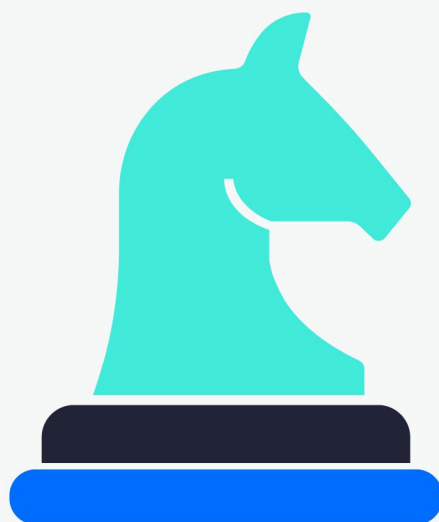# Winning Strategies for the Global Frontier

2023 Strategy Games Global Marketing and Growth Prospects Whitepaper

Introduction

What are strategy games?

At its core, the strategy video game genre focuses on cultivation/construction and strategy/battles. Gamers compete against each other as strategists to obtain achievements and experience the thrill of cultivation. GVG (guild versus guild) mode also feature elements of social gameplay such as player co-op and offer a sense of group identity. These unique elements and their **rewarding in-game experience** drive gamers to **substantially invest themselves** in every aspect of the game. **Moreover, these fundamental elements can attract new gamers, extend the product's lifecycle, and eventually conquer the market.**

How can strategy game publishers identify global opportunities more efficiently?

Strategy game publishers need to stand out on the global stage, retain existing gamers while attracting new ones, and understand their target audience and market more efficiently. The "Pentagon Framework" is a model to assist game publishers in evaluating the growth potential of a market based on **five key factors: players, revenue, socialization, creativity, and promotability.** In addition, publishers also need to understand the target market's characteristics, cultural trends, and Internet infrastructure to formulate tailor-made execution strategies.

How to promote and operate strategy games successfully in global markets?

Strategy game publishers are faced with multiple challenges when considering how to succeed in global markets, and they need to employ appropriate strategies in terms of marketing and operations. As advertising traffic has become highly sought after and increasingly expensive, pressure from both within and outside of the genre has further intensified the competition for marketing resources. Hence, it is imperative for strategy game publishers to **expand their reach to attract new players and embrace innovative methods to develop effective advertising creatives** to stand out in a saturated environment. At the same time, they should **cultivate their games through the four stages of the product's lifecycle to achieve more sustainable operations.**

CONTENTS

01

"Strategy + X" is Trending: Cross-Genre Gameplays, the Exploration of New Themes, and the Adoption of Novel Art Styles are Innovating the Industry

- A rewarding in-game experience drives sustained investment, thereby extending the game lifecycle and winning market share.

- The trend of combining strategy games with other elements, referred to as "Strategy + X", is driving innovation in the gaming industry by integrating cross-genre gameplay, the exploration of new themes, and the adoption of novel new art styles.

02

The "Pentagon Framework" , Evaluating the Market Based on Five Factors, is Assisting Strategy Game Publishers to Stand Out on the Global Stage

- The "Pentagon Framework" provides insights into and explores the distinctive features of the five key regions for global expansion.

- Based on the five factors, there are five key regions identified as "go-first" markets on the road to global expansion.

03

TikTok for Business Helps Strategy Game Publishers Achieve Breakthroughs in Growth amid Market Challenges and Increased Competition

- Continuous pulse checks and optimizations are essential for addressing the three major pain points of strategy games and their global expansion: players, creativity, and ROI.

- TikTok for Business offers integrated solutions to assist strategy game publishers' in driving their growth.

01

"Strategy + X" is Trending: Cross-Genre Gameplays, the Exploration of New Themes, and the Adoption of Novel Art Styles are Innovating the Industry

- A rewarding in-game experience drives sustained investment, thereby extending the game lifecycle and winning market share.

- The trend of combining strategy games with other elements, referred to as "Strategy + X", is driving innovation in the gaming industry by integrating cross-genre gameplay, the exploration of new themes, and the adoption of novel new art styles.

Industry Insights | Value of Strategy Gamers

A Rewarding In-Game Experience Drives Sustained Investment, Thereby Extending the Game Lifecycle and Winning Market Share

Rewarding In-Game Experience

Sense of Achievement

- The element of **strategic moves** and deployment
- Thrilling battles can provoke **excitement**
- Victories generate a strong sense of **achievement**

Strategy Gamers' Motives (%)

Strategic moves	70
Excitement	56
Achievement	53

Compelling Cultivation

- By leveraging delayed gratification in the game's design, strategy games require players' patience in the early stages of growth and development and emphasize the **excitement of developing characters and factions over the long term**
- **Competitive balance** that matches players with equal strength, provides a better gaming experience
- Strategy games are **more player-friendly and offer appropriate difficulty levels**, thus making them more approachable for players

Growth and development	60
Skill mastery	58
Competitive balance	42
Appropriate difficulty level	33

Integrated Social Gameplay

- **Back-and-forth battles** between players and opponents
- **Strong bonds forged between guild members and co-op gameplay** create a platform for socializing.

Battles with other players	55
Co-op with friends	49
Co-op with guildmembers	48

Sustainable ↻ Virtuous Cycle

Sustained Investment

High Loyalty
- **56**% of strategy gamers have been playing the genre for over a year

High Engagement
- Frequency: **6.4 times/week**
- Duration: **2 hours/session**

High Purchase Rate
- **68**% of strategy gamers paid for the game

High Spending
- ARPU*: **26 USD**
- ARPPU*: **38 USD**

🎮 Extending Games' Lifecycles

Industry Insights | Industry Trends in Strategy Games

"Strategy + X" is Trending: Cross-Genre Gameplays, the Exploration of New Themes, and the Adoption of Novel Art Styles are Innovating the Industry

Classic Gameplay

COK-like

COC-like

Immortal Conquest-like

Hybrid

- 4X Concept

eXplore
eXpand
eXploit
eXterminate

Strategy + Cross-Genre Gameplay

Early Game Construction

+Simulation
Sid Meier's Civilization VI

+Tower Defense
Age of Origins: Tower Defense

+Card/Sandbox/Match 3 Puzzle
Puzzles & Survival

- Increase interactions early in the game, conserve time spent on resource gathering and make objectives more enticing
- Emphasize socialization, unlocking characters, and bonuses to make accomplishments more enticing in the early stage
- Maintain competitive balance and lower the barrier to entry to make the game more player-friendly

Late Game Battles

+ RTS
War and Order

+ Shooting
Stormshot

+ Action
Street Fighter: Duel

- Increase real-time feedback and the difficulty of the gameplay, to speed up the pace of the game and generate more excitement

Classic Themes

Oriental/Western History

War/Military

Mystery/Fantasy

- Rich backstories with a wide range of themes

Strategy + New Themes

Otherworldly Plots

The Ants: Underground Kingdom

Infinite Lagrange

- Ant-themed
- Emphasizes the thrill of unlocking new characters
- Science fiction-themed
- Compelling to sci-fi fans

IP Collaborations

The Lord of the Rings

State of Survival +The Walking Dead

- Exciting game borne from a classic IP
- Marketing leverages a top IP

Classic Art Styles

Western Realism

Japanese Realism

Western Manga

- Realistic art styles that are more immersive and easier for players to engage with

Strategy + Novel Art Styles

Anime | Western Cartoons | Pixel Art

- Creating a sense of entertainment with relatable art styles

Alchemists' Garden

Kingdom Guard

Art of War: Legions

02

The "Pentagon Framework", Evaluating the Market Based on Five Factors, is Assisting Strategy Game Publishers to Stand Out on the Global Stage

- The "Pentagon Framework" evaluates the potential of strategy games to successed in global markets based on five factors: **players, revenue, socialization, creativity, and promotability.**
- Strategy game publishers can assess the potential of five major markets – US, EUR (GB/FR/DE), JP/KR, SEA (TH/ID) and BR – to more effectively make market–entry decisions and formulate strategies with clear objectives.

Understanding the Competitive Landscape is the Key to Winning the Global Market!
—— The "Pentagon Framework" for Strategy Games Market Analysis

PLAYERS: The proportion of new players attracted to the game, which reflects the market's growth potential.

REVENUE: The ability to attract strategy gamers to make in-game purchases.

SOCIALIZATION: As a game category that heavily emphasizes social features, the social activity level of gamers is a key indicator.

CREATIVITY: The degree to which gamers are receptive to new types of content in strategy games.

PROMOTABILITY: The capability of strategy games to gain greater popularity through social media promotion and sharing by players.

Evaluating Strategy Game Markets with the "Pentagon Framework"
—— Strategy Games Market Overview

Players

A higher TGI index means greater potential for player growth.

What is the potential for strategy games to attract new gamers in the respective market?

As a genre with a long lifecycle, strategy games continue to attract new players. In fact, new players who have played for less than 3 months account for 14% of all players, which signals huge potential for growth within the player base.

Experience playing strategy games

6 months and above	71
3-6 months	15
Under 3 months	14

Revenue

A higher TGI index means more players are willing to make in-game purchases.

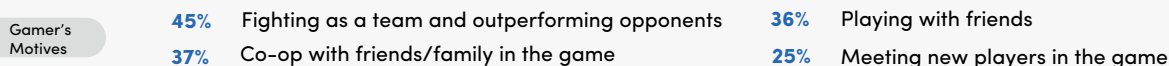**Are players in this market willing to pay for Strategy Games ?**

The average monthly payment per player is around 26 USD. Among paying players, over 60% spend more than 15 USD monthly on average.

Socializatio

Socialization includes two sub indicators: the social needs of players and social interactions in the game. A higher composite TGI index means a stronger social performance in each respective market.

1. Is socialization an important element for strategy gamers in this market?
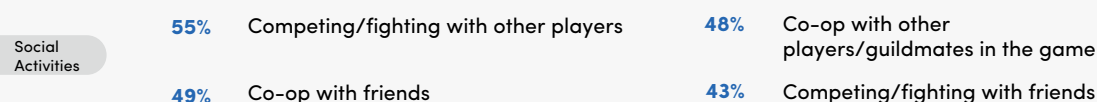
Socialization is an important attraction for players starting to play strategy games in global markets.

Gamer's Motives

45%	Fighting as a team and outperforming opponents	36%	Playing with friends
37%	Co-op with friends/family in the game	25%	Meeting new players in the game

Note: The TGI index for this sub indicator is measured by the performance of players' social motivation in each market.

2. Are strategy gamers actively socializing with others in this market?

On average, a strategy gamer socializes with others through 3-4 types of activities. Major social activities include:

Social Activities

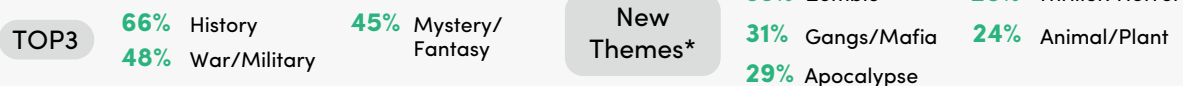|			
55%	Competing/fighting with other players	48%	Co-op with other players/guildmates in the game
49%	Co-op with friends	43%	Competing/fighting with friends

Note: The TGI index for this sub-indicator is measured by the performance of players' social engagement in each market.

Creativity

Creativity includes three sub indicators: theme, art style, and cross-genre gameplay. A higher composite TGI index means a stronger performance in each respective market.

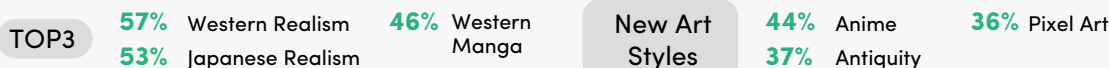### 1. Strategy + X: What are the hottest themes in strategy games ?

The most popular games are mainly based on conventional themes, but fresh themes are beginning to gain traction.

TOP3
66% History
48% War/Military
45% Mystery/Fantasy

New Themes*
33% Zombie
31% Gangs/Mafia
29% Apocalypse
28% Thriller/Horror
24% Animal/Plant

Note: The TGI index for this sub-indicator is measured by the variety of themes that players enjoy in each market.

2. Strategy + X: What are the hottest new art styles in strategy games?

Realism and Western manga are mainstream art styles, while cartoons are also popular.

TOP3
57% Western Realism
53% Japanese Realism
46% Western Manga

New Art Styles
44% Anime
37% Antiquity
36% Pixel Art

Note: The TGI index for this sub-indicator is measured by the variety of art styles that players enjoy in each market.

3. Strategy + X: What new trends are there in terms of cross-genre gameplay?

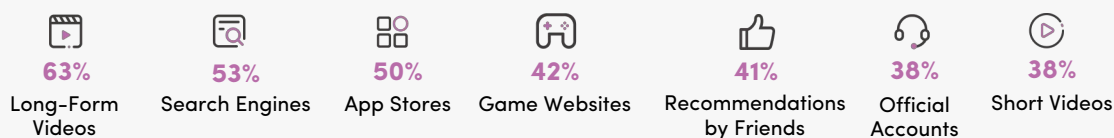| Hardcore			Casual			
43% Action	**40%** Shooting	**23%** RTS	**39%** Simulation	**30%** Tower Defense	**19%** Sandbox	
41% RPG	**25%** MOBA		**35%** Casual Action	**22%** Card	**18%** Match 3	

Note: The TGI index for this sub-indicator is measured by the variety of cross-genre gaemplay that players enjoy in each market.

Promotability

Promotability includes two sub indicators: media activity and game promotion. A higher composite TGI index means a stronger performance in promoting the game in each respective market.

