



# **MOBILE MARKETING FOR MOBILE GAMES**

How to launch mobile marketing campaign for mobile games?

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Degree Thesis

International Business

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| <p>Abstract</p> <p>Highly developed mobile technology and devices enable the rise of mobile game industry and mobile marketing. Hence mobile marketing for mobile game is an essential key for a mobile game success. Even though there are many articles on marketing for mobile games, there is a need of highly understanding mobile marketing strategies, how to launch a mobile campaign for a mobile game. Besides that, it is essential to understand the relationship between mobile advertising and users behaviours. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to study how to launch mobile marketing campaigns for mobile games and to figure out how effective a mobile game campaign on players behaviours.</p> <p>The study design is a combination of exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research. Data collection is a combination of quantitative data and qualitative data. A case study is investigated, an in-depth interview is organised and a questionnaires survey is conducted. The research's reliability and validity is tested.</p> <p>The key findings include the understanding of mobile game mobile marketing mix and the acknowledgement of some effective marketing methods which are cross-promotion advertising and influencer marketing. The research also identifies the effectiveness of mobile advertisements network and influencer marketing.</p> |                                   |

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## **FOREWORD**

This thesis is written as completion to the bachelor degree International Business programme at University of Applied Sciences Arcada. The subject of the thesis focuses on mobile marketing of mobile games industry.

I would like to thanks my interviewee of the case study and to everyone for their supports for answering the survey and feedbacks.

I have learned more about marketing and game industry while working on this thesis. I would like to thank my supervisor Eldon Sveinn for his guidance and contribution. I also would like to sincerely thank those I interviewed and those helped me for their valuable time and supports.



# Chapter I

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists an introduction of the thesis, its purpose and research questions. The chapter begins with the background of the game industry and mobile marketing together with the discussion of the importance of mobile marketing to mobile games industry in order to guide the reader to the research purpose. Finally, the chapter presents the thesis structure.

### 1.1 Background

Background of game industry and mobile marketing will be discussed. Moreover, the question of why mobile marketing is essential for mobile games will be answered.

#### 1.1.1 Game Industry

According to Tech Crunch, 42 percent of Americans are game players and four out of five American households have a console, indeed, gaming has become a modern culture of nowadays technology world. (TechCrunch, 2015) Coming back to the 40s, the first game machine was introduced at the New York World's Fair in 1940.

Then three decades later, in 1967, the first home game system, Brown Box was released by Ralph Baer. From 1966 to 1972, arcade games and in-house games became more and more popular. Realizing the future of in-house games, between 1972 and 1985, more than 15 game companies began to create video games. (TechCrunch, 2015)

From the 80s to 90s, game industry was up and down. However, it was also the birth of multiplayer and online video games. Since the early 2000s, thanks to the improved internet and computer technology, online multiplayer game starts to see its bright future.

In 2007, smartphones and apps were launched as well as started to make way for the evolution of gaming history, mobile gaming was born. Thanks to the born of mobile games, the game industry changed from monopoly to perfect competition.

### **1.1.2 Mobile marketing**

Marketing is one of the most important keys deciding the successful of business besides product itself. Ineffective marketing strategy not only decrease the revenue but also damage the brand image. In the past, marketers highly made use of television, newspaper and radio to spread the brand. However, the world now is overtaken by the convenience mobile technology, mobile marketing is on their rises.

Mobile marketing is defined of all the activities that concern marketers and consumers through mobile devices which include cellphones, media devices, tablets, portable gaming consoles, PDAs and all those devices functioning the same. Since mobile technologies become increasingly popular, most of companies engage in mobile marketing. There are basically six types of method of mobile marketing on two basic levels of informing and involving. The methods include short message service SMS, multimedia message service MMS, quick response codes QR, location-based services LBS, push notifications and mobile advergaming (a combination of advertising and gaming). (Marketing-Schools.org, imediconnection.com, Mike Baker)

2000s is the start of mobile marketing. However, mobile marketing has been preparing its story long before. It starts from the year telephones were introduced in 1876, following by the invention of portable telephone by Martin Cooper in 1973. Then in 1992, Neil Papworth sent the first text message from his computer to Richard Jarvis's mobile phone. One year later, 1993, mobile phone was capable of sending and receiving messages and 1999 was the start of sending SMS between different wireless devices. Moreover, it is interesting that QR codes was invented by Denso Wave in 1994. Finally, in 2003, the first commercial mobile SMS service and text message marketing were launched. (eztexting.com) After that, mobile marketing increasingly becomes common

and essential. For instance, in 2004, mobile campaigns were delivered by polling, text-to-win, text-back-for-coupon and trivia and those campaigns interacted successfully with consumers. One year later, MMS, mBlogs and mobile communities took over the mobile marketing, marketers started sharing photos and videos with customers. (imedi-connection.com, Mike Baker)

Nowadays, by using mobile marketing, marketers are able to reach to customers defined not by demographics but shared behaviors – group of who use mobile devices in frequently for short periods of time and have more opportunities to create more contents to engage and interact more with consumers.

### **1.1.3 Why mobile marketing is important to mobile game**

According to smartinsights, there are about 1.7 billion mobile users worldwide who averagely spend 3 hours per day on mobile phone. (Smartinsights, Dave Chaffey) Moreover, 80 percent of internet users use smartphone to access, 47 percent use tablet, it is a fact that mobile marketing becomes the keys of marketing strategies. (Smartinsights, Dave Chaffey) Besides that, 49 percent of phone users use web browsers and 36 percent use social media, it creates more opportunities and channels for marketers to improve mobile marketing contents.

Also according to comScore, 33.1 percent of mobile phone users play games on their phones and 50.2 percent of them download apps to their phones. (marketing-schools.org) This is only accounted on mobile phone not included other mobile devices. However, these numbers define the fact that mobile marketing for mobile game is natural as bears love honey or people crave for sugar. For instance, one trend to market your mobile games is increasing its ranking and where people look for the mobile games, the answer is apps store where 50.2 percent of phone users access. Moreover, 33.1 percent of 1.7 billion mobile phone users play mobile games, it cannot be denied that mobile games are the future entertainment and mobile marketing is the only way around for this field.

In short, the fact that mobile marketing becomes the keys of marketing strategies and the nature of mobile games played on mobile devices, they are the reasons why mobile marketing is essential to mobile games.

## 1.2 Purpose and Research Questions

Marketing in each industry is significantly different. Even in game industry, marketing for PC games is different from marketing for mobile games. In order to understand that significant different, this research aims to understand mobile games marketing. However, since mobile marketing is the main strategy to advertise mobile games, the research focuses on mobile marketing for mobile games industry. In other words, the research will analyze the whole contents of mobile games mobile marketing, its characteristics and implements. The goal is to learn how to launch mobile marketing campaign for mobile games. As a result, the research will understand the effectiveness of the campaigns have on the game players.

To fulfill the purpose, the following questions shall be answered:

- How to launch mobile marketing campaigns for mobile games?
- How effective do marketing campaigns have on the audiences?

### **1.3 Disposition of Thesis**

This thesis consists of five chapters.

Chapter One: Chapter one presents a brief background of mobile game and a short review of mobile marketing as well as discussion of the important of mobile marketing to mobile game. Purpose and research questions are also addressed.

Chapter Two: This chapter is composed of five parts. It will address a brief history of mobile games industry as well as the current situation of mobile games mobile marketing. Following, the chapter explain the process of launching mobile marketing campaigns for mobile games. In order to have a deeper view, part three studies real case of promoting the mobile hit game Best Fiends of Finnish game studio Seriously. Finally, the chapter tries to figure out the mobile marketing methods that have the most impact on the game players.

Chapter Three: Chapter three determines the type of the research. Measurement, test, sampling, data collection method will be addressed.

Chapter Four: Data analysis including statistics, hypotheses test, interview, survey will be presented.

Chapter Five: The final chapter presents the discussion of theoretical and practical implication. A conclusion of this research, its limitation will be addressed.

## **Chapter II**

### **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter follows the introduction given and will provide the reader with a literature review concerning the research purpose and questions.

There are many papers studying about mobile marketing and marketing in games industry. However, there are not much reviews of significant mobile marketing for mobile games area. In this thesis, this area will be studied to understand how to mobile market a mobile game in order to find out the impact of mobile marketing on players. At the end of this chapter, reader will have a deeper view on mobile campaign for mobile game.

#### **2.1 History of Mobile Games Industry**

Mobile game is currently technologically societies phenomena. In common term, a mobile game is defined as a game designed for mobile devices including smartphones, feature phones, PDA, tablets, PPC and portable media players. (Technopedia) In the literature definition, the nature of a mobile game is “technically focused, and moves directly to discuss the implementation of games for mobile phones and other mobile devices without clarifying the key concept itself”. (Frans Mayra, Mobile Games)

Mobile Gaming has a long history. It is believed that the launching of Nokia’s Snake mobile phone game on its model 6110 in 1997 is the start of mobile gaming. However, many believe that it all started since the early electronic gaming devices (Merlin by Parker Brothers, 1978). There is also discussion that the mobile gaming root starts from the handheld electronic games and handheld game consoles in the late 1970s. In these legendary handheld games field, Nintendo has been the leader with the Game & Watch series from 1980 to 1991. Then in 1989, Nintendo released the first rechargeable battery

powered game consoles Game Boy series with the famous game Tetris. While the players enjoyed the century of handheld games consoles, many mobile phones companies have seen the future of mobile games, they have been researching and developing many phone models supporting gaming features since in the 1970s and 1980s. Then in 1997, Nokia launched the first famous worldwide commercial mobile game Snake on its model 6610. The game is a version of Snake arcade game. It is believed that more than 400 million copies of the game have been shipped. (Chris Wright, 2016, Pocketgamer)

After the first mobile games generation Tetris and Snake, the believed second generation was born, the WAP games. WAP stands for Wireless Application Protocol and it is basically a technology to enable a mobile device to connect to the internet. In 1999, the world was paying their full attention the Nokia 7110s which featuring Snake II using WAP technology. With the WAP technology, it is the start for game developers to make games and selling them online to the mobile game players.

After the release of WAP, century XXI is the rise of mobile games industry. In 2000, there were the start of some standout game developers such as Handy Games of Germany, Swedish Picofun and Finnish Riot-E. In 2001, even though “mobile technology was still primitive, but the games were starting to be innovative” (PocketGamer, Chris Wright, 2016), the game players not only saw the start of leading games developers but also had the chance to play few best WAP technology games which were Lifestylers of Picofun, Riot-E The Lord of the Rings and Wireless Pets by The Game Kitchen, published by Digital Bridges (I-play). Those mobile games were standout because of its creativities and additional features at that time.

The early years of 2000s was the time the mobile games industry slowly moved from WAP games to arcade games. In 2002, with the launch of the first Java feature phones Nokia 3410 and Siemens M50, Java Games were introduced to the world. Gameloft launched its first Java games Siberian Strike. Then around early 2000s the rival BREW



technology was introduced into mobile phones. Released in America, the BREW featured games JAMDAT Bowling is one of the most standout mobile games in American market. The game was the first successful game of JAMDAT Mobile as well as made BREW by Qualcomm became a hit.

