

10TH ANNUAL

#gamesUR
SUMMIT
2019

THE COMMONWEALTH CLUB
SAN FRANCISCO

MARCH 19TH 2019

GOLD
SPONSORS





SCHEDULE

2ND FLOOR

DEVELOPMENT

1ST FLOOR

FOUNDATIONS

3RD FLOOR

REFINEMENT

8:00
AM

REGISTRATION AND SETUP

9:00
AM

KICK OFF

Nicolaas VanMeerten - Summit Director

9:15
AM

OPENING ADDRESS: A GOLDEN AGE OF RESEARCH: A FRAMEWORK FOR ADVANCEMENT

Randy Pagulayan (Microsoft)

10:00
AM

BREAK

10:15
AM

SHAPING WASTRELS INTO PROPER CITIZENS: IMPACTS OF UR ON WE HAPPY FEW

Jonathan Cohen (Gearbox Publishing)

WHAT MAKES A GREAT USABILITY EXPERT REVIEW? LESSONS FROM MY PRACTICE GAME ANALYSES

Seb Long - Player Research

BLENDING UR IN THE DESIGN CYCLE TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT

Julien Huguenin (Ubisoft)

11:15
AM

YOU PLAY LIKE A GURL: PERSPECTIVES FROM FEMALE-IDENTIFYING RESEARCHERS

Laura Levy, Bradlyn Walker, Nikki Crenshaw, & Elizabeth Zelle

ASK US (ALMOST) ANYTHING SO WE CAN ARGUE ABOUT IT

James Berg, Jon Dankoff, Melissa Boone, Matt Streit, Kishonna Gray

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY. UX RESEARCH IN PRE-PRODUCTION

Molly Sirota & Nick Livingston (Sony PlayStation - San Diego)

12:00
PM

LUNCH

1:00
PM

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT NARRATIVE USABILITY BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK

Deborah Hendersen & Todd Kelley (Xbox, Microsoft)

SPEED MENTORING
(HELD ON FOUNDATIONS FLOOR)

2:00
PM

BREAK

2:15
PM

GAMES USER RESEARCH: A WORLD OF WARCRAFT CASE STUDY

Dan Jenrette (Blizzard)

PLAYER INTERVIEWS 101: WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK AND HOW TO ASK THEM

Harvey Owen - Player Research

WHY YOU DON'T NEED AN ARMY TO RUN LONG TERM DIARY STUDIES

Lanie Dixon (Ubisoft)

2:45
PM

RAPPORT AND PARTICIPANT INTERACTION IN GAMES USER RESEARCH

Bob Tilford - Player Research



SCHEDULE

2ND FLOOR

DEVELOPMENT

1ST FLOOR

FOUNDATIONS

3RD FLOOR

REFINEMENT

3:15
PM

VENDORS + POSTER SESSIONS + NETWORKING

3:45
PM

DIARY OF A PLAYTEST RECRUITER — YOU WANT ME TO DO WHAT? (AND BY WHEN?)

Santino Garcia (Activision)

SURVEY DESIGN IN THE WILD: LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM BAD SURVEY QUESTIONS

Elizabeth Zelle (Bethesda Softworks)

HOW TO CREATE A QUALITY RESEARCH BUDGET AND SCHEDULE FOR YOUR GAME PROJECT

Elise Lemaire, Jean-Luc Potte, & Michele Cabeen

4:30
PM

INCLUDING THE USER VOICE IN AN ALGORITHM WORLD

Lauren White (Microsoft, Xbox Research)

LEVELLING UP YOUR USER RESEARCH SKILLS WHEN YOU'RE A STUDENT: WORKING WITH LOCAL DEVS AND MORE

Jess Tompkins, Hannah Murphy, & Brianna Stephenson

A FIRESIDE CHAT WITH JOHN & MIKE

John Hopson, Arenanet & Mike Ambinder (Valve)

5:15
PM

BREAK

5:30
PM

GUR SALARY SURVEY

Jonathan Dankoff

5:45
PM

GAMES USER RESEARCH UPDATE

Ben Lewis Evans - Steering Committee Chair

6:30-
8:30PM

AFTER PARTY – CIGAR BAR & GRILL

850 Montgomery Street, San Francisco CA 94133

CONTENT TRACKS

#gamesUR 2019 grows to three content tracks for the first time! Each distinct track is individually tailored for different professional development levels.

