LIQUID&GRIT

RPG Report

Competitive Research and Actionable Product Recommendations

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OCTOBER

2019

REVENUE DRIVERS

CUSTOMIZABLE IAP BUNDLES

Combination Packages During Challenge Events in *Last Shelter: Survival*

REVENUE ANALYSIS

After the release of the challenge event Mid-Autumn Festival, revenue in *Last Shelter: Survival* was +23% and downloads +28% WoW. During the challenge event Harvest Festival, revenue was +38% WoW. Both events offered customizable IAP bundles.

Last Shelter: Survival

Graph data is iOS U.S. only.

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FEATURE TEARDOWN

Players can customize IAP bundles to assist with event progression. Each bundle offers multiple combinations of boosts, resources, and items.

Details

- Bundles include fixed and customizable components (1).
- Each bundle has a unique menu of combinations (2).
- Combinations include boosts, resources, items, and XP.
- Bundles help players complete event tasks (3).
  - E.g., adding chips to a bundle helps recruit heroes for the Hero Recruitment challenge (4, 5, and video).

Additional Insights

- See the Combination Packages, Mid-Autumn Festival, and Harvest Festival Libraries for more images and videos.
- Players can customize purchase packages in many of *Last Shelter: Survival*'s events, including Sweet Qixi and Child at Heart.
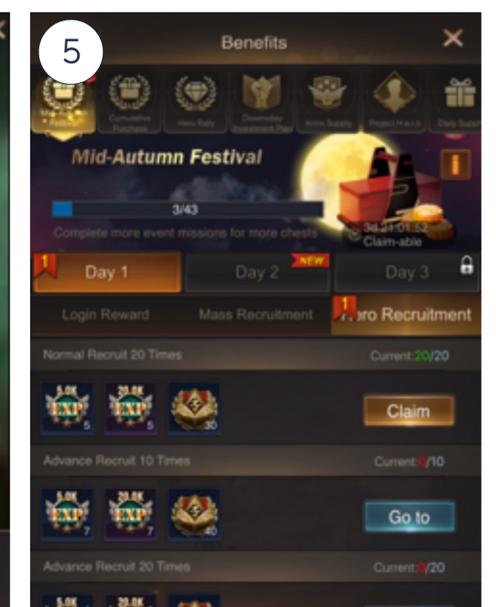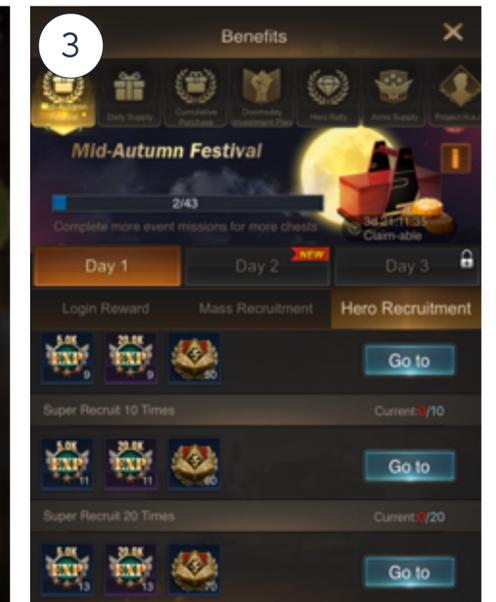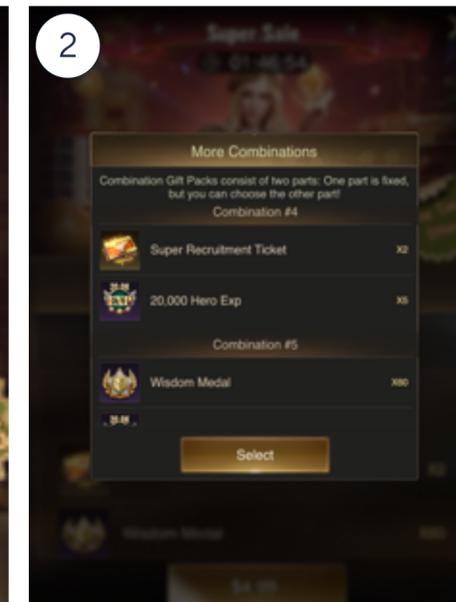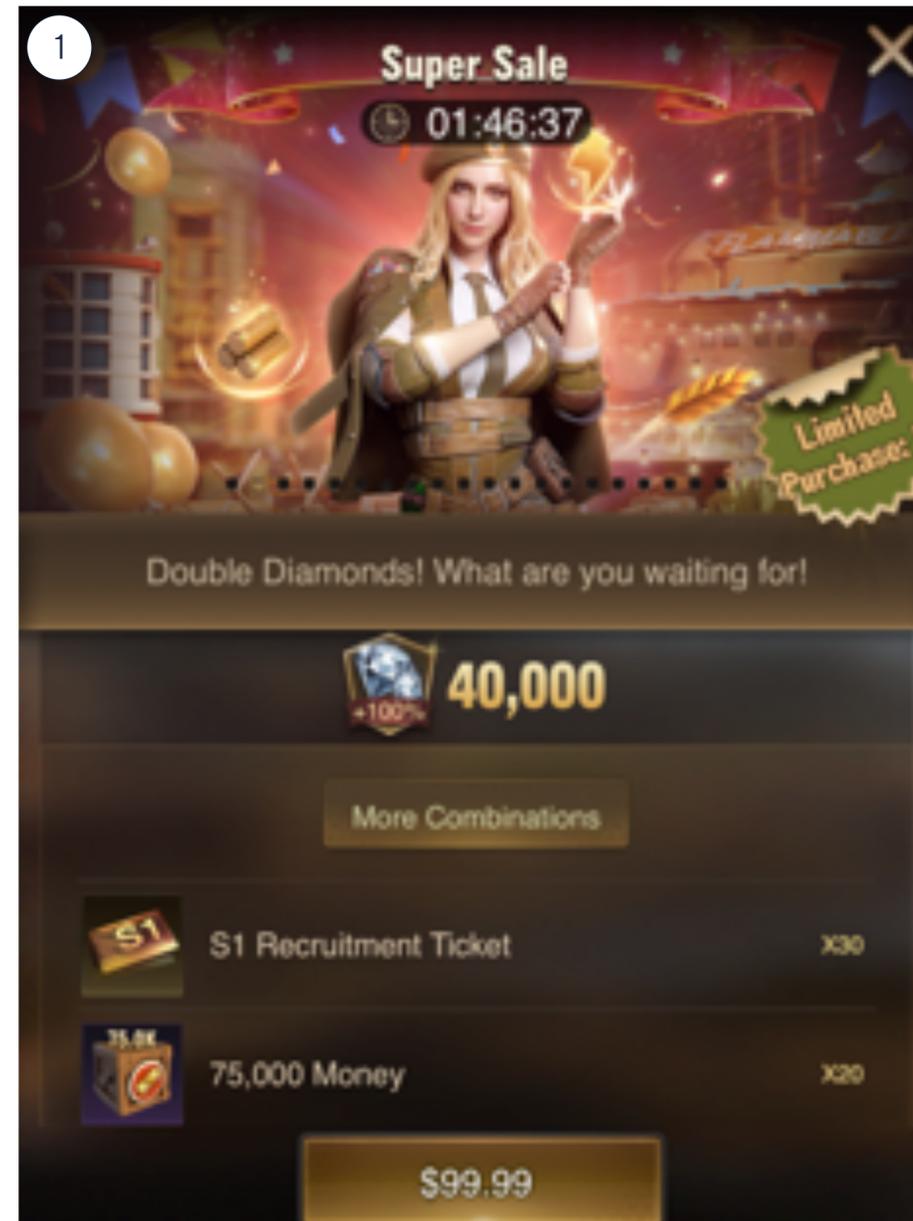
IMPLEMENTATION INSIGHTS

Set customizable purchase bundles at a few lower price points to drive conversions. Then, use post-purchase upsells and mini-games to increase revenue per payer.

