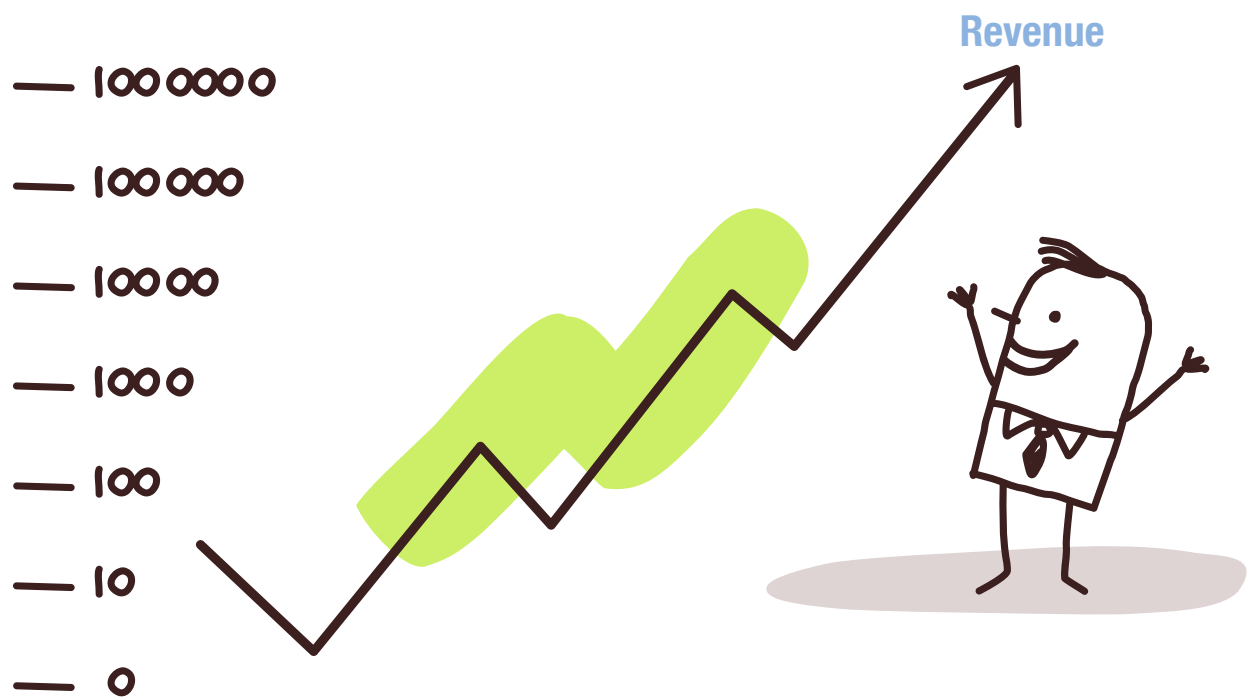


Gamification 101

GAMIFICATION - THE RAPID WAY TO INCREASE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE



Introduction

Gamification - The Rapid Way to Increase Business Performance

Gamification (the introduction of game mechanics and game dynamics into non-game activities and processes) has become a proven, powerful approach to increasing engagement & driving sustained behavioral change; which in turn creates a measurable improvement in business performance.

Sales, Marketing & Customer Service processes are just some of the many business functions that are currently benefitting greatly from adopting a gamification approach.

This white paper will provide you with a basic outline and high-level value proposition for gamification and will hopefully serve to open your eyes to the benefits of deploying a similar approach in your organization.

