GUR Summit 2015

Communities: Advancing applied research, connecting dedicated researchers
Morning Schedule

TRACK 1
Check In & Breakfast
8:30a
Welcome, Intros, & Agenda
Jordan Lynn
Summit Chair

9:00a
Research Life-Cycle for Skylanders
Michele Cabeen & Jeremy Le,
Activision

9:15a
[PANEL] Education & Training Roundtable: The Next Generation
Led by Adams Greenwood-Ericksen & Matthew White & Noirin Curran & Kacey MissKelley

9:45a
Qualitative Post-Launch Analysis of Game Reviews
Ian Livingston, Ubisoft Montreal

10:45a
[PANEL] Recruiting Tactics For A Modern Audience
Led by Klayton Vorlick & Karl Steiner & Nathan Cook & Steven Shulmister

11:15a
Mobile Diary Studies
Florian Leroy, Ubisoft Editorial Lab

11:45a
More Brains: GUR in PvZ Garden Warfare
Veronica Zammito, EA

TRACK 2

Rage Quitting: Predictors & Long-Term Impacts
Elizabeth Schmidlin, Sony America

3:15a
UX CYA FTW – Triangulation, Flexibility & Integration: Making Bioshock series awesome
Bill Gardner, Xperienced Points

9:45a

Lunch:
Pasta Bar
<table>
<thead>
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<th>TRACK 1</th>
<th>TRACK 2</th>
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| Know Your Enemy: Combatants in Destiny  
Jennifer Ash, Bungie | Skill & Progression in Forza Motorsport 4  
Thomas Debeauvais, Microsoft Research |
| [PANEL] Destiny User Research Q&A  
Led by Jennifer Ash & John Hopson & Nick Hillyer, Bungie | [LAB] Sony Lab Tour  
Led by Justin Tanimura  
Early signup in the Summit Lobby |
| User Profiling  
Anders Drachen, Aalborg University | [LAB] Practical Demonstration  
Usability 1:1 & Group Playtest  
Early signup in the Summit Lobby |
| Break | Break |
| Games User Research At Ubisoft Montreal  
Eric Hazan, Ubisoft Montreal | [PANEL] Lab Spaces & Lab Setup  
| Dissecting the Dragon: UXR for Dragon Age: Inquisition  
James Berg, EA | How to Measure Individual Differences in Cognition, Gaming Skill, and Comprehension  
Stephen Hamilton, Sony America |
| Break | Break |
| GUR SIG Update  
David Tisserand | UX Invaders: We come in peace!  
How we can collaborate with developers to frame “fun”  
[Keynote speaker & final talk]  
Celia Hodent, Epic Games |
Speakers

Research Life- Cycle for Skylanders
Michele Z. Cabeen & Jeremy Le, Activision User Research, Activision
In this talk, Skylanders’ researchers will provide an overview of the research and usability work that goes into the Skylanders franchise – a revolutionary franchise combining video games and physical toys, as well as web companion games, providing unique challenges for player research.

Rage Quitting: Predictors & Long-Term Impacts
Elizabeth Schmidlin, User Researcher, Sony America
Rage quitting is a phenomenon with which many of us are intimately familiar. In this talk, Liz Schmidlin will provide insight into how a survey based on the Social Presence in Gaming Questionnaire was used to investigate factors that predicted an upcoming rage-quit, and the long-term impacts the presence of rage- quitting had on player behaviors in game.

Education & Training Roundtable: The Next Generation [Panel]
Led by Adams Greenwood-Ericksen & Matthew White & Noirin Curran & Kacey MissKelley
Directed by educators, this panel discusses the gap between current user research professionals and up-and-coming students, interns, and associate researchers. The panel discusses the establishment of new courses, training, and programs. Get a chance to shape the next generation of user research professionals in this participatory discussion of education and training, and all the headaches with which that process is often fraught.

Qualitative Post-Launch Analysis of Game Reviews
Ian Livingston, User Research Project Manager, Ubisoft Montreal
This talk discusses the development and implementation of a method for qualitatively analyzing textual content for reviews of games post-launch. The grounded-theory approach provides a concrete method, and the ROI that such an approach can produce. Insights and lessons learned from Ubisoft’s implementations of the methodology are discussed. As a take-away, the talk provides a framework for implementing such a process into projects spanning a variety of scales.
Speakers

**UX CYA FTW – Triangulation, Flexibility & Integration: Making Bioshock series awesome**
Bill Gardner, Founder and Chief Analyst, Xperienced Points

Having spent over twelve years in various design roles with Irrational Games, Bill has a wealth of experience with the BioShock series. This intensive talk will walk attendees through the process of designing a game of this magnitude, and will specifically focus on how data triangulation, usability, and playtesting were used in conjunction with development to consistently make the BioShock games heavy hitters.

**Recruiting Tactics For A Modern Audience**
Led by Klayton Vorlick & Karl Steiner & Nathan Cook & Steven Shulmister

Recruitment is a major issue amongst UR practitioners, and one that is only further muddied by the concept of ‘genre’. In this talk, the panelists discuss how different companies have successfully, or unsuccessfully, selected and recruited participants to conduct user research. As sampling is critical to the internal validity of any research study, this topic will be intimately familiar to attendees. Take-aways include best practices for recruitment across game genre and testing methodologies.

