

Casual/Mobile Gaming

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Mobile game popularity with women

The report also found that a full sixty-five percent of mobile game revenue was generated by female wireless subscribers. According to the report, female wireless gamers comprised 72 percent of revenue generated by puzzle and strategy games, compared to the 28 percent generated by men in the same

category.

Dobson, Jason. "Industry News." Puzzle Titels, Women Drive Mobile Game Market. 26 June 2006. Gamasutra.com. 21 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/php-bin/news_index.php?story=9852>.

Women vs girl, causal vs hard-core

The differences between girl gamers and women gamers are often forgotten. “Casual games have surprised the market,” said Carrie Heeter, Michigan State University. “One thing we have to take into account is that women have a lot of other things to do compared to teenage males and females,” Hayes interjected. Romine agreed and explained, “Casual games are easy to learn and hard to master.” They are also easily accessible and often include social elements, which she equates with WoW and the Xbox 360 Live function in games like Halo.

Dillon, Beth. "Features." Event wrap up: Girls 'n' Games. 18 May 2006. Gamasutra.com. 22 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20060518/dillon_01.shtml>.

Casual game market

The panelists mention the oft-quoted demographic of 40 year-old women, but are in agreement that they are really designing for a much broader group... conversation turns to the issue of getting women more involved in the development process, particularly since they make up a huge portion of the casual game audience. Dave Rohrl explains that he focuses particularly on the first 2 minutes of the experience, and makes sure that the player can immediately grasp the gameplay and start feeling successful within

the period... Casual gamers are all about the independent, single-player experience. Duncan agrees that most casual gamers are probably not looking for an ultra-competitive experience, saying I don't think i've ever heard my mom say, I wanna go kick someone's ass!

Tinney, Wade. "Features." Postcard from the Casual Games Conference. 03 Aug 2005. Gamasutra.com. 21 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20050803/tinney_01.shtml>.

Casual Games, Size, Hits, Women

According to CGA numbers in a DFC Intelligence joint market report, the casual games industry made \$713 million (USD) in 2005 and revenue is estimated to grow to \$1.56 billion (USD) in 2008...

...The casual games industry is still hit driven. 35% of downloadable sales went to the top 5 games, 60% went to the top 10, and 75% went to the top 20. Effectively, games that don't reach the top 20 mark lose out on a great amount of sales.

Dillon, Beth. "Features." Event Wrap-Up: Casualty Seattle. 06 July 2006. Gamasutra.com. 21 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20060706/dillon_01.shtml>.

Attracting Women to mobile (casual) games

“I think you need to segment with care,” said Gosen, cautiously. “If you take a game like 24, we know from focus groups that women are very motivated to play that game, because they have a strong relationship with TV series - some would like an even stronger relationship with [lead character Jack] Bauer - but the game design is such that it's a mission-based game with challenging puzzles. And we know that style that motivates females is puzzle, card, and simple type games.”

“They're still challenging, of course. Simple does not equal easy. So what we have to do is make sure that the game design and the concept and genre appeals to them. This is not about going out and doing overtly targeted games to women. That is not the answer. You look at

the success of Tetris, or our own Jewel Quest, and you can see that when you actually deliver a quality puzzle-based game, you will recruit a significant number of women to that game genre.”

Sure, a game like 24 may appeal to the female demographic when they're forced to play the game in a focus group, but how do you get the average consumer to give the game a chance? “We all have a role to educate, and if you're only 5% penetrated, you clearly need to do a lot of education,” said Gosen

Cifaldi, Frank. "Features." Bite-Sized Pieces of Mobile Fun: I-play CEO David Gosen on Mobile Game Design. 07 Mar 2006. Gamasutra.com. 21 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20060307/cifaldi_01.shtml>.

Exclusion/Alienation

"We're **oddballs** if we play."

Gaming culture that excludes women.

"This feature is the proverbial straw-breaker. I have sat back and watched women objectified by a company like Ubisoft that supports a Hooter's waitress-like institution called Frag Dolls (supposedly these glamour shots young gals in tube tops really play games), as well as year after year having to deal with offensive gaming articles and gaming advertising that belittles and degrades women. Not to mention the games that do like the Grand Theft Auto series."

Douglas, Nikki. "Featured Articles." The future of games does not include women. 05 Apr 2006. Grrlgamer.com. 15 Oct 2006 <<http://www.grrlgamer.com/article.php?t=futureofgames>>.

Women excluded from vision of game culture.

"In the April 2006 issue of WIRED magazine, Will Wright, creator of The Sims acts as guest editor and explores the myriad ways that games and gaming will create a new world order in a feature containing an article entitled "Dream Machines". But Will, as well as the other contributors left out more than half of the population: women. "

Douglas, Nikki. "Featured Articles." The future of games does not include women. 05 Apr 2006. Grrlgamer.com. 15 Oct 2006 <<http://www.grrlgamer.com/article.php?t=futureofgames>>.

Male control of video games.

"It's obvious, when playing most video games, who's in charge here: men. Many titles are the video game equivalent of beer commercials. I mean, c'mon, let's take a recent game release, Dead or Alive Beach Volleyball, in which there is a bunch of women in bikinis with big fake boobs bouncing up and down in virtual sand."

Brail, Stephanie. "Featured Articles." Why games need grrl power. 28 Jan 2003. Grrlgamer.com. 15 Oct 2006 <<http://www.grrlgamer.com/article.php?t=grrlpower>>.

