

Marrying Gaming and
Ecommerce.

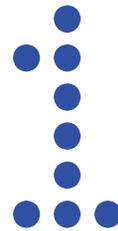
*Punch helped Scopely
analyze games to spot
opportunities for growth.*



punch case study

Contents

- 2** **Contents**
- 3** **About Scopely**
- 5** **Strategy**
- 6** **Punch's areas of focus**
- 8** **Monetization strategies**
- 1 2** **UX research results**



About Scopely

SCOPELY IS ONE OF THE LEADING TOUCHSCREEN ENTERTAINMENT NETWORK THAT CREATES TOP GROSSING GENRE-DEFINING GAMES FOR BOTH CASUAL AND CORE GAMERS WITH WORLD-CLASS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS.

It was recently named the number two fastest growing tech company in America, Scopely's explosive growth is fueled by expertise in game design, live services, marketing, analytics, business development, advertising and more. Scopely brings together the brightest minds across gaming and entertainment to ensure great gameplay experiences for millions of players around the globe.

THE END GOAL

Scopely wanted Punch to provide insights into how the game (Walking Dead) could be improved from a UX perspective and how could they monetize the game without the risk of losing out on the current user base.

PUNCH'S OVERALL OBJECTIVE

We wanted to improve the popular game by focusing on giving the players more satisfaction in the rewarding system. We believed that Scopely - The Walking Dead could be improved by focusing on the onboarding experience, salvage tokens, and encouraging the consumption of videos by introducing daily cap videos to reward the users.

PUNCH SERVICES PROVIDED

Punch provided expertise in game mechanics and UX research to help Scopely identify ways to grow *The Walking Dead* game.

price states,
sdk login, tiered
rewards, loyalty,
offerwall,
cookie clickers,
internationalize



Strategy

OUR STRATEGY WAS TO “E-COMMERCIFY” THE APP BY TAKING THE BEST IDEAS AROUND SUPPORTING USERS IN A PAID-ENVIRONMENT LIKE ECOMMERCE AND GIVE THEM POSITIVE WAYS TO UNDERSTAND WHERE AND HOW THEY CAN ENHANCE THEIR GAMEPLAY.

A user-focused research plan helped us understand what events players find rewarding what parts of the gameplay they wished were different. By conducting a formal user analysis, we helped remove the fog around future product development and improvements.



Punch's areas of focus

- 1 Conducting user research.** Because of the custom nature of every game's interface, story, and gameplay, it was important to repeatedly gather direct user feedback. Punch recommended conducting a number of question-based surveys (with coin rewards) to gauge user pain points and areas that excite them. Due to the intense nature of game programming, it was important to conduct these studies regularly to understand what was resonating with users.
- 2 Monetization.** We wanted the game to be fun yet rewarding. We wanted to focus on giving the players a better reward system for an increased satisfaction. The rewards of watching ads did not scale with the user level, yet the in-game prices did. This reward system did not benefit higher level users, which might have led to cause user dissatisfaction. Players were also more likely to consume more videos when currency payouts were switched to soft items such as food, wood, or special items. Adding a second, alternative Offerwall would have brought bring incremental revenue.
- 3 Making shopping sticky.** Punch saw that in-app purchases and upgrades follow patterns found in other games. While this was common practice, we could improve customer retention by using stronger methods from a true ecommerce experience. These included building pre- and post-sale drip campaigns and launching a more centralized store with better indications of the coin accumulation progress with built-in goal indicators.
- 4 Usability adjustments.** As an initial analysis, Punch took a look at two screens in detail as examples for usability adjustments. In both screens, we

saw the opportunity to apply progressive disclosure to improve conversion and readability for complex, information-dense screens. By focusing on this tactic for most views, the game could improve in two areas: improving engagement during in-between screens and active fighting sequences.