**Mobile Diary Studies**
Florian Leroy, User Researcher, Ubisoft Editorial User Research Lab

Longitudinal study of mobile games in a laboratory environment presents a complex and novel problem. As mobile games become not only more pervasive but more complex, how do we assess the often long-term gameplay sessions required of players in a traditional laboratory environment? This talk presents a novel methodology for performing user research on mobile platforms. The talk will discuss Mobile Diary Studies, a method of longitudinal research for mobile games, and how this study methodology is employed at Ubisoft.

**More Brains: GUR in PvZ Garden Warfare**
Veronica Zammitto, Games User Research Lead, Electronic Arts

While testing early and often may be an industry mantra, significant user research often occurs very near the end of production. The constraints of working within this period of development are not often discussed, but they pose unique challenges as mechanics and game systems are often locked down. This talk discusses Plants vs. Zombies: Garden Warfare, and particularly focuses on improvements made toward the end of the development process through rapid user research.
Speakers

Know Your Enemy: Combatants in Destiny
Jennifer Ash, User Researcher, Bungie
One of the most anticipated games in recent memory, Destiny was a huge undertaking that has certainly generated interest and discussion. In this talk, Jennifer discusses the user research that was undertaken to refine the enemy AI. The talk will span methodological, refinement, and recruitment topics, and will offer a unique “look in” to user research on one of the most ambitious projects to date.

Skill & Progression in Forza Motorsport 4
Thomas Debeauvais, UC Irvine / Microsoft Research
Sloping difficulty curves are a hallmark of well-designed games, but in many cases, players customize difficulty themselves. This is the case with the Forza series, where players can choose to deeply customize their game difficulty. Little work has been done to elucidate exactly what precipitates an elective increase in difficulty by players, and this talk offers some insight provided by intensive study of Forza Motorsport 4. A framework for assessing elective difficulty in games will also be discussed.

Games User Research At Ubisoft Montreal
Eric Hazan, Senior Analyst, Ubisoft Montreal
Ubisoft is a major industry player and producer of some of the most recognizable franchises in the contemporary games industry. As a massive player in both research and development, they have a major role in driving user research forward. This introspective talk will focus on methods, challenges, and procedures for performing user research at Ubisoft Montreal.

User Profiling
Anders Drachen, Aalborg University
Both in statistics and data science, user profiling serves to make huge amounts of data usable by grouping users into ‘profiles’. While relatively new to user research, this kind of clustering is extremely useful in making sense of large amounts of user data. Profiling methods and their applications across numerous projects will be described, and a framework for cradle-to-grave profiling will be demonstrated.
Speakers

Lab Spaces & Lab Setup [Panel]
One of the most interesting things about the diverse practice of games user research is the variety of laboratory environments and spaces in which our work is conducted. In this panel, Shawn will discuss with the panelists and the audience the more mechanical and logistical issues facing contemporary user researchers. Attendees will come away with an understanding of how various labs are set up, and more.

Dissecting the Dragon: UXR for Dragon Age: Inquisition
James Berg, Games User Researcher, Electronic Arts
Offering a perspective into Bioware and Electronic Arts’ user research processes, this talk will illustrate the methodologies and practices that went into user research for *Dragon Age: Inquisition*. Bioware is a company well-known for open communication with its diverse player base, and the idiosyncrasies of how this is weaved into the UR process will provide interesting insights for user researchers at all levels.

How to Measure Individual Differences in Cognition, Gaming Skill, and Comprehension
Stephen Hamilton, Sony America
Try as we might, we still are unable to replicate exactly the same experience across multiple players. Some of this ambiguity is due to the individual differences between our players, which is the subject of considerable scholarship. This talk will illustrate some of the fundamental individual differences in the playing of games, and how these affect our user research.

UX Invaders: We come in peace! How we can collaborate with developers to frame “fun”. [Keynote speaker & final talk]
Celia Hodent, Ph.D., UX Manager, Epic Games
Celia's talk will present a framework developed for the evaluation of user experience at Epic Games. Celia's evolving framework illustrates a collaborative and community-based approach to UX research developed in tandem with developers. She will discuss obstacles, the development of the framework, and the role of the UX professional in the development team. Consistent with this year's theme of "community", Celia's discussion will elucidate the role of the user researcher in the larger game development milieu.
Posters

UX Software Development: The Story of Harvey Giacome
Andrew Osborn
Full Sail User Experience Lab

Predicting Game Sales Using Reveal Trailers
Derek Ellis
Arizona State University Memory & Attention Control Laboratory

Sensors At Play: A Biometric Framework for Games
Dirk Janssen
NHTV University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands

UX Research Procedures – What, Why, and When
Jeff Kennedy
Full Sail User Experience Lab

Gaming & Console Glass: Perceptions & Challenges
William Shelstad
Penn State University

Exhibitors

Insights Meta is a market research gamification agency. We develop games for research applications, and provide full service research for game companies.

Survey Analytics is a suite of interconnected and easy-to-use information collection and analysis tools, including online surveys, mobile data collection, advanced analytics and data visualization.
EA is very proud to sponsor this year’s GUR summit once again.

Our UXResearch team is growing fast! We’ve got open positions in Vancouver, Orlando, California and Stockholm.

Check us out @ careers.ea.com
Thank You!

Thank you to all presenters, sponsors, exhibitors, volunteers, and attendees who make this conference happen.

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