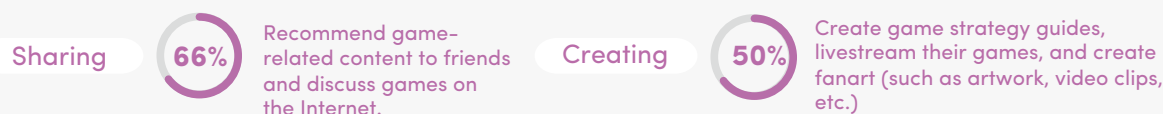### 1. Do strategy gamers actively use various types of media?

Strategy gamers are very active, with an average of 5 types of frequently used media. Main marketing channels for games include:

63% Long-Form Videos
53% Search Engines
50% App Stores
42% Game Websites
41% Recommendations by Friends
38% Official Accounts
38% Short Videos

Note: The TGI index for this sub-indicator is measured by the performance of the players' media usage in each respective market.

2. Do strategy gamers actively share and promote games?

Strategy gamers also enjoy sharing and creating game-related content.

Sharing **66%** Recommend game-related content to friends and discuss games on the Internet.

Creating **50%** Create game strategy guides, livestream their games, and create fanart (such as artwork, video clips, etc.)

Note: The TGI index for this sub-indicator is measured by the performance of players in terms of sharing the game and fanart in each respective market.

Five Key Markets for Strategy Game Publishers to Explore

US

"Fertile Market"
Strongest revenue performance

- **Strong revenue performance** with potential to expand a game's player base. Players show a willingness to spend increasingly large amounts on in-game purchases.
- Players actively socialize in games.
- A more inclusive culture that is willing to embrace different themes, especially **new ones*.**
- Compared to the global average, players are more likely to prefer relatively casual types of cross-genre gameplay, especially **board games and Match 3.**
- **Rich in market opportunities**, this is a must-win market.

EUR [GB/FR/DE]

"Mature Market"
Potential to be tapped into again through new types of themes and gameplays

- A stable and mature gaming market with very strong revenue performance.
- **Gamers are not as active** in terms of socialization and promotability.
- Gamers enjoy **new themes** such as animal/plants, mafia, sci-fi, etc.
- Players like cross-genre gameplay, such as RTS, sandbox and card games.
- **The market is stable with good prospects for revenue performance.** Players need to be tapped into through innovative themes and gameplays.

Japan/Korea

"Unique Market"
Substantial Three Kingdoms/Japanese Warring States Period fanbase

- Mature market with robust gaming culture. Players are relatively more willing to make in-game purchases.
- With the East Asian cultural background, gamers favor themes such as the **Japanese Warring States Period and Three Kingdoms.**
- Gamers are relatively more interested in **IP collaborations.**
- Gamers show a preference for **new art styles, such as ancient worlds and anime.**
- Players enjoy trying out cross-genre gameplays such as **rhythm action, RTS and ACG.**
- There is a strong need to offer **unique themes** for players who struggle to socialize.

SEA (TH/ID)

"Promising Market"
Massive followers of Asian culture and creators

- **Significant opportunities to expand the mobile gamer base** in the SEA market.
- Limited by their income, **players' in-game purchases are more constrained.**
- Preferences for themes and art style are **heavily influenced by Japanese culture**, while niche themes are also welcomed.
- **Players love hardcore gameplay**, especially +MOBA.
- Players are active in socializing and sharing and enjoy **short videos** and following **creators' content.**

Brazil

"Vibrant New World"
Socially active, and heavily influenced by short videos

- The mobile gaming market and player base are growing rapidly, while Brazil has the largest player base in the region. This "New World" offers vast potential to be tapped into.
- **Socialization and sharing are both core parts of the gaming experience and short video has an outsized influence.**
- Unstable factors exist in the Latin America region, such as **weak economies that are less capable of generating revenue.**
- Brazil has a passionate and open culture, and **most types of themes are welcomed.**
- Compared to the overall market, players generally enjoy **hardcore cross-genre gameplay.**

*New Themes: In the past three years, newly launched strategy games in nine countries have incorporated new and novel themes, mostly based on subjects such as the apocalypse, suspense, animals, zombies, gangs and IP collaborations (as opposed to traditional strategy game themes such as military, history and war, etc., and which have been online for over three years.)

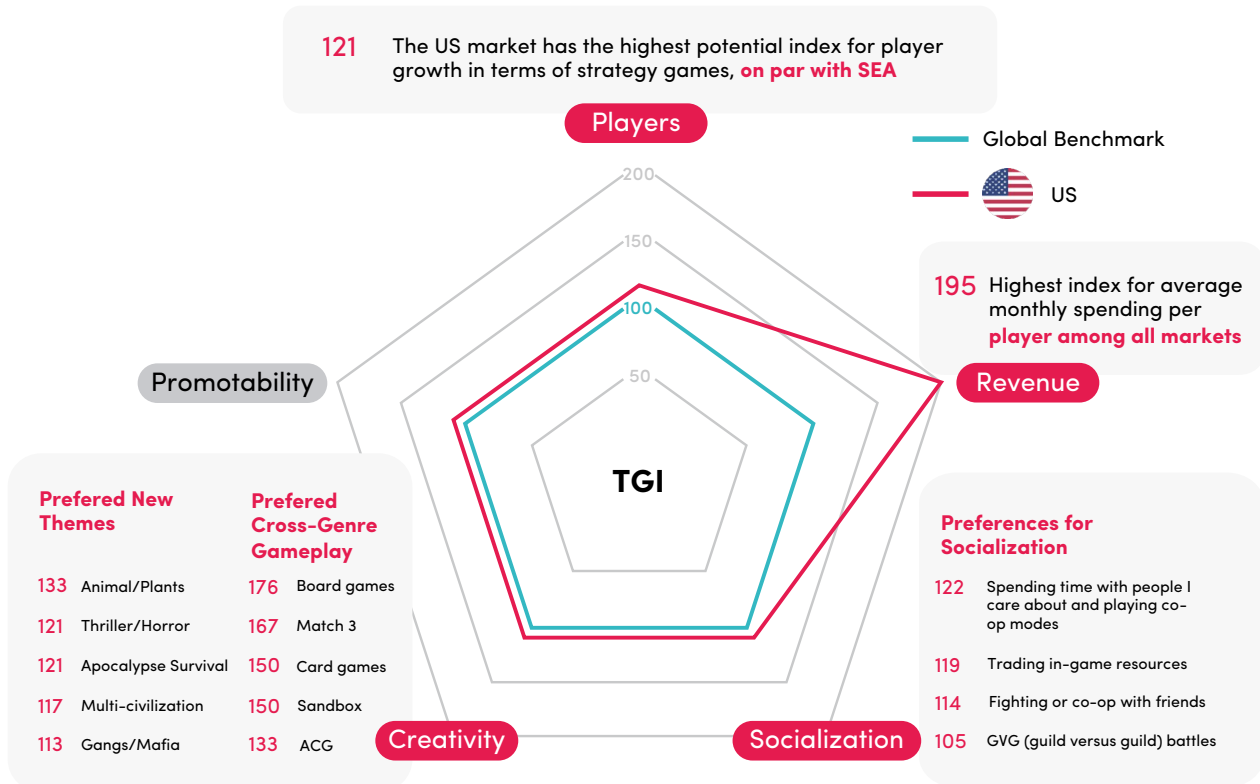# US: A "Fertile Market" for Strategy Games with the Strongest Revenue Performance

Market Background

Economy and the Gaming Market:

- **Developed Economy:** The US had GDP growth of 2.1% in 2022, and players have a higher income in general.
- **A Gaming Giant:** Boasting a sizable gaming industry with a huge player base and market coverage, players have established habits of making in-game purchases and spend more on average.

Society & Culture:

- **Inclusive and Trendsetting:** A diverse culture sets the foundation for a diverse market; strategy gamers have a higher acceptance rate for fresh, new themes and cross-genre gameplay, especially casual gameplay.

121 The US market has the highest potential index for player growth in terms of strategy games, **on par with SEA**

— Global Benchmark

— 🇺🇸 US

195 Highest index for average monthly spending per **player among all markets**

Players

200
150
100
50

TGI

Promotability

Revenue

Creativity

Socialization

Prefered New Themes

133	Animal/Plants
121	Thriller/Horror
121	Apocalypse Survival
117	Multi-civilization
113	Gangs/Mafia

Prefered Cross-Genre Gameplay

176	Board games
167	Match 3
150	Card games
150	Sandbox
133	ACG

Preferences for Socialization

122	Spending time with people I care about and playing co-op modes
119	Trading in-game resources
114	Fighting or co-op with friends
105	GVG (guild versus guild) battles

Source: Kantar, Strategy Games Global Study Quantitative Research.
Note 1: "The Pentagon Framework" uses TGI to evaluate the market's performance based on five factors and compares one factor from the market's global benchmark. TGI > 100 indicates that the region outperforms the global benchmark in that factor.
Note 2: The measurements of "Players", "Revenue" and "Socialization" can be referenced from P6; the measurements of "Creativity" and "Promotability" can be referenced from P7.

EUR (GB/FR/DE): A Mature Strategy Games Market, Which Needs to be Tapped into through New Themes and Gameplays
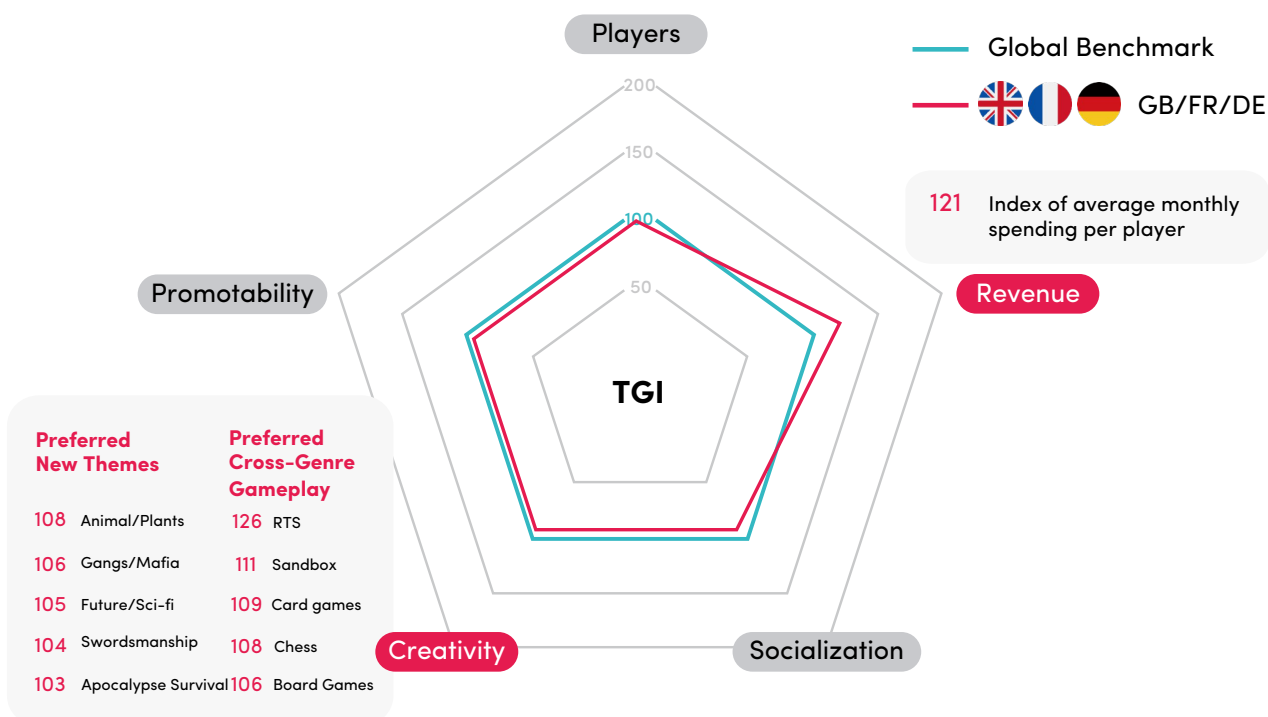
Market Background

Gaming Market:

- **A Mature and Stable Market:** After the US and East Asia, Europe is the third largest mobile gaming market, with a sizable player base and strong in-game purchasing power.

Society & Culture:

- **Cultural Diversity:** Many countries feature a wide range of cultures, so players have a higher acceptance of new themes and different types of cross-genre gameplay.

