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Ultimate Gamification Guide



All you need to know about gamification
and how you can use it to grow your business

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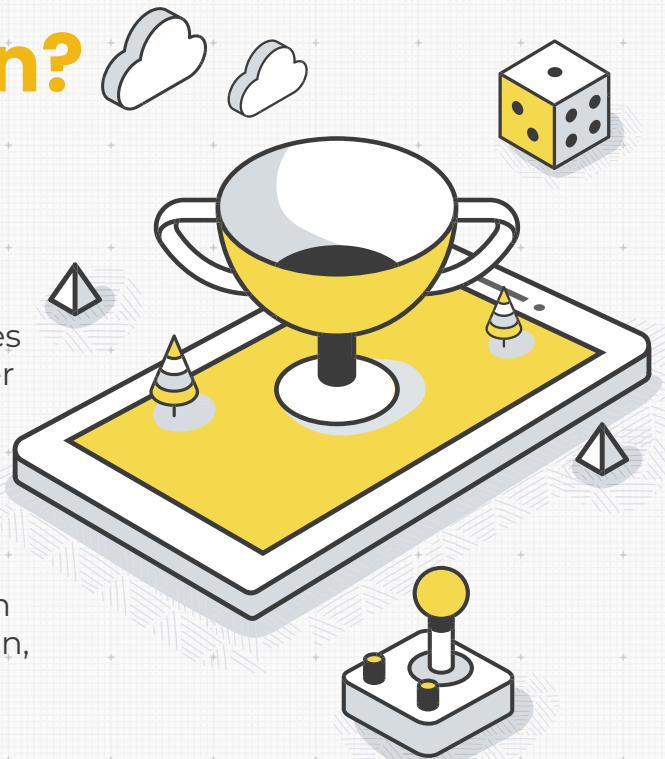
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What is gamification?

First codified in an academic paper from 2011, gamification is defined as “the addition of game elements to non-game activities”, deployed to engage people more effectively. Since then, this definition has expanded to include the use of games in industries and strategies where they serve further purposes than the entertainment of players.

Gamification works by fostering a game-like approach to a system, creating challenges that users need to overcome, and offering rewards for successfully overcoming them. This is done through the creative use of game elements, engaging design, and simple mechanics.



What separates gamification from games?

On the surface, gamification and games may seem interchangeable—both involve game elements and mechanics and encourage people to engage with them. The key difference between the two lies in their purpose.

Games are created for the sole purpose of enjoyment and fun for those who play them. On the other hand, gamification goes beyond entertainment by using these elements to drive motivations in line with your overall business goals.



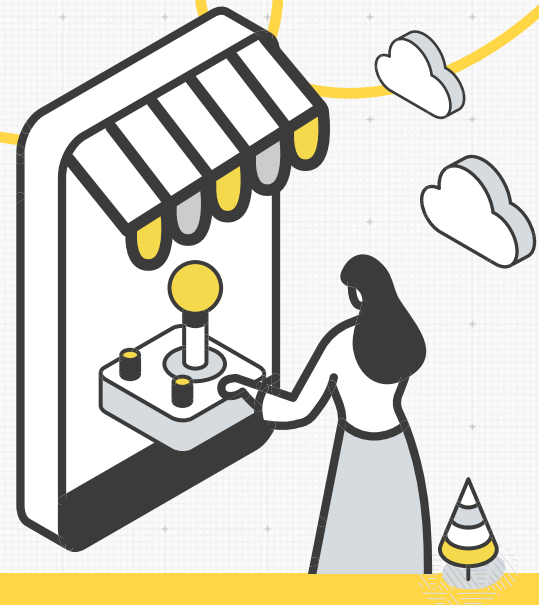
Why market with games?

Aside from the widespread use of smartphones, another significant factor in making games a viable marketing channel is the development of hypercasual games.

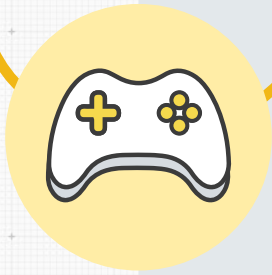
Hypercasual games operate on simple mechanics, making them easy to play, even without prior gaming experience. Typically, hypercasual games can be played instantly in short, contained rounds. These aspects make this type of game enjoyable for a wide range of people without taking up much of their time.