DEVELOPMENT (2ND FLOOR): The traditional track that will include case studies, panels, and workshops of general interest for all researchers looking to continue to learn and to improve their skills.

FOUNDATIONS (1ST FLOOR): Suited to our more junior members that will cover 101 topics such as mastering some of the trickier basics of conducting studies and breaking into the industry, as well as getting career advice from the most senior members of our community.

REFINEMENT (3RD FLOOR): Developed with our experienced attendees and managers in mind. This track will go more into detail on topics like research budgeting, maximising the impact of research, and discussion of the challenges in player-centric development today.

GIVE US FEEDBACK ON OUR TALKS! - [HTTP://BIT.LY/GAMESUR2019](http://bit.ly/gamesur2019)



GOLD SPONSORS



Marketing Systems Group

MARKETING SYSTEMS GROUP

Do your participant recruitment processes and tools meet your needs?

Simplify your participant registration, recruiting and scheduling processes with ARCS all-in-one study management and participant engagement platform. ARCS was developed to bring efficiency and visibility to managing internal research studies. Create customized data points, store in the participant database, then use the ARCS List Builder tool to identify potential study participants. Potential participants can then be emailed or texted with a screener built using ARCS Questionnaire Builder. Qualified playtesters can be scheduled based on how they answer the screener and whether there are open study quotas. ARCS tracks participation, incentive, and engagement history. Many of the industry leading studios and game developers have already migrated to ARCS.



EPIC GAMES

Founded in 1991, Epic Games is the creator of Fortnite, Unreal, Gears of War, Shadow Complex, and the Infinity Blade series of games. Epic's Unreal Engine technology brings high-fidelity, interactive experiences to PC, console, mobile, AR, VR and the Web. Unreal Engine is freely available at unrealengine.com.

For the very latest on the studio, check out @EpicGames on Twitter and we are hiring so please visit: <https://www.epicgames.com/careers>



GOLD SPONSORS



XBOX GAME STUDIOS

XBOX RESEARCH

Xbox Research is the preeminent source of consumer-focused entertainment research and insights for Xbox and Xbox Game Studios. Our researchers provide impactful analyses & strategic guidance that drive ongoing player engagement and enjoyment in our games, franchises, and platforms.

interpret

AN INSIGHT AGENCY

INTERPRET

Interpret is a global consumer insights agency with people in Los Angeles, Seattle, Dallas, Minneapolis, Austin, Shanghai, and London. At Interpret, we live and breathe video games. As the trusted partner of some of the world's top gaming companies, we facilitate better data-driven decisions in all phases of game development, marketing, and post-release support.

We have an intimate and personal connection with how the gaming industry has evolved, and our focus is to always deliver informed and actionable research.

Feature Product – Week One Studies

Players' gaming behavior changes drastically after their first encounter with a game, and that's the limit of what studies can accomplish with focus groups and playtests. Interpret has developed an innovative and dynamic way to marry the two methodologies, allowing direct interaction with target gamers. Week One is a longitudinal study that combines qualitative and quantitative insights with real-time customer interactions and reactions, utilizing our online community of mobile game consumers.

Feature Service – Play Tests

We use a hybrid focus group approach to help our clients playtest new games around the world, including NA, EU, and Asia. Through our playtests, clients not only will receive insights on the onboarding/FTUE experience and fun factor but also gain an in-depth understanding of whether gamer expectations based on marketing materials align with actual experiences. Through our playtests, we develop a rich set of strategic conclusions about both marketing and gameplay mechanics.