Players

Global Benchmark

GB/FR/DE

121 | Index of average monthly spending per player

Revenue

TGI

Promotability

Creativity

Socialization

Preferred New Themes		Preferred Cross-Genre Gameplay	
108	Animal/Plants	126	RTS
106	Gangs/Mafia	111	Sandbox
105	Future/Sci-fi	109	Card games
104	Swordsmanship	108	Chess
103	Apocalypse Survival	106	Board Games

JP & KR: A Unique Market for Strategy Games with a Substantial Three Kingdoms/Japanese Warring States Period Fanbase
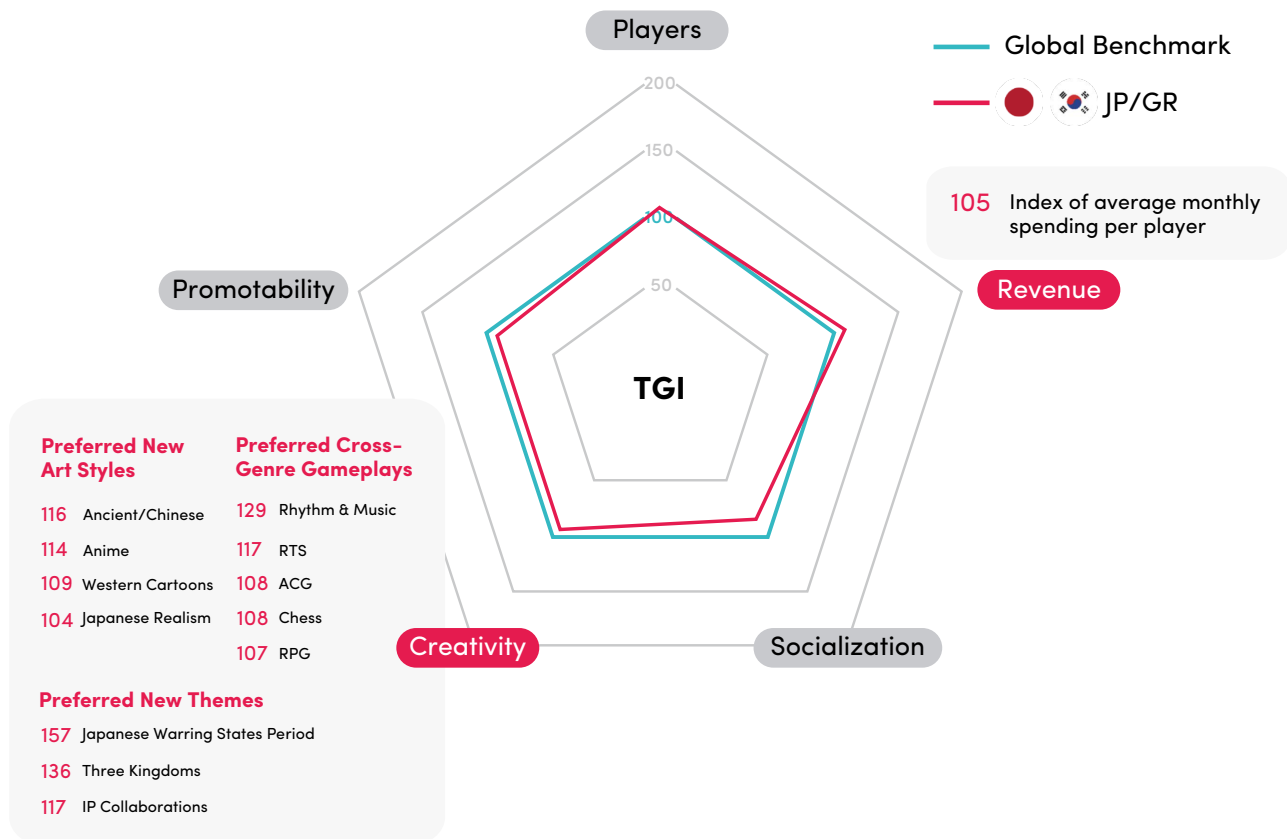
Market Background

Gaming Market:

- **Robust Gaming Culture:** Japan and Korea are two vital and mature gaming markets in East Asia, whose players have discerning and unique tastes.

Society & Culture:

- **Highly Developed Entertainment Landscape:** Japan and Korea are two of the most traditional cultures in East Asia, and yet they are also trendsetters in the region. They are the ideal markets for promoting emerging and niche strategy games, including ACG themes and innovative cross-genre gameplays such as strategy games plus rhythm & music.

Players

Global Benchmark

🔴 🇰🇷 JP/GR

105 Index of average monthly spending per player

Revenue

Promotability

TGI

Preferred New Art Styles

116	Ancient/Chinese
114	Anime
109	Western Cartoons
104	Japanese Realism

Preferred Cross-Genre Gameplays

129	Rhythm & Music
117	RTS
108	ACG
108	Chess
107	RPG

Preferred New Themes

157	Japanese Warring States Period
136	Three Kingdoms
117	IP Collaborations

Creativity

Socialization

Source: Kantar, Strategy Games Global Study Quantitative Research.
Note 1: "The Pentagon Framework" uses TGI to evaluate the market's performance based on five factors and compares one factor from the market's global benchmark. TGI > 100 indicates that the region outperforms the global benchmark in that factor.
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SEA (TH/ID): A Promising Market for Strategy Games, Where Players Love Asian Culture and Follow Creators

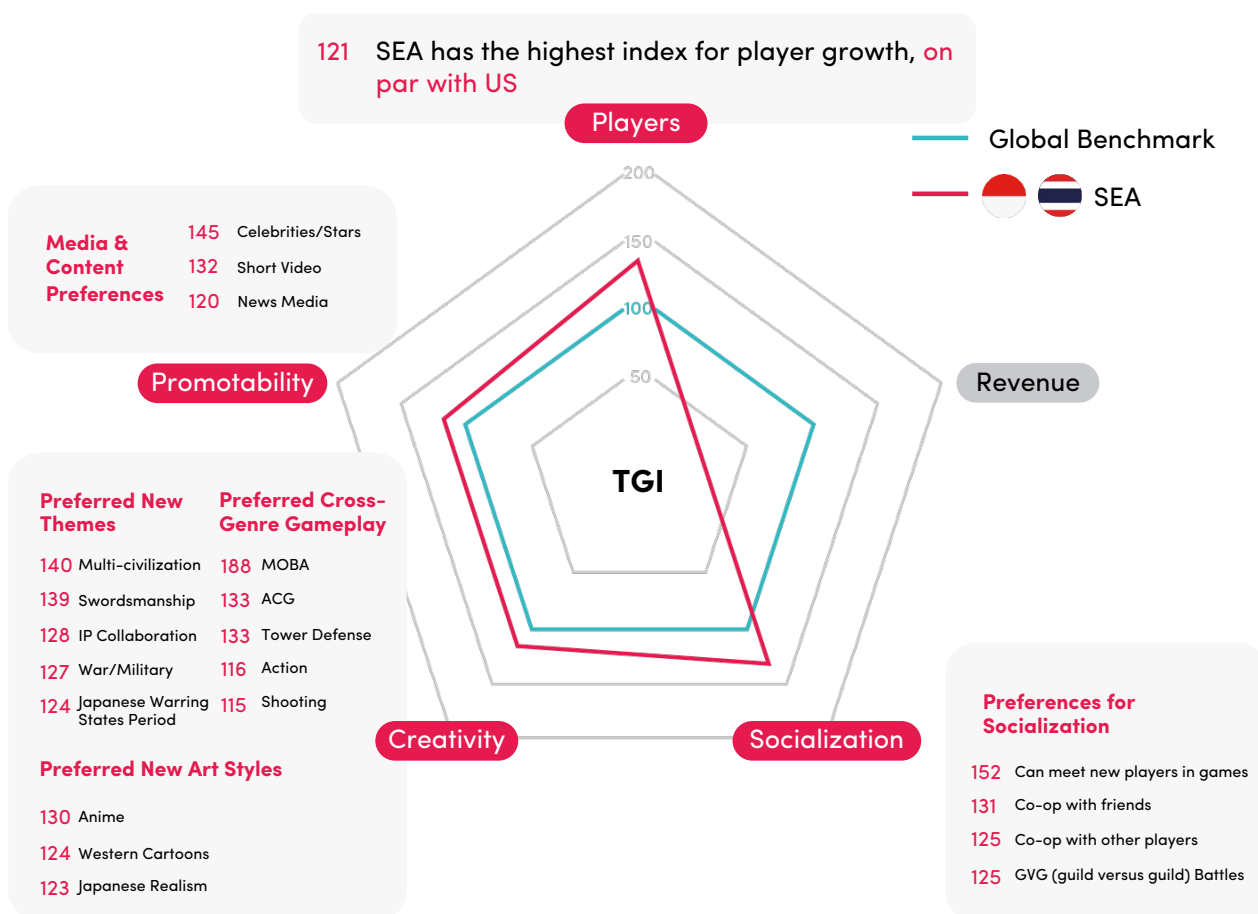**Market Background**

Gaming Market:
- **Full of Opportunities:** A rapidly developing market with a promising player base, hardcore competitive mobile games perform well in SEA in terms of downloads and revenue.
- **E-sports on the Rise:** The region is also a hotbed for the e-sports industry, which is driving the growth of the wider gaming market.

Society & Culture:
- **Culturally Rich and Inclusive:** The region shares a similar cultural background, which is heavily influenced by games from China, Japan and Korea. Gamers prefer promotional messages from celebrities and stars.

Infrastructure and Technology:
- **Acceleration in Infrastructure Building:** Connection speeds and network quality are both on the rise, which is a boon for the growth of the mobile gaming industry in the future.

121 SEA has the highest index for player growth, on par with US

Players

Global Benchmark

SEA

Media & Content Preferences
- 145 Celebrities/Stars
- 132 Short Video
- 120 News Media

Promotability

Revenue

TGI

Preferred New Themes
- 140 Multi-civilization
- 139 Swordsmanship
- 128 IP Collaboration
- 127 War/Military
- 124 Japanese Warring States Period

Preferred Cross-Genre Gameplay
- 188 MOBA
- 133 ACG
- 133 Tower Defense
- 116 Action
- 115 Shooting

Preferred New Art Styles
- 130 Anime
- 124 Western Cartoons
- 123 Japanese Realism

Creativity

Socialization

Preferences for Socialization
- 152 Can meet new players in games
- 131 Co-op with friends
- 125 Co-op with other players
- 125 GVG (guild versus guild) Battles

Source: Kantar, Strategy Games Global Study Quantitative Research.
Note 1: "The Pentagon Framework" uses TGI to evaluate the market's performance based on five factors and compares one factor from the market's global benchmark. TGI > 100 indicates that the region outperforms the global benchmark in that factor.
Note 2: The measurements of "Players","Revenue" and "Socialization" can be referenced from P6; the measurements of "Creativity" and "Promotability" can be referenced from P7.

BR: A Vibrant New World for Strategy Games, Where Players are Socially Active, and Heavily Influenced by Short Videos

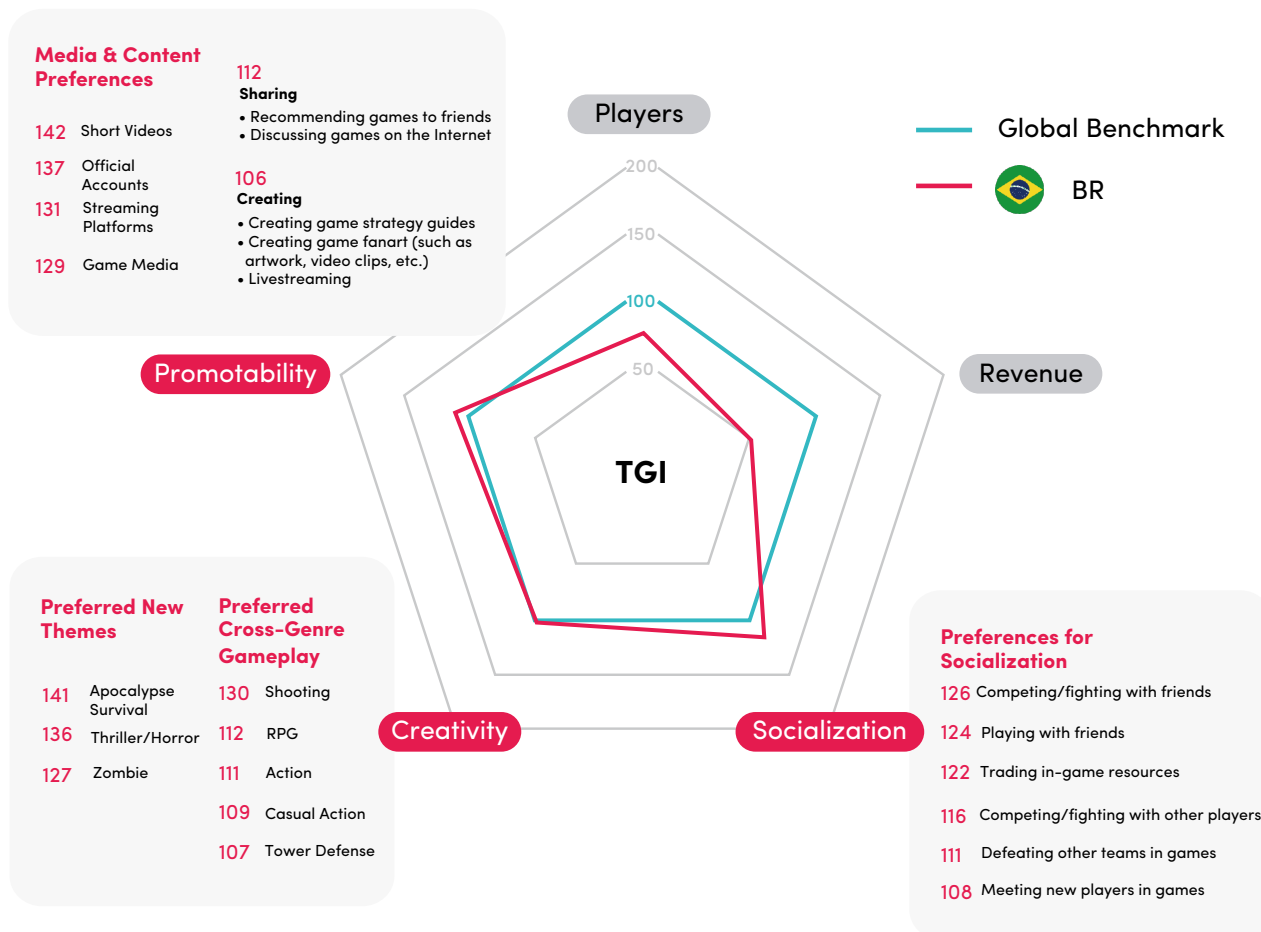## Market Background

Gaming Market:

- **A Market with Potential**: In 2022, the overall gaming revenue of the Latin-American region increased by 6.9% year over year, and the region's player base expanded by 4.8%. Moreover, Brazil has the largest user base in the region.