One year later, in 2003 the global market saw the launches of first color screen mobile phones as well as the unsuccessful Nokia's N-Gage. Because of the games collections, prices and other features, N-Gage could not compete with Nintendo handheld consoles. Following the quiet 2003, 2004 was the beginning of big licensed games. It was also the year of releasing trendy racing games such as The Fast and The Furious by Digital Bridges or Asphalt Urban GT by Gameloft. Then in 2005, besides the releasing of the promising mobile gaming handheld Ginzmondo, this year also the year of merging and purchasing between the games corporations, the hottest headline was the purchasing of the leading developer JAMDAT Mobile by Electronic Arts EA corporation. Moreover, in this year, 3D started to gain more popular and was paid more attention. Through the year 2006, together with the releasing of updated phones, developers mostly focused on developing new versions of the games for new devices more than making new games.

Finally, it came the years of significant milestone. The release of Apple iPhone in 2007 and its App Store one year later 2008 had the most powerful impact on the mobile games industry. The iPhone itself allows the game designers creating more complicated games while the new platform App Store enable the developers to sell their games directly to players without any publisher. The App Store changed the massive dominated mobile games industry into a perfect competition environment.

In the current market, there are three mobile applications platform including App Store, Android and Windows Phone allowing users access to thousands of free or paid applications. With the development of smartphones, fast mobile broadband and available platforms, mobile gaming has become a more and more lively industry. According to Intelligence Blog, 62 percent of smartphone users download game applications within a

week after purchasing their phones which is higher than any other applications. (Intelligence Blog, Mike Sonders, 2016) Moreover, mobile games industry generated 24.4 billion US dollars in revenue globally in 2014, out of which 17 billion came from smartphone games and the remaining 7.4 billion from tablet games. It is estimated that by 2018, the revenue is expected to be around 44.2 billion US dollars. (Statista, Mobile gaming)

## **2.2 The Situation of Mobile Marketing for Mobile Games**

Professor Andreas Kaplan defines mobile marketing as “any marketing activity conducted through a ubiquitous network to which consumers are constantly connected using a personal mobile device”. (Andreas M. Kaplan, Business Horizons, 2012, 130) However, in 2009, the new definition of mobile marketing was given by the Mobile Marketing Association MMA. Mobile marketing is defined as “a set of practices that enables organizations to communicate and engage with their audience in an interactive and relevant manner through and with any mobile device or network”. (MMA, 2009) Therefore, mobile marketing for mobile games is simply defined as a set of activities that connects the developers with the players through and with any mobile device.

In the early days of the early versions of mobile games, marketers advertised their mobile games in an old school style including magazine and newspaper ads and TV advertising spots. After that, in the early of 2000s, besides games magazine, journal ads and TV ads, marketers started to use SMS and WAP advertising. For instance, the marketer put an ad in the newspaper which contents the link or code to download the game through WAP platform. By accessing the link, the audience also see other advertisement banners in the site which called WAP banner. Marketers bought the banner spot on WAP to put up ‘hot’ titles with images which effectively attracted the players at that time. Before the smartphone was launched, the mobile games industry was controlled by dominated games publishers and mobile services providers. Therefore, games devel-

opers and publishers cooperated with service providers to promote their games. For example, when a player subscribes to a phone service or he happens to get a game in the past, the provider gets his number on the lists. The provider starts to text him short message promoting the new games or it can be a code to access on WAP which can be a link to download a new game or an ad with interesting contents. In the end, an effective ad is still its contents which will gain the customer attentions or not.

The release of smartphone and mobile applications stores changes mobile games mobile marketing world. It opens up a whole new world to communicate and interact to the customers. What does exactly create new channels for marketers to reach to the audience? According to comScore, 50 percent of US digital media time spent on July 2016 is smartphone apps and tablet apps is 9 percent. (comScore, 2016) ComScore also reported that consumers spend from 34 percent to 50 percent of their total app time spent on top 10 ranked apps. (comScore, 2016)

Moreover, it is also reported that daily downloads of the top 200 free iOS applications reached 8.5 million in December 2015 while Google Play (Android) had the twice downloads. (VentureBeat, 2016) What opportunities can apps offer to the game developers and marketers? What a game developer marketer has to do to get his game app to be notices in a store of around 500,000 gaming apps (Android had 600,000 and iOS had 450,000 apps in 2015). (ARC, Dan Rowinski) There are plenty of methods to climb to that top list. However, a marketing plan effectiveness depends on characteristics of the products. As any type of product and service, a mobile game marketing plan depends heavily on its budget and a game also depends on its company reputation. There are many great games however only a few number of players knows about them because they are from small or new studio and theirs marketing plan does not hit enough (weak strategies or lack of budget). For mobile games from a big company or having a high marketing budget, it is popular to buy advertisement places from social media, online game magazines, game forums beside paying professional players to play the games and

review on their blogs or channels. The key is making the game appear as much as possible on any channels.

Popularly, both high budget and low budget game are now taking advantage of Beta Testing Pre Launch campaign, Soft Launch campaign and Burst Campaign. Pre-Launch allows players to play the beta testing games. Even though its purpose is to assist developers improve the games at the final stage, it is an opportunity for the games to be known before its release date. While Pre Launch is a pre stage to spread the game, Burst Campaign is a tool to make a game be known widely in 72 hours. On the other hand of Pre Launch Beta Testing and Burst Campaign, Soft Launch is a different strategy. Soft Launch campaign includes launching the game in a chosen Soft Launch market, collecting data and finally improving the game. Its purpose is to provide developers the exact information the audience target, the player desires and what needs to be changed.

Because of the highly competitive environment and pressure on marketing budget, mobile marketing for mobile game still does not have strong impact on players. Players mostly show interests on popular games which come from leading companies or high budget game; adventure players maybe try on the games but nothing guarantee they will come back. Another reason is developers have not use the right strategies for their games. Since there are several mobile marketing tools to choose and there will be more in the near future because of the fast technology development, it is advised that right audience target, suitable contents and long-term marketing strategies are essential to interact and attract the customers in a competitive mobile games industry.

## **2.3 How to Launch Mobile Marketing Campaigns for Mobile Games**

Marketing a mobile game is significantly different to a console game. A console game can cost up to 100 million (for example GTA 5') while an average mobile game costs around two million (R-Style Lab, Andrei Klubnikin, 2016). As mentioned in the last

discussion, there are many tools to market a mobile game. This part purpose is to study mobile marketing tools for mobile games in details in order to understand the research question how to launch mobile marketing campaigns for mobile games.

Mobile games industry is a highly competitive industry. It is expected that only 200 mobile games studios in ten thousand of mobile games companies will gross over 1 million US dollars in 2016. Deloitte also estimated that app stores offer more than 800,000 mobile games in the start of 2016. (Deloitte, P. Lee, Stewart, Calugar-Pop, 2016) And only 200 of those 800,000 will be noticed on the top list of app stores. Therefore, in order to ensure an ultimate successful launch and most important to be noticed, preparations before marketed launch is an essential key. Besides the official marketed launch of the games including Ads Campaigns, Communication Channels, Game Reviews and Burst Campaign, mobile game developers also improve and get attention by Game Testing and Soft Launch to ensure their games climb to the tops.

### **2.3.1 Game Testing**

What is Game Testing? Game Testing is simply a process of testing a game before its real launch. There are three types of game testing which are usually being used. They are quality assurance QA testing, Playtesting and Private Beta-testing. QA testing focuses on finding technical problems of the game. Normally, a game studio has at least one person to figure out the QA problem. On the other hand, Playtesting gives developers information of player's experience with their games. A bit different to Playtesting, Private Beta-testing is also referred as Pre-Launch running before a Soft Launch.

#### ***2.3.1.1 Playtesting***

A Playtesting does not have any literature definition. Basically it is a test of playing a game. Ideally a playtesting test contains of five to ten players, a game can run as many as it needs but each test has different players. The players record videos of playing the

games. Therefore, developers can observe their experiences of the games to gain significant insights into player's movements, psychology and desires. The purpose of Playtesting is to provide developers an insight view of player's experience of the game in order to implement improvements according to those experiences.

A Playtesting launch is proposed to launch a Playtesting before or at the same time of Private Beta Testing and before the important Soft Launch. There are some Playtesting third-party in the market such as PlaytestCloud, Applause. They provide video recordings of users playing the testing games on iOS or Android.

A Playtesting launch is only considered as a part of game development process. However, it is an opportunity for the first time a game being known through Word of Mouth which can be widely spread through game forum and social media.

### ***2.3.1.2 Private Beta Testing***

While Playtesting is considered to belong more to the game development process. The Pre-launch Private Beta Testing falls into both developing and marketing processes. A Private Beta Testing is a 'private' launch of a 'beta version' game that is different from Soft Launch which is a 'public' launch.

A Private Beta Testing consumes from 100 to 1000 players depending on the games. The question is how to launch a private beta testing and how to get the players? There are some applications such as Prelaunch.me or Apple Testflight or Microsoft HockeyApp for developers launch their beta games. Through the apps developers allow their target players to register to play the games and give feedbacks. Developers get their target players through their customer email lists, game forums and networks.

From the perspective of development process, private beta testing launch purpose is to help developers improve the games according to the player metrics and feedbacks. And from the marketing perspective, pre-launch private beta testing works as a channel for

the players to be aware of the game. Together with using multimedia materials of videos and images on other communication channels such as Social Media, Youtube, Forum and Blog, developers can make the players eager to wait for the games to be release. A successful example is Nintendo Super Smash Brothers Brawl. They launched the pre-launch few weeks before releasing the game and every week they announced a new game character on every communication channels. Players were excited waiting for its release date and Nintendo sold 874,000 copies on the first release date in North America market. (SoomlaBlog, Madero, 2015)

### **2.3.2 Soft Launch**

Not every mobile games use PlayTesting and Private Beta Testing. However, Soft Launch has been becoming every developer's favorite because of its characteristics and essential outcomes. A Soft Launch is a full launch to a limited market. It is also called "de rigueur for a serious publisher". (Chartboost, Chris Morrison) Its purpose is to isolate success factors along with incomplete or problematic factors as well as to measure player responses to the game. It is an essential step to complete a perfect game ready for its marketed launch.

Since Soft Launch is only different from a marketed launch at its limited market, developers have to make a detailed plan of what, where and when before starting to launch.

#### **2.3.2.1 What data to measure?**

Before the real launch of the Soft Launch, there are plenty essential data developers have to figure out to make the Soft Launch successful. First on the list is What data to measure. At this first stage, developers want to study all the metrics of user retention, user acquisition, user experience, monetization and virality.

User retention includes metrics of these following questions:

- How often does a player play the game?
- When do a player stop playing?
- How many players still play after one day, three days, seven days and a month?

Notably, the most important user retention data is the numbers of players returning to the game each day. If one in ten players plays the game in a period of one month, it is considered a success.

User acquisition engages metrics of ‘How a player Find the game?’. For instance, the game has an advertisement on Facebook, user acquisition measures how many users download and play the game through that advertisement. User acquisition plays an important factor for which channels and tools to implement mobile advertisement.

