

An Analysis on the Current State of the Social Gaming Market

by Natasha Courtney

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An Analysis on the Current State of the Social Gaming Market



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*‘Submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of BA (Hons) in
Business & Finance’*

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DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree

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Abstract

This research paper has been designed to identify the current state of the social gaming market, as well as identify the appeal of social gaming from a consumers' point of view. In order for this to be achieved, an aim has needed to be set, this was to identify the current state of the social gaming market, looking at different aspects of marketing to identify what social game developers have done in order to attract consumers to the product that is being offered. In addition to this aim, a number of objectives were designed to help meet the aim of the research, these objectives were to;

1. Identify the current state of the social gaming market through conducting a comprehensive literature review.
2. To explore the views of consumers with regards to the attraction of social gaming through primary research.
3. To explore the appeal of social gaming to the average consumer, whether changes in technology has had an influence on this.
4. To provide appropriate recommendations based on what has been written throughout the research paper for future research/developments in the topic area.

Secondary research has been used to create the literature review, using resources ranging from journal articles to academic textbooks. As part of the primary research, a total sample of 81 responses were collected through distributing questionnaires on Survey Monkey. The main findings of this research have identified that social games appears to be a female dominated industry. The research has also identified that merging social games onto mobile devices ('Candy Crush Saga' for example), has increased the appeal of social gaming, due to the ease of being able to play wherever the user wants, in comparison to social games based on a computer.

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1. Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Study

The purpose of this research will be to identify the current state of the social gaming market. Social networking sites are becoming ever increasingly popular, and because a lot of users on the internet play video games in some shape or form, social gaming is also growing in popularity, according to Baek, Ko & Marsh (2014).

1.1.1 What is a Social Network?

A social network is an online application that provides tools to allow users to share content with friends and family. In order for a social network to exist, an application that lives on the piece of technology collects various amounts of data that relates to the user. However, based on the preferences that have been set by the user, there is the likeliness that this server would share information with other users, for example, photographs (Ryan, 2011).

1.1.2 What is Social Gaming?

Social games are a form of gaming that is played on social media websites, for example, Facebook. It has been identified that Facebook is the most popular platform for social gaming, with 63% of audiences (in 2011) that play social games, use that form of social network (Nutley, 2011).

Based upon these definitions, this research study will concentrate on different aspects that impact the social gaming market. The following chapter will discuss the aim and objectives of the study, discuss the reasons behind choosing this area of study, and lastly, discuss the structure for the rest of the research paper.

1.2 Research Aims & Objectives

1.2.1 Aim

The aim of this research will be to identify the current state of the social gaming market, looking at different aspects of marketing to identify what social game developers have done in order to attract consumers to the product that is being offered. The reasoning for this is because through conducting initial research, it appeared that there has been a fair amount of research carried out for the gaming market in general, but very little specifically for social gaming. The possibility for this could be due to social gaming being a fairly new development in the gaming market, which will be discussed in Chapter 2.

1.2.2 Objectives

In order to meet the overall aim of the research paper, a number of objectives will need to have been met. These objectives are to:

1. Identify the current state of the social gaming market through conducting a comprehensive literature review.
2. To explore the views of consumers with regards to the attraction of social gaming through primary research.
3. To explore the appeal of social gaming to the average consumer, whether changes in technology has had an influence on this.
4. To provide appropriate recommendations based on what has been written throughout the research paper for future research/developments in the topic area.

1.3 Rationale

One of the main reasons for conducting this research is due to the researcher having a keen interest in video gaming. The population of the internet is continuously growing and getting easier to gain access to. For example, in 2015 in the United Kingdom, more than three

quarters of the adult population either had used the internet on a daily basis, almost daily, or a similar proportion (Office for National Statistics, 2016). Therefore, the researcher has decided to take on the challenge to identify the current state of the social gaming market. Based on this, the research paper will include a vast amount of reading from different aspects that relate to the area. The sources used will range from journal articles to academic text.

1.4 Structure of the Research Paper

Following the content of the research aim and objectives, the study will progress through the following chapters:

1. Chapter One – The Introduction. This will provide an introduction in to the study, specifying the aim and objectives and the reasons for choosing this field of study.
2. Chapter Two – The Literature Review. This will provide an introduction in to the area of social gaming, as well as identify the current state of the social gaming market.
3. Chapter Three – Research Methodology. This chapter will give an insight in to the research methods that will be approached in order to complete the study. In addition to this, there will be a discussion as to what method will be used to collect findings for primary research purposes.
4. Chapter Four – Data Analysis. This chapter will outline the findings of the primary research that will be carried out, justifying whether there has been correlation between what the researcher will find and what will previously have been mentioned in Chapter 2.
5. Chapter Five – Conclusion and Recommendations. The final chapter will present the main conclusions that will be based from the research carried out. In addition to this, the recommendations provided will be in respect to the study, with what areas the author feels could require further attention in future studies/developments in the field.

2. Chapter Two: Literature Review

The overall aim of the research is to identify the current state of the social gaming market, looking at different aspects of marketing to identify what social game developers have done in order to attract consumers to the product that is being offered. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is for the researcher to provide an in-depth review of literature that relates to social games. To meet the overall aim, the following objectives will need to be met, these are to;

1. Identify the current state of the social gaming market through conducting a comprehensive literature review.
2. To explore the views of consumers with regards to the attraction of social gaming through primary research.
3. To explore the appeal of social gaming to the average consumer, whether changes in technology has had an influence on this.
4. To provide appropriate recommendations based on what has been written throughout the research paper for future research/developments in the topic area.

Highlighting the above objectives, Chapter 2 will primarily focus on Objective 1, identifying the current state of the social gaming market. In addition to this, elements of Objective 3 will also be targeted, in the attempt to identify what the appeal of social games are.

There will be great consideration with the content that will be provided within this chapter, mainly focusing on the marketing perspective of social games. The research included will be taken from a wide range of resources, ranging from; online articles, journal articles and professional publications obtained in the on-campus library. Ensuring that all research will be correctly referenced, there will be an in-text citation, indicating where the information had been originally sourced from.

2.1 Background in to Social Networking Sites

2.1.1 The Growth in Social Networking

The use of social media is continuously growing, hence part of the name, 'networking' (Kadushin, 2012). However, one of the issues with the increase of usage is not necessarily about the amount of users that have a profile, but more of the issue of how many accounts are actually active. Research conducted by Chaffey (2016) had identified that the amount of people that use the internet had increased by 10% in the past year, meaning that there is the potential for more user traffic to be generated on social media sites. In addition to this, there had been an impressive increase in the amount of users on mobile devices, generating more than 17% of the world's population. The increase in users on social networking sites gives the impression that there is the potential for an increase in social games, whether this is on computer hardware or on a mobile device. Although this could be the case, it would be dependent on the type of social media platform. For example, it would not be ideal to market social games on the social networking site, LinkedIn, which is geared towards the world of business (Milanovic, 2015).

2.2 The Gaming Industry



Figure 1: A Picture of the First Ever Video Game (Stony Brook University, 2016)

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Before video games, what gamers know them as currently, the population used to play video games at a wide range of locations, for example, arcades. However, many years ago, users would queue up in the Brookhaven National Laboratory to play a video game that was known as 'Tennis For Two'. This was a video game that consisted of two people playing the game, whilst using two separate controllers that connected to an analogue computer, having an oscilloscope as a screen. 'Tennis For Two' was created by physicist William Higinbotham in October 1958. The game itself had proved to be quite a success, and had helped create the pathway for hugely popular video games (Brookhaven National Laboratory, 2016).

2.3 The Current State of the Social Gaming Market

2.3.1 Consumer Demographics of the Gaming Industry

In a report published by the Entertainment Software Association (2015), it was identified that around 39% of frequent gamers actually play social games. In addition to this, the report highlighted that the average age of a female game player is 43 years old, whereas the average age of a male game play is 35 years old, this could be seen as a massive age gap between the two. However, a report published by the Gambling Commission (2015) has discussed that an estimated 1-5% of people who play games, actually pay to play social games. This information could be interpreted in two ways, it could be that players are spending small amounts of money, to gain extra benefits during gameplay, or that social gaming is becoming an issue in the form of addiction. A detailed discussion relating to addiction will be covered shortly within the chapter.

2.3.2 The Marketing Mix



Figure 2: A Diagram of the Marketing Mix (Baines, et al., 2013, p.12)

Figure 2 shows the different elements of the marketing mix. The marketing mix can be defined as the activities that marketers carry out with a product or service. There are four different elements within the mix, these are; product, place, price and promotion (Blythe, 2006). Product is to do with the product that the company is offering, as well as the product strategy. Place, which can also be identified as distribution takes into consideration where and when a product should be available for customers (Lamb, et al., 2012). Price relates to the amount of money it will cost customers to own the product that is being offered and promotion relates to the activities businesses take part in, in order to communicate the product to potential customers in an attempt to make sales (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). The following discussion will put the marketing mix into practice, applying the relevant findings to each element.

2.3.3 Product

2.3.3.1 The Development of Social Gaming



Figure 3: A Captured In-Game Shot of Social Game, Mafia Wars (Capri, 2011)

In comparison to what is known as a 'traditional video game', a new form of game had been created in 2009, based on a different path of distribution through social media. These games are known as social games (Egenfeldt-Nielsen, et al., 2016). A definition of social gaming has been provided in Chapter 1. One of the first types of social game was 'Mafia Wars', which had been created by Zynga, based on the social media giant, Facebook (Egenfeldt-Nielsen, et al., 2016).



Figure 4: An In-Game Shot of Social Game, Candy Crush Saga (Aquarius, 2014)

Based upon the concept of social gaming, there are a number of ways to differentiate social games from classic video games. One key indicator of this is that social games require input from multiple users (for example, the user's close friends), as well as having the option to compare achievements with other users (O'Neill, 2008). An example of this on a social media platform can be identified with the hit game 'Candy Crush Saga', where the user is able to compare playability statistics after each level, for example, how many points another user has earned, as well as having the option to ask users for additional lives if there has been an issue completing a certain level.