Society & Culture:

- **Vibrant and Inclusive Culture:** The Latin-America region is a dynamic and inclusive culture, where people are more expressive and open-minded. This creates an ideal environment for influencer marketing, patricularly through short videos, as social media stars in Brazil have a tremendous ability to engage and impact their followers.

Infrastructure and Technology:

- **Accelerated 5G Network Expansion:** Brazil's 5G network is rapidly expanding, which will further fuel the growth of the gaming industry in the region.

Media & Content Preferences

142	Short Videos
137	Official Accounts
131	Streaming Platforms
129	Game Media

112
Sharing
- Recommending games to friends
- Discussing games on the Internet

106
Creating
- Creating game strategy guides
- Creating game fanart (such as artwork, video clips, etc.)
- Livestreaming

Players — Global Benchmark / BR

Promotability · Revenue · Creativity · Socialization · TGI

Preferred New Themes

141	Apocalypse Survival
136	Thriller/Horror
127	Zombie

Preferred Cross-Genre Gameplay

130	Shooting
112	RPG
111	Action
109	Casual Action
107	Tower Defense

Preferences for Socialization

126	Competing/fighting with friends
124	Playing with friends
122	Trading in-game resources
116	Competing/fighting with other players
111	Defeating other teams in games
108	Meeting new players in games

Source: Kantar, Strategy Games Global Study Quantitative Research.
Note 1: "The Pentagon Framework" uses TGI to evaluate the market's performance based on five factors and compares one factor from the market's global benchmark. TGI > 100 indicates that the region outperforms the global benchmark in that factor.
Note 2: The measurements of "Players","Revenue" and "Socialization" can be referenced from P6; the measurements of "Creativity" and "Promotability" can be referenced from P7.

03

TikTok for Business Helps Strategy Game Publishers Achieve Breakthroughs in Growth amid Market Challenges and Increased Competition

- Pulse checks and optimizations address the three major pain points of strategy games and their global expansion: **players, creativity, and ROI.**

- TikTok for Business leverages in-depth insights on platform users, a "Creative Guidebook", and integrated marketing solutions that cover the full cycle of games to provide game publishers with a powerful marketing tool to achieve growth.

Diagnosing Pain Points in Strategy Games' Global Expansion

Players »

Strategy Games Struggle to Expand beyond Their Core Gamers, while Whales* are Difficult to Attract and Retain.
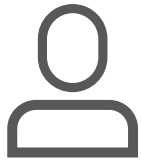
- The majority of strategy gamers are middle-aged males. Yet, the gaming industry has expanded to include a more diverse audience that includes female players and younger players.
- To ensure future growth, strategy games need to attract a wider range of players and keep them engaged.

Creative »

High-Quality and Eye-Catching Creatives are Hard to Create.

- The localization and differentiation of advertising creatives are the major challenges faced by strategy games in global markets.
- It has become increasingly difficult to create attention-grabbing creatives for game advertisements.

ROI »

Challenges in Boosting Long-Term ROAS for Marketing Promotions.

- In-game payments for strategy games are introduced relatively late; thus, they tend to exhibit a weaker performance in terms of ROI in the early stages, thus extending the revenue cycle of strategy games. The key challenge is to incentivize players to spend money, as well as recoup advertising investments.
- In terms of advertising, strategy games consume a lot of creative materials in a short period of time, which can lead to a shortage in available materials in the short term as they are depleted too quickly.

TikTok for Business Marketing Tips Assist Strategy Game Publishers to Innovate and Achieve Breakthroughs to Expand Reach

Players

TikTok for Business Offers
Unique Value from
TikTok Users

Social Reach

A Diverse Community
of Players

Building a Base

High Concentration of
High-Value Players

Creativity

TikTok for Business
Offers a
Creative Guidebook

STEP 1
Select a Creative Format

6 Creative Formats

Creative Insights with
Content Strategy

STEP 2
Make Creative Content

Recommended
Creative Elements

STEP 3
Design Advertisement Modules

Product Highlights

One-Stop Solution for
Advertisement Creatives

ROI

TikTok for Business
Offers
Full Cycle
Marketing
Strategies

Three-Pronged
Strategy

Ads
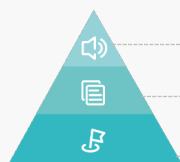
Content
Marketing

Business
Account
Operations

Covering the Full Marketing Cycle of
Strategy Games with Integrated
Solutions
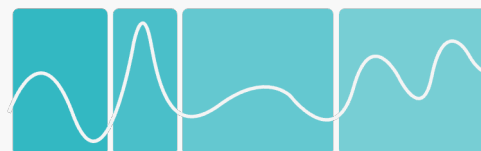
Pre-Reg | New Title Launch | Normal Ops | Live Ops

Players | Tips Value of TikTok Users

Leveraging Global Strategies to Address Pain Points

Pain Points | Players

- Strategy games are struggling to expand beyond their core gamers
- Whales are difficult to attract and retain

The Prototypical Strategy Gamer Segment is Narrow and Solidifying

65% Male

44% Middle-aged（post-80s）

Whales* in Strategy Games Have a Strong Need to "Play Together" with other Players

Main reasons for Whales* to play strategy games:

40% Like playing with friends

37% Care that the game is popular with lots of players
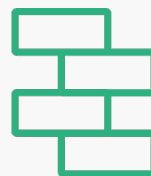
30% Want to meet new players in games

TikTok for Business
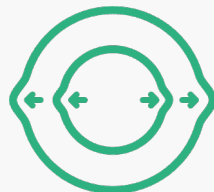
Social Reach:
Constantly Strive to Reach a Broader Audience

Building a Base:
Nurture and Retain High-Value Gamers

Players | Tips   TikTok Community and Content Ecosystem

TikTok Features a Gaming Community and Creative Content Ecosystem to Provide More Room for Brands to Expand Their Reach and Retain High Value Players

Active Strategy Games Communities on TikTok

Community sharing: #strategygames

Strategy gamers in the TikTok community help to spread the game more extensively and increase player engagement.

#clash royale · #gametok · #gamergirl · #strategy games · #clash of kings · #wolf game · #clash of clans · #anime · #streamer · #4x strategy

Strategy Gamers Follow a Variety of Content on TikTok

Diverse strategy game content ecosystem

Gamers on the TikTok platform actively engage with various types of game-related promotional content, which encourages spontaneous creation and sharing.
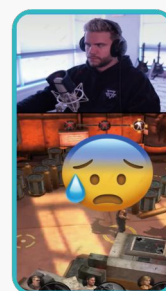

Gamer Creators on TikTok Showcase Their Impact

The creative content of gaming creators

Gamer creators on TikTok help strategy games achieve a deeper and more interactive form of engagement.
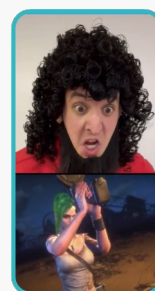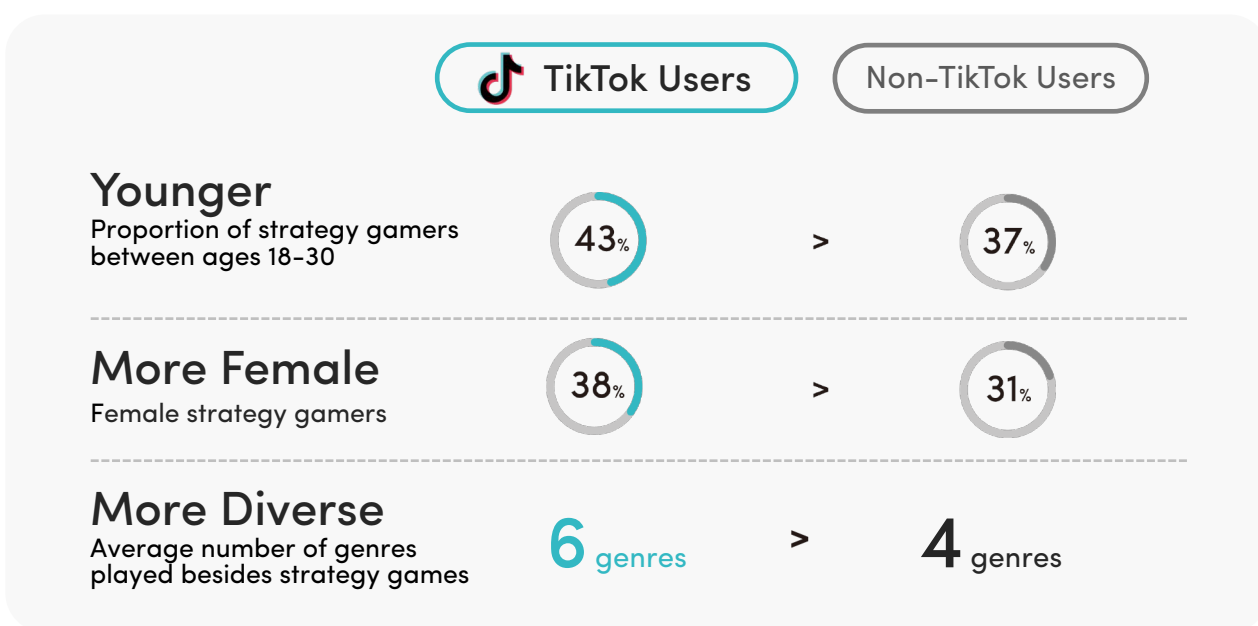

VV : 412.6k   VV : 250.5k
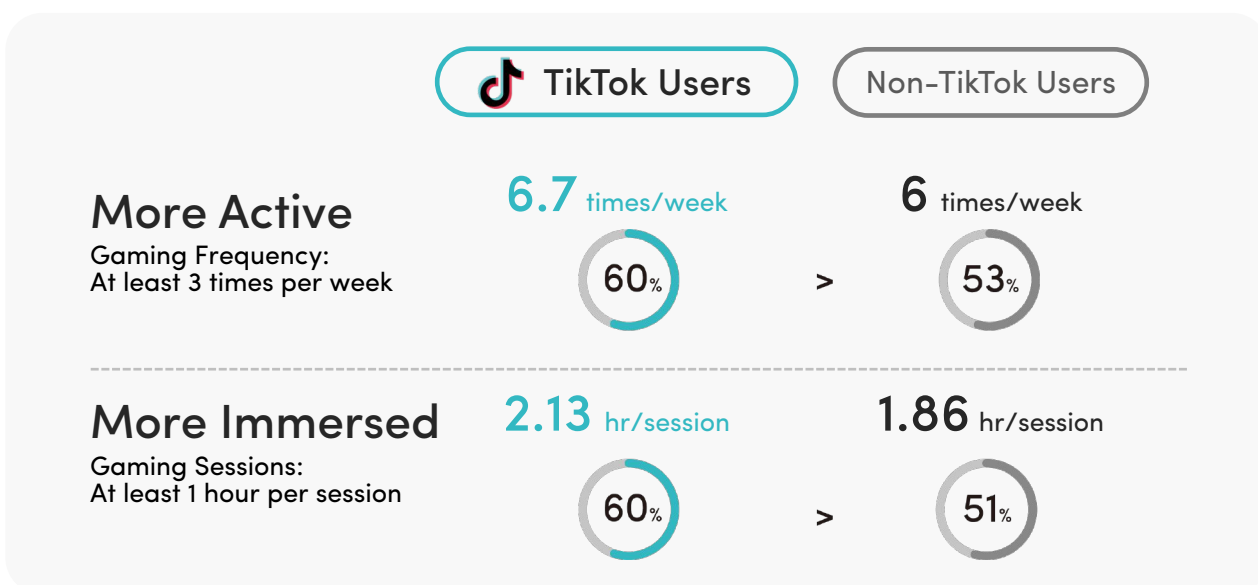
Players | Tips TikTok Strategy Gamer Resources

TikTok's Diverse User Base Can Assist Strategy Games in Expanding Their Reach in Global Markets

Expanding Reach by Drawing from a Huge Pool of Target Users

	TikTok Users		Non-TikTok Users
Younger Proportion of strategy gamers between ages 18–30	43%	>	37%
More Female Female strategy gamers	38%	>	31%
More Diverse Average number of genres played besides strategy games	6 genres	>	4 genres

Substantial Number of Active Strategy Gamers

	TikTok Users		Non-TikTok Users
More Active Gaming Frequency: At least 3 times per week	6.7 times/week 60%	>	6 times/week 53%
More Immersed Gaming Sessions: At least 1 hour per session	2.13 hr/session 60%	>	1.86 hr/session 51%

Players | Tips   TikTok Strategy Gamer Resources

TikTok Strategy Gamers are Proactive and Willing to Give Recommendations, Which Can Amplify a Game's Influence

♪ TikTok Users

A More Proactive Attitude towards Gaming

- 62% Show an interest in Strategy Games
- 54% Feel strategy games are an important genre
- 53% Are willing to invest themselves in the game
- 43% Actively search for guides
- 41% Are willing to make in-game purchases

More Willing to Share and Create Content

- 52% Recommend games to friends
- 49% Discuss games online
- 31% Create their own guides