‘How is the player experience of the game?’, ‘How does a player have fun in the game?’, ‘What part of the game do they spend time the most?’, ‘Is there any part that no player interested on?’, ‘If there is, what to do to make them play that part?’ They are few questions a developer need to figure out from user experience metrics. User experience mostly help improving the games depending on player’s desires. However, developers can make use of user experience to create interesting contents for the advertisements.

In addition to user experience, developers also need to measure monetization. Monetization includes data of a player’s in-app purchase. There are few questions need to figure out:

- What does a player purchase?
- When does a player purchase?
- Why does a player purchase a particular item?

Since currently trendy mobile game is free to play model, a revenue comes from in-app purchases. It is important to get the right monetization data.



Finally, another important measurement need to be studied is the virality of the game and the Soft Launch campaign. It is essential for the game goes viral, the soft launch goes viral. For instance, Pokemon Go became viral when it started its Soft Launch in Australia and New Zealand. Because of its virality, the game does not need to spend money and time for marketing. The most important question to answer for virality measurement is how do players share their game's experience. For example, it is important to get the number of how many connections does a player have in the game.

Since a soft launch is considered as a first public marketed launch in a small targeted market, it is essential to get all the important metrics and data. Especially, the most important factor is the user retention. It plays an important part in a game's long-term strategy. The longer time a player is into the game, the longer the game lasts and the more successful it be. It is meaningless if players do not stay for a long period of time even there are plenty of purchases in the beginning.

### ***2.3.2.2 Where to launch?***

After determining all necessary measurements, it is the step of choosing the right test market which is similar to the target market. The most common markets include Canada, Australia and New Zealand since they are English-speaking countries like the United States which is the main target market for all mobile games companies.

In additional, it is important to use the right tracking services. They assist and provide the accurate measurements of user acquisition, user experience, user retention, monetization and all necessary marketing data. For instance, few of the leading and popular are Flurry, Tune and Chartboost.

Summarization, the stage of preparations of a Soft Launch is essential importance and it includes measurements of significant data, a right market and a marketing strategy besides a ready game application.

### ***2.3.2.3 When to launch? How long does a Soft Launch should be?***

A Soft Launch campaign is a process, a strategy for a long-term goal. It is advised to launch a Soft Launch when all the core pieces of the game are ready. It is also arguing that a Soft Launch date also can be chosen depending on the real launch release date. However, it is very tricky since if the game needs to fixed or changed or it needs a longer soft launch, the release date will be delayed. It happens the same with the period of time a soft launch should last. If there is not enough needed data or there are parts of the game need to improve, the Soft Launch can be longer. Normally, a Soft Launch is for two months.

### **2.3.3 Mobile Advertisements**

Applying to any kind of products and services, ads campaigns has an important responsibility and it also has an impact of getting attentions of consumer. Mobile ads campaigns play an essential part in the marketing strategies for mobile games especially.

#### ***2.3.3.1 Facebook***

One of popular advertising tools for mobile games is Facebook. In 2015, Facebook had 17.4 percent of total global mobile advertisement revenue. (eMarketer, Media Buying, 2016) It is about half of Google, the biggest digital advertisement. Facebook allows developers to buy an ad space on Facebook Mobile News Feed with significantly detailed targeted users. For instance, it allows to choose a significant objective for the ad such as app installs or video views as well as choosing the desirable target audience and locations.

#### ***2.3.3.2 Google***

Google advertisement is the biggest digital advertisement at the moment. Google's ads are displayed in every single corner of the digital world including any websites, Google Search, Youtube which plays an active part of the chains. According to a public report

of Google Advertising Statistics (updated July 2016), Google shared 33.7 percent of global mobile advertisement revenues in 2015. Particularly, in the United States, Google Mobile Search Ads Revenue and Google Mobile Display Ads Revenue were accounted of 36.6 percent and 6.3 percent of total digital US Ad Revenue in 2015 respectively. It is estimated that Mobile Search and Mobile Display will reach to 45.7 percent and 7.5 percent in 2016 respectively. (eMarketer, Media Buying, 2016)

Google AdWords offers developers a simple also advanced advertising tool. Based on the advertisement's target audience and market, an ad appears in several channels including Google Search and Google Search Partners, Google Display Network which consists of Google Search, Google Display Network websites on mobile devices and also Cross-Promotion Mobile In-Apps Advertisement.

### **2.3.3.3 Mobile Ads Network**

On the other hand of Google and Facebook which involve in all digital advertising tools, there are several Mobile Ads Networks who are specialized in mobile advertisement. Each mobile ads network offers different types of mobile advertising method.

What kinds of Mobile Ads Network methodology are there to choose? One of the most common method is Interstitial Ads. Interstitial Ads offers full screen ads which are displayed between activities or loading new levels. It somehow works like a television commercial advertisement. Another type of mobile ads is the Native Ads which is designed to embedded perfectly like a feature in the host app. Totally different from Native Ads, a Banner Ad is only designed to display at a location of the host app. Besides the common Interstitial Ads and Banner Ads, there is the dynamic presenting advertisement Overlay. Overlay ads is displayed over the host app (the app is visible in the background) when the app is first loaded.

According to mobyaffiliates journal, eMarketer estimates that in-app mobile advertising investment will reach to 20.8 billion US dollars in the end of 2016 which is accounted

for 72 percent of total mobile advertisement investment. (Mobyaffiliates, Anne Freier, 2016) So how does an advertisement charge? Importantly, there are two main monetization models which cannot be ignored. They are Cost-Per-Click CPC and Cost-Per-Impression CPI. CPC is accounted when the ad is being clicked. According to Hochman Consultants, an average CPC in 2005, 2010 and 2015 costed 38 US cents, 1.24 US dollars and 1.58 US dollars respectively. (Hochman Consultants, Jonathan Hochman, 2015) Meanwhile, CPI is accounted when the ad is seen (no click required). An average cost of a thousand CPI was accounted of 5.56 US dollars, 8.55 US dollars and 12.07 US dollars in 2005, 2010 and 2015 respectively. (Hochman Consultants, Jonathan Hochman, 2015)

In addition, in order to measure how successful an advertisement is, it is important to understand the Click Through Rate CTR presenting percentages of how many audiences do click the advertisement after they see it.

#### ***2.3.3.4 Cross Promotion***

According to Mobile Marketer e-journal, in the first half of 2015, in-app click-through ads rates averaged 0.56 percent globally while mobile website ads rates averaged only 0.23 percent globally. Cross Promotion is one type of in-app advertisement or in another word Cross Promotion is a part of Mobile Ads Network. However, it is listed a bit different because of its budget. While Mobile Ads Network does cost, Cross Promotion is likely free.

In the literature, cross-promotion is defined as “a practice of setting up apps that promote each other to their audiences”. (Inmobi, Sohan Maheshwar, 2014) There are two main options to implement cross-promotion marketing tool in advertising which includes exchanging ads with other game apps, putting new game ads in your existing games apps.

The reason behind Cross Promotion Advertisement popularity is its impact on user's behavior and its low budget. Compared to Mobile Website Ads, it provides a more effective method to gain target users' attention and interact with players without interruption. Moreover, Cross Promotion in your own network app is free. For instance, there is a lively example for a game using Cross Promotion and successfully becoming rival, the Hill Climb Racing mobile game. Hill Climb Racing was launch in 2012 and three years later it reached to over 400 million downloads. (Yle, Tuula Viitaniemi, 2015) Toni Fingerroos developer of Hill Climb Racing applies Cross Promotion in his own previous apps Cartoon Camera and Night Vision Camera which were launched in 2012 before Hill Climb Racing. Cartoon Camera and Night Vision Camera are also popular apps with 10 to 50 million downloads. (Google Play) By putting free ad banners and a brief notification of the game in these two apps description, Hill Climb Racing successfully gets attention and becomes a rival mobile game.

In conclusion, there are plenty of ideas and tools for a rival mobile advertising campaign. However, it is need to be aware of target audience characteristics and the campaign's objective in order to create an interesting and suitable content. A content and a method to deliver it play an ultimate key in order to win over the users.

#### **2.3.4 Communication Channels**

Communication plays an undeniable important part in marketing, especially for mobile advertising since the global communication is shifting from desktop to mobile. Communication channels mobile marketing is a big and competitive world. Communication and interaction happens every single corner of the net and every single minute. Developers take advantage of these communication channels by creating viral videos, tweets and influencers to promote their games.

### **2.3.4.1 Social Media**

Social Media has been becoming an essential channel for every type of products and services marketing especially mobile marketing since about 80 percent of all social media activities is spent on mobile devices (smartphone and tablet) accounted till the end of 2015 in the United States. (MarketingLand, Greg Sterling, 2016) Moreover, Social Media time spent is accounted of 25 percent of total mobile app time spent in the United States compared to 16 percent for Games (June 2014) according to TechCrunch. (Techcrunch, Sarah Perez, 2014)

Social Media allows developers to directly interact and communicate with potential players in a friendly and creative content marketing way. There are plenty of social media platforms to choose to connect with potential users. For mobile games, there are three main popular platforms that not only popular for games industry but any industry which are Twitter, Facebook and Youtube. Games industry marketing works similar with movies industry. Multi-materials advertisement and influencer engaged advertisement works best for a campaign. Pre-launch campaigns of the games leads to potential players following the games. Posts such as game's trailers, game's graphics and pre-views, a most interesting part of the game video, hints of game's story line updates or influencer's tweets or playing game video help promote and attract the players.

Facebook is one of everyone favorites, it is important to ensure that the game studio page is known and it is up-to-date with plenty of information a player can enjoy. There are some Facebook groups that are popular for mobile games community such as iOS developers, Indie Game Players & Developers, Indie Game Chat. Moreover, enable social media sharing is a great tool to build up a player community for your game. Besides Facebook, there is Twitter, a perfect channel to engage, interact with potential users and to promote not only the games but also the studio. It is suggested to use some of these hashtags when tweeting which are 'gamedev', 'f2p', 'indiegame' and 'freetoplay'.

Social Media Marketing is the most creative tool for mobile marketing. It has a huge impact on customer behavior. Therefore, a suitable content and method for a social media campaign is considered the most important to go right or go down to wrong direction. Aiming at target audience and putting out the most interesting and suitable social campaigns are the key to get a game on the top list already at its pre-launch stage.

#### **2.3.4.2 Influencer**

As mentioned in Social Media, a game advertising works the same as movie advertising, influencer plays a big part in promoting and spreading a game widely. Influencer marketing is defined as a form of marketing focusing on key individuals rather than a whole target audience. Influencer includes media personalities, celebrities, bloggers and youtubers. Influencers' engagement helps making the game appealing to their followers.

Youtube is an important platform for influencer marketing especially for games industry because it is the biggest entertainment digital channel. Nowadays, the young generation spend most of their time watching Youtube rather than television channels. For instance, the current most subscribed Youtuber is PewDiePie whose followers are mostly young generation. He has been a very popular influencer for games marketing. PewDiePie marketed his own mobile game Tuber Simulator on his own channel by promoting and playing it on his videos and asking his audiences for submissions of themselves playing his game. Because of his own influencer marketing campaign, Tuber Simulator was the most downloaded game in US App Store in September 2016. By releasing only the game's trailer, the video got 1.65 million views on the first day.