New Hire – Jesse Divnich

We are proud to announce the appointment of Jesse Divnich to the Interpret team as our new VP of Research & Strategy. Jesse is an industry veteran with over 18 years of experience in games research, investment, development, and publishing.



GOLD SPONSORS

ACTIVISION®

ACTIVISION

Activision User Research functions as a central service to our various teams, assisting with the testing and design of any Activision projects, games or otherwise.

Our goal is to be objective and team-agnostic, presenting the data as we discover it, providing the necessary context and color to help inform the decisions of our designers.

We are always looking for talented researchers that live and breathe game design. As a proud sponsor of this year's summit, we are looking for curious researchers to join our team. If you love games and are willing to bring your passion for them into research, then track us down and tell us which character you main, which Loadout you use, or what your favorite 16-bit game is. And be prepared to tell us WHY.



PlaytestCloud

Level Up Your Mobile Research Toolkit



Playtesting

Secure mobile playtesting for iOS and Android games.



Multiplayer Games

Automatic scheduling of multiplayer playtests.



Your own Panel

Combine your panel with our automated playtesting tools.



Testing with Kids

Fully compliant playtesting with our youngest players.

Visit our booth to see what PlaytestCloud can do.



PLAYTEST CLOUD

Designed to save you time and enhance research quality, PlaytestCloud removes the tedious aspects from your research workflow and gives you more time for designing and analyzing your studies. PlaytestCloud supports user research departments and game teams throughout the entire lifecycle of a mobile game. PlaytestCloud also offers COPPA-compliant mobile playtesting for playtests with young players.

PlaytestCloud's remote video playtesting and survey products can be used with PlaytestCloud's gamer panel or with your own players.



GOLD SPONSORS



At EA, our philosophy is Players First. This applies to our vast portfolio of games and products, including Apex Legends, Battlefield, FIFA, The Sims, Plants vs Zombies, Origin, and many more.

We're always on the lookout for Top Talent. We are eager to meet rising and seasoned researchers. Come talk to us and say Hello!

EA is a proud Gold Sponsor of the GUR Summit 2019. We are thrilled to continue supporting the research community and look forward to driving progress in the years to come.



zynga®



SILVER SPONSORS



UBISOFT

12 traits



EDUCATION SPONSORS





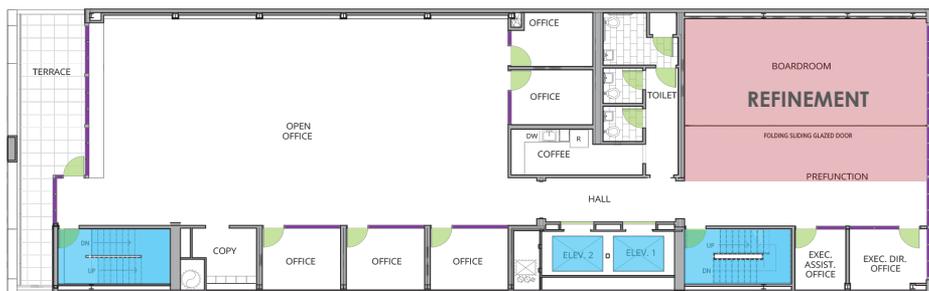
MAP



1ST FLOOR (FOUNDATIONS): The traditional track that will include case studies, panels and workshops of general interest for all researchers looking to continue to learn and to improve their skills.



2ND FLOOR (DEVELOPMENT): Suited to our more junior members that will cover 101 topics such as mastering some of the trickier basics of conducting studies and breaking into the industry, as well as getting career advice from the most senior members of our community.



3RD FLOOR* (REFINEMENT): Developed with our experienced attendees and managers in mind. This track will go more into detail on topics like research budgeting, maximising the impact of research, and discussion of the challenges in player-centric development today.