♪ TikTok Users   Non-TikTok Users

Enjoy Watching Livestreams as a Daily Activity

63% > 48%

Short Videos are a Channel for Recommendations

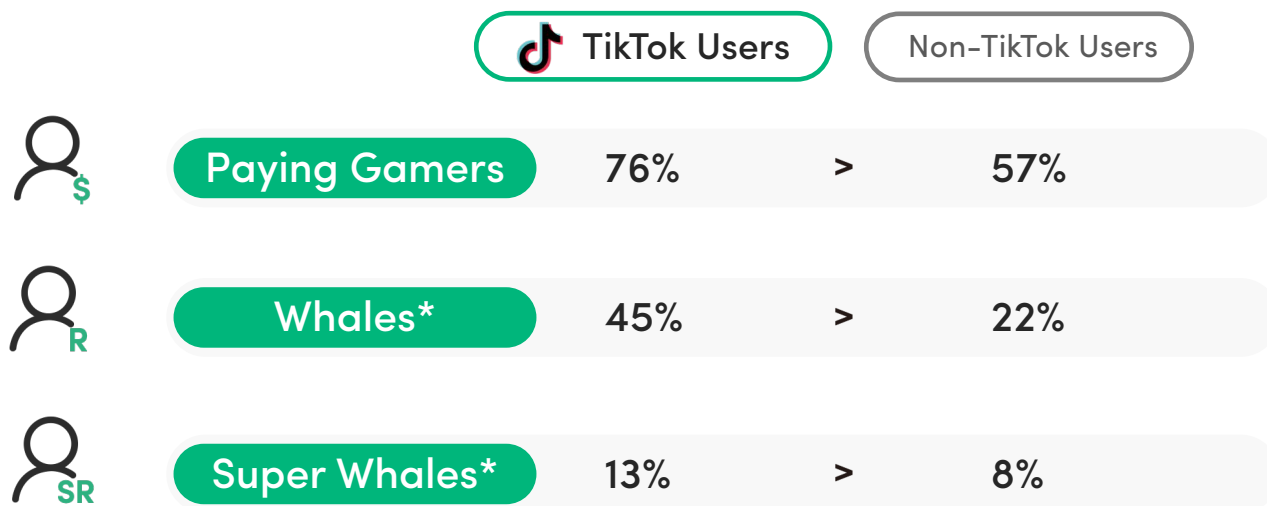| TikTok Users	Non-TikTok Users
67% Long-Form Videos	57% Long-Form Videos
54% Short Videos	50% Short Videos
54% Search Engines	44% Search Engines

Players | Tips TikTok's High-Value Players

TikTok Has a High Concentration of High-Value Players, Allowing Publishers to Reach Whales More Effectively

	TikTok Users		Non-TikTok Users
Paying Gamers	76%	>	57%
Whales*	45%	>	22%
Super Whales*	13%	>	8%

Whales on TikTok Spend More

×1.2

TikTok Users

v

Non-TikTok Users

Players | Tips   TikTok Whale Ecosystem

TikTok's Dynamic Whale Ecosystem Lays a Strong Foundation for Game Publishers to Maintain Long-Term Relationships with Big Spenders

Marketing Campaigns are More Effective on TikTok Whales.

Interest Towards Ads	TikTok Users		Non-TikTok Users
Game Events/Livestreaming	43%	>	27%
In-Feed Ads	41%	>	38%
Creator Marketing	38%	>	25%
Splash Ads	36%	>	31%

"
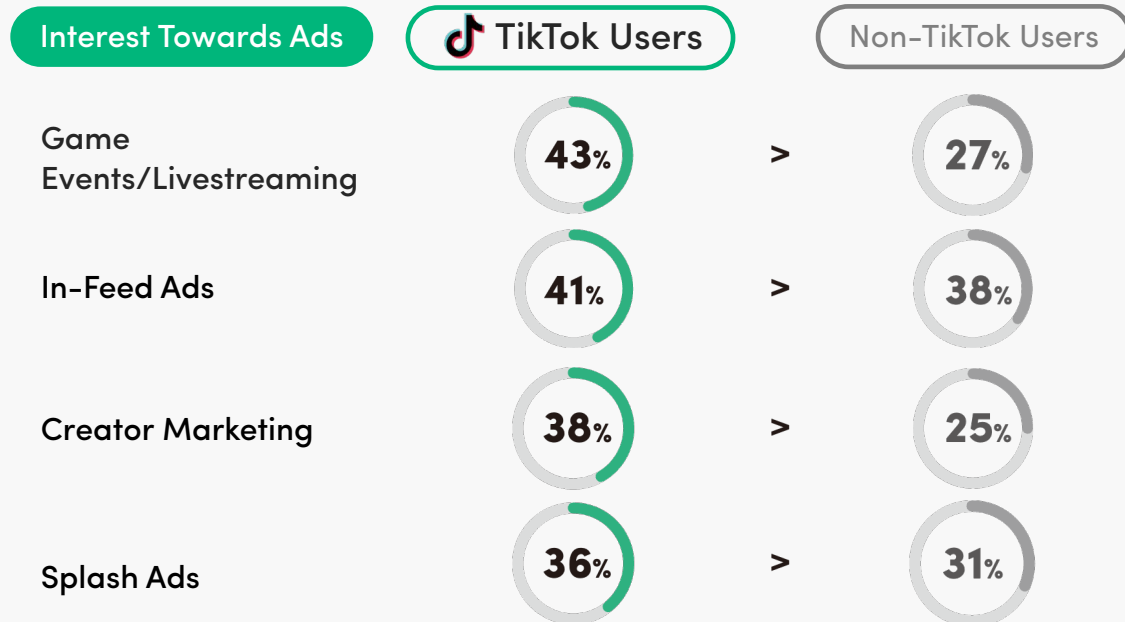
TikTok's Community Fosters a Sense of Belonging among Whales.

Characteristics of TikTok Whales (Exceeding Non-TikTok Whales)

Strong Demands
Teamwork: 46%
Sense of Belonging: 40%

Highly Interactive
Game Recommendations: 57%
Game Discussions: 54%

Love to Share
Game Guides: 38%
Livestreams: 37%
Gaming Videos Creation: 36%
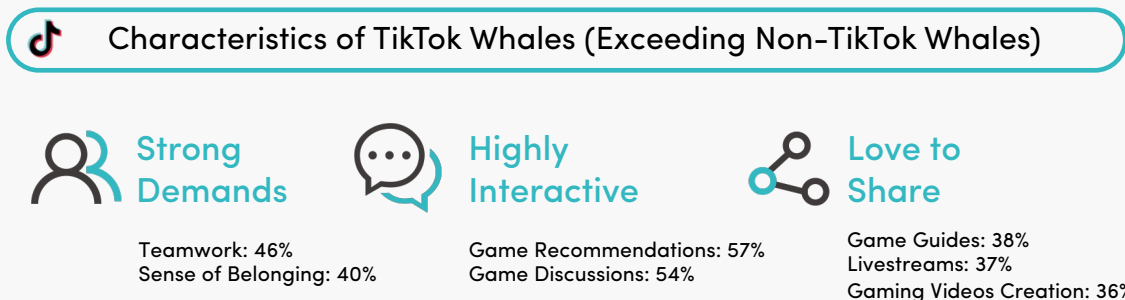
Creative | Tips Creative Guidebook

Leveraging Global Strategies to Address Pain Points

Pain Points | Creative

- High-Quality and Eye-Catching Creatives are Hard to Create

TikTok for Business

Ads Creative Guidebook

STEP 1
Select Creative Format

6 Creative Formats

STEP 2
Craft Creative Content and Creative Elements

Recommendations

STEP 3
Design Advertisement Modules

Product Highlights

Note: Learn more on TikTok Strategy Games Creative Tips.

Creative | Tips   Creative Guidebook – Step 1

Q1: Which Format to Choose?

STEP 1: Selecting a Creative Ad Format:
Ads Performed by Real People are Most Popular and Audiences Prefer Game Walkthroughs Which are More Natural

The Creative Ad Formats Players Enjoy

Real People Ads 56%

• **Ads performed by real people** offer a broader range of creative options and offer significant potential to increase click-through rates and attract larger advertising budgets.

• **TikTok's creator resources, along with its short video format**, provide a fertile ground for game advertisers to create and disseminate ads featuring real people.

Live Commentary
• Natural Conversations
• Straight to the Point
• Clear Plots

Real Skits
• Fun Plots
• Rich Emotions

64%
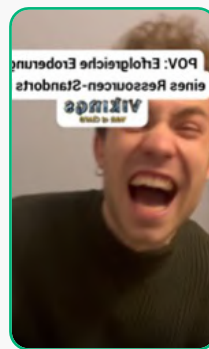
51%

Characters and Gameplay 53%

• Fascinating special effects
• Gripping narratives
• Strong game mechanics

Computer Graphics 46%

• High-quality visuals
• Unique in-game elements
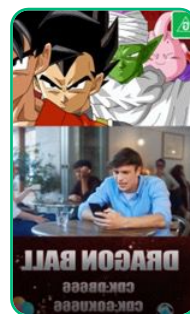
IP Collaborations 31%

• Attention-grabbing IP
• Cross-genre IP content attracts fan's interest

Celebrities 23%

• Strong celebrity endorsements
• Trustworthy recommendations

Creative | Tips Creative Guidebook – Step 2

Q2: How to Produce Creatives?

STEP 2: Key Aspects and Elements of Producing Creatives
Using Live Commentary as an Example, a Compelling Strategy Games Ad Still Needs to Specify Creative Elements

Recommended Creative Elements

Gameplay Walkthroughs 46%

Gameplay Techniques
- Gameplay tutorials
- Elements of strategy gameplay
- Character skills

Experience and Bonuses
- Game experience (highlights/attacks/challenges etc.)
- Emphasize download-for-free and in-game bonuses
- Emphasize in-game socialization

- **Creative Content:** Feature the gameplay side by side with commentary to naturally immerse the audience in the game;
- **Commentary:** Actors emphasize the ease-of-play and strategic element of the game.

⚠
- Avoid showing simplistic, un-challenging or cliché gameplay;
- Showcase specific gameplay or cultivating elements, as well as eye-catching skills from the game.

Sound Effects 41%

BGM
- Use suitable BGM for greater immersion
- Use BGM to create an engaging atmosphere

VO/SFX
- Use VO to help understand the game
- Use SFX that resonate with the player's emotions and appeal to them

- **Creative Content:** Introduce the game through a scene where a couple is actually playing the game and include timely SFX;
- **Commentary:** Combine characters' SFX with the couple's conversation to increase the content's relatability.

⚠
- Avoid wordy and hurried dialog;
- Acting should be natural, with a speaking tone that's neither flat nor exaggerated.

Story 36%

Main Plot
- Showcase the innovative and strategic elements of the game
- Share information about the game in an immersive way
- Design a consistent plot with natural transitions
- Design enticing plots featuring conflicts between characters

Characters in Game/Actors
- Use popular characters to present the game
- Choose good-looking, charming actors

- **Creative Content:** Ad creatives should highlight the sci-fi theme, while the commentator should vividly recreate the immersive gaming experience of the game. They should also compare equipment and the battle power of characters to pique the audience's competitiveness and encourage them to download the game and try it out for themselves;

- **Commentary:** The commentator's presentation should be infectious, and the game's plot should resonate on an emotional level, so that viewers will be highly motivated to play. Featuring different robots from the game can demonstrate the game's futuristic vibe.

⚠
- Avoid sharing boring or stereotypical game themes;
- Actors should appear highly engaged in the video.

Creative | Tips   Creative Guidebook – Step 2

Q2: How to Produce Creatives?

STEP 2: Design Suggestions for Creative Ads
Tricks for Reaching Different Marketing Goals and Player Segments

Attract Players to Download and Play   Suggestions

Ad Creatives Showcase Key Attractions from the Game in Different Ways

Highlight the social element of playing with friends — [37%]
Present the plot of the game — [35%]
Emphasize the game's popularity — [34%]
Showcase the competitiveness of the gameplay — [33%]

- Whales' appeal*: Game characters, IP, meeting new players, experiencing the game's plot and strategy

- Minnows' appeal*: Whether the game is easy to play or not

Entice Players to Make In-Game Purchases   Suggestions

Ad Creatives Should Focus on Showcasing the Selling Points of In-Game Abilities

Weapons/equipments which boost in-game abilities — [46%]
Accelerated player progression — [44%]
Paid characters, skins, items, and limited-edition or limited-time content — [33%]

- Whales' appeal: Skins, cards, VIP levels, coupons, monthly/weekly memberships, reasonable in-game purchase mechanisms, bonuses for spending, discounts, etc.

- Minnows' appeal: Accelerated progression and leveling up

Reduce Player Churn   Suggestions

Ad Creatives Should Show Enticing Objectives and Strategies

Clarify level-up objectives and development tracks — [21%]
Show how players can freely explore the game — [18%]

- Whales' appeal: Less mandatory missions and unique gameplay

- Minnows' appeal: Development tracks which show how to close the gap between themselves and whales

Creative | Tips   Creative Guidebook – Step 3

Q3: Where to Show Highlights?

STEP 3: Ad Module Design
Start with an Intriguing Opening to Quickly Draw Attention and Generate Interest

Opening

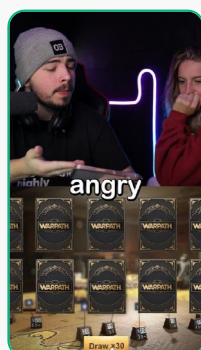|		
🎉	Special Holidays/Occasions	Appeal **46%**
	Dramatized Scenes from Daily Life	Appeal **39%**
🙂	Emotional Dialog Doubtful/Surprised/Provocative/Excited/Restrained	Appeal **39%**

Dramatized Ad

- Opening: Start with a casual conversation between the couple and use phrases like "Top 10 Secrets" to capture the audience's attention.

- Middle: Display an interaction on the upper half of the screen, while the lower half of the screen showcases specific gameplays.

- Ending: End with a sweet exchange between the couple who protect each other in the game to entice users to download and obtain in-game items.

Creative | Tips Creative Guidebook – Step 3

Q3: Where to Show Highlights?

STEP 3: Ad Module Design
The Middle Section Should Focus on the Game Itself to Deliver Key Information, Such as Gameplays and Actions

Middle Section

Strategic Skills and Gameplay	Appeal	**40%**
Tutorials	Appeal	**36%**

Walkthroughs

but it has 360 view

look this is what the game looks like

- Opening: Start with a natural interview/conversation, which gets straight to the point.

- Middle: Display a floating window which shows a 360° scene/strategic gameplay.