Influencer marketing is an effective advertising tool to reach to the potential players. It is an easier process to persuade an audience playing a game through an influencer he trusts compared to a mobile advertisement. Moreover, it is also easier for developers and marketers since it does not involve creating advertisement stages. However, developers can not foresee the outcomes from influencer campaigns because it depends on what influencer does. Therefore, the most important key of influencer marketing is

choosing the right influencer who presents same values of the company and target audience.

#### **2.3.4.3 Forum**

Games forums play a particularly important part of gamers' activities. It is a specialized platform where communication and interaction between the players happens. In another word, it is a social media platform for game communities. One significant characteristic of games forums is that they have every kind of games' communities who would love to test, play and support a game. Two of the busiest gaming forum can be mentioned are Reddit and NeoGAF. Reddit defines itself as a "made up of many individual communities". (Reddit Help)

#### **2.3.5 Game Reviews**

A review is defined as an evaluation of a company, a service, a product or a publication. A game review is an evaluation of a video game or a mobile game. A game review can be a user review or an expert review. Games industry makes use of game reviews as a tool of advertising. However, one thing to be aware of that mobile games reviews is not as common as other games such as video games and console games. Therefore, mobile games developers need to approach game reviews by offering them a custom-build version of the game where they can experience how all features work and importantly how interesting the game is.

For example, developers should approach and making networks with IGN, one of the biggest game reviews sites. They are heavily on video games and console games but they also have mobile games reviews articles. Getting IGN reviews for the game then promote the reviews through social media and other articles could be a small part of the marketing plan.



An extremely effective game reviews channel which is a huge game reviews community is Youtube. Youtube has both expert reviewers and user reviewers. Each reviewer has different followers' segments, styles and expertise. Therefore, before approaching and networking, developers need to research to consider who should be on the game reviewers list in order to get positive and effective reviews. For example, Angry Joe Show is a comedy game reviews Youtube channel with three million subscribers. He has many game reviews videos and playing games videos with average over one million views on popular videos.

Another game reviews platform developers should be familiar is Blogging. Blogging is a marketing tool called content marketing. Besides managing your own studio blog with up-to-date information and interesting articles with friendly mobile design, getting your game reviews on famous gaming blogs is a strategy. One of the most popular gaming blogs that contents general gaming activities blogging and game review is Jimquisition. He is considered as an influencer with a big number of followers.

In summary, by using any type of game reviews platforms, developers are advised to take extra caution on choosing the reviewers. It is extremely important to get a right opinion for positive reviews since one of the first actions a potential player does is to read a review of the game and bad or neutral reviews do not help developers to promote the game.

### **2.3.6 Burst Campaign**

Burst campaign is one of the most popular tool used in mobile applications marketing. It is a marketing tool to climb up to the app stores top ranks and achieve desirable downloads within a short period of time by spending a budget on paid advertising to buy a game a large numbers of paid installs (non-organic install). In return, a high ranking position on the app store will get attention of users and gain organic installs.

There are many strategies to implement to a burst campaign. However, it is based on the games' strategies and characteristics. Basically, mobile games consist of two types including Free-to-Play F2P mobile games and Paid mobile games. A Burst Campaign for a F2P mobile game focuses on players, who are willing to purchase in-app features, called high quality players instead of low quality players. However, according to Swrve, there are only 1.9 percent of players making an in-app purchase within a month in 2016 compared to 1.5 percent in 2014. (Swrve Monetization Report 2016) Based on this segment of target users, developers decide where and when to run the campaign. For example, running in-app advertisement where the potential players usually spend their times or engaging activities with their influencer would get their attentions.

On another hand, burst campaigns for paid games play different strategies. Since they are paid mobile games, the goal is to break even the game investment. Based on the analytics, developers understand exactly how many downloads they need to break even the cost. Because paid games involve more spending, developers tend to spend a huge budget on a burst campaign so at once, they gather enough players. Commonly a burst campaign involves multiple channels advertisement which means running an advertisement in every possible channel.

One example that is perfectly for an effective burst campaign is Kate Upon advertisement for free-to-play mobile game Machine Zone Games 'Game of War: Fire Age'. Machine Zone Games spent 40 million US dollars on the campaign. (Bloomberg Business Week, Robert Kolker, 2015) The campaign ran nine thousands television advertisement including Super Bowl and promoted the ad multiple times on all social media channels. As a result, Game of War gets to the second ranking on the top mobile game list and brings in average 1 million US dollars per day. (CinemaBlend, William Usher, 2015)

An impressive burst campaign has its own advantage and disadvantage. A burst campaign can help a game has the top rankings to gain as much as downloads as possible.

However, if the game quality is not as the players' expectation as the campaign's effectiveness, it can disappoint players and this leads to an unremarkable damage to the studio reputation.

## **2.4 Mobile Campaigns for Mobile Games**

In this part of the second chapter, the research studies of mobile campaigns of mobile games case Best Fiends. The research focuses on how do the developers of the studied mobile game launch their campaigns to promote the game and what are the outcomes. This study purpose is to have a deeper view on the complicated mobile marketing for mobile games industry.

### **Best Fiends by Seriously**

“Discover the world of Minutia and its cute, courageous inhabitants in this fiendishly fun, FREE puzzle adventure! Collect all Best Fiends, level them up, discover their special powers and battle the Slugs of Mount Boom. Get ready for the slime of your life!” is the description of award-winning mobile game Best Fiends of Seriously on Best Fiends own webpage. (Seriously main webpage) Seriously is a mobile gaming studio founded in 2013 by former talents of Rovio, Andrew Stalbow and Petri Jarvilehto. Described as “takes mobile games to the next level” by Telegraph UK, Best Fiends was launched in October 2014. (Munford, Telegraph, 2014) With a vision of creating an additive game that can turn into its own merchandise brand, Seriously started the Fiends brand firstly with Best Fiends mobile game which costs a million US dollars to make when the studio first launched the game. Best Fiends is a story of a world called Minutae. Minutae is a village where adorable Fiends live peacefully until the comet turns the neighbors of the nearby mountain into scary monsters who kidnap all Minutae parents. It is the story of Minutae Fiends kids to bravely storm the mountain to save their parents.

It is reported that Best Fiends has over 40 million players accounted at present time besides ranked ninth in the best iPhone and iPad games of 2014 (The Guardian, 2014) and placed 43 on top free game of all mobile devices on October 24 2016 according to ThinkGame statistic platform. Moreover, Best Fiends attracted more than one million daily active players in the beginning of 2015 according to Develop online journal. On September 8 2016, Best Fiends also posted on its own and Seriously Facebook page that it had a new record daily players of 2.35 million along with the post of the game favorite video advertising ‘Warning: Don’t Download Best Fiends’ with 6.5 million views in six days. (Seriously HQ)

In an interview with Chartboost, Seriously Philip Hickey shared that “our biggest focus is influencer marketing, especially with YouTube stars. This has been our most effective and efficient growth strategy”. (Morrison, Chartboost) Hickey explained that they want to build up a “long-term property” which means build up a communication-brand-community through Youtube since the channel has a long tail power because of its videos which can “add to your credibility factor and community growth”. (Morrison, Chartboost) According to Tubefilter, Seriously announced that they spend 90 percent of marketing budget on influencer marketing campaigns and they have sponsored over seven hundred YouTube videos featuring YouTube stars in 2016. For instance, Seriously ‘MobileEggHunt’ Easter campaign featured ten of the most famous YouTube stars such as MyLifeAsEva and Telea Dunn. They designed their own eggs which hidden in the game for players to collect, said Philip Hickey, Seriously vice president of marketing and communication. Hickey also shared that it is essential that the influencers fit for the game brand and have an effective resonance with the game audience. Moreover, the effectiveness depends on the advertisement content therefore Seriously “leave the creative freedom” with the influencers because of their understanding of their audiences. (Cowley, PocketGamer, 2016) Following the Easter campaign, Seriously launched their Mother’s Day featuring nearly 200 lifestyle influencers. This campaign target audience is women and the campaign objective is to attract new audiences. According to PocketGamer, Mother’s Day campaign made Best Fiends climb up to top fifteen of US App

Store Free App and top twelve of UK App Store Free App along with top 25 rankings in Canada, New Zealand and Australia market. (PocketGamer, 2016) For the record, it is reported that Best Fiends had 265 thousands downloads on Mother's Day. In conclusion, as a result of YouTube stars campaigns, Best Fiends sponsored YouTube videos are accounted to generated over 150 million total views and the game hit 40 million downloads with daily active user growth increased from nine percent to 21 percent of 2 million daily active users. (Tubefilter, 2016) Moreover, the daily downloads in the United States, the United Kingdom market have increased by six and two times respectively. (PocketGamer, 2016) After the big Easter and Mother's Day campaigns, Seriously also worked with other YouTube stars and released advertisement in summer time such as Nicole Skyes and Rclbeauty101 with total over 15 million views. All the YouTube stars videos advertising and the Don't download Best Fiends advertisement released in August are parts of Seriously 'World's Largest Mobile Treasure Hunt' campaign.

On 31 August of 2016, Seriously updated its Influencer marketing strategy by releasing its self-produced online advertisement 'Warning: Don't download Best Fiends!' featuring Hollywood actress Kate Walsh and YouTube stars Joey Graceffa and Rosanna Pansino. After the first three weeks, the hilarious and surprised video gets over twelve million views through Facebook and YouTube. (OpenMobileMedia, 2016) For the record, the advertisement also ranked tenth in the top YouTube ads in September. (Marketing-Land, 2016) In an interview with Open Mobile Media, Stalbow mentioned that they created the video "as a love letter to our fans" and it helped Best Fiends reached the new record of over 2.35 million daily active users as well as a new highest revenue day. Moreover, the advertisement also grew for the game's YouTube channel 100 thousand subscribers as the first video. (OpenMobileMedia, 2016) Since the advertisement is a part of the huge 'World's Largest Mobile Treasure Hunt' campaign, the video contents the hints of the hidden fifteen personal themed icons of the actress Walsh and fourteen others YouTube Stars that featuring in the campaign.

In addition, the studio also shared with Chartboost that community is the key player in their marketing strategy. “We put a massive amount of emphasis on growing and maintaining and engaging with the community”, said Hickey to Venture Beat. (VentureBeat, 2016) He also shared that they want to communicate with all the audiences who would like to be involved, they want to make great communication to grow up the community to build up the “ecosystem of game and community”. (VentureBeat, 2016) How does Seriously build up and grow up their community with the players? The answer is Social Media which “leads to things like word of mouth and reengagement grows through that”, said Hickey. (VentureBeat, 2016) In the interview with Charboost, Hickey also mentioned that they always try to answer every Facebook question and Tweet. As a result of communication and engagement through Social Media, Best Fiends has gained a big community of more than 800,000 Facebook fans, over 250,000 Twitter followers, around 400,000 Instagram followers, more than 100,000 Snapchat views, over 80,000 VKontakte followers and 3.4 million email subscribers. (PocketGamer, 2016)

Besides Influencer and Social Media marketing, Seriously also applies Cross-Promotion and Mobile Advertising for their mobile marketing strategy. Mobile Advertising includes mobile advertisement on mobile webpages and ads networks platforms as mentioned in the previous part of the chapter. For instance, Best Fiends gives the players a reward after they watch the video advertisements in the application. Moreover, mobile advertising also involves the articles of the game in online journals and newspapers about its release date, new updates or its achievements. Understanding the power of the press and media, on Seriously webpage, one can find all the articles that featuring Best Fiends mobile game. Since Seriously has two released mobile games which are Best Fiends and Best Fiends Forever, they apply heavily Cross-Promotion for promote Best Fiends in Best Fiend Forever. For example, the player gets double in-game currency of Best Fiends Forever by watching Best Fiends advertisement.