- 5 Existing game mechanics.** From the beginning of the game, the current Facebook login opened in a webview within the app which was hard to navigate. If the user had already played before and connected via Facebook, he only got one way to reconnect. Reworking the onboarding process would have avoided getting the users frustrated at the beginning of the game. The game also needed to localize prices and adjust to foreign currencies. The gameplay could be improved by having smarter healers. In autoplay, healing should have been prevented if no survivor was wounded.
- 6 A fresh strategy.** We believed that the game was undeniably popular and had proven to have a great gameplay. We, however, wanted to refocus on other elements where we saw necessary improvements from a user's perspective such as tokens. From initial research, we found out that the players had the most dissatisfaction with salvaging tokens and the rewarding system. Instead of improving on areas that the game was already great on, we wanted to look at where the pain points were and bring about effective changes to improve user's satisfaction.



Monetization strategies

- 1 Upgrade to premium.** Most apps find this good for a smooth transition from creating a user base and then upgrading them to the premium one for a fee. This approach, also known as the “freemium” model, is effective as long as the free app version holds the interest of the audience and make them engaged. For example, offering gamers the opportunity to play the first few levels for free can intrigue them enough to upgrade to premium for an in-app purchase or subscription. In much the same way, a music or movie download app can allow users to retrieve a certain number of songs or films, demanding a subscription thereafter for unlimited downloads.
- 2 Virtual currency.** Many of the most successful apps utilize virtual currency successfully as a revenue model. Particularly in immersive gaming apps, virtual currency makes a common appearance. The idea behind this is to offer a currency that can be earned by playing more, competing and achieving special advertisement offers or through buying something. The players then utilize the earned currency to unlock features or items of choice.
- 3 Native advertisements.** Native ads allow app builders to generate revenue while providing the least invasive interruption to the user experience. These ads actually blend in with your app’s visuals and other elements, and they don’t affect the user’s ability to use the app. It takes just a little bit of work in design and development to include native advertisements within the app, garnering easy visibility and better click-through rates. Moreover, these ads are flexible, adaptive and can fit perfectly into any kind of app.

- 4 Pushing the newsletter.** If your app has a newsletter, you can utilize it for a monetization drive. You can push the newsletter through your app to garner more registrations and consequent leads. This is also a robust way to drive traffic to your website from within the app. If your app is just another face of your brand, then there is nothing wrong with such a move. If the app cannot generate enough revenue to survive on its own, it can at least help the other leg of your brand by adding more value.
- 5 Earn incentives from advertisers.** You can allow brands to display their advertisements within your app, or just allow them to address some promotional campaigns at your app's users. Whenever any business converts a lead through the ads, or anyone earns revenue from the campaign, you earn an incentive as an affiliate, because of your ownership of the app generating the conversions or revenue. This revenue model is particularly effective in gaming apps, as players frequently choose to redeem gifts and respond to such integrated campaigns. Some affiliate programs that are helpful in monetizing apps include SupersonicAds, Klip, and the like.
- 6 In-app purchase.** The in-app purchase is still one of the most popular and effective monetization strategies, especially for free apps. Unlike so-called ads and banners, this method offers the least interference to the ease of use of the app, while also offering the least negative impact to the user experience. Just by making small purchase in the course of playing a game, a player can unlock an array of game features or useful objects. Game apps or any kind of app that offers an immersive experience, making users glued to the app for hours, can effectively utilize this strategy.
- 7 SMS marketing.** The same device on which your game app is being played by the user holds the most crucial customer information: his or her cell phone number, email address and social media profiles. Just by asking your users for their mobile numbers, you can generate an outstanding contact list to be used for SMS marketing. Once you get the mobile numbers of your users, you can send them contextual messages showcasing an event or promotion or informing them about a new product or contest.

8 User analytics for retention. Most apps are abandoned within the very first week of the download and never used again. Therefore, user acquisition cannot help you garner profit and earn revenue as long you fail to retain those users. Ensuring regular engagement of your users is the mission-critical step to accomplish this.