2.3.4 Place

2.3.4.1 *Distribution of Social Games*

Richmond & Douglas (2009) have stated that changes in technology are increasing rapidly, creating the issue that companies need to 'stay on top of their game' and keep up with these changes. As social games are designed for the user to play with friends, as well as other users around the world, distributing the games across different platforms is a great way to adjust to the changes in technology. As mentioned by Rossi (2009), having the opportunity to play games and share experiences with friends and family are what makes them more enjoyable and fun to play. To help with distribution, publicity plays a massive role to motivate potential users to download said game. One of the benefits of social gaming is that they can fit in to any game genre, and do not require many skills to play, creating the opportunity to target a wide audience (Game For Change, 2016). Therefore, using social media itself would be a great way to distribute social games, as it can potentially reach a range of different age groups.

2.3.4.2 The Network Effect Model

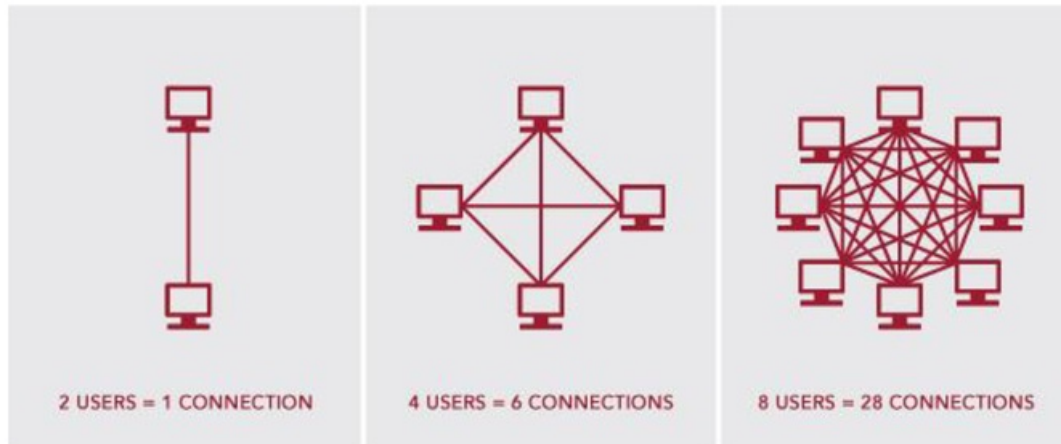


Figure 5: A Diagram to show the Network Effect Model (Busse, 2012)

The network effect model is essential when it comes to the distribution and promotion of social games. This is because a network effect occurs when the value of a product or service for the user is dependent on how many other users there are (Pascal-Emmanuel, 2011). An example of using the network effect from a social gaming perspective can be identified through studying Zynga (a slightly in-depth discussion on the company will be mentioned later on within Chapter 2). The developer relies heavily on users playing its games, spreading opinions on whether other users should play that game also. However, advertising also plays a crucial part on the success of a social game. As identified by Payne (2013), Zynga heavily spends on advertisements on social media websites, to try and promote their games as much as possible. This helps to initially draw users into the game. Once this has been achieved, the network effect occurs, and the popularity of the game increases, having the potential to go viral.

2.3.5 Price

2.3.5.1 Freemium Pricing

The freemium pricing strategy (or business model) is a key element to games based on social platforms. The concept of this strategy is to offer the initial service for free, and then give the user the opportunity to purchase premium items, or to disable any adverts that may affect gameplay. In an article published in the Harvard Business Review, Kumar (2014) had mentioned the various ways that organisations can use freemium pricing as a marketing tool. It was also mentioned that the strategy can be used to attract users without having costly advertising campaigns. In addition to this, Hayes (2008) discussed that freemium pricing is a great way to create brand loyalty between the company and the customer, due to services being free, removing any barriers that relate to rapid mass adoption. In addition to this, products that are free are likely to get great attention as users are likely to spread messages about the product to other potential users.



Figure 6: Zynga Company Logo (Davis, 2010)

An example of a social game developer that uses the freemium strategy is none other than Zynga. Zynga (2016) is one of the leading social game developers. The company has had more than one billion people play their games, ranging from FarmVille to Zynga Poker. What you may be thinking is what makes Zynga games so successful? Well firstly, their games are available to play not only on PC, but they can also be played on all mobile phone platforms,

which is a great way to reach a wider audience. In addition to this, under this strategy, it is made clear that games released by Zynga are initially free to all users, however, users have the opportunity to pay for a release, which enables them to have ad free gameplay. Zynga games are also fairly straight forward to play, making it easier to reach an audience that ranges in age, from young to old. This helps increase the chances of that user's siblings, parents or even grandparents play their games, allowing users to have as much fun as possible. Using this strategy has paid off to a certain extent, as in 2011, games released by Zynga had accounted for 12% of Facebook's revenue (Freemium, 2012). Although this may be the case, the issue with using freemium pricing is that Zynga are reliant on a small scale of high valued users, due to an estimated 1% of Zynga players account for between 25-50% of the company's revenue (Reynolds, 2012). This suggests that although freemium pricing is a great way to attract customers, only a small percentage of users actually go further to purchase additional content, which could make it difficult for social game developers to make a profit.

2.3.6 Promotion

2.3.6.1 *Word of Mouth*

Word of mouth from person to person has helped to promote games for many years, as mentioned by Minguez (2014). The popularity of social media has opened a gateway for people to voice their opinions with ease, giving views and opinions on the latest game releases, no matter what platform the game was released on. The use of social media presents companies with the opportunity to use social platforms for marketing purposes, enabling them to specifically target an individual's wants and needs, in the form of gaming entertainment. This is because it has allowed game developers to gain benefits to help achieve future growth opportunities for the product being offered. In that sense, having games on social media platforms makes it easier to offer incentives for users, creating the

option for users to gain an achievement that can be perceived to be of value (Kim, et al., 2014).

In an article by Michaud (2014), it was highlighted that social games attributed to an impressive 36% of the online gaming market, as well as contributed to 13% of the video game market in general in 2012. In addition to this, in August of that year, Facebook had an active gaming population of around 235 million users, making it the leading social gaming platform. Referring back to the article by Minguez (2014), there is a high indication that social media platforms and video game marketers use strengths created by one another for their own mutual benefits. These scenarios have helped companies to reach target audiences, as well as helped to keep social media users to stay logged in to their accounts and stay online. The preferences on each user's social media account also has had an impact on the success of a game. This is because when these types of games are played, normal social media browsers are occasionally sent invites to join friends, playing against one another, to see who can achieve higher scores. A perfect example of this situation would be the popular social game, 'Candy Crush Saga'.

2.3.6.2 The Use of YouTubers

A popular way that companies market their products is through sponsorships. This is because it is a great way to attract people to play the game that is being marketed (Dutta, 2010). Something that is increasing becoming popular through sponsorships is companies partnering up with YouTubers. This is because people tend to purchase items from people that they trust, whether it has been purchased directly from that person, or if the product or service has been recommended to them. Using videos to promote a product adds a personal touch between the person selling the product and the viewer. Therefore, one of the major benefits of using YouTubers to promote social games is that it can drive traffic to the product, potentially leading customers to whichever game has been spoken about (Grow Marketing, 2015). Based

on this, it could be suggested that YouTubers are classified as Mavens. This is because audiences tend to go to Mavens for advice, similar to YouTubers to some extent. In addition to this, Mavens do not try to persuade people to purchase a product that is not in their interest, but do obtain information for areas that attract them (Gartner, 2010). A useful way to reach an even wider audience can be through what is known as a collaboration (The Wishpond, 2014). This is because if a group of YouTubers collaborate, it attracts viewers from different demographic backgrounds, creating additional exposure to that particular video. Using collaborations for the purpose to promote a social game could be useful, as it would allow viewers to watch what is involved with the game being played, planting the seed of potentially gaining more players.

2.4 The Appeal of Social Gaming

2.4.1 Merging to Mobile Devices

Some may question the importance of social gaming, and what input do it has had in the perspective of generating income in to economies. However, playing games has been around for many years, being developed from ancient behaviour. For example, in pre-historic times, human beings may well have used pebbles or bones to play games on the ground, whereas in the present day, the idea of games has shifted to playing online, on mobile devices and desktop computers (Chen & Leung, 2015).

In this current day and age, video gamers have many choices available with regards to social and economic interactions. Users are able to choose what actions they wish to play, but they also get the choice of who they interact with (Jackson & Watts, 2010). The simplicity of social gaming makes it easy for users to get 'hooked' on the game, which could be one of the influences as to why social gaming attracts a broad audience. As mentioned by Yu-Kai Chou (2014), users enjoy the sense of accomplishment when playing social games. In addition to

this, the increasing amount of social games merging to mobile devices opens up the market to reach an even wider audience. This is because the use of mobile phones is increasing rapidly, making it a social device. The use of technology enables users to connect with relationships that already exist, for example, family and close friends, as well as people where the relationship may be slightly weaker. However, the advantage of using technology, such as a mobile phone, allows the user to keep in contact with whom they may have a relationship with, as well as create new ones (Eklund, 2012). In an article by Codorniou (2012), it was mentioned that a vast majority of the population check their mobile phone at least once an hour. This creates the opportunity for social game developers to target this audience, as it creates the achievability that users are able to play the social games whatever the location.

2.4.2 Social Gaming Addiction

Playing games in moderation can be a great way to have fun and relax, however, at the other end of the spectrum, there is the possibility that users may become addicted. As with most types of activity, there is the issue that some users may get addicted to pass the time. One issue with video and computer games are that users are able to act differently, in comparison to their normal everyday personalities. This can lead to the problem that the user confuses their everyday life with their 'in game persona', creating the issue that is known as video game addiction (Video Game Addiction Help, 2016).

From a social gaming perspective, games on websites such as Facebook tend to be highly sociable, allowing users to play with friends, as well as complete strangers at the same time, much like games based on console devices. Although social games are free to play, players are able to purchase in-game credits, to provide an aid to continue gameplay (Kim, et al., 2014). This can play a huge role in social game addiction. As mentioned by UnityPoint Health (2016), gaming addiction can lead to other forms of addiction, as well as create problems financially and from an academic point of view.