In conclusion, Best Fiends mobile marketing strategy includes Influencer, Social Media, Cross-Promotion and Mobile Advertisement. Among the four main mobile marketing

methods, Best Fiends focuses on Influencer YouTuber marketing campaigns which has the most impact on their audience. However, the game studio also mentions that building up a community is the key for building the brand. Social Media plays an important part in the long-term strategy.

## **2.5 The effects of mobile advertising on mobile game players**

According to the case study discussion, a mobile marketing mix contains several marketing advertising methods. Mobile Advertisements and Influencer Marketing are the most common and effective advertising methods.

### **2.5.1 Mobile Advertisements**

Mobile advertisements include Mobile Ads Network and Cross-Promotion. In another word, it is called in-game or in-app advertisements. A common question concerning mobile advertisements is the effects it has on user retention.

According to an article on Chartboost, “relationship between retention and ads is not a simple union”, it depends on the genres of the games and the advertisements strategy. (Barker, Chartboost) There are two typical genres for mobile games which are casual and strategy. In contrast with casual game where player can play and finish the game quickly, strategy game requires long-term playing sessions. Based on the game genres, Chartboost argued that in-game advertising gave positive effect in strategy games which was opposite for casual games. Chartboost shows that for casual game genre, user retention day seventh is 13 percentage with advertising and 23 percentage without advertising. On the other hand, strategy game genre user retention day seventh is 26 percent with advertising and 12 percent without advertising. In additional, Chartboost also discussed about the relationship between user retention and advertisement strategies. The article strongly addressed that When and How an advertisement displayed decide the success of the advertising. For instance, the article mentioned that “one way to retain players with ads is by incentivizing the ad for the player”. (Barker, Chartboost) This

means the players get in-game rewards for watching the advertisement or download the advertised game. In addition, in an article of gaming forum gamasutra, one factor that also affects the effects of in-game advertising on user retention is the game business model. They argued that if the game income comes from advertising, the advertising matter is not a problem. However, if the income comes from in-app purchase which is the most common mobile game model, a wrong advertisement to a wrong target at a wrong time can lead to a loss of potential players. Therefore, once again, it is important to make a right decision on How and When to display an advertisement.

### **2.5.2 Influencer Marketing**

Influencer marketing concerns all marketing and advertising activities involving influencers which can be YouTube videos or Social Media posts. “It affects the purchase intent of every customer”, wrote in a Chartboost report about Influencer Marketing. (Chartboost, 2016) According to Nielsen, 66 percent of consumers addressed that they trusted online posted consumer opinion (Chartboost June 2016 report of Influencer marketing). Besides that, Google reported that 90 percent of gamers watched YouTube videos at least once a week for gaming tips, gaming plays and game discovery (Chartboost June 2016 report of Influencer marketing). In addition, there are average 144 billion minutes of youtube gaming video watched monthly. Based on these numbers and Best Fiends case study discussion, it is easy to understand the effectiveness of influencer marketing.

According to Chartboost, there are four main reasons why influencer marketing is effective for mobile games. It is because of the bond between mobile games, mobile game players and influencer marketing characteristics. They are adjustable to each other. The first reason is the crowded user acquisition channels which are apps stores and mobile advertisements. Secondly, since videos have engaged mobile game player audience, it is likely to reach out to more potential customers. Thirdly, because of the engaged audi-



ence, YouTube has becoming the most popular mobile gaming videos channel or in another word, “YouTube is where gamers go shopping”. (Chartboost, 2016) The final reason is the trust between audience and their favorite influencer (youtuber). Since audience trusts other player’s opinions more than any advertisement, a paid influencer campaign brings the most positive outcomes. According to Roostr, a marketplace connecting game influencers and mobile game developers, after a paid influencer marketing campaign, 30 percent of views are conducted.

Since the mobile game industry is affected by the powerful ‘word of mouth’, it is important to get the trust of the target audience. The most effective way is via influencer marketing. Organizing an influencer campaign that covering up all over communication channels is the ultimate strategy to get a mobile game go ‘viral’.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter answers the main research question of how to mobile marketing mobile games.

In the first part of the chapter, history of mobile games industry is introduced. The most important events include first mobile games generation Tetris and Snake, WAP technology and BREW technology mobile games and significant milestone of the history: the release of smartphone and app stores in 2007-2008.

Following the first part, mobile marketing methods are described in details in the part of how to launch mobile marketing campaigns for mobile games. They include Game Testing, Soft Launch, Mobile Advertisement, Communication Channels, Game Reviews and Burst Campaign. It is essential to pay attention to Soft Launch, Mobile Ads Networks, Social Media, Forum communication and influencer marketing.

According to the literature, the most effective marketing strategy is influencer marketing. Since audience trust others’ opinions especially their favorite influencer (youtuber),

a right influencer campaign is the most effective campaign to reach out to target audience. Besides that, this part of the chapter also discusses the effects of mobile ads network on user retention. It is mentioned that how and when to display an in-game advertisement decided its success.

The final part of the chapter gives a deep understanding and a realistic view marketing for mobile game by studying Best Fiends mobile game hit of Seriously. Best Fiends gain 45 million downloads because of its core marketing strategy which are Influencer YouTube marketing and community vision. By spending most of advertising budget on YouTuber advertising and engaging with players as a community, Best Fiends becomes a mobile hit and Seriously is building up its brand for a long-term future.

## Chapter III

### 3 RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGIES

This methodologies chapter explains the methodological approaching process of the research in order to answer the research questions and understanding the research purpose. All the research methodologies are explained to give audience an overview of how the data is approached and studied.

#### 3.1 Research Philosophy

The research object is to understand a process of launching a mobile campaign for a mobile game and then aim to understand its impact on the players or in another word to understand the players' behaviors driven by the campaign. How to launch a properly campaign for a mobile game? Are the players interested in the game because of the campaign? Will the players download the game after experiencing the campaign? What campaign has the most impact on players? The research, in order to answer those questions, studies secondary data from relevant documents, journals and blogs together with engaging in interviews with developers and marketers and also run a survey for understanding from players' point of view. Because of the research objective and research approach methodologies, the research philosophy is pragmatism (a combination of positivism and interpretivist). Pragmatists argue that "there are many different ways to interpreting the world and undertaking research, that no single point of view can ever give the entire picture and that there may be multiple realities". (M. Saunders, P. Lewis, A. Thornhill, 2009) A pragmatism research begins with addressing the research questions then aims to answer those questions by applying different types of knowledge and methods if necessary.

## **3.2 Research Purpose**

Researches are divided into four types: exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and policy-oriented based on its purpose. Based on this study purpose, this research is a mainly exploratory and explanatory research.

### **3.2.1 Exploratory**

An exploratory research method is used when the research problem as the beginning is broad. The objective of an exploratory research is to explore the research topic by applying three principal methods including literature search, experts interview and focus group interview. (M. Saunders, P. Lewis, A. Thornhill, 2009, p140) Since the problem is broad, the research may not give a conclusive answer to the addressed problem. However, the research methods help researcher to understand what is happening, obtain new insights and then narrow down the topic.

The main topic of this study is understanding mobile marketing for mobile game. In order to understanding this topic, the research questions include the process of launching campaigns for the games and based on that studying the players' behavior. The research's methods include literature search for general understanding of the situation and experts interviews for in-depth understanding.

### **3.2.2 Explanatory**

An explanatory research studies a situation in order to explain the relationship between variables. (M. Saunders, P. Lewis, A. Thornhill, 2009, p140) The main methodology of an explanatory research is analysis of qualitative data collection. In this study, researcher runs an analysis of a qualitative survey in order to understand relationship between mobile marketing and players' behavior. The research aims to answer the question of what campaigns have the most impact on the players by both qualitative data analyses.

### **3.3 Research Approach**

When a research approach is deductive, “the conclusion is derived logically from a set of premises, the conclusion being true when all the premises are true”. (Saunders, 2015, p144) In contrast, a research approach is inductive when “the conclusion being judged to be supported by the observations made”. (Saunders, 2015, p144)

In this study the research questions are developed without a theory. The research starts by collecting data to explore the phenomenon and to answer the questions and finally based on the data collection the research generates a conclusion. Therefore, this research uses inductive approach.

After understanding the research approach reason, next step is choosing the suitable research strategy for the study which depends on research questions and data collection.

### **3.4 Research methods**

There are two research methods which are quantitative and qualitative. While qualitative research focuses on describing a phenomenon and explore it to have in-depth understanding, quantitative research is concerned with cause and effect relationships between variables. Research method is chosen depends on the research addressed problem and its needed data collection.

Based on the research inductive approach, the research problem and data, both quantitative and qualitative method is applied in this study. Since the research approach is inductive, it is preferred to use qualitative method to explore mobile marketing campaigns in mobile games industry phenomenon. Collecting qualitative data methods for this study include cases studies and expert interviews. Moreover, in order to understand the effectiveness of the campaigns on the players, the study also makes use of quantitative method to collect data which involve online questionnaires survey.

There are two type of time dimension researches which are cross-sectional research and longitudinal research based on the time of collecting data. Cross-sectional research data is gathered one time. In contrast, longitudinal research data collection is collected at multiple times. This research studies the process of launching a mobile marketing campaign for mobile game at a particular point of time. Data collection is collected at once. Both interview data and survey data are gathered at once during couple of days. Hence this study is a cross-sectional research.

### **3.5 Sampling Strategy**

Sampling methods are divided into two main categories which are probability and non-probability. Probability sampling is applied when every unit of the population has an ability to be selected as a sample. In contrast, in non-probability sampling, samples are not randomly selected, in another word, not every unit of the population has a chance to participate in the samples.

In this study it is clear that non-probability sampling method is chosen. In non-probability sampling, there are many available sampling methods such as convenience, snow-ball, purposive. This research contents two primary data collection which are case study interview and survey. Both of the data collection are chosen based on the research topic and purpose. Hence both data collections apply purposive sampling. Survey targets are social media users and game players at all ages and genders. In case studies, expert sampling method, one type of purposive sampling, is chosen since it involves “assembling of a sample of persons with known or demonstrable experience and expertise” in mobile game marketing field. (Social Research Methods)

### **3.6 Data Collection**

In a qualitative research, there are plenty of research methods to apply in order to reach the research objective. In this research, case study with interview and questionnaires survey are employed.

Case study is defined as a worthy data for exploratory research because of its detailed and intensive information. This research studies a case of mobile marketing campaign in mobile game industry accompanied with an in-depth interview with developers of the games. In-depth interview is defined as “a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation”. (C. Boyce, P. Neale, 2006) The cases purpose is to gain a deep understanding of the research topic, the process of mobile marketing a mobile game. Moreover, the cases are also considered as a source of evidence for the research theory of how to launch a mobile marketing campaign for a mobile game. Besides that, the interview outcomes also answer the question of what the most effectiveness campaign is according to the developer perspective.