*The 3rd floor is only accessible by elevator



WIFI PASSWORD

NAME: Club Guest

PASSWORD: beintheknow



SESSIONS

[9:00 AM] KICK-OFF

Nicolaas VanMeerten - Summit Director

Nicolaas VanMeerten will kick off the Summit with an opening address.

[9:15 AM] OPENING ADDRESS: A GOLDEN AGE OF RESEARCH: A FRAMEWORK FOR ADVANCEMENT

Randy Pagulayan - Director of Xbox Research (Microsoft)

How do you ensure user research (UR) is driving impact and at the cutting edge of research? While games user research is now an integral part of the game development process – and arguably should be entering a Golden Age of innovation - many strategies that helped make it integral are no longer relevant, and the introduction of other data sources has raised questions about the merits of older techniques. How do UR teams position themselves to ensure continued growth and relevance? Randy, Director of Xbox Research, will discuss different ways to think about research, process, and impact, highlighting those that (in his two decades of industry experience) have been most impactful in driving the evolution of our discipline and the advancement of individual researchers.

DEVELOPMENT

[10:15 AM]

SHAPING WASTRELS INTO PROPER CITIZENS: IMPACTS OF UR ON WE HAPPY FEW

Jonathan Cohen (Gearbox Publishing)

Gearbox Publishing User Research worked closely with Compulsion Games as We Happy Few evolved from its Early Access form to the full game released in August, 2018. The User Research Team conducted a series of tests focusing on comprehension, on-boarding, and pacing that helped reveal ways in which players were failing to learn the intended mechanics, features, and narrative of the game. Data helped inform key changes from the developers which created a positive impact on the product and user's experience.

Audience members should learn about ways in which testing an evolving project can help inform key changes that benefit new players, how the structure of tutorials and early content can shape the emphasis of features and change user behavior, and how narrative comprehension can be improved through altering the flow of events. A final key takeaway is how collaboration between an engaged developer and publisher can produce a positive feedback loop between design and user research.

[11:15 AM]

YOU PLAY LIKE A GURL: PERSPECTIVES FROM FEMALE-IDENTIFYING RESEARCHERS

Laura Levy (Georgia Institute of Technology), Nikki Crenshaw (Blizzard Entertainment), Bradlyn Walker (Georgia Institute of Technology), & Elizabeth Zelle (jd Software)

This panel will discuss gender-specific challenges in GUR, focusing on successful strategies that can be used by anyone to ensure effective research sessions. Topics will include extant literature, adapted playtesting methods, context-dependent methodologies, and a conversation on gender dynamics between researchers and participants in the GUR domain. Our panelists represent GUR professionals across academia, industry, and research and development laboratories. Opening discussions may focus heavily on a dichotomous perspective of gender; however, many of the techniques and experiences shared by panelists also apply to trans and non-binary researchers, whose perspectives would be a rich contribution to the discussion.

DEVELOPMENT

[1:00 PM]

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT NARRATIVE USABILITY BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK

Deborah Hendersen (Sr. Xbox Researcher Studio Lead), & Todd Kelley (Xbox Researcher)

In previous GUR Sig talks Deborah has presented Narrative Usability as a method, and she still consistently get questions on how exactly to implement this method. One reason, she suspects, she gets so many questions is the gap between theory and practice can be annoyingly large when trying to build the stimuli and figure out what an issue is. How polished does the narrative need to be to test? What level of detail do you include in the stimuli? When is a misunderstanding really an issue? Which issues are high-pri and which can be safely ignored? Indeed, when I train new Xbox URs on how to use it, it's the hands-on training that is most valuable. Todd and Deborah both have lots of experience with this method, and will be sharing a hands-on workshop for any and all URs who are interested in mastering narrative usability.

Attendees should walk away with the confidence to use this method, the inherent constraints of the method, and the probability of impact. More tactically, attendees should have a better understanding of how to break down a narrative into key beats, turn those key beats into a stimuli deck, evoke the data from participants, and analyze the data to find actionable, impactful insights. This workshop should be open to everyone, but it will likely be more useful for attendees who have run a usability session before.