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Although it may be surreal to think that addiction on social games exists, due to the majority of people spending sensible amounts, there is a small percentage of users who spend much larger amounts. A report published by the Gambling Commission (2015) acknowledged that around 10% of users spend around \$500 within a year. These findings were based on a leading gambling style game based on social media platforms. This may not seem like a large sum of money, however, when it is taken into consideration that social games are free to play, it can be seen as quite a concerning issue. To try and counteract game addiction, users should limit the time they spend playing games, this would help users avoid developing compulsions to play the game in question. In addition to this, it could be suggested that users could compete in other activities, for example, spending more time with friends and family (New Beginnings, 2016).

2.5 End of Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted a variety of different points with regards to the different elements included with social gaming. There has been discussion on the current state of the social gaming market, through the application of the marketing mix. In addition to this, included in the discussion in this chapter has been the elements of what likely influences the appeal of social gaming from a consumer perspective.

3. Chapter Three: Research Method

This section of the research paper will provide a detailed discussion relating to the various methods that will/have been used to conduct the research, as well as how these methods have been implemented. The variety of methods that will be used are an aid to help achieve the aims and objectives of the research, where the aim of the study is to identify the current state of the social gaming market, looking at different aspects of marketing to identify what social game developers have done in order to attract consumers to the product that is being offered. To meet the aim, the following objectives help to achieve the outcome, these are to;

1. Identify the current state of the social gaming market through conducting a comprehensive literature review.
2. To explore the views of consumers with regards to the attraction of social gaming through primary research.
3. To explore the appeal of social gaming to the average consumer, whether changes in technology has had an influence on this.
4. To provide appropriate recommendations based on what has been written throughout the research paper for future research/developments in the topic area.

Although this chapter will not necessarily be focusing on any of the objectives mentioned, the chapter will outline the research methods that will be used in order to meet these objectives, contributing to meeting the research aim. Therefore, this chapter will indicate how the research plans to collect data to support the study, how the researcher plans to generate this research and how it will be analysed.

3.1. Definition of Research

Collis & Hussey (2014, p. 344) have defined research as “A systematic and methodical process of inquiry and investigation with a view to increasing knowledge”. In addition to this,

research is categorised into two different methods, these are; primary research and secondary research. (Nargundkar, 2003). Primary research relates to data that is generated from an original source, for example, the researcher conducting questionnaires, interviews or focus groups (Collis & Hussey, 2014). Whereas with secondary research, the researcher collects information that has been previously created by others (Lehman, et al., 2014).

3.2. Research Methods

3.2.1 The Research Onion

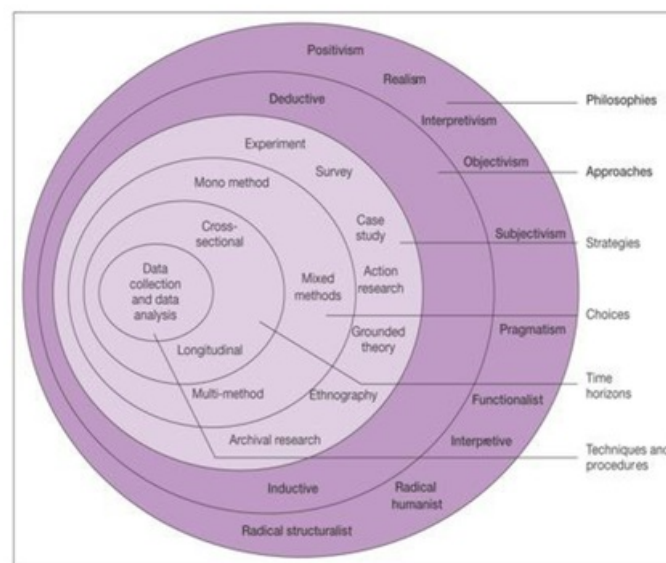


Figure 7: The Research Onion (Saunders, et al., 2009)

Figure 7 shows the process known as the “Research onion” designed by Saunders, et al., (2009). In order for the research study to be practical, it is essential for each layer of the ‘onion’ to be adapted carefully. Interpretivism has been selected as the researcher will be interpreting data that has been collected from a social aspect. As detailed by Collis & Hussey (2014, p. 45), interpretivism tends to focus on exploring the complexity of ‘social phenomena’, to gain a view that has an interpretive understanding. Based on this philosophy, the use of interpretivism tends to have a small sample size, and the qualitative method of

data collection is used. The next layer highlights the two different approaches that can be used in research study. The approach adapted for this study will be deductive. This is because theory will be tested, identifying if there are relationships between what will be found in primary research and what has already been found through secondary research (Collins, 2010).

The research strategy that will be used is survey. This will be justified in more detail further on within the chapter. The next layer highlights which research choices the researcher is able to use. In relation to this study, the research will adapt the mixed method approach. This is because both qualitative and quantitative data will be collected (Creswell, 2014).

The cross-sectional timeframe will be adapted to this form of research. Using cross-sectional allows the researcher to compare different elements, for example, different population groups at any single point in time. In addition to using this method, it will allow the researcher to compare different variables, which will be useful to aid comparisons between the primary research findings and the secondary research findings provided in Chapter 2 of the study (Institute for Work & Health, 2015).

3.3 Research Sample

Collis & Hussey (2014, p. 51) state that a sample can be defined as a 'subset of a population'. The size of the sample used for research purposes is dependent on the size of the population that is in consideration based on the research topic. For the purpose of the study, the population that will be considered for the study will be online users, more specifically social media users. Based on this, it can be identified that purposive sampling has been used. This is because the researcher has specifically targeted an audience that will facilitate the investigation that is being carried out (Adler & Clark, 2008).

In a report that has been published by the National Audit Office (2001), it has been suggested that a sufficient sample size of between 50-100 responses would be beneficial, as it would contribute to the reliability of the data that will be collected. Based on this, for the purpose of the research paper, the aimed sample size will be for between 70-100 responses. This will hopefully give the researcher a better insight as to what attracts consumers to social games, allowing respondents to voice their opinions, for example, what they enjoy about social gaming. The sample will be selected on an anonymous basis, as the questionnaire will be distributed online, there will be no specific audience targeted as such, in the form of age (as long as the respondent is 18 years of age or older) or gender. However, respondents will be made aware of the purpose of the questionnaire, and what their responses will be used for in the study.

3.4 Questionnaire

3.4.1 Questionnaire Design

In order to obtain appropriate data to support the research study, the researcher has chosen to carry out an online questionnaire. The reasons for this are because using questionnaires will allow the researcher to collect straightforward information that relates to the respondent's behavioural patterns, questionnaires can be used to collect factual information that can be put into classes and lastly, the use of questionnaires will allow the researcher to establish the basic attitudes towards social gaming, which is one of the research objectives (GOV.UK, 2016). For the purpose of this research, the survey itself will consist of 10 questions, ranging from questions based on demographics to questions specifically based on social gaming. The content of the questionnaire will consist of questions/statements that have been written in a form that is clear, to allow respondents to understand each question, enabling each respondent to provide honest answers, based on each individual's opinion on the topic. This has been justified by Bradburn, Sudman & Wansink (2004), where it was mentioned that it is

essential for respondents to be top priority. The layout of a questionnaire has an input on the overall results of the research, depending on the complexity of the questions asked. Not only should questions be easy to understand from a respondent point of view, it should also be taken into consideration that depending on the type of question being asked, there is a different approach that needs to be taken in order to analyse the results.

Taking this into consideration, the questionnaire will include a total of 10 questions, as previously mentioned. There are a variety of questions that will be included, ranging from open and closed ended questions, to questions in the format of a Likert scale. The use of open questions will allow respondents to voice their opinions on certain areas, which as mentioned by MacKay (2002), will allow the researcher to obtain a greater insight and more understanding based on the topic that the questions are based on. For the purpose of this research, open questions will be used to collect opinions based on social games, more specifically, whether the respondent likes or dislikes playing them, opting to provide reasons for this. In addition to this, respondents will have the opportunity to provide the names of up to 10 social games, this will allow the researcher to gain an insight on what social games appear to be the most known. Where open questions allow respondents to answer freely, closed questions are used to retrieve responses that have a specific response (Schuman, 2008). Specific to the research, closed questions will mainly be used to collect demographic data from each respondent, for example, their age and gender. However, in addition to this, closed questions will also be used to retrieve answers based on the respondents' social media account(s). Likert scales allow respondents to rate their level of agreement on a particular statement, whether it is positive or negative (Tullis & Albert, 2013). Within the questionnaire, there will be two Likert scales, one that measures the frequency that each gaming platform is used, and one that provides statements that relate to social games.

In order to prevent any ethical issues arising, extreme care will be taken to ensure that each response retrieved is kept completely anonymous. A copy of the questionnaire will be provided within the appendices of the research paper.

3.4.2 Advantages of Online Questionnaires

There are many advantages with using online questionnaires. One of the clear advantages is that due to being distributed online, costs of printing out physical copies/element of time to distribute will be avoided. There is also the advantage that the researcher will be able to create an appealing questionnaire design, through using fonts that are clear to read as well as having the ease to create questions based on Likert scales for example (Bryman & Bell, 2007). In addition to these advantages, online questionnaires allow responses to be generated on an anonymous basis, allowing questions that may be perceived as sensitive to be answered by respondents more openly. Lastly, there is the opportunity to gain responses from people from geographical areas, which would allow responses to be collected from respondents that may have slightly different views (Dempster & Hanna, 2016).

3.4.3 Disadvantages of Online Questionnaires

Although there are plenty of advantages with using online questionnaires, there are also a variety of disadvantages. There is the issue that time is of the essence, online questionnaires tend to have a lower response rate in comparison to physical questionnaires. In addition to this, there is the issue that online questionnaires are restricted to online populations, this could impact the overall outcome that the researcher had previously prepared for (Bryman, 2016). Lastly, there is the problem that the researcher has little control over responses. If a respondent has an issue with answering one of the questions, the researcher is unable to offer help at that specific time. Therefore, it is vital that questions are set out to be easily understood, and that there is some sort of contact detail available in case any questions regarding the research arise (Melcher, 2012).