Survey is the most popular research method in any study. Through a survey, a collection of a large amount of data is able to be collected. However, a quality of a survey is difficult to calculate. It depends on the survey strategy of target and questions. It is argued that data collected by a quantitative survey may not be as wide ranging as a qualitative survey. In this research, a quantitative survey is chosen. Based on the sample target, the survey is distributed to three target groups including IGDA - Finnish chapter of the International Game Developers Association, Reddit game related forum and relevant social network groups. In addition, the quantitative survey contents a qualitative question for opinion exploration.

### **3.7 Reliability and Validity**

The concept of reliability and validity of quantitative and qualitative research is different. According to Joppe, in quantitative research, reliability is defined as “if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable”. (Golafshani, 2003) In contrast, the most important evaluation of a qualitative study is its quality. Lincoln and Guba apply Dependability in qualitative research for a close correspondent to Reliability in quantitative research. (Golafshani, 2003)

A validity of a quantitative research depends on “whether the means of measurement are accurate and whether they are actually measuring what they are intended to measure”. (Golafshani, 2003) Meanwhile, Mishler argued that the measurement of reliability and validity in a qualitative research should be replaced by trustworthiness. (Golafshani, 2003) Hence the quality of sample collection and the process of studying them is the most important concept to evaluate the trustworthiness of this research.

The study cases are selected based on its marketing success in order to have a realistic view of the research problem. Interview is made with in-charge of the games experts with selection of structured and in-depth questions to gain insider perspective. A questionnaires survey with a margin of error of 11 percent with confidence level of 95 percent is completed to measure the research answers. Cronbach’s Alpha test is performed to check the research quantitative data. In additional, chapter four will also discuss of the research trustworthiness.

### **3.8 Analysis**

In a research, data analysis consists of three main steps including data preparation, descriptive statistics and finally inferential statistics. The first step, data preparation, includes logging data, checking data for its accuracy and documenting data collection into



a structured database. Descriptive statistics are used to provide summaries of the samples and measurements. In another word, descriptive statistics describe what the data shows. Meanwhile, inferential statistics allow researcher make inferences from the data to more general conclusions.

In this study, data from case study interviews is documented and developed into a source of evidence for the conclusion of a process of how to launch a mobile marketing campaign for a mobile game. In additional, analyzing questionnaires survey includes documented data into a structured database, developing database into pies and charts and finally perform a statistical test on the data. Process and findings of data collection analysis are discussed then reliability and validity of the data is checked and presented in details in chapter four.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter explains the research philosophy, its strategy, design and methodologies. The research philosophy is pragmatism and the study is a combination of exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research with an inductive research approach method. In this study, qualitative and quantitative methodologies are applied. The research strategy includes exploring the research topic phenomenon, studying case studies with insider in-depth interviews and questionnaires survey. Hence data collections include sources from secondary data and primary data which interview and survey. Sampling selection method is purposive sampling since all samples are chosen based on the research purpose. Reliability and validity of the study is based on its data collection worthiness and data analysis. Hence, the study is considered valid and trustworthy.

## Chapter IV

### 4 DATA ANALYSIS

Chapter four provides descriptive statistics, reliability and validity assessment and the results of data collection. In addition, this chapter also discusses the findings from the interview and the survey. This study uses survey monkey statistic platform and to analyze the data.

#### 4.1 Interview

The study chose mobile game Best Fiends of Seriously as a real case example of mobile marketing for mobile game with the purpose of a real and deep understanding of mobile game mobile marketing field. In the case study, an in-depth interview with the game insider was carried out. The interview played an important part of real case study mobile game Best Fiends by Seriously.

The interviewee was Seriously Chief Creative Officer Petri Jarvilehto. Petri is not only the CCO of the game studio but also the studio co-founder. Therefore, he has an undoubtable vision of the studio in general and the game in particular. Hence the research chose to approach him for an in-depth interview about their first mobile game Best Fiends. The interview was carried out via email due to interviewee circumstances.

The interview questions were highly structured with a clear objective. The desirable outcomes include finding and understanding the mobile marketing strategy the game applies, the process of launching a mobile campaign and the game most effective campaign method. The interview transcript consists of five questions. Four questions were answer in details and clearly while question number three are considered poorly answered. The key findings are presented in the following figure.

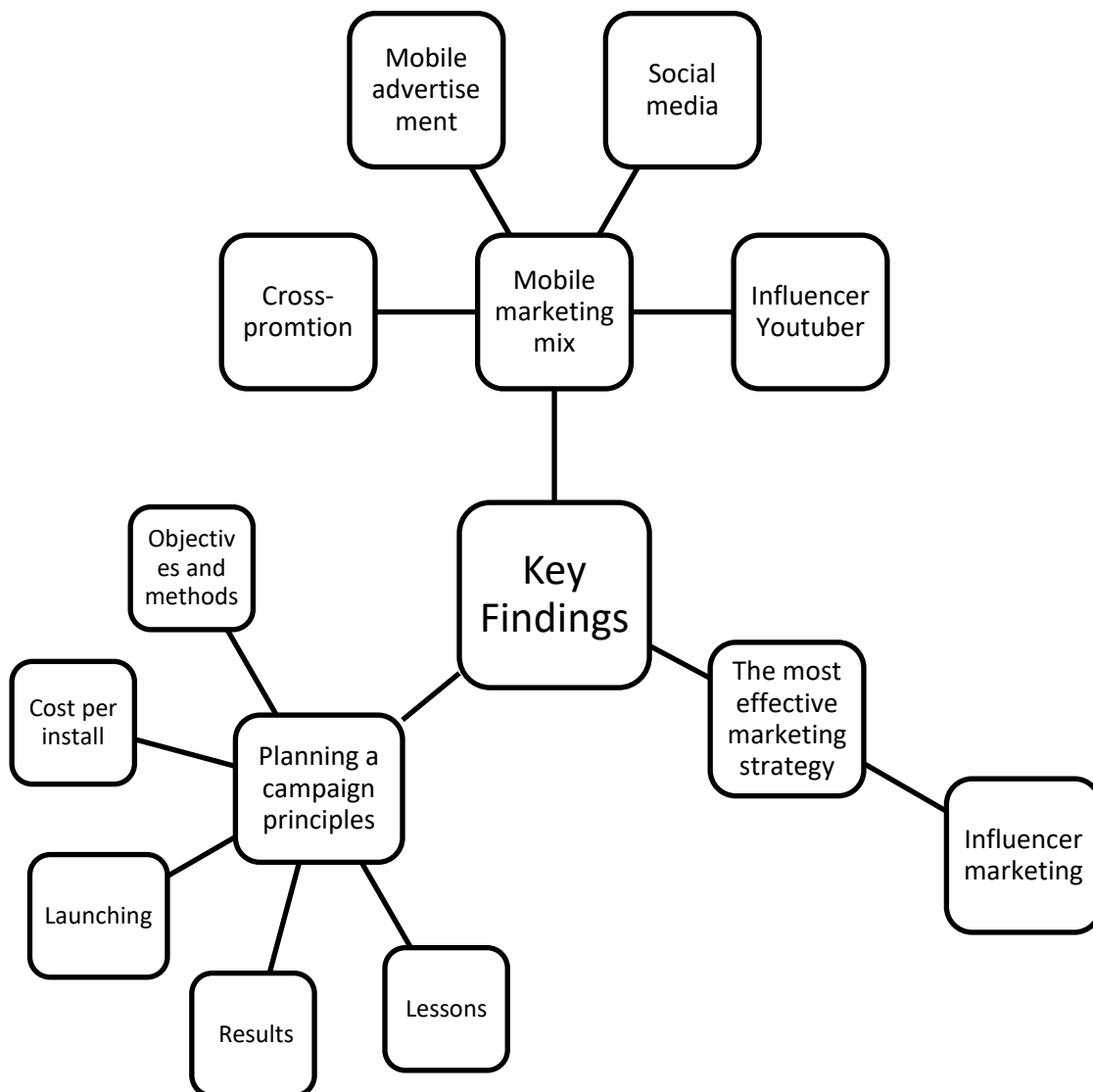


Figure 4.1 Key findings of case study interview

The interview presented most of desirable findings. The key findings include the game mobile marketing strategy, the principles of planning a campaign and the game most effective marketing method. The first answer of the interview clearly addressed that Seriously focuses on Influencer marketing and Best Fiends mobile marketing mix is a combination of cross-promotion marketing, social media advertising and mobile advertisements.

In the third question of the process of launching a campaign for the game, Petri confirmed that since each campaign has different objective, the process of making each campaign is significant different especially for Best Fiends Influencer campaigns. However, in the second question of important factors before launching a campaign, he answered with these important principles:

- Define campaign objectives.
- Define which methods give what results.
- Defining how much ‘one install cost’. In another word, you want to measure how much your campaign cost and how effective it is. You want to answer the question that is the campaign worth the investment.
- Run a campaign.
- Observation the campaign and study its outcomes as a learn from an experience.

In the interview, Petri also discussed about the time they would like to launch a campaign. He said they usually run campaigns to match with game updates. That way, each campaign can have a specific ‘current’ theme”. He shared that they normally do three week update cycles and it is the opportunity to run campaigns. For instance, at present, the studio just launched a Halloween update in Best Fiends and the YouTuber campaigns are based on that theme. Finally, the last key factor the research wants to find out is which mobile advertising methods that give Best Fiends the best outcomes. The co-founder does not hesitate to address that they have been working with YouTube Influencers for about two years and they find it the most effective way for the game.

The interview information plays as a part together with the case study provides the research a realistic view of conducting mobile marketing for a mobile game. The in-depth interview with the game executive is a valuable source of evidence for the case study reliability and validity.

In conclusion, it is a valuable information of a mobile game marketing mix strategy and a quite surprised inside set of principles of planning a mobile game marketing campaign. It is not surprised that the executive agreed that influencer marketing is their strongest strategy because of its results. Since the information conducted from the interview is a match up with the case secondary information analysis, the case study discussion is considered reliable and valid. Moreover, the findings of case study and the in-depth interview provide a deeper understanding of the research topic.

## **4.2 Survey Response**

Questionnaires survey targets social media active users and game players. The survey consists of ten questions including one qualitative question. Questionnaires survey was conducted via online platform survey monkey for a period of twelve days in return of 87 responses in total with margin error of eleven percentage with 95 percent of confidence level.

The study aims to get 100 survey responses. It is a regret that there are only 87 responses. However, the survey receives many valuable responses for the qualitative question.

The survey result data and data descriptive statistics are presented in following graphics.