Unfortunately, without an in-depth understanding of your users' behavior, their buying patterns, demographic data, and user contexts, you have practically no clue to improve retention.

This is where data analytics tools can really be effective. They offer you periodic guidance concerning the areas that you need to address to make your app more engagement-friendly, which leads to increasing your user retention rates and, by extension, your revenues. Some popular and effective app analytics tools include Apple App Analytics and Google Analytics for Mobile Apps.

9 Partnership with another successful app. Partnering with another successful app and using the promotional benefit from their platform is a great way to build your user acquisition and achieve revenue growth. Even if you cannot partner with a hugely successful app, doing the same with a moderately successful or a potential one can be effective as well. The recent partnership between Evernote and LinkedIn's social platform is an excellent example, as the synergistic integration between the two services increased the popularity of both.

10 Multiple options of payment. The old marketing mantra of avoiding blind lanes and instead offering several options is at work here. Just one payment option is like the blind option with the possibility of garnering a strictly negative or positive response.

On the other hand, multiple payment options offer an array of choices, and users are more likely to choose one. For example, a newspaper or news app can offer its readers several subscription options, such as a web subscription, print subscription, mobile app subscription or a combination of choices.

11

Recommendation

Loyalty

REWARD TRUE FANS

Coins earned for activities do not increase based on a user's level. This causes the higher level players to not find the rewards helpful and not use them anymore





UX research results

- 1** Users can feel more empowered about pricing and less upset when we make clearer upgrade paths. We want it to be easier to see past purchases, reclaim them, and also see where you can apply future purchases with an “order history” area masked as town hall ledger
- 2** Points, rewards, bonuses, prestige points, tokens, coins, and cash: we should provide a place for users to understand how all of these work in the game and simplify language around their use.
- 3** We'd like to feature a dedicated spot for shop, much like a shopping cart where people can add and save items to purchase. We can consolidate all buying messaging here: coin counts, shop, and upgrade notices can all be merged into this area and no longer hidden.
- 4** When creating a team, the small controls and amount of information can be simplified. While we do not recommend removing any information, we believe condensing the visual load will help. For example, point and health metrics can collapse into an icon that can explode on tap.
- 5** During active gameplay, health metrics and details about a player are at the bottom of the screen. We'd like to try with floating it by the character so users don't need to move their eyes back and forth during active combat.
- 6** The rewards screen will benefit from a more conversion driven layout: larger calls to action and simplification of minor details. Between the

9

Recommendation

4.99 €

INTERNATIONALIZATION

Pricing inside the game for international audience wasn't made to read easily leading users to distrust the purchases.



left and middle characters, it's hard to tell what is associated with the information below.

- 7** The onboarding experience can be improved by avoiding opening a new webview within the app. A native SDK Login is commonly used to smooth the process.
- 8** We want to give the users a second chance by giving more options for players to connect. Currently, the user can only reconnect to the existing game if he has played before. We want the user to decide which account (new or old) will be tied to the Facebook account.
- 9** The prices, as seen here are not nicely rounded. This leads to weird price points and more expensive items on Google Play than on iOS. We recommend localizing the prices within Google Play developer console (I18n) to fix prices such as 5.57€ to 4.99€.
- 10** Adding a second, alternative Offerwall provider such as Fyber or Supersonic will bring incremental revenue. A 15% to 25% increase can be expected as users have more ways to collect rewards.
- 11** The rewards should be tiered to increase the player's satisfaction. When watching videos, the coins earned do not scale with user level. This causes the higher level players to not find the rewards helpful and not use them anymore. Instead, we can introduce tiered rewards as well as a daily cap for videos.
- 12** We recommend introducing cookie clicker where we switch rewards to randomized (or user level specific) payouts to encourage players to consume more videos. Hayday has utilized these random payouts of gamble joy for players that have been hugely successful.

12

Recommendation

Cookies

COGNITIVE TOOLS

Switching rewards to randomized varieties encourage players to play more frequently to catch the variety.



Legal

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