

SoAC_ProjectProposal_JamesPurser(2004333)

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Research Proposal – The Longevity of Multiplayer Games and the Preservation of a Franchise

James Purser

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1. Introduction:

I have decided to research the fundamentals of the multiplayer genre when it comes to sequels and identify the risks a company must take when investing in a sequel, what makes a sequel beneficial to a multiplayer franchise and how creating a sequel can affect a playerbase through various means and examples.

Through this research I may understand and identify the thought process of a company through the release of a sequel and why the public opinion was positive or negative.

2. Background to the Proposed Research:

The concept of sequels is a core aspect to a video game franchise, they are a vital component when it comes to expanding a beloved individual property, often gaining a mass income if the timing is correct on release. However, due to the nature of the industry and the immense number of genres it covers, the creation of a sequel to a franchise may end up tainting it instead, it's entirely dependent on the genre or even whether the game in question is multiplayer or singleplayer.

Through numerous examples it can be said that there are a lot more risks taken when creating a sequel to a multiplayer experience as due to the nature of a sequel, in this case, the developer is not just simply creating another instalment to continue an overarching narrative, in terms of multiplayer franchises it is vital that the sequel has been made to

provide a greater alternative to its predecessor rather than the same game with barely any differences, which can be seen in the likes of 'Overwatch 2'[1] which some players consider "Basically the same game" [2] and ensure that it is released at a time where it can be most appreciated which is why games such as that of 'Titanfall 2' [3] which "was a complete flop despite being a great game". [4]

It is up to the developers to decide whether creating a sequel is worthwhile in the first place whilst also knowing what the original is lacking that how that can be improved on next generation hardware without needing to take away what made the original so successful.

3. Aims & Objectives:

- To answer what makes a lucrative game or sequel such as an "emphasis on teamwork" [5] when it comes to multiplayer.

- To understand where other companies have failed to meet the requirements of a worthwhile successor.

- To identify the risks a company must take when creating a sequel to a multiplayer game. Such as "unstable player base and harsh competitions." [6]

- To address areas of public outcry in terms of disappointing or controversial sequels. Once again, as seen in 'Overwatch 2' with some stating that it's the "Most Disappointing Game of the Year". [7]

- To understand how active players of an online community perceive the creation of a sequel whether it be considered a worthy successor or a significant downgrade from where it had originated, whether this be for the better in 'Left 4 Dead 2' [8] which "improves upon its popular predecessor in several important ways" [9]. Or on the contrary 'Call of Duty Infinite Warfare' [10] which has been called "a re-skin of other Call of Duty titles" and as "players are tired of futuristic shooters" [11], the game was extremely unpopular at its release.

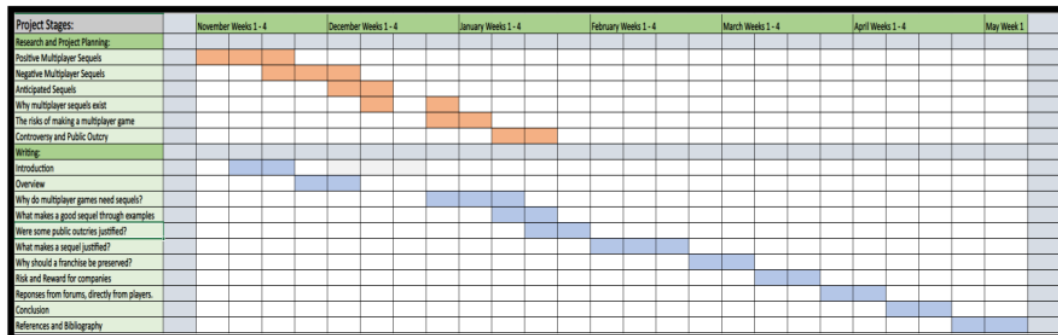
4. Project Design:

4.1 Outline of Project Process – I must initially identify a multitude of differing examples between what is considered a worthy sequel of a multiplayer game, what did not change enough to warrant a sequel and finally what can be considered a bad investment by a company with the sequel being worse than the original, such as in the case of 'FIFA 20' [12] with fans being "heavily critical of gameplay on show" [13] whilst the series does not seem to gain many changes per instalment such as FIFA 23 [14] with some calling it the "same name – same game" [15].

4.2 Data Collection – I will collect data and vital information through examples of social media, news articles and the public opinion through message boards and forums, using statistical analysis through polls and reviews to understand the majority vote on an aspect of



Gantt Chart explaining project plan:



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- [9] B. Vincent Brittany Vincent has been covering video games and tech for over a decade for publications like G4 and A. McCumbers Alex McCumbers is a champion of games—new and vintage—who treats the medium with as much respect as film and literature: His retro game studies made it into the SNES Omnibus books, "The 30 best multiplayer games," *The 30 Best Multiplayer Games*, 28-Dec-2021. [Online].

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FINAL GRADE

64/100

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

1. Engagement with Literature Skills (65%)

A good amount of research sources have been used in the proposal. These are all mainly online so we can try to expand a little more when it comes to the main report, but it is a good start.

2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills (61%)

It will be important to ensure this research does not present a biased opinion of sequels and franchises – make sure that the corporate/industry reasons and motivations behind making sequels are understood as well as the players. Publishers often make sequels of successful franchises for guaranteed financial gain, while players hope that sequels add more to game series they are heavily invested in. We will look at these in more detail going forward in supervision sessions.

3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills (64%)

A good evaluation of ethical considerations has been given – this is a fairly light subject so it won't have too much of an impact on your proposed topics of research.

Aims and objectives are clearly outlined – we may need to reduce the scope a little and focus on key areas, as we may end up in covering too many subjects with not enough depth – again, this can be discussed during supervision sessions.

The bias mentioned above has been identified as a potential risk/limitation in the proposal, which is good to be aware of.

4. Practical Application Skills (66%)

The Gantt chart is a good first draft though I would say that you are trying to quantify subjects rather than tasks, which is difficult to judge – these could be reworked as “research: sequels in franchises” or “research: multi player game development”. There is no guarantee that you can do everything you need in a specific subject in a predetermined number of weeks – it will have to be more like researching, writing and editing, with analysis of research data at regular intervals.

5. Transferrable Skills for Life and Professional Practice (62%)

The proposal is generally written well with good use of bullet points that concisely describe elements of the work you plan to research.

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