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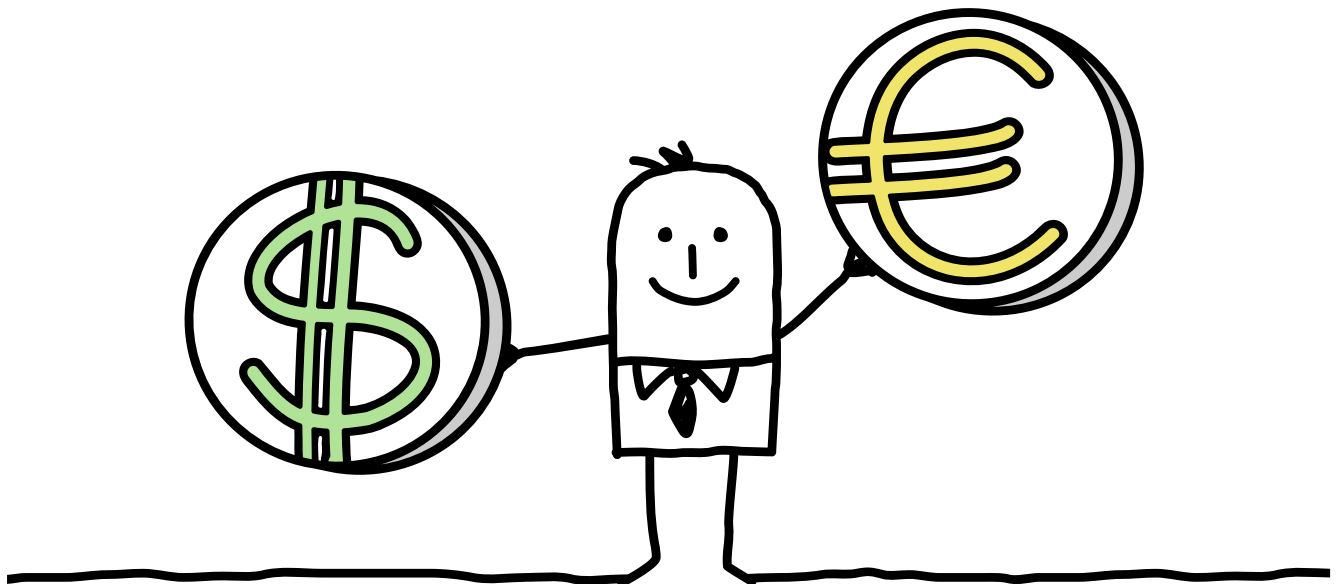
What is Gamification?

To help answer this question let's start by highlighting what gamification is not.

Firstly, gamification is not about creating a game, nor is it about playing games in the workplace.

Secondly, gamification is not simply the use of prizes (or other incentives) to drive a specific action, as this would merely be an incentive system.

Incentive systems have been used for many years. For example, employee of the month awards, cash prizes and sales commission payments can all be seen as incentive systems. Such incentive systems have limited and ever decreasing impact on driving the behavior that delivers the outcomes you seek. In fact these approaches, when used in isolation, are often the reason why there are large groups of dispassionate and poorly engaged employees in enterprise organizations.



At a fundamental level, [gamification](#) is defined as follows:

“The use of game mechanics (the main components of a game structure) with game dynamics (how, when and to what degree each component is used) in a non-game context to engage users and solve problems”.

In a business context, this would translate as:

Gamification is used in business applications and business processes to: improve user engagement, improve data quality, accelerate learning, and so drive a faster and larger return on an existing or new investment.

In the workplace, gamification has taken root in many business areas; including Sales, Marketing, Customer Service, Supply Chain and HR processes. The reason is simple; it drives an increase in engagement & behavioral change that in turn creates a measurable improvement in business efficiency.

For example, increasing the level of engagement can result in:

- 50% increase in user adoption
- 20% increase in data quality
- 70% increase in social collaboration
- 30% reduction in sales cycles

Even [Gartner are heralding the success that is being driven by Gamification](#) in the business world, predicting that “by 2015 40% of Global 1000 organizations will use gamification as the primary mechanism to transform business operations”, citing that “70% of business transformation efforts fail due to lack of engagement. Gamification address engagement, transparency and connects employees actions to business outcomes.”

The logic is simple; in their free time people love to play games. The last twenty years has seen an explosion in the popularity of online multi-player games that require collaboration to solve complex challenges. The aim is to identify the motivations that drive so many of us to want to participate in these, take the same core elements and apply the relevant ones to the business environment.