Through the easy-to-play, fun, and “bite-sized” nature of hypercasual games, games have gone from a limited audience to near-universal appeal. As a result, marketing with games goes beyond endemic brands—it can be done for all kinds of brands across industries.

What does the gamified marketing landscape look like?



Thanks to hypercasual games, gamified marketing has become ripe with opportunities for brands to boost engagement, improve recall, and generate buzz and hype. Currently, research has shown that:



As of 2022, mobile games have taken up 53% of the global games market, accounting for \$103.5B in revenue (Newzoo)

The prevalence of smartphones has made games more accessible to the public, making mobile gaming highly popular. These numbers only further solidify mobile games as a legitimate channel for all kinds of marketing strategies.



There are 3,198M players globally, with 2,675M gaming from their smartphones (Newzoo)

Millions of people globally play games in some form, with a majority of players using their smartphones for gaming. By using games for marketing, brands are able to reach larger audiences across demographics.



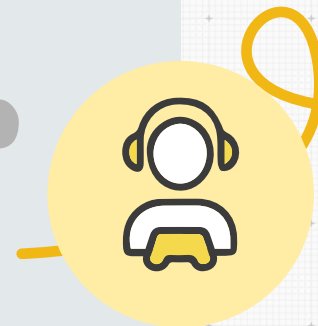
Hypercasual games have accounted for over 30% of downloads among the top 100 games globally (Newzoo)


Hypercasual games are very popular, thanks to their simple and easy-to-play nature. Gamified marketing taps into the popularity of these games, creating the right environment for reaching larger audiences—both old and new.



85% of mobile game players don't consider themselves "gamers" (AppLovin)

Despite the assumption that people who enjoy games consider themselves gamers, data shows that a majority of players don't identify with the term. This further drives the fact that games are no longer a niche interest, but instead are enjoyable to all kinds of people.





Mobile ad spending is poised to hit \$350B in 2022, surpassing the total spend of \$295B in 2021 (Data.ai)

Mobile marketing is already in full swing, with ad spending poised for an upwards trajectory. Gamified marketing is aligned with this current trend, making it a critical addition to marketing strategies for brands who want to get ahead of the competition.

All these numbers highlight the potential that gamified marketing can bring to the table. In this highly competitive market, it is imperative to reach your audiences where they are—or risk losing big.



Why is gamification so popular?

The biggest reason why gamification is so popular is that it works. Gamification easily creates additional value for your mobile app, giving your users more reasons to come back, participate, and spend. This “stickiness” is what helps apps retain their current user base and grow it further.

With its rising popularity, it’s no surprise that research on gamification’s effectiveness has begun to emerge. Recent studies from different experts and institutions came out with positive findings, such as:

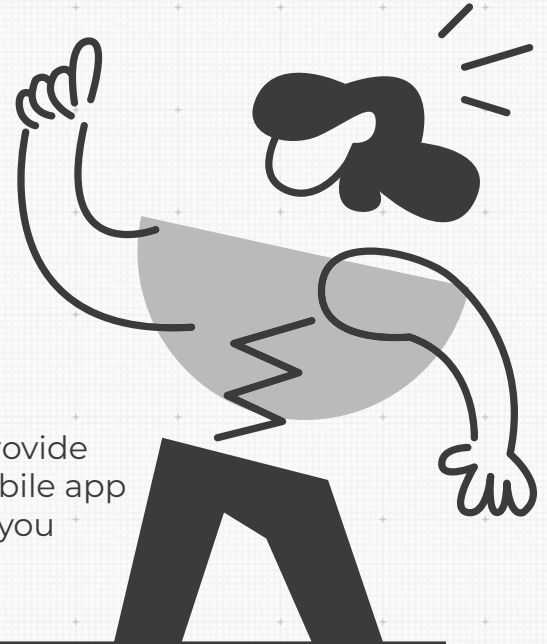
Gamification has helped brands increase customer interactions by 30-40%.
(Deloitte)

