

**Game Design 53-609
Final Project**



The Castle... of Commerce

Congratulations! You are now an employee of Big Hit Games! Big Hit is a large publisher with internal development studios. It has divisions that produce PC, console, social, mobile, and even educational games. Seeing the success that indie developers have had, the CEO of Big Hit has issued a memo explaining “The world of game publishing is changing. If Big Hit is to survive, we need to take on a more indie mentality. To that end, I want to cast a wide net to find the best ideas in the company, and get them funded. An executive review team will go on tour, visiting each Big Hit studio, ready to hear your best ideas.”

This could be your big chance -- now you just have to come up with an idea, and prepare a pitch.

For this project, you and your team will present a design, budget, and development plan for a videogame that would be competitive in the marketplace at the time the game would ship. The game can be of any genre, and designed for any platform or platforms.

On **Monday, May 15**, your team will have 20 minutes to present the game concept to a group of representatives from Big Hit Games. Although Big Hit is fictitious, the executives you will be presenting to will be a live panel of experts from the game industry, who will consider your pitch, examine your materials, ask you questions, and **give you a grade**. I highly recommend you plan to keep your pitch to about 10-12 minutes, leaving the remaining time for questions.

April 18 (Tues): Team and Concept. Your team will briefly present your studio location and an overview of your concept.

April 25 (Tues): Pitch Outline. You will present an outline of your pitch in class using powerpoint or google slides to get feedback. The pitch should contain all the key points you hope to make.

May 2 (Tues): Pitch Beta. Your pitch should be basically complete at this point. It will include a spreadsheet of expected costs and anticipated revenues. You will present it in class to get feedback, and you will be assigned an industry expert to give you further feedback via email.

May 15 (Mon): Pitch Day: You will present your pitch to industry experts, representing the panel from Big Hit Games. You may present using any means you like. You may also bring auxiliary materials to give to the group (make sure to bring enough for everyone). These might include: a “one sheet”, diagrams that help illustrate your gameplay, schedules or financial details. In short, anything that the panel might want to browse over or refer to during your presentation to better understand and appreciate your concept.

The goal? Convince the representatives from Big Hit Games that they should fund the game that you are pitching.

Regarding your studio:

You should be able to explain:

- What city your studio is in
- The background of the studio (does it make mobile games? Console? Social?)
- The job titles that you each have at Big Hit

Big Hit, like most large publishers has acquired studios in many cities. However, it has a standardized system with a “blended” billing rate, which means that when budgeting a game, each staff member is assumed to cost \$75/hr, or \$13,000 per month.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: It is inconvenient for me to be on team X because of reason Y. Can I change teams?

A: Make it known to the TAs ASAP, and we will try to work out a trade.

Q: Does everyone on the team have to present at the pitch?

A: No. Sometimes, a pitch is best with a single voice. Sometimes it is best with contributions from everyone. It is up to you to decide what is best for your pitch.

Q: Do we have to dress up for the pitch?

A: Things are pretty casual at Big Hit, but you would be wise to dress according to your role on the team. How would a designer dress for a pitch? A programmer? A producer?

Q: Do we need to provide a detailed design document?

A: Not necessarily. You should provide whatever is necessary to convince the executives that you will be able to complete a quality design. Of course, more design up front is good, but not essential. What is essential is that you convince the executives that you have a firm design handle on whatever is unusual or unique about your game, and that this game has a good shot at being profitable.

Q: On what basis will we be graded?

A: Each of the executives on the Big Hit Games panel will give you a grade based on whether they would be interested in pursuing what you have proposed, and these grades will be averaged. Jesse will not be on the panel.

Q: What about licensed IP? Can we pick an IP and design around it?

A: Nope. The CEO is very clear on this point: “We have been over-relying on licensed IP while our competitors have been creating new IP that they own. We need to do the same.”

Q: Will this project be important for my grade?

A: This project accounts for a full 20% of your grade.