Gamers vs Players, Women %s

It's also important to note that the dearth of women gamers is somewhat overblown in the first place. When we as an industry decry the absence of women in gaming, we're forgetting that 43% of PC gamers are women already. (Only 19% of action gamers are women, though, and I'm pretty sure that's where this women-don't-play idea comes from.) We don't

have as much catching up to do as you might think.

Phillips, Andrea. "Features." Soapbox: ARGs and How to Appeal to Female Gamers. 29 Nov 2005. Gamasutra.com. 21 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20051129/phillips_01.shtml>.

Fight for the term gamer

"Girls gamers" are struggling with both the term itself and the imbalance of putting females in a position of competing with males in order to own being a "gamer." Similarly, stereotyping by gender, both male and female, can lead to missteps in game design that alienate the targeted genders unintentionally.

Dillon, Beth. "Features." Event wrap up: Girls 'n' Games. 18 May 2006. Gamasutra.com. 22 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20060518/dillon_01.shtml>.

Actively kept out

"[Women are] gaming in an industry that actively tries to keep them out," commented Taylor [TL Taylor of the University of Copenhagen]. "We're oddballs if we play." There is a gap that needs to be fixed, panelists agreed. Games are recoded through use, and not just cross-cultural, but also cross-gender.

Dillon, Beth. "Features." Event wrap up: Girls 'n' Games. 18 May 2006. Gamasutra.com. 22 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20060518/dillon_01.shtml>.

"Disenfranchising"

Margaret Wallace (Skunk Studios), also on the panel, railed against the industry for disenfranchising women. "There's a push against women gamers from within the game industry," she said. Games have been made "with puke-humor" thought to be edgy, she said, wondering why developers don't see the direct correlation between the "sophomoric" humor put into the games and women not liking them. "They treat women as a mysterious nut to crack." Wallace's advice: "Make a game mechanic accessible."

Duffy, Jill. "Features." Games for Women, Games by Women: Women Celebrate games, Gamers, Developers in San Francisco. 06 Mar 2006. Gamasutra.com. 21 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20060306/duffy_01.shtml>.

“If we could get it right, we could add **\$1 billion** of sales per year,” Gardner predicted: EA’s current annual turnover is around **\$3 billion**.

Industry Wanting Female Gamers

Wanting female gamers

A longterm discussion point, Gardner said EA’s internal research already underlines the important of the sector. Over 70 percent of purchasers of 40 million-strong The Sims franchise are women, younger than 25. Equally, more than 70 percent of the million-strong audience for the company’s subscription casual games site, pogo.com, is made up of women over the age of 35.

The trick in both cases has been perfect execution, both in terms of gameplay and community features. This isn’t always the case however, as Gardner explained with the example of The Sims Online, which failed to take account that players of The Sims were getting younger and hence didn’t have access to creditcards. This combined with gameplay issues meant despite being based on such a successful franchise, it never had more than 50,000 subscribers.

But there are also structural problems to overcome before reaching women gamers. While 90 percent of teenage boys play games, only 40 percent of teenage girls do. And, of those, most lose interest around six months to a year of starting to play games. The answer, Gardner explained, wasn’t pink games, but games made by women. As he pointed out, four of EA’s 11 global studios - including Fiona Sperry, who heads up EA’s UK studio which includes Criterion - are now run by women.

But what no one argues about is the potential of the market. “If we could get it right, we could add \$1 billion of sales per year,” Gardner predicted: EA’s current annual turnover is around \$3 billion. — EA’s EVP & COO David Gardner, as summarized by Jon Jordan

Jordan, Jon . “Industry News.” EIEF: EA’s Gardner on seven predictions for success. 21 Aug 2006. Gamasutra.com. 22 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/php-bin/news_index.php?story=10562>.

Co-Op Play

“In the World of Warcraft window, you can see lots of husband/wife teams,” said Sikora.

Supporting roles

Lisa Sikora from Microsoft, also spoke of the complementary roles in her game playing. She and her husband play Half-Life 2, but she said, “I want a supporting role. I want to play Alyx while my husband saves the world.” Lazzaro followed up this point with the fact that women often look for the word “co-op” on a game’s package when making a purchasing decision. And both Lazzaro and Sikora, in fielding an audience question about World of Warcraft, defended the game’s ability to appeal to women.

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Duffy, Jill. “Features.” *Games for Women, Games by Women: Women Celebrate games, Gamers, Developers in San Francisco*. 06 Mar 2006. Gamasutra.com. 21 Oct 2006 <[http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20060306/duffy_01.](http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20060306/duffy_01.shtml)

shtml>.

Women and MMORPG

In terms of employment, 50.0% of respondents were shown to work full time, 22.2% were full-time students, and 13% of female players referred to themselves as “homemaker.” Additionally, the number of female MMO players seems to increase with age, surpassing the number of males in the 23-28 age range, and in each subsequent age range (Yee, 2006). Yee argues that this data dispels the notion that all gamer players are unemployed, male, and young; rather games have a universal appeal.

Other findings from Yee are that 60.9% of respondents had played for at least 10 contiguous hours, this effect being roughly equivalent along age groups. 15.8% of men and 59.8% of women play MMOs with a romantic partner, while 25.5% of men and 39.5% of women play with a family member, suggesting that women are primarily being introduced to MMO games by a spouse or family member. Most importantly, Yee points out, “...the data demonstrate that MMORPGs appeal to a very wide demographic and that this appeal is strong and elicits high time investment from users.” (Yee, 2006).

Clark, Neils. “Features.” *Addiction and the Structural Characteristics of Massively Multiplayer Online Games*. 22 Aug 2006. Gamasutra.com. 21 Oct 2006 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20060822/clark_03.shtml>.