characters from their animated segments but in a normal office</li> <li>- Ridiculous gameplay which gives players agency in deciding their way of completing the tasks, think akin to Scribblenauts where you could use the first idea that comes into your head</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not many levels and looks like there isn't much room for replayability</li> <li>- Appears there isn't much story behind it, there is an initial premise in terms of lore but outside of 'starting from the bottom' it doesn't seem to follow any narrative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Casual</li> <li>- Teen - Young Adult age range</li> <li>- Quick pick up/put down game</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/download-software/Good-Job-1">https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/download-software/Good-Job-1</a>
The Talos Principle	Story driven, puzzle game,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excellent narrative,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficult, not for a casual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Experienced gamer</li> </ul>	<a href="https://store.steampowered.com">https://store.steampowered.com</a>

	the player is given a story to follow throughout difficult puzzles, this isn't a typical puzzler as it can take a player a while to solve each one, unlike the usual puzzlers where a player could get through a good handful of puzzles in a short amount of time.	teeters on philosophical in terms of narrative - The soundtrack is brilliant, it complements the rather barren world - Stunning visuals	gamer	- Adult ages - Single player story driven fans	
--	---	---	-------	---	--

Games in cozy art style	Synopsis	Strengths	Weaknesses	Demographic	Link
Animal Crossing: New Horizons	Life sim game where you are a new villager joining a new community (talking with NPCs, resource gathering, decorating/customization of island)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong visual cozy aesthetic (distinct and recognizable art style)</li> <li>- Tasks are completable over in real life time (forces the player to play game over longer duration and enforces casual play)</li> <li>- Strong character design and NPC personalities</li> <li>- Strong customization and player personalization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nintendo Console exclusive</li> <li>- Requires Nintendo online subscription to make online play accessible</li> <li>- Certain tasks require a significant amount of time and repeating the same game loop for completion (this is an intentional feature but can be tiring from some players for certain mechanics such as fishing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Casual/Cozy</li> <li>- All ages</li> <li>- Players 24-35 yrs, fairly equal distribution of gender</li> <li>- Nintendo Switch Users</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.gameuidatabase.com/">https://www.gameuidatabase.com/</a>
Spiritfarer	Cozy management game about dying. As ferrymaster to the deceased, build a boat to explore the world, care for your spirit friends, and release them into the afterlife.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- afterlife topic</li> <li>- make people reflect on it</li> <li>- relaxing</li> <li>- soundtrack</li> <li>- art style</li> <li>- character</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- slow</li> <li>- very sentimental</li> <li>- too much farming and chores</li> <li>- boring dialogue</li> <li>- nothing really to do</li> <li>- Unskippable animations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 12+ (PEGI)</li> <li>- gamers interested in the afterlife</li> <li>- some find it helpful for grief</li> </ul>	<a href="https://store.steampowered.com/app/1032000/Spiritfarer/">https://store.steampowered.com/app/1032000/Spiritfarer/</a>
A little to the left	Sort, stack, and organize household objects into just the right spot in A Little to the Left, a tidy puzzle game with a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multiple solutions make for intuitive and satisfying puzzle design</li> <li>- easy-to-use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- too short, players find it too expensive for it's lenght</li> <li>- opaque in some cases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- all ages</li> <li>- games who like to tidy things</li> </ul>	<a href="https://store.steampowered.com/app/1032000/A_Little_to_the_Left/">https://store.steampowered.com/app/1032000/A_Little_to_the_Left/</a>

	mischievous cat who likes to shake things up!	hints - complete with the options to simply move on to the next - humour - use of color	- soundtrack isn't much appreciate		
Sea of Thieves	is a pirate sandbox defined by the possibility of chaos. Not only do players have to worry about skeletons and sea creatures, but other pirate ships mark a significant threat.	- exciting - art work - narrative	- more advanced players can make it difficult to play and frustrating - cheaters - disrespectful	- 12+ (PEGI)	<a href="https://store.steampowered.com/app/384440/Sea_of_Thieves/">https://store.steampowered.com/app/384440/Sea_of_Thieves/</a>

Team Member	Research Take Aways/Comments
Megan	<p>Currently a large market for cozy games (<a href="https://games-stats.com/steam/?tag=cozy">https://games-stats.com/steam/?tag=cozy</a>) with games tagged as cozy bring revenue on Steam. Same goes as well for satire games (<a href="https://games-stats.com/steam/?tag=satire">https://games-stats.com/steam/?tag=satire</a>). Tag search on S few results for a cozy/satire game. This could indicate an untapped market.</p> <p>Here is a great publication on the use of satire in video games to spark real world conversations and give social critique posted this I realized in References as well):  <a href="https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342503333_'Is_This_a_Joke'_The_Delivery_of_Serious_Content_through_Satire_in_Video_Games">https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342503333_'Is_This_a_Joke'_The_Delivery_of_Serious_Content_through_Satire_in_Video_Games</a></p>
Rachel	<p>Combination of hell and office based/corporate games is going to be a niche demographic to tackle. Some like for the either "in your face" or extremely subtle, there's no in between. Office-based/corporate games that lean into satire need to turn into it. The expectation appears to be that if you're going to do an office-based game, it needs to turn into The Office (and it has to stick to it).</p> <p>Then combining it with the style/game design that comes with cozy games is really pushing our idea into an area that explored before. I think if we're going to combine the three areas, we need to reference Hell in a light manner (character little wings) but maintain a light colour palette that comes with cozy games. Office humour needs to be there from the start.</p> <p>We need to ensure that the narrative includes optional quests. Having a linear story with no deviation will be off-putting. Divergence allows to incorporate more easter eggs for situations that would appear in the office or in other games (without leaning into it as this is a game).</p> <p>To make it a point-and-click puzzle game, we'd need to utilise stories/mechanics that would let our users organically find the mechanics. The mechanics need to be enough to keep users engaged, but simple enough that they do not become overwhelmed. The majority of users could be using our game as an outlet after a stressful day at work, and to burden them with stress would be counterintuitive.</p>
Matt	<p>There's a few games that mix hell and offices, some try to lean more toward the office vibe like Red Tape, and some go to the Hell vibe like Hell of an Office, we ideally want to try to find a balance that doesn't lean more one way than the other.</p> <p>When it comes to our game we want to be able to make it accessible to everyone, so best to avoid the massive puzzle principle, we'd want to look more toward Good Job! where the player is given a rough task and they solve it at their own pace. The art style of the same game is something I'd lean toward, the simplicity of the style makes it easier to pump out a lot of content in a short amount of time.</p> <p>When it comes to the narrative surrounding the game, I'd like to see us use the Hell themes integrated into the office like NPCs discuss the best soul they've seen down below, leaning into some satirical aspects, and someone has to be on heat and the fact that the AC doesn't work.</p>
Callum	
Marine	<p>The cozy game style we choose for our game makes it more accessible than RedTape, which can be a good business as young professionals are being disillusioned about their workplaces and our game will be the perfect place for them to go after a stressful day at work.</p> <p>Our characters need to have a subtle devil side, not so visible at first, like the "devil" people in their real office who look like they belong in the environment also needs to be in a light colour palette with comforting shapes for the pieces of furniture.</p> <p>Note on Red Tape : I don't like the aesthetics of it, too literal in my opinion. I think we can be more fun and subtle. If it was as obvious as the game, people wouldn't choose to work there. I think we should "hide" the hell beneath cute characters, if agreed, it looks awful, but is a direct competitor)</p>