[2:15 PM]

GAMES USER RESEARCH: A WORLD OF WARCRAFT CASE STUDY

Dan Jenrette (Blizzard)

This talk will include an overview of the Games User Research Team at Blizzard and how being embedded in QA and it's benefits. Dan will share what their team learned building a relationship with the WoW development team, successes, failures, lessons learned and still learning.

Attendees can expect to take away:

- Real world examples of how researchers attempted to build trusted relationships with game designers, producers, up to the director level on a large successful game development team



SESSIONS

DEVELOPMENT

GAMES USER RESEARCH: A WORLD OF WARCRAFT CASE STUDY (CONT.)

- The different research methods used, what worked vs. what didn't (also what surprised us)
- Understanding potential pitfalls when attempting to insert research into a fast paced development process
- Impact of a respected QA department across all of these efforts

[3:45 PM]

DIARY OF A PLAYTEST RECRUITER — YOU WANT ME TO DO WHAT? (AND BY WHEN?)

Santino Garcia (Activision)

The Playtest Recruiter's goal is to fill a study with players that best fit the profile needed for a product. How do you find the right players without letting them know what you are looking for? How do you get someone to engage in conversation if they are not verbally inclined? How do you keep your sanity recruiting for 1-on-1's, usability playtests, large scale playtests and multi-day playtests all in one week?

This presentation will feature example mistakes, lessons learned, and success stories focused on identifying the right participants, dealing with short turn-around times for unexpected studies, and the heart break of a canceled study (and how to mend that broken heart).

Attendees will have a better understanding of the recruiting role, challenges presented in filling a session, and what a recruiter needs to properly find the right players. This talk will be beneficial to Researchers using external recruiters, in-house recruiters, and you!

[4:30 PM]

INCLUDING THE USER VOICE IN AN ALGORITHM WORLD

Lauren White (Microsoft, Xbox Research)

Big data has been the topic du jour recently, as we saturate ourselves in data and numbers and statistics and graphs. But how does a user researcher fit into this picture? Yes, there are opportunities for some researchers to snap to this mold and shine brightly in the data saturation. However, what about other researchers who either aren't exposed to this type of data in their work, don't want to crunch numbers, or don't know the best way to run and talk about statistical analysis? Being a researcher doesn't mean you have to use methodologies that produce p values and variance and standard deviations. Instead, this talk is meant to expose how to be a researcher that can answer the question what do our users think and feel and say it with confidence when you present and talk about your results.

In this talk, I will focus on a case study of using the user voice to influence algorithms for content that is displayed on the Xbox console. After lots of work has gone into creating the pipeline for content, monitoring impression data, and other information, user sentiment was missing. Having users talk about the content they were personally seeing on their console can influence decisions in ways that the numbers were unable to do on their own.

FOUNDATIONS

[10:15 AM]

WHAT MAKES A GREAT USABILITY EXPERT REVIEW? LESSONS FROM MY PRACTICE GAME ANALYSES

Seb Long - Player Research

This session presents a meta-review of these analyses to provide learnings for entry-level candidates: What were their common failures and successes? Where did they fail to clarify issues? Where was a lack of thoroughness most impactful? Which heuristics are commonly overlooked? Where do they over- or under-deliver when compared to the hundreds of usability assessments I've conducted as a professional games user researcher?

We'll first outline the role of expert analyses in commercial games UX, then explore areas of improvement for practice reports, theme-by-theme. Themes include: how to talk about game design (and how not to), best practice for writing style and tone, advice on critiquing monetisation approaches in free-to-play games, difficulty balancing, and what to do if you suspect the game is a bit dull.

In addition to providing much-needed direction to entry-level and junior candidates, this talk will provide insight for lecturers and professors teaching GamesUR, and any GamesUR Managers running training in-house.