In a recent [TED talk Jane McGonigal](#) outlined that people of all ages are working collaboratively to solve challenges in the virtual world of online games:

1. Last year we collectively played some 3 billion hours of games every week.
2. There are more than ½ billion people worldwide playing computer and video games for at least ½ hour per day.
3. 5 million “gamers” in the US are spending more than 40 hours a week playing games (the equivalent of a full-time job!).



However, in our everyday working life, we are often presented with tasks that we find uninspiring. Gamification is the process of introducing game mechanics & dynamics into activities to make them engaging, rewarding even desirable; encouraging us to want to proactively take part.

What are Game Mechanics?

Game Mechanics are the basic mechanisms used to deliver a reasonably predictable desired outcome by encouraging certain behavior through a system of incentives, feedback, and rewards.

They are the building blocks that can be applied and combined to gamify any non-game context.

Examples of Game Mechanics include Levels, Badges, Points, Challenges and Leader Boards.

Game Mechanics can be strung together and combined in interesting ways to drive a very complex sequence of actions suitable for different contexts or desired results, enabling you to gamify pretty much anything.

However Game Mechanics alone are not enough. Just adding some Challenges that earn Points to an existing process may well deliver a short-term spike in behavior change, but very soon it will become repetitive and the behavior will revert to normal. To keep the gamified activity “fresh” and the user engaged, then Game Dynamics are required.

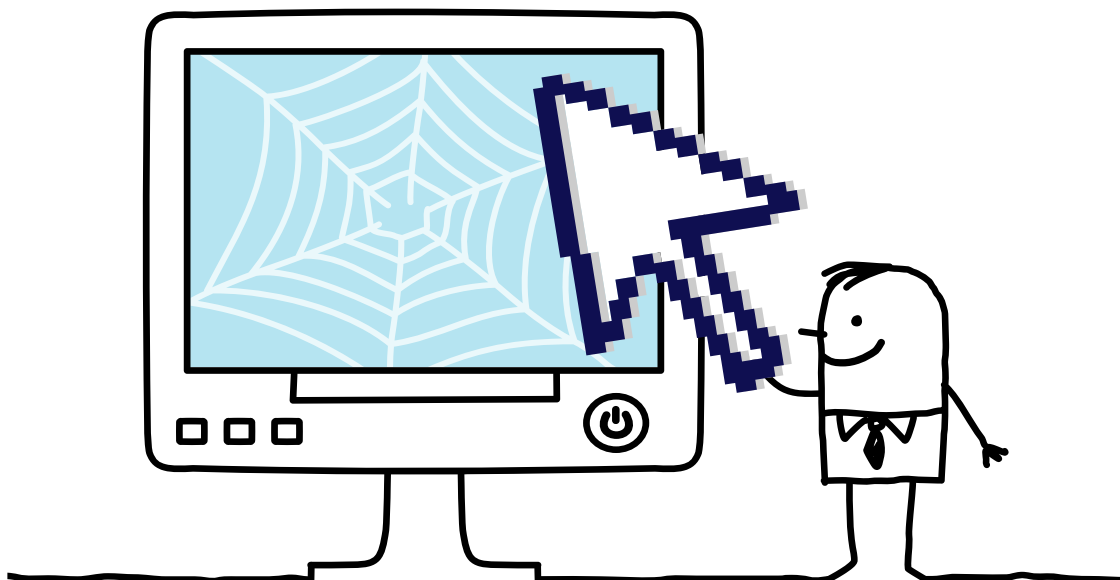
What are Game Dynamics?

Everyone is motivated in different ways. Hence Game Mechanics that work well for one type of player will work poorly for others. For example, Leader Boards will be motivational for those with a highly competitive nature such as Sales, but will have little impact on those that seek social collaboration to solve problems.

This is where Game Dynamics comes in.

Game Dynamics define the patterns of how both the game and the players will evolve over time and that will make the gamified activity enjoyable and keep the user engaged for as long as possible.

Game Dynamics tailors the Game Mechanics to address the desired outcomes and particular motivations of the participants.