- Ending: Use a Q&A format to emphasize no ads/download-for-free to entice users to download the game.

Creative | Tips Creative Guidebook – Step 3

Q3: Where to Show Highlights?

STEP 3: Ad Module Design
The Ending Should Urge Players to Act, Using Highlights to Entice Users to Download and Start Playing the Game and Boost Conversions

Ending

↓ Download-For-Free		Appeal **40%**
In-Game Bonuses		Appeal **36%**

Characters & Gameplay

- Opening: Start by displaying the gameplay with character dialog.

- Middle: Show the up and downs of the story and conflicts between characters.

- Ending: Present an ending full of suspense, which can pique the audience's interest and engagement. Use special text effects to emphasize positive reviews and other elements such as download-for-free.

ROI | Tips   "Full Cycle" Marketing Strategy

Leveraging Global Strategies to Address Pain Points
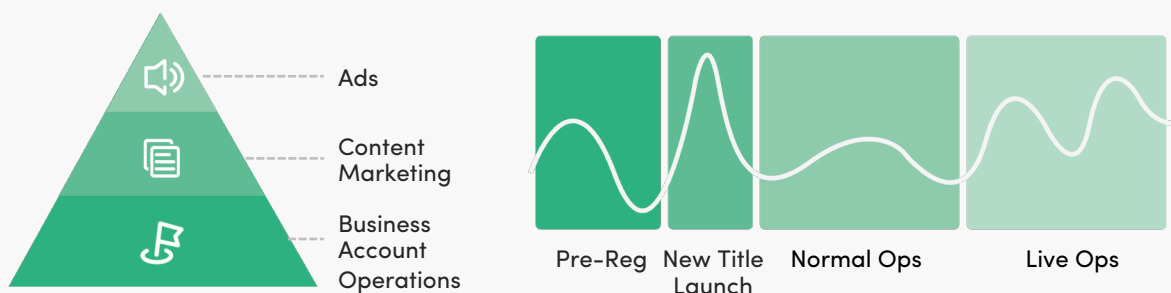
Pain Points | ROI

• Challenge to boost ROAS in the long-term
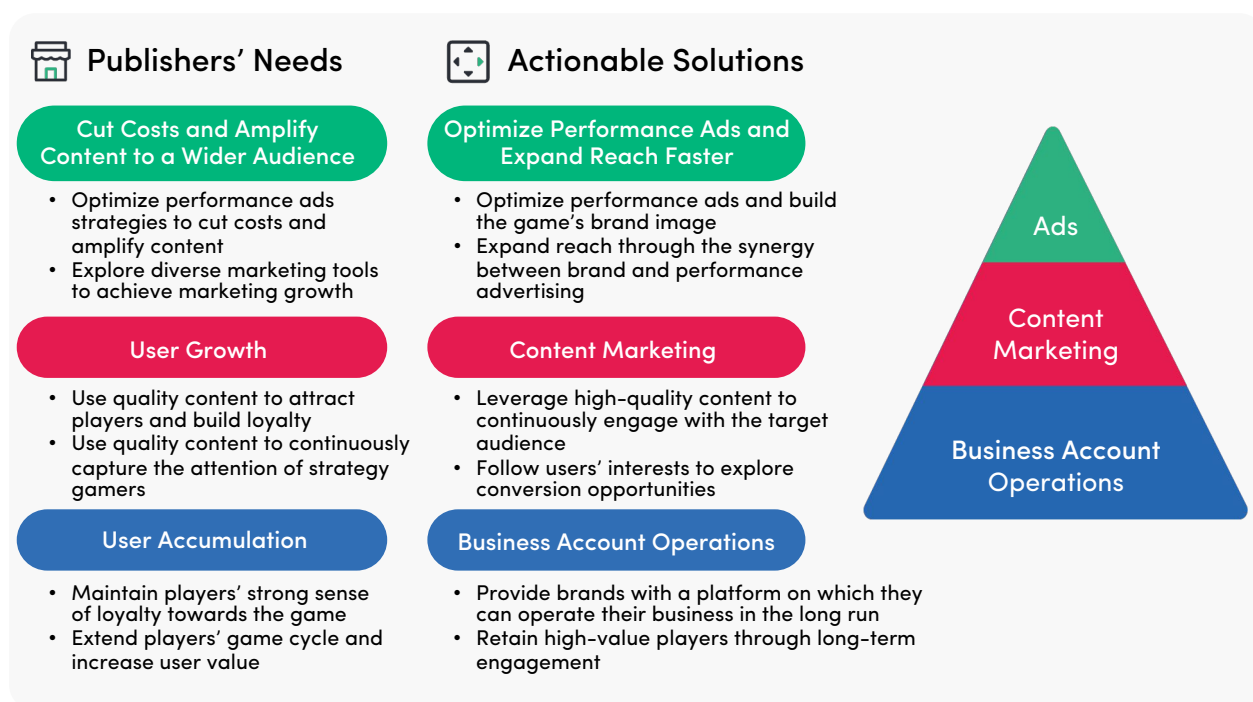
TikTok for Business

"Full Cycle" Marketing Strategy

Ads

Content Marketing

Business Account Operations

Pre-Reg   New Title Launch   Normal Ops   Live Ops

ROI | Tips Game Publishers' Needs and Solutions

What Actions Can Publishers' Take to More Effectively Market Strategy Games and Increase ROI?

🏠 Publishers' Needs

Cut Costs and Amplify Content to a Wider Audience
- Optimize performance ads strategies to cut costs and amplify content
- Explore diverse marketing tools to achieve marketing growth

User Growth
- Use quality content to attract players and build loyalty
- Use quality content to continuously capture the attention of strategy gamers

User Accumulation
- Maintain players' strong sense of loyalty towards the game
- Extend players' game cycle and increase user value

Actionable Solutions

Optimize Performance Ads and Expand Reach Faster
- Optimize performance ads and build the game's brand image
- Expand reach through the synergy between brand and performance advertising

Content Marketing
- Leverage high-quality content to continuously engage with the target audience
- Follow users' interests to explore conversion opportunities

Business Account Operations
- Provide brands with a platform on which they can operate their business in the long run
- Retain high-value players through long-term engagement

Ads / Content Marketing / Business Account Operations

Increase Brand Awareness and Conversion Lift through Integrated Solutions

TikTok for Business' s integrated solutions help strategy game publishers expand their reach, reduce costs and amplify content

	Cost Reduction		Effect
• TopView + Content Ads + Performance Marketing	**−36** % Cost for Downloads		**+54** % CVR*CTR

	Cost Reduction		Effect
• R&F + Content Ads + Performance Marketing	**−58** % Cost for Downloads		**+129** % CVR*CTR

	Expanded Reach	Cost Reduction	Effect
• R&F + TopView + Content Ads + Performance Marketing	**~5X** Core TA Reached	**~70**% Cost for Downloads	**2X +** CVR*CTR

Note: The comparison of brand + conversion lift is based on performance advertisements only.

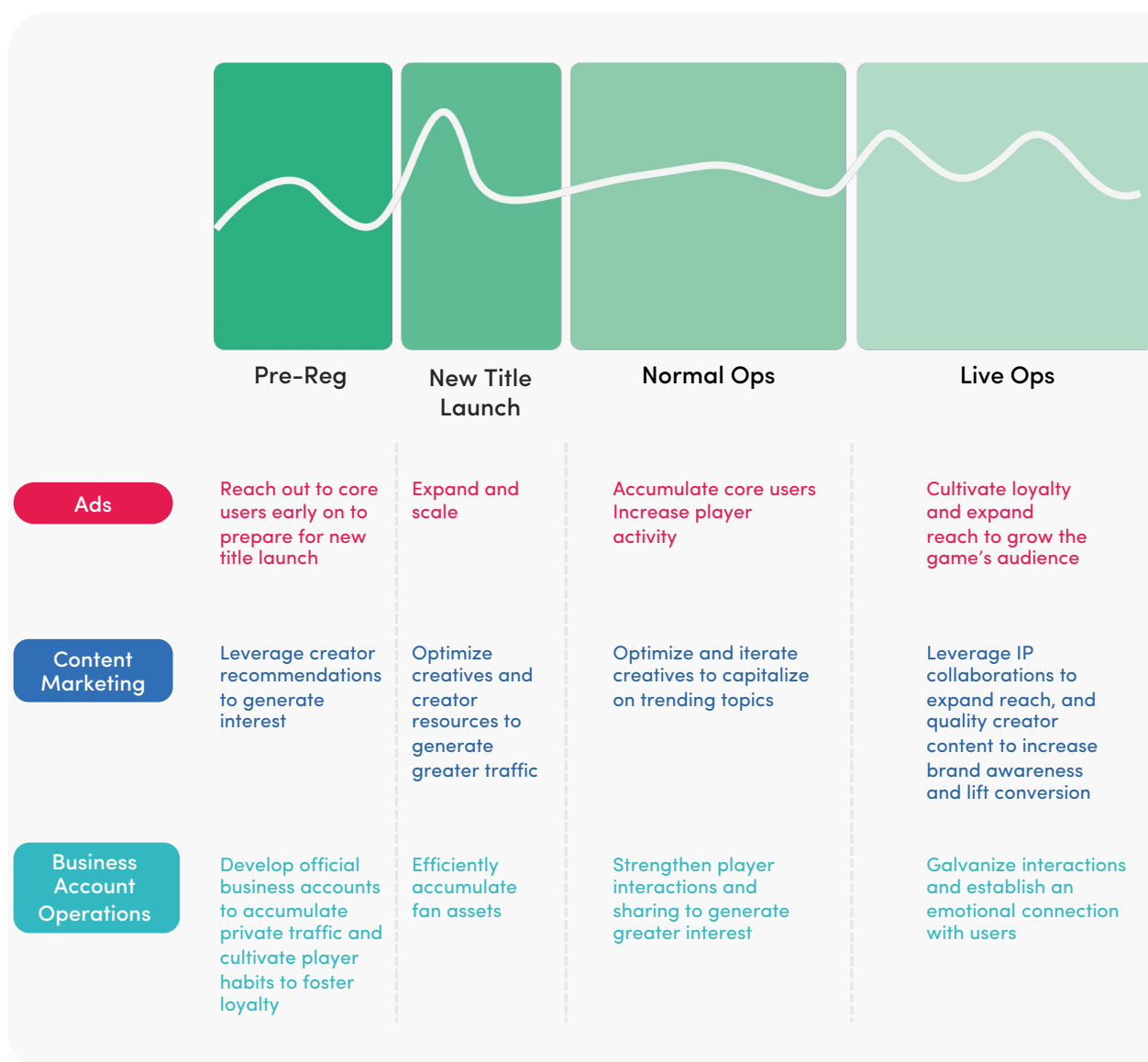Source: Relevant materials from TikTok for Business.

"Full Cycle" Marketing Strategy: Three-Pronged Strategy Business Account Operations · Diversifying Content · Synergy between Brand and Performance Advertising

"

Covering the Four Stages of Gaming Marketing: Leveraging the Three-Pronged Strategy

	Pre-Reg	New Title Launch	Normal Ops	Live Ops
Ads	Reach out to core users early on to prepare for new title launch	Expand and scale	Accumulate core users Increase player activity	Cultivate loyalty and expand reach to grow the game's audience
Content Marketing	Leverage creator recommendations to generate interest	Optimize creatives and creator resources to generate greater traffic	Optimize and iterate creatives to capitalize on trending topics	Leverage IP collaborations to expand reach, and quality creator content to increase brand awareness and lift conversion
Business Account Operations	Develop official business accounts to accumulate private traffic and cultivate player habits to foster loyalty	Efficiently accumulate fan assets	Strengthen player interactions and sharing to generate greater interest	Galvanize interactions and establish an emotional connection with users

ROI | Tips TikTok Marketing – Marketing Strategy during Pre-Reg

Pre-Reg Phase — Trendsetting · Generating Interest · Creating Awareness

"

Goals during the Pre-Registration Phase: Prepare for the New Title Launch with a "Forward-Facing Marketing" Strategy.

Strategy game publishers needs to boost their game's exposure to capture the interest of users and entice them to download the game. By acquiring new players beforehand, publishers can expand their game's reach and ensure enough new users before the official launch.

⌄ Challenges in this Phase

- Core users are indistinguishable, which can make it challenging to target interested gamer segments with precision.
- There's no guarantee that pre-registered users will become active after the official launch.

▶ Ads

Instant Page

Better page layout to ensure a smooth user experience and click optimization for the pre-registration page

- Easy to use with a selection of comparable templates
- Faster page loading times to reduce lost users
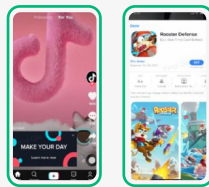
Interactive Add-on

Display Card: Visuals to trigger clicks

Countdown Sticker: Hints for registration

- Diverse ad formats to ensure originality and increase interactions
- Guaranteed competitiveness with CTR and CPM optimization
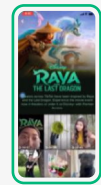
Note: TTAM (TikTok Ads Manager) pre-registration targets the Closed Beta Stage

Content

Branded H5

- Branding: Content display
- Interactions: Character polls
- Conversions: downloads/preregistration

Brand TVC display

Tasks: customized tasks such as following a TikTok account, daily check-in, posting video with an hashtag, and liking a TikTok video

Redirection: brand official website, app store page, eComm page, etc.

Redemption: Redeem branded prizes with points

TTCM (TikTok Creator Marketplace) Creator Recommendations

- Vertical creators focus on core users, enriching creative content and seeding interests

- Creator Selection
- Collaboration
- In-depth Recommendations

⚑ Business Account Operations

Business Account Ops: Official business accounts and in-feed ads can generate excitement and help build fanbases.

