

# **THE DECLINE OF MMOS**

**NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
CREATIVE AND MEDIA INDUSTRIES**

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## INTRODUCTION

- **10 YEARS** AGO, MMORPGS HAD A **BRIGHT** AND **EXCITING** FUTURE
- TODAY, THEIR PROSPECTS ARE **NOT** SO GREAT
- TO ATTRACT **MORE** AND **MORE** PLAYERS, THEY **DILUTED** THEIR GAMEPLAY
  - AND THEIR **CORE** AUDIENCE **DESERTED** THEM
- NOW THAT EVEN THESE **NEW** SOURCES OF PLAYERS ARE DRYING UP, THEY FACE **DECLINE**
- IN THIS TALK, I'LL OUTLINE THE MAIN **PROBLEMS** AND HOW TO **FIX** THEM
- **NOTE:** THE FIXES REQUIRE SOME **BRAVERY...**

## TOURISTS

- HERE'S A PICTURE OF SOME **TOURISTS**



- IT'S **BEHIND** YOU...

## QUICK LIST

- HERE ARE THE **MAIN** ISSUES FACING MMOS:
  - THEY **COST** TOO MUCH TO MAKE
  - TOO MANY OF THEM **PLAY** THE EXACT SAME WAY
  - THEIR **REVENUE** MODELS **PUT OFF** KEY GROUPS OF PLAYERS
  - THEY LACK **IMMERSION**
  - THEY LACK **WIT** AND **PERSONALITY**
  - PLAYERS HAVE BEEN TRAINED TO **VALUE** EXPERIENCES THEY DON'T **WANT**
  - DESIGNERS AREN'T ALLOWED TO **EXPERIMENT**

## COST

- I DON'T HAVE **TIME** TO GO THROUGH **ALL** OF THESE, SO I'LL JUST PICK A **FEW**
- THE **HIGH COST** OF DEVELOPMENT IS DUE TO:
  - MARKETING
    - LACK OF **SURFACE QUALITY** PUTS OFF PLAYERS
  - RAISING THE BAR
    - THE MORE **EXPENSIVE** IT IS TO MAKE AN MMO, THE FEWER **COMPETITORS** THERE WILL BE
  - FINANCE
    - THE MORE MONEY YOU **ASK** FOR, THE HIGHER THE CHANCE YOU'LL **GET** IT

## EFFECTS

- HIGH COST **FEEDS** INTO:
  - RE-USE OF TECHNICAL **ASSETS**
  - FIXED **TOOLS**
  - FEAR OF **FAILURE**
- ALL THESE LEAD TO **CLONE** MMOS
- **CLONES** AFFECT PLAYER **EXPECTATIONS**:
  - THEY THINK OPTIONAL FEATURES ARE **INTRINSIC**
  - THEY PREFER **SHORT-TERM** TO LONG-TERM FUN
  - THEY DON'T PLAY MMOS MORE THAN **4 MONTHS** OLD, THEY JUST **WAIT** FOR THE **NEXT** ONE

## CONSEQUENCES

- MMO PLAYERS TODAY ARE MAINLY **TOURISTS** OR **CONTENT LOCUSTS**
  - NEITHER OF WHICH STAYS **AROUND** FOR LONG
- MMOS HAVE **ARRIVED** AT THIS SITUATION BY TRYING TO ATTRACT **NEWBIES**
- UNFORTUNATELY, THE WORLD HAS PRETTY WELL **RUN OUT** OF NEWBIES
- THE KEY TO **RESTORING** THE FORTUNES OF MMOS THEREFORE LIES WITH **ATTRACTING** AND **KEEPING** THE **EXPERIENCED** PLAYERS

zzz...

- HERE'S SOMEONE **SLEEPWALKING**



- EVEN THOUGH IT'S **DAYLIGHT?**



## FIXES

- EXPERIENCED PLAYERS HAVE **REFINED** TASTES
  - THEY **DON'T** ALL LIKE THE **SAME** THING
- MMOS WILL THEREFORE **FRAGMENT**
  - WE SAW THIS WITH **CASUAL** GAMES
- **SOLUTION:** HAVE **MORE** SERVERS WITH **FEWER** PLAYERS PER SERVER
  - INSTEAD OF **10** SERVERS OF **10,000** PLAYERS EACH, HAVE **400** SERVERS OF **250** PLAYERS EACH
- THIS ALLOWS FOR **SPECIALISATION**
  - NO PVP, UNRESTRICTED PVP, PD, IMMORTALITY, ...

## BYE BYE END GAME

- MMOS HAVE A **LEVELLING** GAME FOLLOWED BY AN **END** GAME THAT'S **NOTHING** LIKE IT
  - PVP, RVR, RAIDS, ...
- **IDEA:** REMOVE THE END GAME
  - LET PLAYERS ACTUALLY **WIN!**
- “BUT ... BUT IF YOU **REMOVE** THE END GAME, THE PLAYERS WHO REACH IT WILL ALL **LEAVE!**”
- GUESS WHAT? THEY'LL LEAVE **ANYWAY!**
  - ONLY **THIS** WAY, THEY'LL **LIKE** YOU AFTERWARDS
- BESIDES, THEY **DON'T** ALL LEAVE

## LET DESIGNERS DESIGN

- MMO DESIGNERS HAVE **MANY** ORIGINAL IDEAS
  - WE **SAW** THIS WITH **TEXT** MUDS
- THEY SHOULD BE **ALLOWED** TO TAKE **RISKS**
  - TO BE **CREATIVE**
- MMOS **DON'T NEED** 1,000,000 PLAYERS TO BE PROFITABLE
  - **50,000** CAN BE MORE THAN ENOUGH
- 50,000 PEOPLE WHO **LOVE** YOUR GAME WILL GIVE YOU **MORE MONEY** THAN 1,000,000 WHO ARE **INDIFFERENT** TO IT

## CONCLUSION

- SOME STUDIOS **ARE** TRYING TO INNOVATE, BUT MOST ARE **SLEEPWALKING** OFF A **CLIFF**
- THERE **ARE** WAYS TO WAKE UP, BUT THEY MEAN **CHANGES** TO THE **PARADIGM**
- IF TODAY'S DEVELOPERS **DON'T** CHANGE, THE WORLD **WILL** CHANGE AROUND THEM
- ALL THOSE **FORMER** MMO-PLAYERS NOW PLAYING **OTHER** GAMES ARE MERELY WAITING FOR **THEIR** MMO TO COME ALONG
- ALL **YOU** HAVE TO DO IS **GIVE** IT TO THEM!