3.4.4 Piloting the Questionnaire

To ensure that the questionnaire is suitable to distribute, a pilot study will be used on a small proportion of volunteers, to identify any areas where improvements are needed, for example, the wording of questions or to highlight if there are any grammatical errors. This is supported by Oppenheim (2005) , who mentions that although pilot work is extremely time consuming, it can also be used to help determine the sequence of the questions that are going to be asked.

For the purpose of this research, a pilot questionnaire will be distributed to a small group of people who regularly use social media, as well as regularly play social games on multiple platforms. Once this has been completed, it will be identified whether a small number of changes need to be made to the design of the questionnaire. This includes erasing questions that appeared to be similar to one another and combining questions to provide the opportunity to create more. In addition to this, the feedback that will be received will help decide whether to add the option to “prefer not to say” on some of the closed questions. This would be added in order to aid keep question responses as anonymous as possible, as some respondents may be cautious over answers that may be provided.

3.4.5 Distribution of the Questionnaire

As the questionnaire will be inputted onto Survey Monkey, it has been decided that it would be ideal to distribute the questionnaire online. In addition to this, the nature of the research topic aided the suggestion of online distribution. An ideal platform to distribute the questionnaire to potentially retrieve large amounts of responses was to post on a forum based on Digital Spy. However, due to the increase of accounts being registered on the website for research purposes and the posts not generating enough discussion, the researcher is unable to post the questionnaire onto Digital Spy’s forum. Digital Spy is an entertainment and media website that is based in the United Kingdom. The website primarily focuses on reporting news from a variety of different areas, ranging from music to gaming (Digital Spy, 2016).

In light of this, it has been decided to distribute the questionnaire onto Facebook, having the potential to reach a wide audience originating from different demographic backgrounds. In order to retrieve an ideal amount of 75 responses, the questionnaire page will remain open for two weeks, allowing enough time to answer any questions respondents may have had concerning the study.

3.5 Reliability & Validity

A key element to the study is to ensure that the results of the research are credible, this is because it may impact the accuracy of the results in general (Gibbins, 2010). In order to help maintain the credibility of research, there are two different methods that can be used to do so, these are; reliability and validity. Reliability is to do with the retrieving similar results from repeated trials. The measurement of these will ultimately always contain a certain amount of errors within the results, no matter what investigation is being carried out (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). In relation to this study, reliability would consider whether the questionnaire carried out has similar results to research that has been previously carried out. In addition to this, a useful way to test the reliability of the research is through the piloting of the questionnaire. Validity can be defined as, "The extent to which an instrument measures the attributes of a concept accurately" (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 2014, p. 290). With regards to the validity of the research, yet again conducting the pilot questionnaire would allow the researcher to identify any issues that may need to be altered, for example, the wording of the questions asked.

3.6 Limitations of the Research

One main limitation of the study will be that due to the survey being distributed through personal social media, there is the issue that there may be a struggle collecting responses from a variety of different age groups. Due to the age of the researcher, it could be suggested

that a vast majority of the audience will be of a similar demographic background, which could impact the reliability of the secondary research retrieved in Chapter 2.

3.7 Data Analysis

Due to using Survey Monkey to design and distribute the questionnaire, the website has the feature to automatically convert the results into various graphs to aid the analysis of the findings (Survey Monkey, 2016). However, as the researcher would like to visualize the results in a range of formats, Microsoft Excel will be used to plan and design graphs and charts. This will help provide clear graphs and identifying patterns in the responses retrieved.

3.8 End of Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has identified the research methods that the researcher will implement in order to conduct the survey and achieve the aim of the research. There has been discussion as to the form of primary research that will be used (online survey), and the different stages involved before distribution takes place. Carrying out these measures will help generate accurate data, through making the questionnaire clear to understand, which will enable respondents to give honest answers when completing the questionnaire.

4. Chapter Four: Data Analysis

This chapter of the study details the results of the survey conducted by the research, based on the methods discussed in Chapter 3. To reinforce the overall aim of the study, which is to identify the current state of the social gaming market, looking at different aspects of marketing to identify what social game developers have done in order to attract consumers to the product that is being offered. the questionnaire that was distributed needed to cooperate with the objectives, which were to;

1. Identify the current state of the social gaming market through conducting a comprehensive literature review.
2. To explore the views of consumers with regards to the attraction of social gaming through primary research.
3. To explore the appeal of social gaming to the average consumer, whether changes in technology has had an influence on this.
4. To provide appropriate recommendations based on what has been written throughout the research paper for future research/developments in the topic area.

Based on the aim and objectives of the study, Chapter 4 will provide an analysis of the data that has been collected and compare it to the literature discussed in Chapter 2, to identify any correlation between the two. The survey itself was split into 4 parts, the basis of these questions were to:

1. Identify the demographic background of social gaming users, in the form of their age, gender and profession.
2. Establish what gaming platforms respondents generally use, as well as the frequency that they are played.

3. The size of each respondent's social network; the size of their 'friends list', whether each respondent has ever received a notification to do with a form of social gaming and the various social games that respondents have recognized.
4. The attraction of social games; what users may enjoy about them and the types of advertisements that may influence this.

With regards to the amount of responses obtained for the purpose of the research, a total of 81 respondents cooperated with the survey. For the purpose of the reader, a copy of the questionnaire is provided, please see Appendix 1.

4.1 Demographics of the Sample

4.1.1 Question One

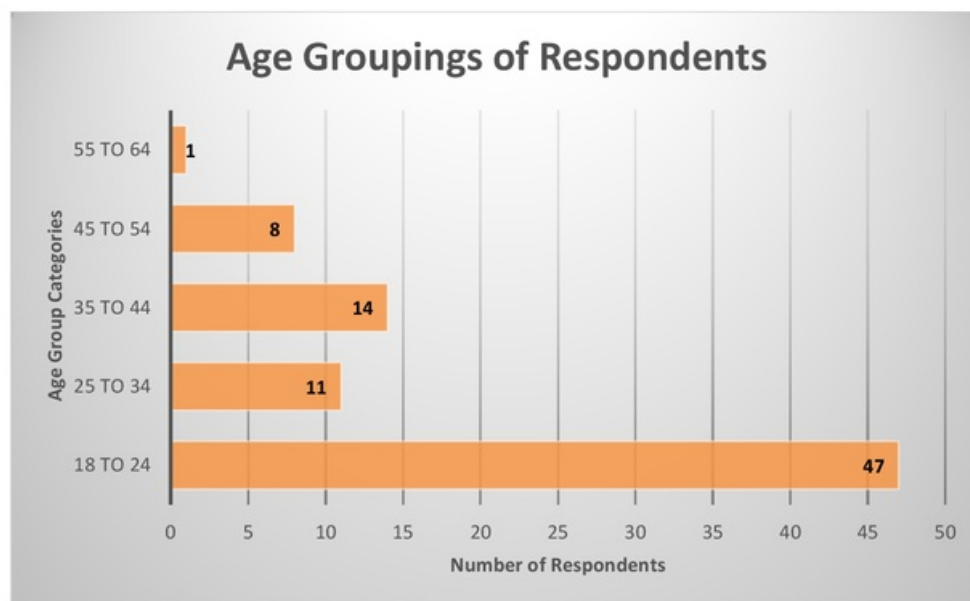


Figure 8: A Graph to Show the Results of Question 1

Figure 8 shows that out of the 81 respondents that cooperated with the study, more than half were in the age group 18-24. This may be due to the method of distribution of the survey, as

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it was distributed on the researcher's personal social media, therefore a majority of connections are through a similar age group.

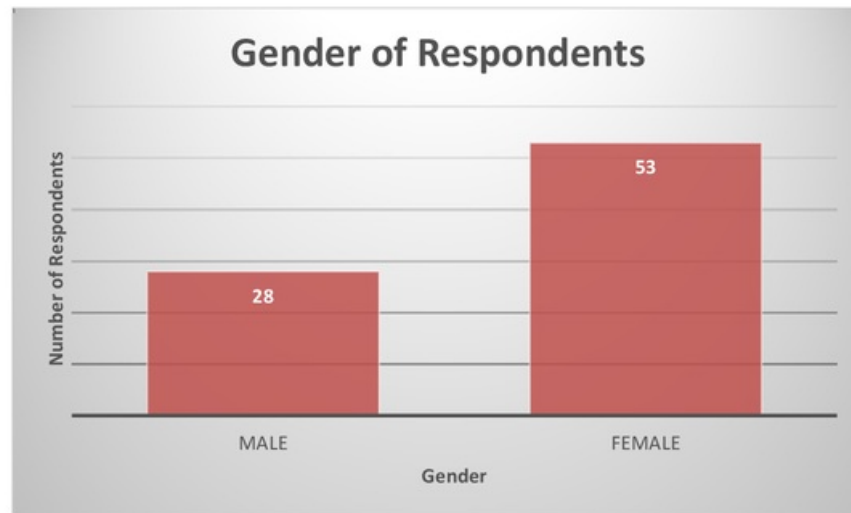


Figure 9: A Graph to Show the Results of Question 2

In addition to Figure 8, Figure 9 shows that the amount of female respondents is significantly larger in comparison to the amount of male respondents. The appeal to this could be due to the main audience of social games are likely to be from a female demographic (Think Management, 2014).