Event Ops: Time-limited promotions, in-game bonuses, and official posts can build excitement and generate interest among users.

Fan Ops: Creator interactions with official business accounts and H5 landing pages can help connect with users from both brand-owned channels and earned channels.

ROI | Tips TikTok Marketing – Marketing Strategy during New Title Launch

New Title Launch Phase — Unleash a Coordinated Product Portfolio · Leverage Content to Generate Traffic · Rapidly Scale Player Acquisition

"

Goals during the New Title Launch Phase: Increase Downloads, Awareness and Drive Traffic.

During the new title launch phase, it is crucial for publishers to quickly acquire a large number of core players to position themselves to claim a top spot in the game rankings.
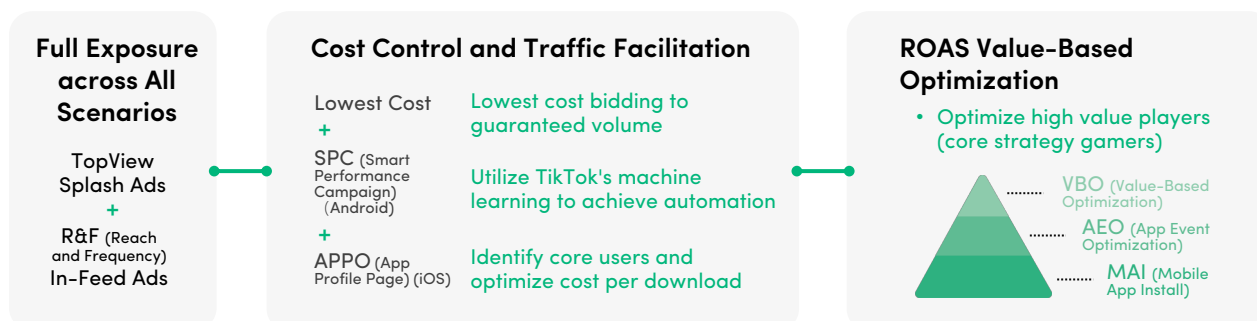
Challenges in this Phase

- Difficulties striking a balance between quickly acquiring traffic and ensuring ROAS
- Difficulties efficiently scaling a player base
- The strategy game genre often lacks differentiation, making it challenging to create unique ad creatives.

Ads

TikTok's 3-Product Matrix provides strategy game advertisers with huge exposure, fast traffic growth and real-time optimization

Full Exposure across All Scenarios

TopView Splash Ads
+
R&F (Reach and Frequency) In-Feed Ads

Cost Control and Traffic Facilitation

Lowest Cost
+
SPC (Smart Performance Campaign) (Android)
+
APPO (App Profile Page) (iOS)

Lowest cost bidding to guaranteed volume

Utilize TikTok's machine learning to achieve automation

Identify core users and optimize cost per download

ROAS Value-Based Optimization

- Optimize high value players (core strategy gamers)

VBO (Value-Based Optimization)
AEO (App Event Optimization)
MAI (Mobile App Install)

Content

Leveraging the "Creator" factor to achieve amplification, differentiation, and localization

TTCM (TikTok Creator Marketplace) + Spark Ads

- Top creator and celebrity collaborations with sticker releases can leverage their appeal. Such collaborations can help achieve coverage in various communities and verticals

TTCC (TikTok Creative Challenge) Local Creator Content Creation

Continuous Advertising · Brand and Performance Synergy · Local Creators in Relevant Verticals

- Understand the local culture and preferences
- Produce diverse and unique creatives to avoid homogenization

Branded H5

Innovative profile pic frames

Business Account Operations

Event Ops: Operations such as limited edition equipment and time-limited bonuses can attract more fans.

Fan Ops: Interactions between creators and business accounts can leverage the popularity of creators and facilitate conversions.

New Title Launch Case Study: "Last Fortress"

Background

IM30's apocalypse–themed strategy game "Last Fortress: Underground" allows players to enjoy the game by purchasing in-game heroes. During its new title launch phase, the game faced the same challenges as other strategy games, namely that the cost of advertising was constantly increasing, making it harder to achieve conversions with lower costs.

♟ Marketing Strategy

Increase conversion efficiency: Obtain sizable traffic and optimize conversion efficiency through an ROAS value–based optimization product package

APPO + AEO + Lowest Cost Bidding

The combination of APPO and AEO helped mitigate the effects of the iOS privacy policy on ad measurement and tracking. The product package identified a larger pool of potential users likely to convert during the new title launch phase. The game's introduction, rankings, comments and reviews of the game were shown on the APPO page to generate interest from potential players, thus boosting conversion efficiency.
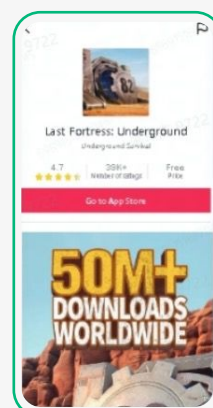
🍎 Results

Optimized purchase rate while leveraging performance ads: More conversions with lower costs

– 20% iOS CPA   **+9%** Purchase Rate

New Title Launch Creative Case Study: "Rise of Empires"

Background

To enhance the localization and differentiation of the "Rise of Empires" advertising campaign, IM30 leveraged TTCC to collaborate with local creators on the production of live-action ads. By showcasing the unique creativity of local creators, the campaign captured the attention of potential users, while mitigating advertising resistance.

♟ Marketing Strategy

Increase view through rates: Collaborations with local creators to enhance the localization and differentiation of the advertising campaign.

Leverage TTCC to find suitable local creators to create ad creatives

Creators produced content in accordance with the precise demands of the advertisers, aimed at potential gamers. By leveraging ad creatives with real people and showcasing gameplay strategies, the ad campaign effectively emphasized key operational points and successfully generated user downloads.
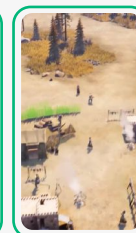
🍎 Results

Download rate optimization: Ad creatives quickly generated traffic while reducing advertiser's cost

Advertising Spend: More than 420K USD	TTCC creatives were able to generate traffic quickly and drive 425k USD in ad spend within a month
CPA – 6%	By utilizing TTCC–produced creatives, the CPA decreased by 6% within one month compared to regular ad creatives
Ads Volume: 94 in total	After using TTCC, the advertiser received 94 new ad creatives within one month

ROI | Tips   TikTok Marketing – Marketing Strategy during Normal Ops

Normal Ops Phase — Ad Creatives Optimization · Business Account Operations · Solidifying the Game's Core Player Base and Driving Engagement

"

Goals during Normal Ops Phase: Accumulate High-Value Players, Boost Player Activeness, and Extend the Lifecycle of the Game.

The excitement of strategy games lies in its long-term cultivation. However, after acquiring a sizable player base in the new title launch phase, obtaining more players through ads gets harder. Thus, improving player retention, increasing player engagement and boosting ROAS are crucial for the long-term operation of strategy games.

Challenges in this Phase

- Costs to acquire new players from ads increases and it can be hard to improve ROAS
- Core gamers are hard to retain; new players have low engagement
- Ad creatives are hard to iterate effectively with limited resources for production

Ads

APPO (App Profile Page)

Recommend to leverage the product in the iOS to optimize the real-time data and amplify the advertising effect

- Transition page is created automatically, and can be customized
- Gain in-site information to optimize CPI

AEO (App Event Optimization) + VBO (Value-Based Optimization)

Product package to reach the core high-value segment more effectively

- AEO identifies ad creatives with a strong conversion rate → Uses VBO to target high-value segments with precision
- AEO accumulates data on well-performing conversions → Lookalike segment tagging → VBO precision targeting

Content TikTok Ad Creatives Provide: Auto-Generation, Intelligent Optimization, and One-Stop Creative Solution

TikTok Automated Optimization of Ad Content Package

- Automatic Bidding / Creative Combinations / Audience Targeting / Value Optimization Solution
- Reducing operational costs by auto-generating high-quality creatives

Highlight Frames

- Optimization suggestions based on high-converting frames from creatives

Creative Center One-Stop Creative Platform

- Information on popular trends, inspirations, editing tools and copyrighted songs, etc.

Business Account Operations

Event Ops: Manage fans and players by connecting public and self-owned realms. Use content as a foundation to facilitate player interaction and sharing across a variety of events and activities.

ROI | Tips TikTok Marketing – Normal Ops Case Study

Normal Ops Case Study: "State of Survival: Zombie War"

Background | To target high-value user groups, "State of Survival: Zombie War" a game from FunPlus, created live-action dramatic ads ads in the NA and EUR markets. By applying a lowest-cost strategy and on download targets to the ad campaign, the game saw a boost in in-game conversion rates.

⚖ Marketing Strategy

Marketing product strategy: A combination of APPO*AEO to optimize in-game conversions

Creatives selection: The advertiser created 1-2 sets of ads and inserted at least 3 high-quality creatives into each set (including real people ads) to ensure creatives quality;

Cost and bidding: The budget for each ad group is set to 10 times the historical CPA to ensure enough data for model learning. The advertiser adopts the lowest-cost bidding strategy, elimination the need to manually set bidding limits for each ad group. The delivery system uses intelligent automatic bidding for each auction, ensuring that the full budget is utilized at the lowest cost.
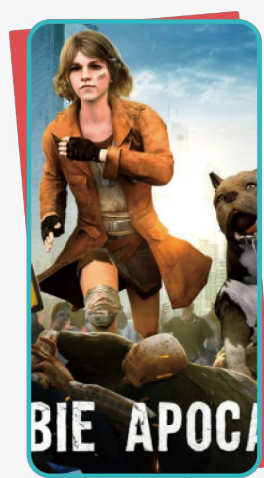
🍎 Results

ROAS Optimization:

Increased in-game conversions, while reducing costs for the advertiser

+191% In-game Purchase Conversions — The advertiser was very pleased with the performance and allocated 70% of their iOS ad budget to APPO*AEO

−61% CPA — During a week-long testing period, a 61% decrease in CPA was achieved

3x SKAN CVR — Conversion rate tripled

ROI | Tips   TikTok Marketing – Marketing Strategy for Live Ops (Version Updates/Anniversaries)

Live Ops Phase — Topic Creation · Focus on Hot Trends · Engagement to Expand Reach

"

Goals during the Live Ops Phase: Utilize Resources for Special Promotions to Reengage Inactive Players and Reach a Broader Audience.

During the Live Ops phase, strategy game publishers need to launch regular marketing campaigns for certain promotions, such as version updates, anniversary events, or IP collaborations, to promote player loyalty and reach a broader audience.

Live Ops Phase — Version Updates/Anniversaries

⌄ Challenges in this Phase

- It can be hard to further increase player loyalty, reengage inactive players, and increase player activeness.

▷ Ads

Full Exposure across All Scenarios

TopView **+** R&F (Reach and Frequency) In-Feed Ads

● **Branded Mission**
Leverage TikTok user communities for greater participation, creation, and proactive sharing

● **Brand & Performance Synergy Package**
AEO (App Event Optimization) + Spark Ads
Quality Creator Creatives + AEO Bidding Strategy can realize win-win value

▦ Content

TTCM (TikTok Creator Marketplace) **+ Spark Ads**

- A creator matrix with vertical content creators as the core team, complemented by pan-entertainment creators can expand reach through quality content

● **TTCC** (TikTok Creative Challenge) **Local Creator Content Creation**
Local vertical creator and lower rand KOC

- Understanding local cultures and their preferences; multiple creators' and multiple creatives can help avoid homogenous content

● **Branded H5**
Innovative profile pic frames

⚑ Business Account Operations

Business Account Livestreaming: Gain recognition from core players in the community and generate interest in new players

Source: Relevant materials from TikTok for Business.

ROI│Tips TikTok Marketing – Live Ops (Version Update/Anniversary) Case Study

Live Ops Phase Case Study: "The Ants: Underground Kingdom"

Background

In order to promote the new version of "The Ants: Underground Kingdom", StarUnion launched a Branded Mission to create original content, which was ultimately successful in captivating potential gamers and increasing their interest.

♟ Marketing Strategy

Co-create marketing content with creators, personifying the concept of ants to inspire user participation

- Launch Branded Mission, featuring special effects and BGM, to increase exposure and interactions, while raising awareness of the game and enriching the game's content.

- Leverage the influence of creators and encourage greater interaction to generate interest and intent among diverse user groups to learn more about the game's communities.

- Utilize rewards to drive player engagement, boost conversions and raise the game's popularity.

🍎 Results

Total VV in Japan 140.9M (+46.4%)

- Video plays from Branded Mission surpassed expectations and outperformed the overall market.
- Fun interactions and customized music successfully attracted TikTok users to participate in the campaign.

Japanese Audience's Ad Recall Increased by 7.6%

- Branding results were extraordinary.

Brand Popularity and Long-Term Impressions Grew

- A long-tail effect in branded promotion was achieved, as game-related content continued to flourish.
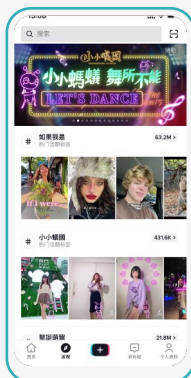
Video Creation

Multiple Chances for Users to Participate

Rewards for High-Ranking Submissions

Source: TikTok for Business Strategy Games Marketing Case Studies.

ROI | Tips   TikTok Marketing – Marketing Strategy for Live Ops (IP Collaboration)

Live Ops Phase — Topic Creation · Focus on Hot Trends · Engagement to Expand Reach

"

Goals during the Live Ops Phase: Utilize Resources for Special Promotions to Reengage Inactive Players and Reach a Broader Audience.

During the Live Ops phase, strategy game publishers need to launch regular marketing campaigns for certain promotions, such as version updates, anniversary events, or IP collaborations, to promote player loyalty and reach a broader audience.