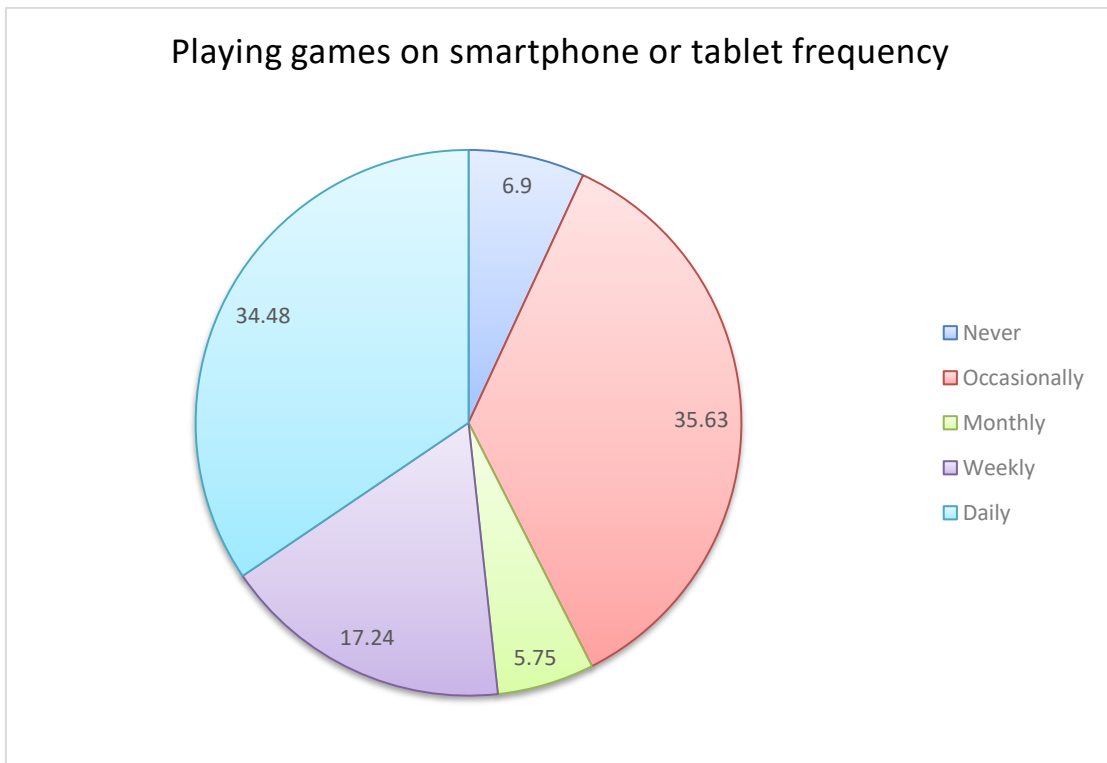


Figure 4.2 Playing games on smartphone or tablet frequency

**Note (for following tables)** Rarely (1 to 2 times) Occasionally (3 to 9 times) Often (at least 10 times)

| Answer Choices | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Never          | 71        | 81.61      |
| Rarely         | 13        | 14.94      |
| Occasionally   | 3         | 3.45       |

|       |   |   |
|-------|---|---|
| Often | 0 | 0 |
|-------|---|---|

*Table 4.1 Download a mobile game because of website banner ad in 2016*

| Answer Choices | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Never          | 68        | 78.16      |
| Rarely         | 16        | 18.39      |
| Occasionally   | 3         | 3.45       |
| Often          | 0         | 0          |

*Table 4.2 Download a mobile game because of website video ad in 2016*

| Answer Choices | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Never          | 68        | 79.07      |
| Rarely         | 15        | 17.44      |
| Occasionally   | 3         | 3.49       |

|       |   |   |
|-------|---|---|
| Often | 0 | 0 |
|-------|---|---|

Table 4.3 Download a mobile game because of in-game banner ad in 2016

(There are totally 86 responses for this question, one skipped the question.)

| Answer Choices | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Never          | 60        | 68.97      |
| Rarely         | 21        | 24.14      |
| Occasionally   | 4         | 4.6        |
| Often          | 2         | 2.3        |

Table 4.4 Download a mobile game because of in-game video ad in 2016

| Answer Choices | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Never          | 21        | 24.14      |
| Rarely         | 31        | 35.63      |



|              |    |       |
|--------------|----|-------|
| Occasionally | 29 | 33.33 |
| Often        | 6  | 6.9   |

*Table 4.5 Download a mobile game because of friends references in 2016*

| Answer Choices | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Never          | 45        | 51.72      |
| Rarely         | 28        | 32.18      |
| Occasionally   | 13        | 14.94      |
| Often          | 1         | 1.15       |

*Table 4.6 Download a mobile game because of Social Media in 2016*

| Answer Choices | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Never          | 57        | 65.52      |

|              |    |       |
|--------------|----|-------|
| Rarely       | 15 | 17.24 |
| Occasionally | 13 | 14.94 |
| Often        | 2  | 2.3   |

Table 4.7 Download a mobile game because of video on video-sharing platform in 2016

| Answer Choices | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Never          | 47        | 54.02      |
| Rarely         | 27        | 31.03      |
| Occasionally   | 11        | 12.64      |
| Often          | 2         | 2.3        |

Table 4.8 Download a mobile game because of blog post or article in 2016

|                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |      |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Figure/Measurement | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.10 |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|

|                    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Minimum            | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Maximum            | 5.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 |
| Median             | 4.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Mean               | 3.37 | 1.22 | 1.25 | 1.24 | 1.40 | 2.23 | 1.66 | 1.54 | 1.63 |
| Standard Deviation | 1.43 | 0.49 | 0.51 | 0.50 | 0.69 | 0.89 | 0.77 | 0.83 | 0.79 |

*Table 4.9 Survey sample descriptive statistics*

Codes: Never (1) Occasionally (2) Monthly (3) Weekly (4) Daily (5); Never (1) Rarely (2) Occasionally (3) Often (4)

The final question of the survey is an open-ended question concern the responder's opinion of preferred mobile game advertisement. The qualitative question got 31 responses of total 87 responses. In total of 31 opinions, four of them responded with no advertisement makes them download the game, four addressed their choices based on the game brands, stories and qualities and one mentioning television advertisement. Hence, there are 22 valuable responses expressing the responders' mobile games marketing concerns. The key findings are presented in the following figure.

| Advertisement Forms              | Quantities of choices |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Word of Mouth/ Friends reference | 12                    |
| App Stores Top lists             | 2                     |
| Mobile ads networks              | 6                     |
| Youtuber/Blogger/Influencer      | 3                     |
| Social Media                     | 2                     |
| Games Review                     | 3                     |

*Table 4.10 Players opinions on mobile games marketing*

From the survey, the study finds out that a mobile advertisement rarely drives users to download a mobile game. For instance, only three out of 87 survey participants occasionally (three to nine times) download a mobile game because of website banner or video advertisement, four of them occasionally download a game because of an in-app video advertisement. On the other hand, the most popular approach is friends references with 29 (occasionally download) out of 87. This is considered one of most popular approach that can make a game become a rival hit. It is not surprised that respondents are also affected by Social Media (occasionally 13 out of 87) and Blog posts or online articles (occasionally 11 out of 87) and videos on video sharing channel such as YouTube (occasionally 13 out of 87).

In addition, outcomes of the users' opinions on what advertising attracts them to download a mobile game suggest that marketing does not have a big impact on long-term users' behaviors in mobile game industry. It can help the game earn a number of downloads but it does not make sure that they stay for a long time if the game is not interesting enough. Since mobile game industry is a highly competitive market, success lies on both the game quality and its marketing mix. Social Media is a popular and effective marketing tool for many industry, however, in the survey last question, only two of the respondents strongly agreed that it works for them. On the other hand, three of the respondents make their choices based on the game reviews and two prefer game app top lists. However, in order to have positive reviews and high ranks, the game needs to be interesting or already has huge number of downloads. Moreover, six of the respondents agree that interesting advertisement on mobile ads networks which include website mobile ads and in-app ads work for them. Meanwhile, three respondents mentioned that a post or video of their favorite figures such as blogger, youtuber and actor can make them try on the game. In additional, it is interesting that the most popular factor to drive a user to download and play a game is word of mouth. It is argued that word of mouth or friends reference is a form of influencer marketing in which friends are the influencers.

### **4.3 Research's trustworthiness**

Guba argued that a trustworthiness of a qualitative research is discussed by four factors including credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. (Shenton, 2004, p64) Credibility is considered as internal validity while transferability expresses external validity. Dependable is strongly agreed as reliability in qualitative research by many researchers. The last factor, confirmability is in preference to objectivity.

A qualitative research is considered credible if the research meets the requirements of adopting well established research methodologies, applying random sampling with tri-

angulation involving the use of different data collecting methods, tactics to ensure honesty in respondents, discussion with research supervisor description of the phenomenon with examination. Since the research topic focuses on mobile marketing in mobile game industry, the researcher after discussed with the research supervisor about his goal and his approach method, researcher has chosen suitable research questions in order to explore research's objective. The research's objective and questions are clearly understood hence suitable research methodologies are applied. Firstly, the research studies the phenomenon through available public data to deliver a quality description of the addressed topic, then the description is examined by a relevant case and following with a studying concerned customers' perspective. Even though sampling method is purposive sampling, the respondents of the survey are random and the confidence of honesty is ensured since the survey is accessed online and freely. The in-depth interviewee is chosen based on the case study however he has the right to refuse or accept the conversation. The process of conducting the research has proved the research's credibility.

According to Merriam, transferability of a research is "concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations". (Shenton, 2004, p69) In another word, if the results of the study can be applied to a wider population, it is transferable. According to this definition, this study is considered transferable. In this study, description of the process of launching a campaign is given with possible available advertising methods, following with a real case investigation and finally a finding regarding consumers' perspective is presented. Reliability and validity of this study quantitative data is proved.

In qualitative research, reliability is referred as dependability while confirmability expresses objectivity. If the study obtained a similar result when it was conducted again with the same methods and same participants, the study is considered dependable. It is suggested that in order to confirm the research dependability and confirmability, the study process has to be explained and reported in details of research design and methodologies, data approaching and gathering and the study effectiveness evaluation. Since

this study is conducted in a well-established structure and is reported clearly in every step, its dependability and confirmability are guaranteed.

#### **4.4 Summary**

In conclusion, this chapter is a presentation of data analysis results including in-depth interview, questionnaires survey consisting of both quantitative data and qualitative data. The interviewee profile and interview organizing process are presented along with the findings of the interview in the first part of the chapter. In the second part, both findings of quantitative survey questions and qualitative question are provided after explanation of survey conducting process. Both interview and survey data are analyzed by descriptive statistical methodology. Finally, reliability and validity of the research's trustworthiness are discussed. All of the research questions have been answered and the research has been explored the research topic with discussion and explanation.

## **Chapter V**

### **5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

This final chapter discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the thesis. Theoretical implications part presents the key findings of the thesis. In addition, practical implications part discusses the situation of applying the research data results in the field. Finally, thesis limitations and conclusion are presented.

#### **5.1 Theoretical findings and implications**

This study topic concerns mobile marketing strategies for mobile games. The research focuses on mobile marketing strategies and advertising methods of launching a campaign for a mobile game. An understanding of mobile marketing mix for mobile games leads to the findings of its impacts on users' behaviors.