[11:15 AM]

ASK US (ALMOST) ANYTHING SO WE CAN ARGUE ABOUT IT

James Berg (Electronic Arts), Melissa Boone (Xbox, Jonathan Dankoff (Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment Inc.), Matt Streit (Scopely), & Kishonna Gray (University of Illinois)

Join a panel of industry & academic leaders in the field of #gamesUR who will be taking on all questions from the audience. With a mix of backgrounds and knowledge, our panelists will be able to provide a broad range of answers to questions, and it is our hope that we'll find significant points of disagreement for the panelists to discuss, and everyone to learn from.

[1:00 PM]

SPEED MENTORING

Veteran researchers are paired up with small groups of students or junior researchers, in a rapid-fire mentoring engagement. Our mentees will have about 10 minutes to ask questions with each mentor, and we'll be aiming to ensure everyone gets to sit down with 4 different mentors. Research Mentees! Please arrive with an idea of what you'd like to ask our mentors, and what you'd like to learn more about. This is an excellent opportunity to get some quick coaching from leaders in the field.



SESSIONS

FOUNDATIONS

[2:15 PM]

PLAYER INTERVIEWS 101: WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK AND HOW TO ASK THEM

Harvey Owen - Player Research

Conducting player interviews is a fundamental skill of a Games User Researcher, and a well-crafted interview can provide insights that cannot be found using any other method. In this talk I will be providing advice, tools and lessons for conducting great player interviews, as part of usability testing, discussion groups, or even telephone interviews.

This talk will cover the following topics: how to structure an interview, how to write killer interview questions, how to listen, tips and tricks for getting the most out of player feedback, as well as means of building rapport with interviewees.

[2:45 PM]

RAPPORT AND PARTICIPANT INTERACTION IN GAMES USER RESEARCH

Bob Tilford - Player Research

Every microinteraction between research staff and playtesters sets a tone. This starts right from recruitment, and evolves throughout their playtest experience, as a result of things like lab design, briefing script, interpersonal conduct, and questionnaire phrasing. Research teams must be deliberate about the tone they set, since left unchecked it can cause meaningful and unpredictable biases in their data, and restrict their ability to draw inferences with confidence. This talk will dig deep into the importance of establishing and managing rapport with participants in games user research, with a view to ensuring valid player insights, and building mutual trust to adhere to NDA requirements.

Primarily, this talk aims to give early-career researchers a deep foundation in the importance of rapport, factors to be aware of, and techniques for managing it. It also has direct practical relevance for research team support staff who manage, recruit, and communicate with participants. Moreover, it's intended as an opportunity to surface the topic among more senior research staff who may not have gone so far as to implement a formal, end-to-end participant interaction strategy.

[3:45 PM]

SURVEY DESIGN IN THE WILD: LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM BAD SURVEY QUESTIONS

Elizabeth Zelle (Bethesda Softworks)

Have you ever taken a survey and seen a question that was so bad that you HAD to screenshot it and share it with people? That motivation is what this talk is founded on. On my Twitter account (@kohizerj) I have an ongoing series of tweets I call 'Survey Design Lesson Time' where I share screenshots taken from surveys and forms that are circulating in the wild and conduct mini case studies. I call out the weakness present in the questions and summarize what lessons we can all learn from these mistakes when we go about designing our own surveys. The approach is somewhat humorous, but provides concrete lessons in survey design that will be

FOUNDATIONS

SURVEY DESIGN IN THE WILD: LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM BAD SURVEY QUESTIONS (CONT.)

valuable for all levels of GUR, from juniors and students designing their first questionnaires to veterans who maybe just need a quick refresher. The presentation will be short and modeled on my Twitter posts (and probably reusing quite a few I've Tweeted already, tbh): show a screenshot of a survey/form question, point out its weaknesses, and provide advice on how to avoid or resolve the issues identified when writing your own surveys. Advice will cover everything at a fairly high level (no arguing the merits of 5-vs-7 points or the validity of NPS here) and will cover topics like question type and wording, response options, question organization, and the struggles of making sure your survey works on mobile.

