Stanford eCorner

Game Development Process

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Video URL: http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/717/Game-Development-Process

Kim explains that EA's strategy is based on nailing down the "X," or organic fun concept for that product. EA shares knowledge across studios and around development creating a collaborative environment. The development process is pretty standard: build prototypes, do market tests, start to build it and, ultimately, finalize the product, she says.

Transcript

That being said, I think EA is definitely one of the companies that have tried to normalize and understand what the game development process is in the industry. So in my studies, I've studied a number of different game companies and I've found that EA is really about sharing that knowledge across studios and around development. And some of the things that we've come up with is what we call the "X", the "X" on the wall. You'll hear us talk about this in all of our game development and it's a process that we've put together where we say this is a little bit hard to read, but visually it's something I want to share with you guys because at the top line is sort of how the studio deals with our development around running the "X" and at the bottom line is how marketing does it. So we actually partner very crisply with marketing to understand what the market may be and try to nail the "X". The "X" is the organic fun that I was talking to before, that piece of dew, the taste that you don't know what it is. Basically what we do in defining and understanding the "X" is building prototypes, trying to understand what that fun aspect is. And you need to confirm that "X" through your organization. Test it within your market. Test it within knowledge of the people in the organization.

And once you've confirmed what the "X" of that game is, then you go out and start building it. And that's the investment up front, what we call pre-production without worries of wasting any money in trying to understand what a game might be. Once we've build that "X" and then we go to the finagling stage. And that's a typical software finagling stage that you'll see in any software company that's in the industry whether it be Oracle, etcetera. That's at the top line.