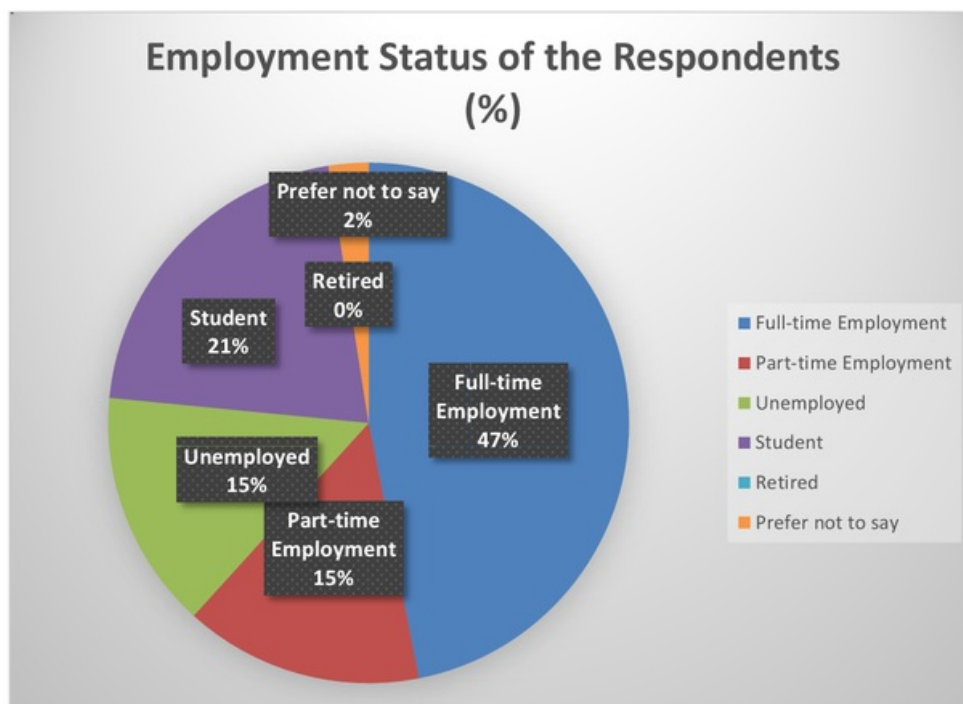


Figure 10: A Pie Chart to Show the Results of Question 3

Figure 10 shows a generalised summary on the employment status' of the respondents that participated in the questionnaire. To a surprise, slightly less than half of the respondents were in full-time employment, which implies the question are games becoming a more popular pastime? Previous results show that majority of respondents were in the 18-24 age category, however, an article in the Guardian by Stuart (2014), it has been suggested that the stereotype of boy teenagers playing video games alone in their bedroom has vanished. The possibility of games attracting older audiences could be due to what was previously mentioned by Chen & Leung (2015), where games have shifted to being compatible to play online as well as numerous platforms, which could influence why older generations have started to participate.

4.2 Gaming Platforms

4.2.1 Question Four

Type of gaming platform	The frequency each platform has been played					
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	In the past 6 months	More than 6 months ago
Console	27	16	18	5	12	3
PC	34	12	10	14	5	6
Social/Facebook	29	15	13	4	12	8
Mobile	10	35	18	11	4	3

Table 1: A Table that shows the Results for Question 4

Table 1 shows the results that identify the frequency that each gaming platform has been played, based on the respondents' individual choices. Studying the results collected from the survey, it has been established that mobile gaming was the most popular gaming platform, where 87.65% of respondents had played a game operating on a mobile device. Whereas the least popular gaming platform was PC gaming, where only 58.02% of respondents had played a game based on a computer. This may be the case, however, it has been identified through looking at the responses that only 64.2% of respondents have played a social game before. This questions the appeal of social gaming, based on where Richard & Douglas (2009) mentioned that changes in technology mean companies need to keep up with the pace. The results appear to support what was mentioned by Codorniou (2012), where this generation of technology has influenced mobile phone users to regularly check their phones,

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ultimately suggesting that there is the possibility that mobile devices are becoming the 'gaming platform' of choice.

4.2.2 Cross Tabulation Between Questions 1, 2 & 4

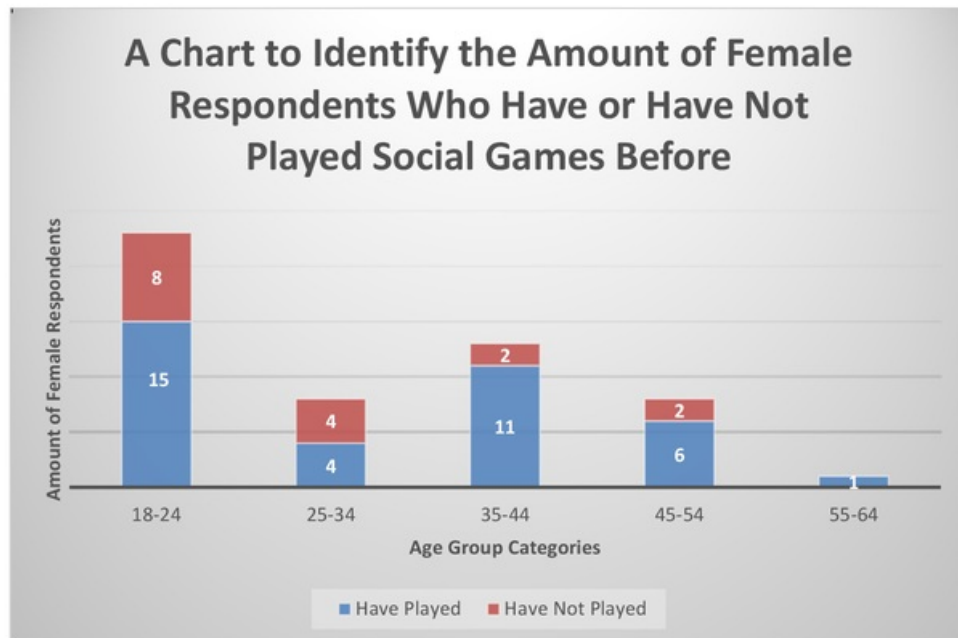


Figure 11: A Graph to Visualize Cross-Tabbed Results of Female Respondents

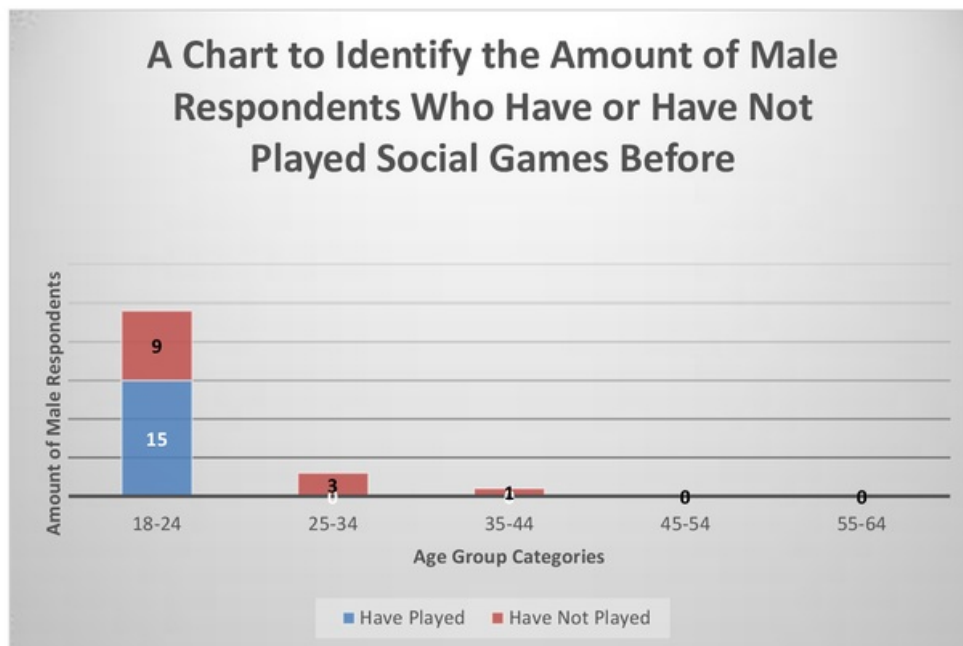


Figure 12: A Graph to Visualize Cross-Tabbed Results of Male Respondents

Through linking together, the data collected between sections one and two, as well as the researcher studying each questionnaire response has allowed the researcher to identify which of the respondents have actually played a social game. Figures 11 & 12 have identified the amount of respondents per age group and gender, in addition to indicating through each response, which respondent has actually played a social game before. Based on the results, the charts indicate that social games appear to be most popular with females. So where there were a total of 53 female respondents and 28 male respondents, 37 female respondents have played social games in comparison to only 15 male respondents. Comparing these results to previous research that has been conducted, where the average age of a female gamer is 43 years old and male 35 years old by the Entertainment Software Association (2015), it appears that looking at the age groupings, social games are most popular with females in the 18-24 category. However, with comparing this to the 35-44 group, 65% of the 18-24 female respondents play social games, whereas 85% of the 35-44 respondents play social games.

Therefore, the findings for this particular outcome correlate with the research carried out by the Entertainment Software Association (2015), due to confirming that the majority of females that play games are between the ages of 35 to 44 years old.

4.3 Social Network

4.3.1 Question Five

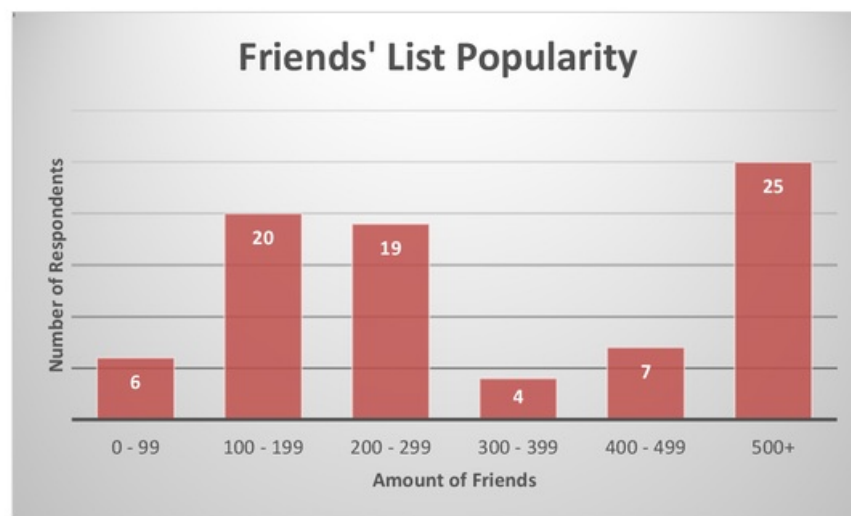


Figure 13: A Graph to Show the Results of Question 5

The results of Figure 13 show that out of all of the responses collected, more than two thirds of respondents have more than 200 friends in their 'social' network. Research carried out by Smith (2014) had identified that half of all adults that use Facebook have 200 or more friends in their network, where it was mentioned that younger social media users, or in this case, young adults, are likely to have 500 or more friends in their network in comparison to older users whom may only have around 100 (50 years of age or older). Therefore, when comparing the two studies, the data collected does partly correlate, based on the age of the respondents and the size of their social media network. The suggestion of this is due to studying the amount of female to male responses, as well as looking at the age of the respondents, which can be identified clearly through looking at Figures 11 and 12.