Early game researcher, Professor [Richard A Bartle](#) created the Bartle Test of Gamer Psychology. A series of questions and an accompanying scoring formula that classifies players of [games](#) into categories based on their gaming preferences. The Bartle test covers four type of gaming personality:

Achievers who prefer to gain points, levels, badges and other concrete measurements of succeeding in a game. They will go to great lengths to achieve rewards that confer them little or no game play benefit but want the prestige of having achieved it.

Explorers who prefer discovering and learning about new areas. They often feel restricted when a game expects them to move on within a certain time, as that does not allow them to “explore” at their own pace.

Socializers who choose to play games for the social aspect, rather than the actual game itself. They gain the most enjoyment from a game by interacting with other players and being part of a team.

Killers who thrive on competition with other players, and prefer competing with them to be the winner.

We all have components of each of the 4 characteristics highlighted above. However, normally one of the characteristics tends to dominate. Understanding the profile of your game participants, is key to which Game Mechanics and which Game Dynamics you use.

For example, Killers require a set of gaming dynamics that are faster than those for Socializers. An engaging game will need to get progressively harder to challenge the Achiever so that they don’t become bored.

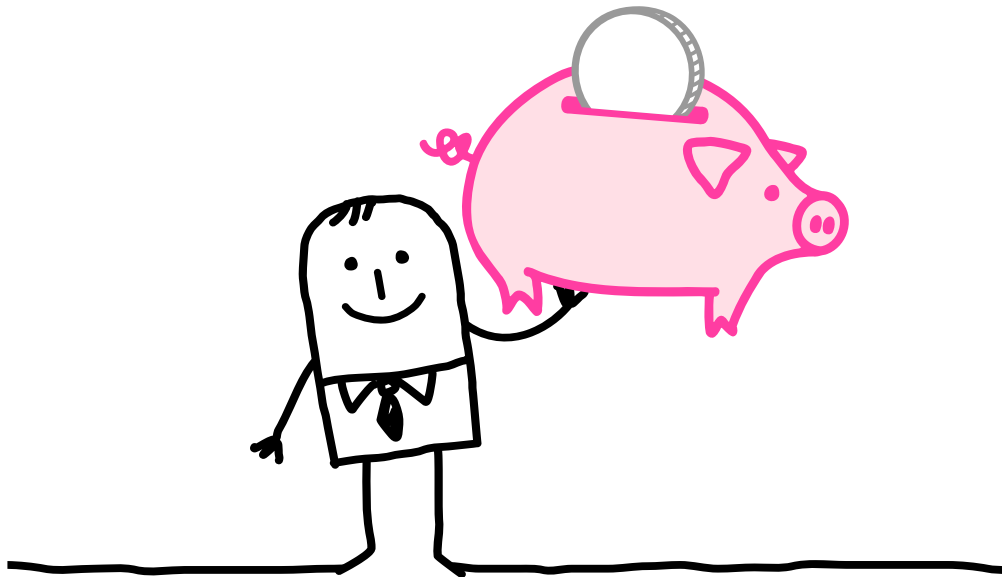
Are you starting to see the difference between game mechanics (framework) and gaming dynamics (content)?

Points, achievements and badges are game mechanics used to motivate behaviors, but how and precisely when a badge is unlocked and the precise reward schedule are gaming dynamics.

Gaming Dynamics also need to consider timing. A well-designed gaming dynamic brings players to the next stage at the right time, so that the players feel accomplished. Poorly designed Gaming Dynamics will tend to lose players along the way. For example, leveling up too quickly will make the game feel too easy, not challenging enough and users will quickly become bored. Challenges that are overly complex will create anxiety, making it hard to succeed and will also cause users to disengage.

The most effective business gamification approaches carefully consider both the elements of Game Mechanics and Game Dynamics. Successful approaches will deliver new Game Dynamics (content) by combining various Game Mechanics over time to make game participation more interesting and to keep users continuously engaged.

Approaches that do not carefully consider both elements, for example, just deploying simple Game Mechanics to a single process, will find that users will quickly suffer “game fatigue” and will rapidly disengage.



What is Game Theory?

Game Theory really doesn't have much to do with gaming or gamification. It is actually a well-established branch of mathematics that tries to describe the decision process in any strategic situation, including games.