A fully-engaged customer can net an average of 23% premium in terms of profitability.
(Gallup)

Companies that used gamification saw a 700% increase in conversions over those that did not.
(The Octalysis Group)

Benefits of Gamification For Your Mobile App

As discussed in the previous section, gamification can provide opportunities for your app to profit. It also gives your mobile app avenues to improve certain KPIs. Below are the benefits you can expect from gamifying your app:



01 Create additional revenue streams

There are two primary ways that app gamification can create new revenue streams—in-app ads and in-game purchases. Your app can leverage this ad space within the gamified experience, giving your future partners access to your audiences for additional profits.

Meanwhile, certain game mechanics can enable in-game purchases. Users, whether driven by competition or simple curiosity, can opt to spend on these resources to accelerate their progress throughout the different challenges in the gamified experience.



02 Boost user engagement

App gamification works by appealing to various user motivations—recognition, rewarding, competition, and so on. By providing an experience that triggers these motivations, users are compelled to come back to your app—for both app and fun.

You can further optimize and incentivize this engagement through the use of game elements that best suit the behaviors of your user base. When done right, users will be more likely to participate, engage, and take certain actions within your app.



03 Shape in-app brand experience

While app gamification works best when integrated with a solid app ecosystem, it can also create a new layer to the overall user experience within your app. This can range from the visual design, to rewards given to users.

A gamified experience that is seamlessly integrated into your app encourages users to engage with the challenges, all while retaining the familiar image and experience they have associated with your brand.



04 Foster user community

Gamifying your app not only lets your brand engage with users in new ways, but also provides an additional avenue to grow and nurture an organic community aligned with your brand.

From there, you can create campaigns and events that center around the gamified experience and activities, allowing your brand to reach out and connect with your user base in meaningful ways.



05 Expand user base

One of the advantages app gamification offers is an avenue to both retain your current users and attract new ones. This is because a gamified experience can give your app additional value, on top of its preexisting functionality and services.

You can use your gamified experience as a focal point for campaigns geared towards user base growth. Additionally, brand-loyal users can be your advocates and invite other prospects to install and engage with your app.

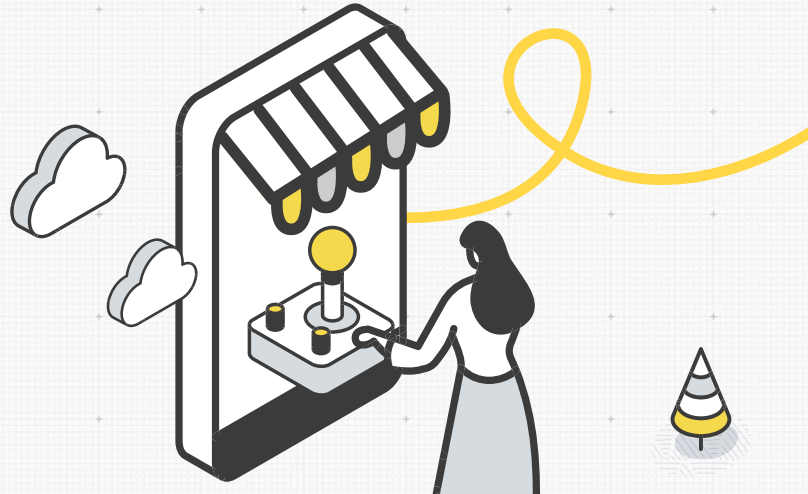


06 Provides insights into user behavior

Essentially, gamifying your app creates an experience that pushes your users into a cycle of taking certain actions to arrive at certain outcomes. This gamified experience can provide an opportunity for your app to gain insights into the behaviors of your user base.

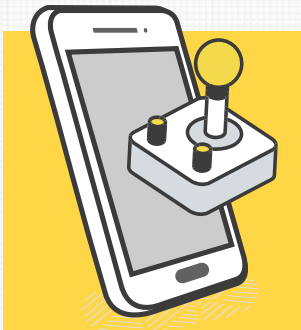
These insights can then be used to improve the in-app user experience, develop campaigns, and other improvements that can boost revenue.