This research finding provides theory implications for academics as a document of mobile marketing strategies for mobile games. As described and explained in chapter two, mobile marketing mix includes Game Testing, Soft Launch, Mobile Advertisements, Communication Channels, Game Reviews and Burst Campaign. Game Testing falls more into development category however it is one of marketing approaching method to create a first interesting image of the game, reach to new audience and start building up a community of the game and players. On the other hand, Soft Launch plays an important factor both in developing and marketing since a Soft Launch is only different from a Real Launch of its launching market. Within the period of Soft Launch, mobile marketing campaigns are normally launched inside the chosen market. In addition, a successful Soft Launch can make the game go 'rival', for example, Pokemon Go. Game Testing and Soft Launch are considered as Pre-Launch marketing strategy. Since most of the survey respondents expressed that word of mouth and friend references are their most driven method, the game reputation needs to be spread widely before its release.



Since one of the most popular advertising method is Mobile Advertisements in which mobile ads network and cross-promotion are commonly used, it is essential to pay attention to the advertisements materials and concepts. In this research, communication channels marketing mix include social media, forum and influencer marketing. As studied in chapter two, Best Fiends is an example of successfully applying communication channels marketing strategy. By focusing on influencer marketing besides building up a community of the game and the players, the game has about 45 million downloads in return. A mobile game is also similar to a movie or a book, reviews play an important part as a driven audience purchase factor. As finding in the survey, a number of participants strongly agreed that they are willing to try on the game after reading the game reviews. Since it is impossible for developers to control their games reviews from users, it is essential to approach the professional game reviewers besides improving the games' quality. The last marketing strategy the research mentioned is burst campaign. Since a burst campaign is launched in a short time with the only objective of getting to the top rankings, it tends to spend a huge investment and marketing concept and method are chosen based on the target audience characteristics.

According to the literature, the most common and effective marketing methods include mobile advertisements network, social media and influencer marketing. It is argued that mobile advertisements network especially in-game advertisements success is decided based on three elements of the genres of the games, the games business models and the advertising strategy. If the game is a strategy game, it is argued that in-game ads raise user retention, meanwhile, it is better to show less in casual game. Moreover, if the game business model is income-from-advertising, it is no harm for using many advertising which is exactly opposite for in-app purchase business model game. Therefore, it is suggested that an in-game advertising strategy is essential. It is important to how and when to display an ad. In additional, the study also found out that influencer marketing is considered the most effective campaign for mobile game. Since the campaign characteristic is based on the trust between the audience and their favorite influencer (youtuber), it is effective reaching out to the engaged mobile gaming players.

## 5.2 Practical findings and implications

Research's findings are considered as an informative article of mobile game mobile marketing strategies for mobile developers. In particular, findings from case study and questionnaires survey can help developers understand more of the relationships between the advertising methods and audience behaviors.

According to the survey, most of participants' decisions does not affected by the mobile game advertisements. It is clear that quality of a game has the biggest impact on the players' behaviors. However, according to the case study, Influencer Marketing is one of the most effective advertising methods which involving campaigns featuring famous public figures such as youtubers or actors. Nowadays, not only mobile games but also consoles games have been using influencers such as youtubers to be a part of their marketing mix. In the survey, one participant also mentioned that advertisement featuring popular figures captured the audience. However, it is important to keep in mind that these campaigns run on a big budget. As a result of case study and survey, Mobile Advertisement Network advertising is also an effective mobile games marketing method. Mobile Advertisement Network includes mobile advertising and cross-promotion. Mobile advertising includes advertisements on a mobile webpage, inside an application and inside a mobile game application. On the other hand, cross-promotion involves advertisements of a mobile game in another mobile game of a same game studio hence cross-promotion is free. In addition of low budget advantage, mobile advertisement network and cross-promotion also allow developers and marketers to be creative with the advertisement approaches and concepts in order to make the players feel excited. For example, Best Fiends rewards the players with in-app valuable items after watching the advertisements. According to the survey, the most effective approach to get one interested in the game is word of mouth/friend references. The research finds out that community is the key factor for a long-term success. A community means connections between the game and the players. A community is built up via social media and other communication channels such as game forum, youtube or in-game forum. Hence Social Media is

considered as an important factor of the marketing mix. Social Media includes all the activities of the game campaigns on social platforms. For instance, one does not purposely visit a game social platform. He visits when his favorite figure or favorite following mentions the page. In another word, Social Media is an important feature of any mobile campaign. It is important to communicate, interact and engage with every single player and audience. By involving in gaming-life of players, a game-player community is build up, word of mouth is the following outcome.

### **5.3 Limitations**

This study associates with few limitations. First, this research is a studying of mobile marketing strategies for mobile game at the present time. The research also investigates one of mobile game hits in the present time. Hence in the future when new mobile technology and modern concept are introduced, some of this research concept will be uninformative. Second, it is a regret that the questionnaires survey only had 87 respondents. The result would be more generalizable if the survey had more participants.

### **5.4 Conclusion**

Summary, this research focuses on mobile marketing campaigns in mobile games industry as well as figures out the relationship between mobile marketing campaigns and audience behaviors. The study includes five chapters of introduction, literature, research methodologies, data analysis and conclusion.

Main findings address that Mobile Advertisements Network (including Cross-Promotion), Social Media and Influencer Marketing are the most effective methods. Even though a game has to face too many competitors, there are also many effective marketing methods and strategies to be standout in the crowds. Available advertising and marketing mixes allow developers to make creative and rich concepts marketing campaigns. While mobile advertisements network success lies on the game genres, business model

and advertising strategy, social media and influencer works together to build trust and reach out the potential customers. The essential keys of an effective campaign consist of campaign objectives, campaign cost per install and lessons from previous campaign. Moreover, the key of success concerns building a community of the game and the players. However, players' decisions are most driven by the game quality.

In chapter three and four, process of conducting the research, collecting data and analyzing data are clearly presented. In addition, chapter four also presents discussion of the research reliability and validity. Finally, chapter five discusses of the research findings and implications as well as the research limitations of its data collection.

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## Appendix 1. Interview

Giang: I saw the very popular 'Don't download Best fiend YouTube' video ad. What other types of advertising methods do you use to promote the game? Do you use for example Influencer, Cross-promotion, Social Media?

Petri: We focus on YouTube/Influencer marketing and it's where we think we have the best chance of winning, but the entire marketing mix is a combination of cross-promotion, social media, mobile ads, outdoor ads and even occasional TV advertising.

Giang: What do you think is important to know before starting a mobile marketing campaign?

Petri: Define what you want to achieve, what means it worked for you. Define how you can quantify that, in our case that's usually cost per install. Then do a campaign. Look at the results. If it worked, do more of those. If it didn't, do less of that.

Giang: Can you shortly explain the process you go through to get the campaign launched?

Petri: Depends per campaign. TV ads are very different from mobile user acquisition, which is very different from youtuber campaigns.

Giang: How do you decide When to launch a campaign?

Petri: We usually run campaigns to match with game updates. That way, each campaign can have a specific 'current' theme. We do three week update cycles, so there's opportunities to run campaigns pretty often. For example, right now we just launched a Halloween update in Best Fiends and the youtuber campaigns are based on that content. New game launches are obviously backed by much bigger campaigns.

Giang Vu

Giang: Which mobile advertising methods do you think have given you the best results? What has been the most cost effective? (Influencer, Cross-promotion, Social Media or any other method)

Petri: Now that we've been working with youtuber influencers for about two years, we are starting to be pretty good at that and find it the most effective way for us.

## **Appendix 2. Questinnaires Survey**

### The impact of mobile advertising methods for mobile games on consumers

Question 1: Do you play games on your smartphone or tablet?

- Never
- Occasionally
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Daily

Question 2: Have you downloaded a mobile game because of a banner ad on a website within 2016?

- Never
- Rarely (1 – 2 times)
- Occasionally (3 – 9 times)
- Often (10 to more times)

Question 3: Have you downloaded a mobile game because of a video ad on a website within 2016?

- Never



- Rarely (1 – 2 times)
- Occasionally (3 – 9 times)
- Often (10 to more times)

Question 4: Have you downloaded a mobile game because of a banner ad in another game within 2016?

- Never
- Rarely (1 – 2 times)
- Occasionally (3 – 9 times)
- Often (10 to more times)

Question 5: Have you downloaded a mobile game because of a video ad in another game within 2016?

- Never
- Rarely (1 – 2 times)
- Occasionally (3 – 9 times)
- Often (10 to more times)

Question 6: Have you downloaded a mobile game because a friend referred it within 2016?

- Never
- Rarely (1 – 2 times)
- Occasionally (3 – 9 times)
- Often (10 to more times)

Question 7: Have you downloaded a mobile game because of a Social Media post (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc) within 2016?

- Never
- Rarely (1 – 2 times)
- Occasionally (3 – 9 times)
- Often (10 to more times)

Question 8: Have you downloaded a mobile game because of a video on a video-sharing website (YouTube, Vimeo) within 2016?

- Never
- Rarely (1 – 2 times)
- Occasionally (3 – 9 times)
- Often (10 to more times)

Question 9: Have you downloaded a mobile game because you read a Blog post or an article about it within 2016?

- Never
- Rarely (1 – 2 times)
- Occasionally (3 – 9 times)
- Often (10 to more times)

Question 10: Describe a mobile advertising method(s) that works for you.(Optional)

- None.
- Word to mouth, e.g. My friends know what kind of a gamer I am.
- From friends, going through Play store.
- In game ads occasionally. Anything outside the mobile (like sitting on the computer and seeing a mobile ad) doesn't really work.
- Word of mouth is definitely the best for me.

- Refer a friend or a blogger/youtuber but I haven't downloaded a mobile game this year so I can't answer anything but never on all questions apart from the first one.
- Video ads in games.
- I download games i read about on review sites.
- A brand, band or other thing that I recognize (Marvel, Iron Maiden, etc...).
- None. I don't click on ads nor do I download anything easily.
- Mostly mouth to mouth, but occasionally I'll see an ad that sparks my interest. The ads usually contain in-game footage and list of a few key features I look for in games.
- Word of mouth, but I rarely even game on my phone.
- Finding it through friends. Most ads drive me away from a game.
- Not exactly advertising, but the positive user reviews generated for games similar to the ones that I enjoy will often have me go through the efforts of trying a new game.
- Top Ten lists, lists in general.
- Word of mouth.
- I decide based on the reviews and plot of the game.
- Just post some memes done right, a la the sonic twitter.
- Good game play, shooting, sexy girls.
- TV ads.
- It's quite useful to make the product more popular or considered as a way to make money. However, mostly i and everyone i know all find it annoying and time-consuming because it cannot be removed even being reported many times ago.
- Recommendations from friends.
- None really works, but what especially does not work is breaking whatever I am doing to force an ad onto me. I will be too annoyed to actually consider the

game, and I might even stop using the app, hurting both the game maker and the advertiser.

- YouTube video and game ad.
- Product placement. E.g. Coke bottles in a game.
- In-game video ads for reward works for me best. Those are the only one I would consider influencing me to download a game. Main issue being that after a short while, they tend to repeat. They also most likely come from the same few large game developers. So always Mobile Strike, Clash Royale and so on . But sometimes an original one shows up and may be interesting.
- 'No Advertising' works best.
- Friend recommendation and video ads.
- Word of mouth/recommendation banner ad within social media/website.
- I actually, do not play any mobile games. Nevertheless, as a Marketing student, I do believe in the impact of stimulus and word-of-mouth advertising, both in the entertainment and any other kind of online experience.