Even though Game Theory is not really about gaming or gamification, it is often used to analyze how decisions are made. In a controlled setting, Game Theory can reveal principles that give us a better understanding of how humans think and act.

Translated to the business world, "Game Theory" can be thought of as the process that you should undertake prior to introducing any gamified process. This would include the careful and detailed analysis of how the current business process is implemented, how users currently behave and interact, the desired change in behavior (which may be broken down into multiple steps) and the typical behavioral profile of the users.

This detailed analysis is then used to carefully select the Game Mechanics and Game Dynamics that will drive your desired outcome and prolong engagement over time.

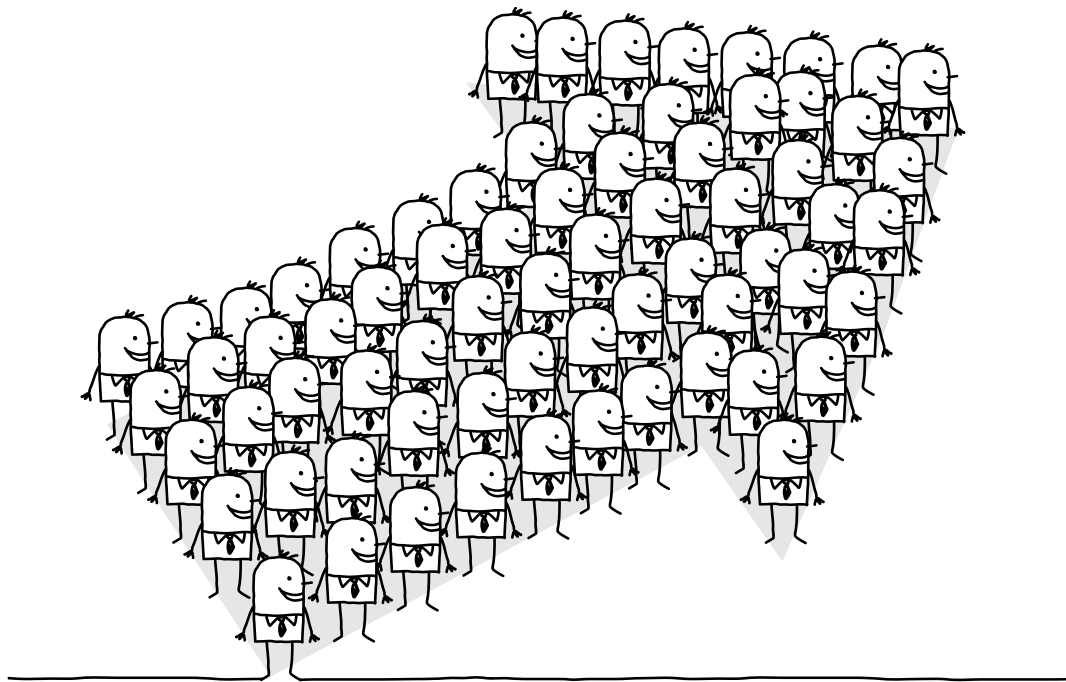
Without this up-front analysis, you are simply guessing at which Game Mechanics and Dynamics will work, which if you get it wrong, can produce a negative result.

Conclusion

There can be little doubt that Gamification is a proven, powerful approach that, in the business context, drives an increase in user engagement & behavioral change that will in turn create a measurable improvement in business performance.

In this paper we have covered the basic building blocks and definitions of gamification and the impressive results that can be achieved by applying these principles.

Don't ever underestimate the business value of fun!



About CloudApps

CloudApps delivers increased business performance by enabling, supporting and encouraging employee behavioral change.

SuMo for Salesforce allows you to increase user adoption and accelerate the achievement of your CRM KPI's through the power of game mechanics.

SuMo changes user behavior through concepts that include in-line suggestions & promotions, rewarding with points & badges and leader board rankings for individuals & teams.

SuMo is the only solution built 100% on the Force.com platform and is delivered with pre-built CRM best-practice & marketing communications content.

SuMo blends the technology & best practice content together into a managed service to ensure your success.

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