4.3.2 Question Six

Question six asked respondents whether they had received a request on their Facebook account to play a social game. Due to 100% of the respondents answering the question with 'Yes', the researcher felt it would be unnecessary to include a graph showing the result. Based on this result, this suggests that the network effect has proven effective as all of the respondents had received a game request in some shape or form. This approves what had been mentioned by Payne (2013), where game developers such as Zynga use the game requests to promote their games, as an aid to target as much as an audience as possible.

4.4 Attraction of Social Games

4.4.1 Question Eight

As Question 8 was formatted as an open-end based question, the researcher felt it was not appropriate to include a chart to discuss the findings. This specific question aimed to identify if respondents could name up to 10 different social games. From this, a total of 7 different games repeated to appear in the responses, these were; 'FarmVille', 'Candy Crush Saga', '8 Ball Pool', 'Hay Day', 'Clash of Clans', 'Words With Friends' and 'Texas Hold'em Poker' (otherwise known as 'Zynga Poker'). In addition to this, out of 81 respondents, only 11 were able to list up to 10, however through studying each response, the researcher identified that on a few occasions, some of the games listed were games that are only available on mobile devices. Research that had been carried out by statistics portal, Statista (2016) in February 2016 had identified the most popular Facebook games (based on the amount of daily active users). Comparing the results of the two studies, 5 of the 7 games that were mentioned by respondents correlated with Statista's results. The only 2 games that were not on the list were 'Texas Hold'em Poker' and 'FarmVille'. Although there is no clear indication as to why these game titles have not made the list, this could be due to both games being released towards the start of the social gaming era. Although this may be apparent, due to being

mentioned in Chapter 2, it is worth noting that both games were developed by Zynga (2016), which could suggest that the game developer is not making as many popular games in comparison to other social game developers.

4.4.2 Question Nine

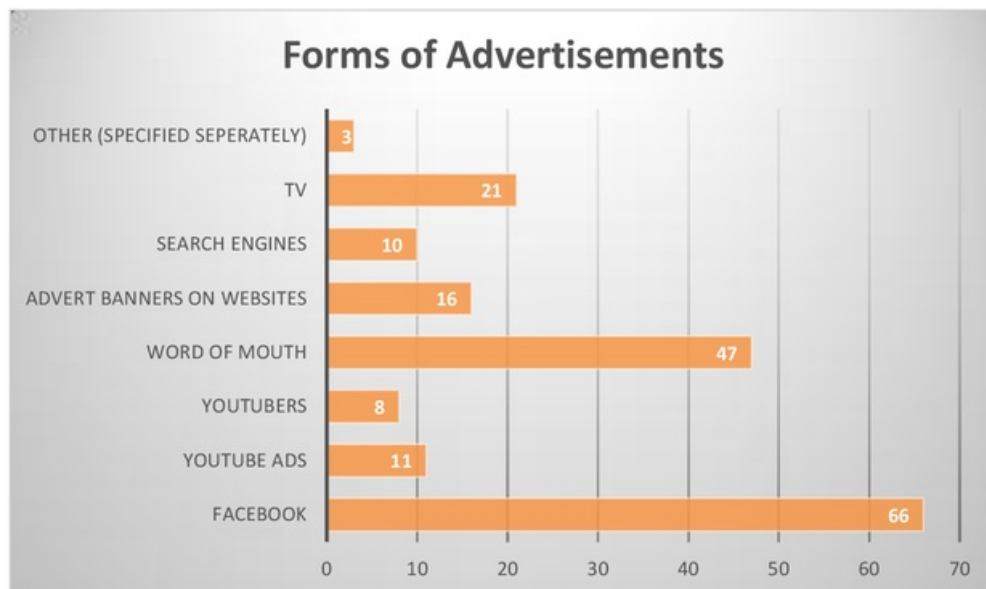


Figure 14: A Graph to Show the Results of Question 9

Figure 14 shows the results of the forms of advertising that either has attracted users to play a certain social game or what respondents thought may attract other users. From looking at the chart, it appears that advertisements based on Facebook mainly attract users to play social games. Dunay, Krueger & Elad (2011) have identified that in-game ads and offering virtual currency to users are some of the most popular forms of advertisements that have been seen, which are the methods Zynga have used to boost user activity (Payne, 2013).

In comparison to using Facebook to advertise, one of the least popular suggestions was the use of YouTubers. One of the reasons YouTubers may not necessarily be useful for this form of advertising could be due to the issue that YouTubers generally attract large audiences of

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younger generations, for example, teenagers. In an interview with Dredge (2016), chief content officer of Maker Studios (known as a multi-channel network) mentioned that the new era of digital celebrities are causing a generational divide because of this. Based on this, the application of YouTubers being classified as what Gartner (2010) describes as ‘Mavens’, does not appear to be effective to older social gaming audiences.

4.4.3 Question Ten

“Facebook games are a great way to interact with friends.”				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	23	30	15	6

Table 2: A Table that shows the Results for Question 10 Part 1

Studying Table 2 has indicated that respondents’ opinions regarding the interaction with friends within their networks appears to be across the board, although slightly leaning more towards agreeing with the statement mentioned within the survey. With regards to this, it was mentioned by Rossi (2009) that games based on social media websites are apparently a useful way to share experiences, making the overall experience more enjoyable. However, even though Game For Change (2016) discussed the concept that social games cover a variety of genres, there appears to be the issue that there is still a large proportion of social game users do not feel that Facebook games are not useful to engage with friends.

“Playing Facebook games is a great way to pass time.”				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17	34	16	6	8

Table 3: A Table that shows the Results for Question 10 Part 2

Whereas the social aspect of social games appears to be broadly opinionated, Table 3 indicates that the majority of social game users use the form of entertainment to pass time. To support the answers provided in Table 3, responses that were provided to Question 7 (the question asked can be viewed in Appendix 1) justify this, where one respondent stated that social games are, “Simple to use, and are a great way to pass the time”. In addition to this, another respondent mentioned that this form of gaming allows them to “Zone out and relax” as well as stating that, “it is a mindless activity to help me calm and settle my thoughts”. This suggests that although social games have been designed to appeal mass audiences, and consist of fairly simple patterns that allow users to unlock rewards, social games are still required to attempt to capture the user’s imagination (The Guardian, 2012). Therefore, the simplicity of social games may contribute to the reason why a small number of respondents disagreed with the statement provided in Table 3, where the respondents may have been ‘hardcore gamers’, ultimately preferring games which are more challenging.

“Facebook games are a great way to make new friends.”				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2	6	32	31	10

Table 4: A Table that shows the Results for Question 10 Part 3

This set of results identifies whether social games are a useful method for users to make new friends. Table 4 indicates that the majority of respondents disagreed with this statement. Although Facebook is a useful online tool to make new friends, as mentioned by Awl (2011), where users are likely to connect through mutual friendships, the survey respondents felt that this is not the case for social gaming. This appears unfortunate that this may be the views of social gaming users on a global basis, as in comparison to video games, although there is an element that playing these can be viewed as antisocial, game developer Stuart Duncan created a server based on the hugely popular game Minecraft, where the server had been designed specifically for children with autism to socialise and make new friends (New Scientist, 2016). It may be the case that Facebook (2016) does not allow users under the age of 13 years old, but developing games that help users make new friends could have the potential to promote social games on a larger scale, catering for a bigger audience.

“I often ask friends for help when I’m stuck on completing a level.”				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4	18	20	14	25

Table 5: A Table that shows the Results for Question 10 Part 4

In comparison to previous statements mentioned as part of the survey, Table 5 focuses on the suggestion that social game users occasionally seek help when there is difficulty in

competing a level, for example, where the user may have run out of lives. However, through analysing the results, it appears that the majority of respondents do not agree with the statement provided. Comparing the results of this statement to the content included in Chapter 2, there is the issue that these results question the relevance of social games. Expanding on what was mentioned by Minguez (2014), where the popularity of social networking has rapidly increased, there appears to be the issue that social games users are becoming less reliant to seek help from friends in order to complete a level, in comparison to traditional console games, where users regularly play through multiplayer in order to complete missions. For example gamers are able to play multiplayer either over the internet, playing with complete strangers or do what is known as ‘split-screen’ where multiple players can cooperate through one console and a television screen (GamesRadar, 2014).

“Facebook games are more appealing to play on mobile phones.”				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17	30	21	9	4

Table 6: A Table that shows the Results for Question 10 Part 5

Table 6 shows that more than 50% of respondents agreed that social games are more appealing on mobile devices. Looking at the results indicates that with the rapid improvements in the quality and functionality of technology, social game users are quickly adapting to development of the increase in the variety of social games that are available to play on mobile devices. Therefore, the results for this particular statement support what had been mentioned by Yu-Kai Chou (2014), where social games merging to mobile devices help gaming companies to reach a larger audience in comparison to sticking with distribution based on a computer. This being said, the research also suggests that the increased attraction

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of social games being available on mobile devices contributes to the online gaming market, where Michaud (2014) mentioned that social games made up 36% of the market in 2012.