Live Ops Phase — IP Collaboration

Challenges in this Phase

- Strategy gaming communities are relatively concentrated and fixed and it can be hard to expand a game's reach to new players.

▶ Ads

**TopView
R&F (Reach and Frequency) In-Feed Ads
IP Segmentation Pack**

Increase exposure and turn IP fans into interested users

Branded Mission

Leverage TikTok user communities for greater participation, creation, and proactive sharing

Content

TTCM (TikTok Creator Marketplace) + Spark Ads

- Collaborate on content promotion with celebrities/cross-industry creators/gaming creators to expand reach and build the game's brand

Livestreaming

Covert IP fans into players with intriguing livestreaming content

⚑ Business Account Operations

Business Account Ops: Create IP relevant content to engage fans of the IP partner

ROI | Tips   TikTok Marketing – Live Ops (IP Collaboration) Case Study

Live Ops Phase Case Study: "State of Survival"

Background | "State of Survival" from FunPlus aimed to expand its user base by leveraging the popular IP of DC's Joker. To achieve this, they launched a Branded Mission in the SEA market, which resulted in increased downloads, drove significant participation, and successfully attracted more users to experience the game.

Marketing Strategy

- IP Collaboration: Expand reach with Joker from DC
- Launch #State of Survival Branded Mission# to drive player participation
- Combine TopView, R&F and branded effect ads to expand the game's audience and enhance interactions
- Cooperate with creators to attract more gamer communities and amplify campaign marketing volume
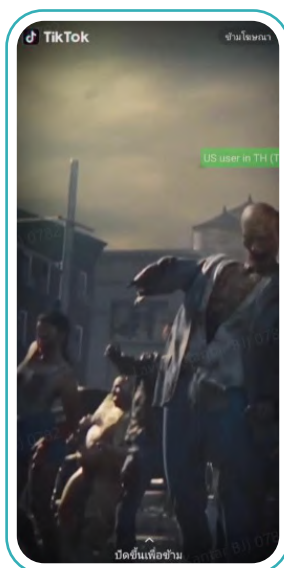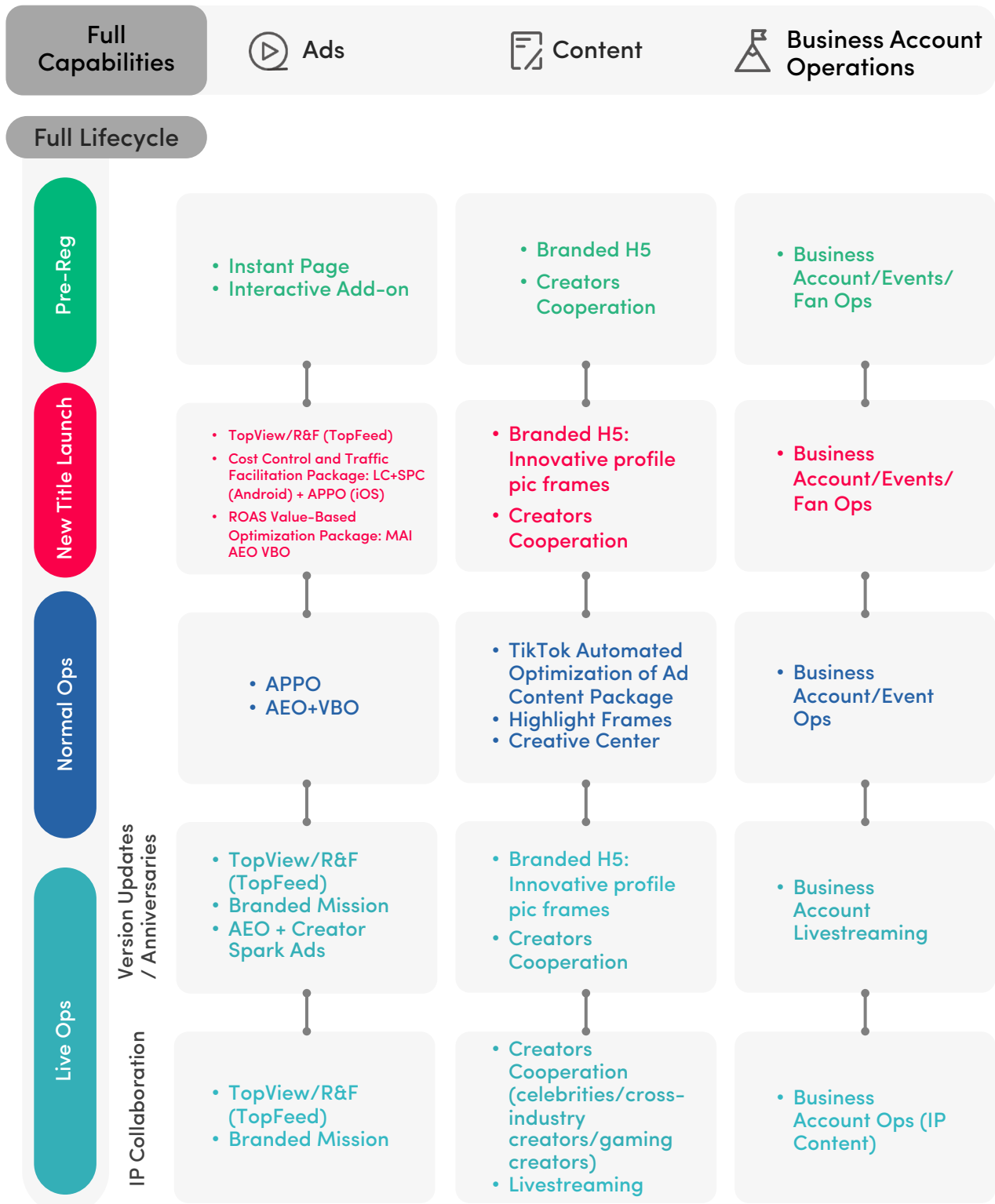
Results

–69%	**2.2x**	**4.7x**
CPA	PVR	Core Players

Source: TikTok for Business Strategy Games Marketing Case Studies.
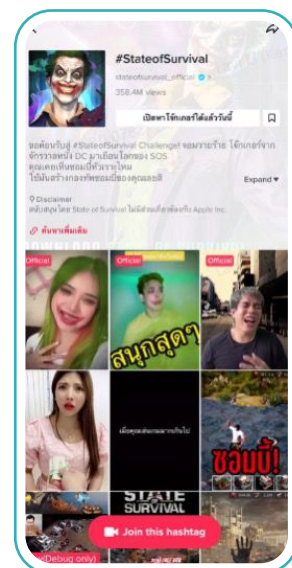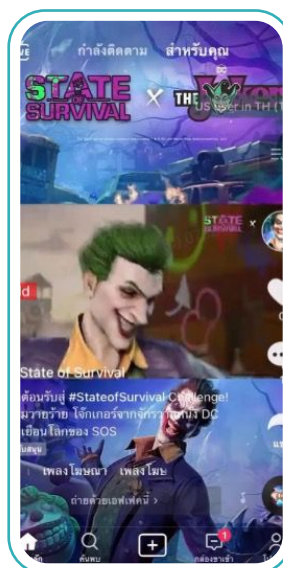
"Full Cycle" Marketing Matrix of Strategy Games to Facilitate Growth in the Long Run

Full Cycle Marketing Matrix of Strategy Games

Full Capabilities	▷ Ads	◱ Content	◮ Business Account Operations
Full Lifecycle			
Pre-Reg	• Instant Page • Interactive Add-on	• Branded H5 • Creators Cooperation	• Business Account/Events/Fan Ops
New Title Launch	• TopView/R&F (TopFeed) • Cost Control and Traffic Facilitation Package: LC+SPC (Android) + APPO (iOS) • ROAS Value-Based Optimization Package: MAI AEO VBO	• Branded H5: Innovative profile pic frames • Creators Cooperation	• Business Account/Events/Fan Ops
Normal Ops	• APPO • AEO+VBO	• TikTok Automated Optimization of Ad Content Package • Highlight Frames • Creative Center	• Business Account/Event Ops
Live Ops — Version Updates / Anniversaries	• TopView/R&F (TopFeed) • Branded Mission • AEO + Creator Spark Ads	• Branded H5: Innovative profile pic frames • Creators Cooperation	• Business Account Livestreaming
Live Ops — IP Collaboration	• TopView/R&F (TopFeed) • Branded Mission	• Creators Cooperation (celebrities/cross-industry creators/gaming creators) • Livestreaming	• Business Account Ops (IP Content)

TikTok for Business Marketing Tips Assist Strategy Game Publishers to Innovate and Achieve Breakthroughs to Expand Reach

Players | Tips
The Value of Platform Users

- Tap into the diverse and vast gaming communities on TikTok to achieve player growth
- TikTok has a high concentration of high-value players, which is an ideal platform for strategy game publishers to reach and retain whales
- Leverage the TikTok gaming community's culture and rich and diverse content to expand reach and stabilize your game's player base

Creativity | Tips
TikTok Creative Guidebook

- Creative format: Combine TikTok's UGC and creator resources to focus on producing real people ad creatives
- Creative content: Design creatives based on different player's needs and preferences
- Ad module design: Arrange content highlights to achieve multiple goals, from increasing awareness to realizing conversions

ROI | Tips
Full Cycle Marketing Strategy

- Leverage TikTok for Business's "Full Cycle" marketing solutions to help strategy game publishers to achieve long-term and sustainable operations
- Achieve brandformance through TikTok for Business's three-pronged marketing strategy: advertising, content marketing and business account operations

04

APPENDIX

- Research Data Explained
- The Methodology of the "Pentagon Framework" for the Market Evaluation of Strategy Games
- Project Team

Kantar Research Data Explained

"

Strategy Games Global Study Quantitative Research

- **Method :**
  Online Survey

- **Sample Coverage :**
  Markets: US, GB, DE, FR, JP, KR, ID, TH, BR

- **Sample Size :**
  N=4800
  600 each from US, GB, DE, FR, JP and KR
  400 each from ID, TH and BR

- **Criteria :**
  Gamers >18 years old who have played strategy games in the past 3 months

- **Survey Period :**
  Dec. 23rd 2022 – Jan. 4th 2023

"

Strategy Games Global Player Qualitative Research

- **Ad Creatives :**
  A total of 135 premium ad creatives of popular strategy games, with 15 each distributed to 9 countries, including 45 ad creatives from TikTok

- **Method :**
  Qualitative interviews

- **Sample Size :**
  N=180

- **Criteria :**
  Gamers >18 years old who have played strategy games in the past 3 months

- **Sample Coverage :**
  Markets: US, GB, DE, FR, JP, KR, ID, TH, BR

- **Survey Period :**
  Nov. 30th 2022 – Dec. 19th 2022

"

Strategy Games Global Publishing Expert Interview

- **Method :**
  In-Depth Expert Interview Online

- **Sample Size :**
  4 groups of experts

- **Background :**
  TikTok Experts with in-depth experience and knowledge in the area of strategy games

- **Survey Period :**
  Dec. 8th 2022 – Dec. 15th 2022

The Methodology of the "Pentagon Framework" for the Market Evaluation of Strategy Games

Capture Trends

Kantar's proven model as a theoretic framework, combined with the research insights on the market traits of strategy games helps understand key factors influencing the strategy games market.

Modeling

Five indexes were selected in evaluating the strategy games market: Players, Revenue, Socialization, Creativity, and Promotability. Moreover, each index had a sub-index.

The three sub-indexes for Creativity were Theme, Art Style and Cross-Genre Gameplay. Whether a market had a high or low Creativity index was based on the three sub-indexes. Using "theme" as an example, if a market had a good TGI performance regarding themes (both traditional and emerging), this factor of the market evaluation would contribute greater value to the Creativity index. The same applies to the other two sub-indexes, Art Style and Cross-Genre Gameplay.

Note: The model does not include PEST factors, meaning politic, economy, society and technology factors are not calculated in the model.

Research Market

Kantar's consumer research, which follows global protocols and standards, collected and compiled data from representative strategy gamers from 9 markets (US, GB, DE, FR, JP, KR, ID, BR, and TH).

Analyze Results

Based on research results, each market's performance was compared through the lens of player's willingness to spend, their gaming experience, and the performance of specific games. The comparison uses the Targeted Group Index (TGI), which is an index that indicates if a market's performance is higher or lower than the global average. TGI>100 indicates that the evaluated factor outperformed the global average.

Using the Revenue TGI of the US market as an example, US Revenue TGI = American's average spending amount/global average spending amount * 100. If US Revenue TGI > 100, it indicates that US players pay more than the global average. The higher the TGI, the wider the gap.

Index Calculation

Based on the five indexes, through individual TGI calculations and aggregate analysis, we obtained a composite score for each factor of the pentagon. By comparing each market's "pentagon" shape with the baseline, we could then understand each market's unique qualities.

【1】 The index calculation: Each index is based on its underlying sub-indexes. Each sub-index reflects a factor of the fundamental status of each strategy games market.

【2】 The "Pentagon Framework" evaluation: Based on the five indexes' underlying sub-indexes, our calculations provided us with a composite of each market's Pentagon score. The Pentagon score reflects the performance of each strategy games market.

TikTok for Business

TikTok for Business aims to create a home for brands and marketers to be creative storytellers and meaningfully engage with the TikTok community. Our growing suite of advertising solutions delivers across every marketing touchpoint, enabling advertisers of any size to unlock real-world opportunities and drive business results.

KANTAR

Kantar is the world's leading marketing data and analytics company. We have a complete, unique and rounded understanding of how people think, feel and act globally and locally in over 90 markets. By combining the deep expertise of our people, our data resources and benchmarks, and our innovative analytics and technology, we help our clients understand people and inspire growth.

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