[4:30 PM]

LEVELLING UP YOUR USER RESEARCH SKILLS WHEN YOU'RE A STUDENT: WORKING WITH LOCAL DEVS AND MORE

Jess Tompkins (Bethesda Softworks), Hannah Murphy (Epic Games), & Brianne Stephenson (Player Research)

This panel will share how current students and recent graduates can successfully work with game developers in their local community to build the necessary skills for working in GUR. Topics discussed include finding indie and/or student teams to work with, building a rapport with these groups, conducting the research, report writing, as well as following up with teams during the post-report stage.

Panel speakers will pull from their individual experiences working with students and independent game developers from their local communities. Aspiring researchers may have access to student developers or local indie devs in their own community. We will share strategies for 'breaking the ice' with potential developers to work with. Because game designers and developers – especially students and independents – may not fully understand the value of GUR and what it can offer for their return on investment, collaboration can be a challenge for novice researchers. We will share our personal strategies for building rapport with developers, as it can influence the degree to which the developers may or may not trust a researcher's feedback.

REFINEMENT

[10:15 AM]

BLENDING UR IN THE DESIGN CYCLE TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT

Julien Huguenin (Ubisoft Montreal)

Our experience on R6 shows that by focusing on blending in the iteration process more closely, by offering flexibility and striving to a great understanding of the design, we are able to mitigate those issues & achieve a great deal of proximity with the design at every steps – which ends up making our more "classic studies" that much more effective.

From intermediary prototype play sessions where we, as researchers, define the test objectives based on



SESSIONS

REFINEMENT

BLENDING UR IN THE DESIGN CYCLE TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT (CONT.)

the need of the design team, to being two third of the balancing team for post-launch reworks, we positioned ourselves outside of the traditional "User test – wait a bit – user test again" structure. In a lot of instances, we were able to leverage our GUR Skills well outside of the traditional scope of user test.

This has given us insight on how we can better leverage the UR skillset through the full design process, rather than pooling our resources on the completed design. I believe this to be the key to achieving greater impact as a discipline through owning as much as possible of the feedback loop, rather than the "ready to help when you are ready" mentality. But, more than anything, this talk aims to discuss the evolution on the way we envision Research, and the necessary mindset shift required to achieve greater impact.

[11:15 AM]

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY. UX RESEARCH IN PRE-PRODUCTION

Molly Sirota & Nick Livingston (Sony PlayStation - San Diego)

A joint presentation from a Sr. Researcher and a Game Design Supervisor on a Triple A Title (MLB The Show) discussing the ups and downs of collaboratively running Pre-Production

Discussion will cover:

- How a research teams involvement in Pre-Production has evolved over the years due to candid discussions with dev teams on what worked and didn't in previous experiences
- What is the researcher's role in Pre-Production?
- How a researcher can get involved with Pre-Production

Attendees can expect to learn tips and tricks on how to make your presence at Pre-Production enjoyed, detailed examples of what Research can do to get invited, and uninvited, and tips and tricks on how researchers can get involved with Pre-Production.

[1:00 PM]

SPEED MENTORING

Veteran researchers are paired up with small groups of students or junior researchers, in a rapid-fire mentoring engagement. Our mentees will have about 10 minutes to ask questions with each mentor, and we'll be aiming to ensure everyone gets to sit down with 4 different mentors. Please come with questions ready! This is an excellent opportunity to get some quick coaching.

[5:30 PM] GUR SALARY SURVEY

Jonathan Dankoff

The results of the latest GUR Salary Survey will be presented.

[5:45 PM] GAMES USER RESEARCH SIG CHAIR UPDATE

Ben Lewis-Evans

What is up with the Games User Research SIG? Let me tell you!

REFINEMENT

[2:15 PM]

WHY YOU DON'T NEED AN ARMY TO RUN LONG TERM DIARY STUDIES

Lanie Dixon (Ubisoft)

Since its release in December 2015 Rainbow Six Siege has experienced incredible growth. The number of daily players has continued to rise and in-game content expanding to include over 18 different maps and 40 unique Operators. With a team committed to releasing new content every 3 months - what does that mean for new players trying to learn the game?

