

# Dingo Dash

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**Abstract**—The author gives an overview of Dingo Dash videogame made for iOS and how the study the target audience, understanding today's market and some processes post-launch have a huge impact on the app success. I will use my game as a good example on how to not make and publish a game.

**Keywords**—Videogame; Arcade; iOS;Dingo; Marketing

## I. INTRODUCTION

Back in the golden days of the early App Store, you could publish even a mediocre app and it was guaranteed to get downloads. This is no longer the case. The market has now matured and purely relying on organic growth by uploading your app without any marketing at all is usually met with “crickets”, as described by many new developers.

I will describe the game, its features then some common practices on pre-development studies, pre-launch activities, and post-launch activities that will determine if a game succeeds or it stays in the bottom.

## II. THE GAME

### A. Introduction

Dash the dingo was playing in the middle of the woods, and he decided to stay near a suspicious giant boulder. Instead of trying to climb the rocky walls or move straight before the huge rock falls Dingo starts to daydream until there's no time left and the boulder falls. The player has the power to control Dash and help him escape from the never stopping boulder. How far will the player go?

### B. Controls

The player can swipe in horizontal directions in order to switch lanes and upwards swipes to jump.

### C. Gameplay

Dingo Dash is an Infinite runner, a platform game which the player character is continuously moving towards through a procedurally generated endless world, Dash our character needs to jump and move to evade obstacles with the objective of get far as possible before Dash gets crushed by the chasing boulder, this happens when the player collides twice.

Also, another main objective is collecting coins that can be used to buy in-game content such as levels and costumes for our character.



Figure 1. Dingo Dash Game menu





Figure 2. Dingo Dash Gameplay



Figure 4. Dingo Dash costumes

#### D. Levels

Levels are just cosmetic for the game, it doesn't alter or affect the gameplay, these levels contain new chasing enemies, music, background, themed obstacles.



Figure 3. Dingo Dash levels

#### E. Costumes

While the player progress through the game, the more he/she plays the more coins will get, with the in-game currency the player can buy costumes, these costumes are purely cosmetic, some of these costumes dresses Dash and parodies some gaming characters or popular culture.

#### D. In-App Purchases

As mentioned before the player can obtain coins while playing the game, but if the player is interested in some in-game cosmetic he/she can buy coin packs using real currency.

### III. WHERE TO START

A. *The 'who'* Something that's often missed by new developers and inexperienced ones is that they don't realize that marketing starts before they even start the app. the app should have a clearly defined target user in mind - ideally, when you make the app, it should be solving a problem that you yourself have. A common pitfall is that would-be-entrepreneurs create solutions for problems that don't exist and think it'll be met with fanfare.

With Dingo Dash after scrapping other ideas, I came up with the design, Dash was born and stuck to develop a game for Dash until finishing it. Although it took me 2 years due to technical limitations, lack of 3d modelling and 3d programming skills. However, that didn't stop me from learning and then when I could, I published it. Now with no target audience previously identified and currently under 300 downloads it seems clear that dingo dash was a failure.

#### B. Market Research Why Competition Is A Good Thing

Are there a lot of apps in the App Store that do a similar thing to what you plan to do? There are two ways to look at this:

- You're going to be up against a LOT of competition, making it harder for your app to stand out...
- OR you could be more optimistic and say that if there's competitors, there must be people that want the thing you aim to make.

The first step to understanding market research is to understand what's currently popular. Apple provides with

a free means of doing this already by looking at the top charts of the App Store.

There are a lot of games as reskins, which have been around for a few years now, becoming popularized by 1 the idea that making many cheap apps is less risky than making one good app. Many developers saw that they could make a lot of money from doing this - just search for “flappy bird” and see how many clones exist. Thus, this is not a good long-term strategy.

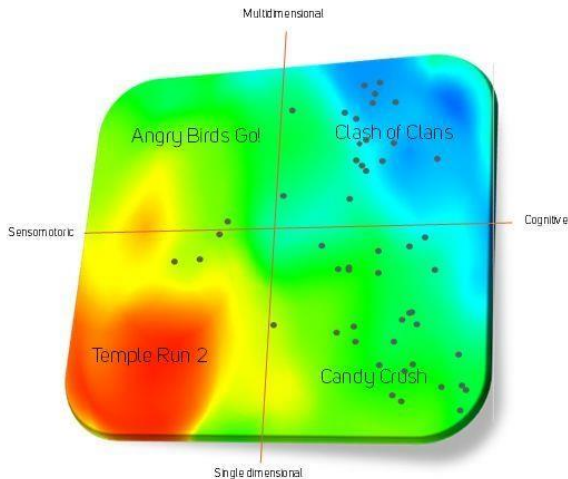


Figure 5. The competitive heat mapping of US AppStore. The warmer the color, the more there are games in that area. The grey dots represent the top grossing 50 games [1]

As seen in Figure 5. Dingo Dash is in a market oversaturated where it has a tough competition with other infinite runners. One of the main reasons why this game got few downloads since its launch on February.

### C. Validating your market

To validate your market for when you make a game, in addition to looking at the App Store, you should check for whether those types of games are popular on online websites that features flash games.

You'll be able to tell simply by the number of plays on each game, any online with greater than one million plays are likely to be a hit, so analyzing those games (and what made them popular) might give you the key to making something that drives a ton of downloads.

### D. How to market at Pre-launch

- Make a splash page for your app. Collect email addresses on this splash page.
- Reach out to developers in your niche to see if you can launch an advertisement with them in the first week.

- A press/product page is vital.
- Localize your app descriptions and screenshots for different languages.
- Collect the emails journalists and influencers in your app's industry.
- Start getting followers on social media early.
- Test a beta product with your target audience.
- Do some review mining.

### E. How to market at launch

- Mail the journalists/influencers you collected in your pre-launch marketing.
- Work out your pricing strategy.
- Create threads on forums about your app
- Send out a press release.
- Get as many reviews as possible.

## IV. CONCLUSION

After all Dingo Dash was only a game designed by a creator fueled by the passion of making games, but due to that he got blinded on focusing on the development part, and didn't consider the pre-launch and post-launch processes that are needed to make an app successful. I hope with this you can get a small view on what being an indie developer is like, and get motivated to make a game for your own, as my motto is... never give up. And keep learning

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## REFERENCES

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