What is Gamified Marketing?



Gamified marketing makes use of games as a channel for marketing efforts. Given the flexibility that digital marketing and games have to offer, there are a number of forms that gamified marketing can take. Selecting the right approach will depend on the goals of your campaign and overall business.

Some of the common gamified marketing methods include:



Game Licensing

Game licensing is the practice of paying a game publisher/distributor for a license to host a game on your brand's website or platform. Licensed games create an avenue to engage your customer base better, improve conversion rates, and increase traffic and time spent on your platform.



Game Rebranding

Game rebranding involves working with a game publisher to customize an existing game with branded elements. The resulting game will have similar mechanics to the base game, but is made unique by your brand image and visuals.

Rebranded games can be hosted on your own website or platform, as well as other third-party gaming platforms. Because of this, your game can be used to engage existing audiences and reach new ones.



In-game Advertising

In-game advertising is done by displaying ads within existing games or gaming platforms. These ads can range from static and animated banners, to interactive pop-ups and interstitial displays.

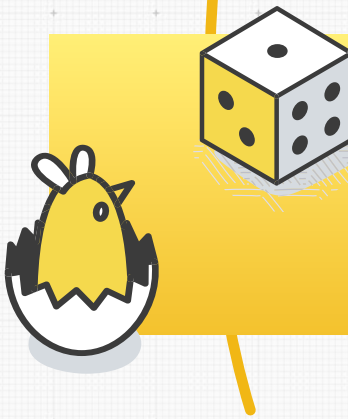
This allows your brand better visibility with new and possibly larger audiences, depending on the game or gaming platform. Additionally, ads can contain CTAs and links that redirect to your brand's page, making it good for boosting traffic and conversions.



Leaderboard/Tournament Sponsorship

Brands can partner with games and gaming platforms to sponsor a leaderboard or tournament. This can be done by putting a rebranded game up for competitive play, a brand sponsoring prizes for top players, or a combination of both.

This gives your brand the chance to actively engage your audiences, increase brand recognition and reach, and even promote your brand products.



App Gamification

App gamification involves the use of games and game elements within an existing app ecosystem to drive users to take certain actions. This can be done by integrating games or gaming platforms and rewarding users for engaging.

Gamifying your app can help grow your existing user base, boost engagement, create new streams of revenue, and so on.

Chapter 4:

Best Types of Games for Marketing

Platform games/Platformers



Platform games, or platformers, involve controlling a character's movements through the game's environment. Players of platformers win by collecting items and avoiding obstacles.

Examples from the mgames library:



Tapping games



Tapping games make use of tapping actions to fulfill the core mechanic. These games will often encourage players to tap as fast as they can, or combine both speed and the timing.

Examples from the mgames library:



Precision games



Precision games, as the name suggests, focus on the player's ability to take precise actions. The core mechanics of these games often work around the aim, timing, or a mix of both.

Examples from the mgames library:



Puzzle games

Puzzle games challenge players by testing their logical thinking. Puzzles can be as simple as locating matching pairs, or as complex as rapidly fitting objects together strategically.

Examples from the mgames library:



Chapter 5:

Key Takeaways

- ◆ Gamification is the use of games and game-like elements to non-game activities, industries, and strategies.
- ◆ Gamification works by fostering a game-like approach to a system, creating challenges that users need to overcome, and offering rewards for successfully overcoming them.
- ◆ The wide adoption of smartphones and the development of hypercasual games have made gaming more accessible and have near-universal appeal.
- ◆ Gamification is highly successful because of its unique and fun approach to driving user engagement and motivation, especially in the current digital landscape.
- ◆ Gamified marketing is a multifaceted approach that makes use of games to reach wider audiences, boost conversions, and improve retention, among other things.
- ◆ Selecting the right gamified marketing approach requires an understanding of your overall business goals and how each approach works to achieve them.

It's not too late to gamify your marketing and take your business to the next level!

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