This talk will cover how we leveraged Twitch for a Diary Study with 24 players playing at home across Canada over the course of 10 weeks for 80+ hours and how the 'Learning Study' created a cultural shift within the top production focus to a mindset on learning while pushing the team to look beyond just telemetry and analytics.

[3:45 PM]

HOW TO CREATE A QUALITY RESEARCH BUDGET AND SCHEDULE FOR YOUR GAME PROJECT

Elise Lemaire (Rovio), Jean-Luc Potte (Paradox Interactive), & Michele Cabeen (Activision)

"Failing to plan is planning to fail", but for many game dev teams planning to use more player data, or to mature their approach to span the development lifecycle, their first hurdle is budgeting and scheduling. How much should we allocate, and to what differing research projects? When do we lock down our exact research schedule? How can we predict the data needs of a projects months or even years in advance? What mistakes are we going to make, and how do we deal with the chaos ensuing from changing priorities?

This session of short talks presents three leading games UX managers discussing their own approach to the budgeting and scheduling of UX research in game dev.

[4:30 PM]

A FIRESIDE CHAT WITH JOHN & MIKE

John Hopson, Arenanet & Mike Ambinder (Valve)

John and Mike will host a 'fireside chat' where we share a little bit about our experiences in the industry and then solicit and answer questions on a broad array of topics from members of the audience. We've been in the industry much longer than average and have watched the GUR discipline go from a few brave pioneers to the thousands of practitioners we have today. We agree on some things and disagree on others, and we hope that seeing how experienced researchers approach and break down problems from different perspectives will be useful to the attendees.



THANK
YOU

THANK YOU!

DIRECTOR Nicolaas VanMeerten

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Jessica Tompkins

CONTENT LEAD Lanie Dixon

CONTENT ASSISTANT Jonathan Dankoff

CONTENT ASSISTANT Michael Berthin

LOGISTICS LEAD Jim Stanhope

LOGISTICS ASSISTANT Jimmy Zhou

VENUE LEAD Elise Lemaire

VENUE ASSISTANT Dan Jenrette

FUNDRAISING LEAD Ashley Brown

FUNDRAISING ASSISTANT Rick Eisenberg

FUNDRAISING ASSISTANT Kelly Boudreau

BUDGET LEAD Daniel Kutz

BUDGET ASSISTANT Cody Rosasco

SOCIAL EVENT LEAD Stephanie Puri

SOCIAL EVENT ASSISTANT Hannah Murphy

A/V LEAD Tony Scimeca

A/V ASSISTANT Ara Jung

A/V ASSISTANT Nickolas Forsten

WEB LEAD Ben Lewis-Evans

WEB ASSISTANT Jhim Verame

PR/MARKETING LEAD John Mahan



THANK
YOU

THANK YOU!

PR/MARKETING ASSISTANT Karina Arrambide

EU CONFERENCE DIRECTOR Sebastian Long

VOLUNTEERS Breanna Baltaxe-Admony

Josh Marchand

Alexis Raushel

Alex Sakkis

William Shelstad

Shania Williams

Bernice Wong

Amber Young

CONTENT REVIEWERS John Hopson

Jim Stanhope

Ben Lewis Evans

Seb Long

Phil Keck,

Melissa Boone

Andrea Abney

Kirk Rodgers

Stephanie Puri

Dan Jenerette

Ashley Brown

Hannah Murphy

Ara Jung

Danielle Pelletier

Brianne Stephenson

Tyler Searle

We would like to thank everyone who made this event possible. Our Summit Committee members, presenters and sponsors, our content reviewers, keynote speaker Randy Pagulayan, all of our sponsors, our event venue The Commonwealth Club, our printing service America's Printer, and Kendal Kotter for asset creation. And to all of our attendees, thank you for making this event possible!