4.5 End of Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the findings collected from conducting primary research in aid of the aim and objectives of the study. Although there had been an appropriate amount of responses collected, the issue arose from looking at Figure 12, where there was not an ideal amount of male respondents that had participated in the study. This issue will be addressed in more detail towards the end of Chapter 5.

5. Chapter Five: Conclusion

The aim of this research was to identify the current state of the social gaming market, looking at different aspects of marketing to identify what social game developers have done in order to attract consumers to the product that is being offered. In order to achieve this general aim of the research, objectives specific to the research were set, these were to;

1. Identify the current state of the social gaming market through conducting a comprehensive literature review.
2. To explore the views of consumers with regards to the attraction of social gaming through primary research.
3. To explore the appeal of social gaming to the average consumer, whether changes in technology has had an influence on this.
4. To provide appropriate recommendations based on what has been written throughout the research paper for future research/developments in the topic area.

Based on these objectives, this final chapter of the study will summarise the findings of the conducted research, providing conclusions based on each of these. In addition to this, recommendations will be included with regards to future developments in the study area.

5.1 A Summary of the Findings and Conclusions

5.1.1 Objective One – The Current State of the Social Gaming Market

To meet this objective, a variety of different aspects had to be researched due to the issue that social gaming was only introduced within the past several years. Therefore, to provide a basis for this, it was required to look at general themes in the gaming industry, and adapt these findings to suit social gaming. Based on this, it was identified through a study by the Entertainment Software Association (2015) that the amount of female gamers had increased in comparison to previous years. In addition to this, it was made apparent from the primary

research that more adults are playing games. When comparing the two, it was identified that the results from both aspects were a fair representation when looking at female responses. However, when looking from the male perspective, there appeared to be a small amount of male responses collected, therefore impacting the analysis of the findings through the demographic situation.

5.1.2 Objective Two – Consumers' Views

To achieve meet objective, primary research was used to identify what views consumer had in relation to social gaming. Through this, it was made apparent that there are mixed opinions towards this form of gaming. Although the research sample unintentionally mainly consisted of female respondents, users of social games enjoy the element of competitiveness between friends, however, due to simplicity of this type of game many stated that they have not had the need to request help off of friends. This questions the social element of this form of gaming, where Rossi (2009) claimed that the ability to share experiences with friends and family makes to process more enjoyable. As the research obtained from Game For Change (2016) suggested that due to social games being straightforward to follow, it in some ways defeated the need for users to cooperate and work as a team, instead only indicating a competitiveness element between users.

5.1.3 Objective Three – Audience Attracted to Social Games

To meet this objective, it was required to combine the research previously collected in Chapter 2 with the results mentioned in Chapter 4. Through looking at the responses collected in general, it was made apparent that one of the main reasons that consumers find social games appealing is because they are free-to-play. Using the freemium pricing strategy has suggested that this attracts a large audience online, as highlighted by Hayes (2008), where freemium pricing can be a useful tool to create brand loyalty. However, as identified from the primary research, the majority of social gamers appear to be female. Although there is no

clear indication as to why this appears to be the outcome, many of the male respondents did not like the fact that social games are simple and fairly straightforward to play, which again has been justified by Game For Change (2016). This could be due to traditional console games require more skills and concentration to be able to play successfully. Another element that consumers enjoy about social gaming is the merging on to mobile platforms. This was also identified through conducting the questionnaires where respondents mentioned that social games being available to play on mobile phones has allowed them to play whilst on the move.

5.1.4 Objective Four – Recommendations

In relation to the 4th objective of the study, the following recommendations that are made will be based upon the general findings of the research study.

1. Based on responses provided as part of the primary research, ‘hard-core gamers’ could potentially find social gaming appealing if there are alterations in future game releases. Therefore, the first recommendation for social game developers would be to allow users to change the difficulty. This would enable users to play at a pace that suits them, based on their gaming experience, which could potentially help social game developers to target a larger audience.
2. Another suggestion to help make social games appealing to an increased demographic would be the idea to merge social gaming onto other gaming platforms, for example on the Xbox One. This could be used to attract users whom may not necessarily enjoy the concept of playing games on social media websites. In addition to this, this could create a more competitive aspect of social gaming due to the ease of playing multiplayer on console platforms.
3. The last recommendation would be for social game developers to offer incentives to users who regularly share games that they have played, for example, exclusive items

that could only be unlocked from doing so. This would be a great incentive from a marketing perspective as it would help promote the game being offered, potentially helping to attract more users.

5.2 Limitations

One of the main limitations of the study was that due to the research carried out was based in a new subject area, there was very little research on social gaming. This made it very time consuming when collecting resources to include in Chapter 2 of the study. Another limitation of the study was through the collection of results. Due to the majority of respondents being female, although this gave the impression to support the findings based in Chapter 2, there was the issue that due to there not being enough male respondents, it could be suggested that there was not a true male representation to support the findings.

If the study were to be carried out again, there would need to be a number of changes made to the way the researcher approached the task. Due to issues out of the researcher's control, a lot of essential time towards the beginning of the project had been voided. This meant that in areas that could have used longer time periods, for example, data collection, there was the implication that there were not enough responses that had been collected in order to give a truer response. In addition to this, as mentioned previously, the chosen research field is considerably new, therefore a lot of time had been used to retrieve a sufficient amount of research in order to continue with the study. To prevent these similar mistakes from reoccurring, it could be suggested for the researcher to manage time better, allocating appropriate timespans to complete certain tasks within the study.

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Appendices

Appendix One: Screenshot of the Questionnaire (Part One) (Survey Monkey, 2016)

*** 1. What is your age?**

- ☐ 18 to 24
- ☐ 25 to 34
- ☐ 35 to 44
- ☐ 45 to 54
- ☐ 55 to 64
- ☐ 65 to 74
- ☐ 75 or older
- ☐ Prefer not to say

*** 2. What is your gender?**

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say

*** 3. What is your employment status?**

- ☐ Employed, full-time
- ☐ Employed, part-time
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Appendix Two: Screenshot of the Questionnaire (Part Two) (Survey Monkey, 2016)

* 4. Looking at each platform of gaming, how frequently do you play each one?

	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	In the past 6 months	More than 6 months
Console Games	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
PC Games	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social/Facebook Games	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mobile Games	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

* 5. On your social media accounts (e.g. Facebook), how many people do you have on your friends list?

- ☐ 0 to 99
- ☐ 100 to 199
- ☐ 200 to 299
- ☐ 300 to 399
- ☐ 400 to 499
- ☐ 500 or more

* 6. Have you ever had any requests/notifications to play a game (e.g. Candy Crush Saga) on your Facebook account?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

* 7. Based on your answer for question 4, if you play Facebook games, what do you enjoy about them? If you do not play them, what are your reasons for this?

Appendix Three: Screenshot of the Questionnaire (Part Three) (Survey Monkey, 2016)

* 8. Please list up to 10 Facebook games that you have either played or have heard of before.

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

* 9. Please select the types of advertising that have either drawn you to play Facebook games or what types you think attracts others to play them. If you can think of anymore, please state in 'Other'.

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ YouTube ads
- ☐ YouTubers
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Advert banners on websites
- ☐ Search engines (e.g. Google)
- ☐ TV
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Appendix Four: Screenshot of the Questionnaire (Part Four) (Survey Monkey, 2016)

* 10. What do you agree with regarding each statement provided below?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook games are a great way to interact with friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Playing Facebook games is a great way to pass time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Facebook games are a great way to make new friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I often ask friends for help when I'm stuck on completing a level	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Facebook games are more appealing to play on mobile phones	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix Five: Completed Ethics Form



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

E3 FORM

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL – BA level

CAIS AM GYMERADWYAETH MOESGOL – Lefel BA

Mae'r ffurflen hon i'w chwblhau gan bob BA myfyrwr. Rhaid i bob ffurflen gael ei ystyried gan diwtor y modiwl. Dylai un copi o'r ffurflen yn cael ei roi ar y ffeiliau Gyfadran ac un copi cadw ar y ffeil myfyrwr.

This form is to be completed by all BA students conducting research, projects or productions. This form should be completed by the student. All forms must be considered by the Module tutor. A copy of the form must be kept centrally and on the student file.

ADRAN 1 – MANYLION MYFYRIWR

SECTION 1 - STUDENT DETAILS

Enw Llawn
Full Name

Natasha Courtney

Ysgol/Cyfadrn/
School/Faculty

School of Business

Rhif Myfyriwr
Student
Number

P134354

Cydlynnydd prosiect /
Tiwtor
Module Tutor / Programme
Co-ordinator

Caroline Jawad

Enw'r Gradd
Name of
Degree

BA (Hons) Business &
Finance

Teitl dangosol yr Traethawd Hir:

Indicative Title of Dissertation:

An Analysis on the Current State of the Social Gaming Market

ADRAN 2 – MANYLION CYFRANOGWYR /
CYNULLEIDFA

SECTION 2 - PARTICIPANT / AUDIENCE
DETAILS

Pwy yw'r cyfranogwyr arfaethedig?	Who are the intended participants?	Ydw / Yes	Na / No
Myfyrwyr / staff Y Drindod Dewi Sant	Students / staff of Trinity Saint David		No

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Oedolion (dros oed 16 ac yn gymwys i gydsynio)	Adults (over the age of 16 and competent to give consent)	Yes	
Plant a phobl ifanc dan oed	Children / legal minors		No
Cleifion neu gleientiaid gweithwyr proffesiynol	Patients or clients of professionals		No
Rhywun sy'n cael ei gadw yn y ddalfa neu y mae'r llys wedi cymryd cyfrifoldeb amdano	Anyone in custodial care or for whom the court has assumed responsibility		No
Aelod o unrhyw sefydliad lle mae'n bosibl bod angen i unigolyn arall hefyd gydsynio.	A member of any organisation where another individual may also need to give consent.		No
Eraill: Nodwch: / Others: please identify:			

Nifer, Oed a Ffynhonnell y Cyfranogwyr Rhowch fanylion yr demograffeg y cyfranogwyr / gynulleidfa.		Participant / Audience Number and Age Provide details of the demographics of the participants / audience.
Nifer o Gyfranogwyr / yn y Gynulleidfa	Participant/ Audience number	81 individuals
Grŵp oedran y Cyfranogwyr/y Gynulleidfa	Participant/ Audience age group	18+

ADRAN 3 – GWEITHGAREDD YMCHWIL SECTION 3 – RESEARCH ACTIVITY

1.	Ydy'r prosiect yn cynnwys:	Does the project include:	Ydy / Yes	Nac ydy/No
	Defnyddio holiadur neu offeryn ymchwil tebyg	Use of questionnaire or similar research instrument	Yes	
	Defnyddio prawf ysgrifenedig neu gyfrifiadurol	Use of written or computerised test		No
	Cyfweiliad (cysylltwch gwestiynau posibl)	Interview (attach provisional questions)		No
	Dyddiaduron	Diaries		No
	Arsylwi ar gyfranogwyr a hwythau'n ymwybodol o hynny	Participant observation with their knowledge		No

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Arsylwi ar gyfranogwyr a hwythau ddim yn ymwybodol o hynny	Participant observation without their knowledge		No
Recordio fideo neu sain	Video or audio-taping		No
Mynediad i wybodaeth bersonol neu gyfrinachol heb gydsyniad penodol y cyfranogwyr	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants specific consent		No
Defnyddio unrhyw gwestiynau, ysgogiadau prawf, cyflwyniad y gallai rhai cyfranogwyr eu profi fel rhywbeth sy'n achosi niwed / tramgwydd corfforol, meddyliol neu emosiynol	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive		No
Cyflawni unrhyw weithredoedd allai achosi embaras neu effeithio ar hunan-barch	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem		No
Ymchwilio i gyfranogwyr sy'n ymwneud â gweithgareddau anghyfreithlon	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities		No
Gweithdrefnau lle defnyddir twyll	Procedures that involve deception		No
Gweini unrhyw sylwedd, cyfrwng neu blasebo	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo		No
Dull arall o gasglu data neu fformat cyflwyno (esboniwch)	Other method of data collection or presentation format (please explain)		No

2.	Restru eich dull o gasglu data	List your method of data collection:
Online Questionnaire/Survey		

3.	Risg Posibl: (corfforol, seicolegol, cyfreithiol, cymdeithasol neu economaidd)	Potential Risk: (physical, psychological, legal, social or economic)
-----------	--	--

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A oes unrhyw risg bosibl i:		Is there any potential risk to:	Ydw / Yes	Na / No
A	Cyfranogwyr?	Participants?		No
B	Ymchwilydd?	Researcher?		No
C	BrifYsgol/Cyfadrn?	University?		No

4. Rheoli Risg: Os oes, beth yw'r risg a sut y bydd yn cael ei reoli?	Management of Risk: If yes, what is the risk and how will it be managed?
No risk	

5.	Os ydych yn delio â phlant a / neu oedolion agored i niwed, rhaid i chi gyflwyno eich dystysgrif DBS i'ch tiwtor goruchwyllo i'w cymeradwyo cyn i unrhyw gysylltiad â cyfranogwyr hyn.	If you are dealing with children and/ or vulnerable adults you must present your DBS certificate to your supervising tutor for approval before any contact with these participants.		
		Ydw / Yes	Na / No	
A	Ydych chi wedi gwneud cais am dystysgrif DBS?	Have you applied for a DBS certificate?		No
B	A yw eich tiwtor weld a'i gadarnhau eich dystysgrif DBS?	Has your tutor seen and approved your DBS certificate?		No

6.	A fyddwch yn cael cydsyniad gwybodys ysgrifenedig gan eich cyfranogwyr?	Will you obtain written informed consent from your participants?		
		Ydw / Yes	Na / No	
A	Os na fyddwch, pam hynny?	If no, why not?		No

Natasha Courtney (P134354)

B	Os byddwch, sut byddwch yn sicrhau cydsyniad gwybodus?	If yes, how will you secure informed consent?		No
Rhowch eglurhad / Please explain: The questions that will be asked as part of the research will not be intrusive. In addition to this, as questionnaires will be distributed online, all responses obtained will remain anonymous.				
Cynhwyswch gopi o'r ffurflen gydsynio os ydych yn defnyddio un.		Please include a copy of the consent form if you are using one.		

ADRAN 4		SECTION 4	
CEFNOGWYD /APPROVED		NIS CEFNOGWYD/ NOT SUPPORTED	
Datganiad Mae'r wybodaeth a gynhwysir yma yn gywir, hyd eithaf fy ngwybodaeth a'm cred. Rwyf wedi ceisio dynodi unrhyw risgiau a phroblemau sy'n gysylltiedig â'r prosiect / ymchwil neu gynhyrchiad ac rwyf yn cydnabod f'ymrwymadau innau a hawliau'r cyfranogwyr.		Declaration The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the project/research or production and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.	

Llofnodau Dylai'r ffurflen hon gael ei chwblhau a'i llofnodi gan y myfyriwr a'r Cydlynnydd y prosiect /Twitor	Signatures This form should be completed and signed by the student and the Module tutor/Programme Co-ordinator.
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Myfyriwr / Student	Dyddiad: / Date:
Cydlynnydd y prosiect /Twitor Project co-ordinator / Tutor	Dyddiad: / Date:



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

Cyfranogwr Rhif Adnabod:
Participant Identification Number:

P134354

CWESTIYNAU CYFWELIAD SAMPL

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

TEITL Y PROSIECT: / PROJECT TITLE:

An Analysis on the Current State of the Social Gaming Market

1	What is your age?
2	What is your gender?
3	What is your employment status?
4	Looking at each platform of gaming, how frequently do you play each one?
5	On your social media accounts (e.g. Facebook), how many people do you have on your friends list?
6	Have you ever had any requests/notifications to play a game (e.g. Candy Crush Saga) on your Facebook account?
7	Based on your answer for question 4, if you play Facebook games, what do you enjoy about them? If you do not play them, what are your reasons for this?
8	Please list up to 10 Facebook games that you have either played or have heard of before.
9	Please select the types of advertising that have either drawn you to play Facebook games or what types you think attracts others to play them. If you can think of any more, please state in 'Other'.
10	What do you agree with regarding each statement provided below?

Natasha Courtney (P134354)

<u>ENW A CHYFEIRIAD YR YMCHWILYDD</u>	<u>NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER</u>
	Natasha Courtney 2 Bryn Y Gors, Llangyfelach, Swansea SA6 6DQ

Natasha Courtney (P134354)



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU

Y Drindod Dewi Sant

UNIVERSITY OF WALES

Trinity Saint David

Cyfranogwr Rhif Adnabod:
Participant Identification Number:

P134354

FFURFLEN GANIATÂD CYFRANOGIAD

PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM

TEITL Y PROSIECT: / PROJECT TITLE:

An Analysis on the Current State of the Social Gaming Market

Name of Researcher: Natasha Courtney

**Please
Initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated _____ for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the research team.

4. I understand that my name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations.

5. I agree to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Natasha Courtney (P134354)

You may decline to participate in this study. You may end your participation in this study at any time. If you decide to remain anonymous, maintaining your anonymity will be a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise your identity. If you prefer anonymity, there will not be any identifying information on audiotapes or transcripts of this or any interview. No-one will hear any audiotapes or see any transcripts without your prior consent. All materials generated from this or any interview will remain confidential.

When completed, please return in the envelope provided (if applicable). One copy will be given to the participant and the original to be kept in the file of the research team at:
PLACE:

<u>ENW A CHYFEIRIAD YR YMCHWILYDD</u>	<u>NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER</u>
	Natasha Courtney 2 Bryn Y Gors, Llangyfelach, Swansea SA6 6DQ

Natasha Courtney (P134354)



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

Cyfranogwr Rhif Adnabod:
Participant Identification Number: **P134354**

FFURFLEN GANIATÂD CYFRANOGIAD

SAMPLE PARTICIPANT INFORMATION
SHEET

TEITL Y PROSIECT: / PROJECT TITLE:

An Analysis on the Current State of the Social Gaming Market

Dear Participant:

My name is Natasha Courtney and I am studying in the School of Business (Swansea UWTSD)

I would like to invite you to participate in my research project. This project aims to identify the current state of the social gaming market, looking at different aspects of marketing to identify what social game developers have done in order to attract consumers to the product that is being offered. The objectives to achieve this are as follows:

1. To identify the current state of the social gaming market through conducting a comprehensive literature review.
2. To explore the views of consumers with regards to the attraction of social gaming through primary research.
3. To explore the appeal of social gaming to the average consumer, whether changes in technology has had an influence on this.
4. To provide appropriate recommendations based on what has been written throughout the research paper for future research/developments in the topic area.

Natasha Courtney (P134354)

Through your participation in the questionnaire and/or interviews, I hope to ascertain information on what appeals consumers in respect of social gaming.

All questionnaires will be kept strictly confidential to the researchers involved and at **NO** time will individual questionnaires be released to the general public. This gives you a chance to express your views on your programme a confidential and anonymous forum and still be able to make a difference. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary so you can withdraw from the questionnaire at any stage.

Our questionnaire should take about 10 minutes to complete, but there is no time constraint. There are also no right or wrong answers. Attached to this letter along with the questionnaire is a consent. As this is a new project, your feedback is also important to us and we would be much obliged if you could also complete the feedback sheet along with the questionnaire. We understand that your time is at a premium but your opinions are very valuable to us.

After careful and precise analysis of the data obtained from this questionnaire, I will be happy to provide you with a copy of the findings at your request. The results of this questionnaire will hopefully enhance my understanding of the current state of the social gaming market and will safely be stored on Survey Monkey. The results of the research will be fed back to The University of Wales Trinity Saint David as part of the BA (Hons) dissertation.

We thank you in advance for your time and participation. If any questions do arise, feel free to contact me at your convenience.

<u>ENW A CHYFEIRIAD YR YMCHWILYDD</u>	<u>NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER</u>
	Natasha Courtney 2 Bryn Y Gors, Llangyfelach, Swansea SA6 6DQ