Drive Conversions

- **Players expend mental energy customizing the bundles—simplify the final purchase by offering fewer prices.** Bundles with 1–5 price points convert 1.5x better than those with 6–10, according to a 2017 Amazon app store study (source). *Slotomania*'s bank feature offers players a $2.99 price point that increases with each purchase. The $19.99, $5.99, and $11.99 bank feature packages are the fifth, sixth, and tenth top-selling IAPs in *Slotomania* (1).

- **Price bundles within the second-lowest quartile of IAP prices.** Between two low-priced currency packs in *Spellstone*, 77% of players preferred the larger pack ($8 for 10 ShardBots) to the smaller pack ($4 for 5) (source). Test medium-low price points for the best conversion price as player behavior can be counterintuitive.

Increase Revenue per Payer

- **Upsell players with dynamically adjusted prices based on each player's reservation price.** A reservation price is the highest amount a player will spend on a package. If a player's reservation price is *higher* than the package's cost, the post-purchase upsell should be *larger.* Calculate a player's reservation price based on their purchase history.
  - Research found that dynamic upselling increases profits more than dynamic discounting (source).

- **Add a post-purchase mini-game as a temporary event.** In *Slotomania*, players can buy a Lucky Spin that multiplies their purchase value by up to 20x. Lucky Spins at $1.99 and $4.99 rank as the 8th and 9th most-transacted packages in *Slotomania* (2 and video). In *POP! Slots,* revenue was +5% WoW after the first release, and +48% WoW after the second release of Cash Match, a post-purchase pick'em mini-game (Mini-Game Purchase Events Wiki).

Sink Wallets

- **Use a "refresh" store mechanic.** In *Rise of Kingdom'*s Bankrupt the Boutique players can refresh the store five times (see our August 2019 RPG Report). The first time is free and the following four times cost gems. Refreshing the store changes the items and discounts (video).
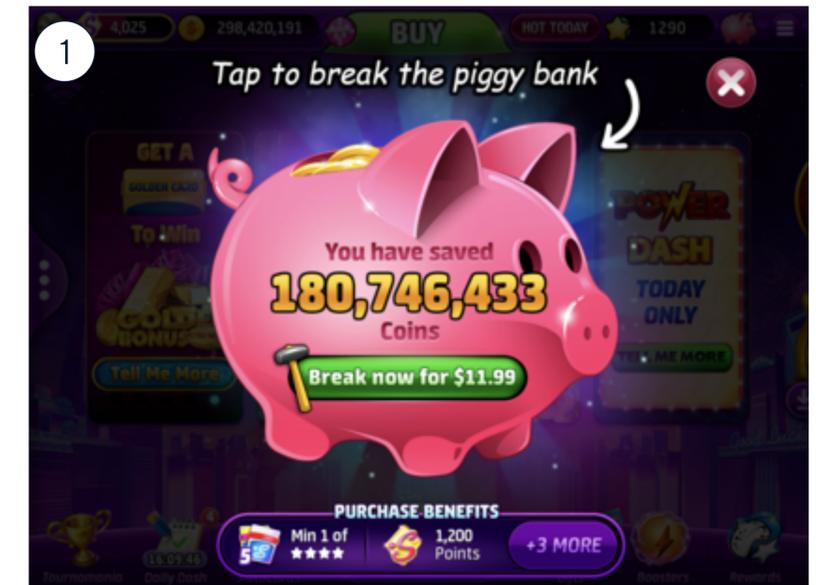
SIEGE EVENTS

Red Guard Raid in *Guns of Glory*

REVENUE ANALYSIS

During two of the more recent releases of the Red Guard Raid event in *Guns of Glory,* revenue was **+4%** WoW (9/17) and **+24% WoW (10/1).**

Guns of Glory

Legend: ■ Revenue — Downloads

Red Guard Raid

Y-axis (left): Revenue per Day — $400K, $300K, $200K, $100K
Y-axis (right): Downloads per Day — 8K, 6K, 4K, 2K
X-axis: 7/22/19, 8/5/19, 8/19/19, 9/2/19, 9/16/19, 9/30/19, 10/14/19
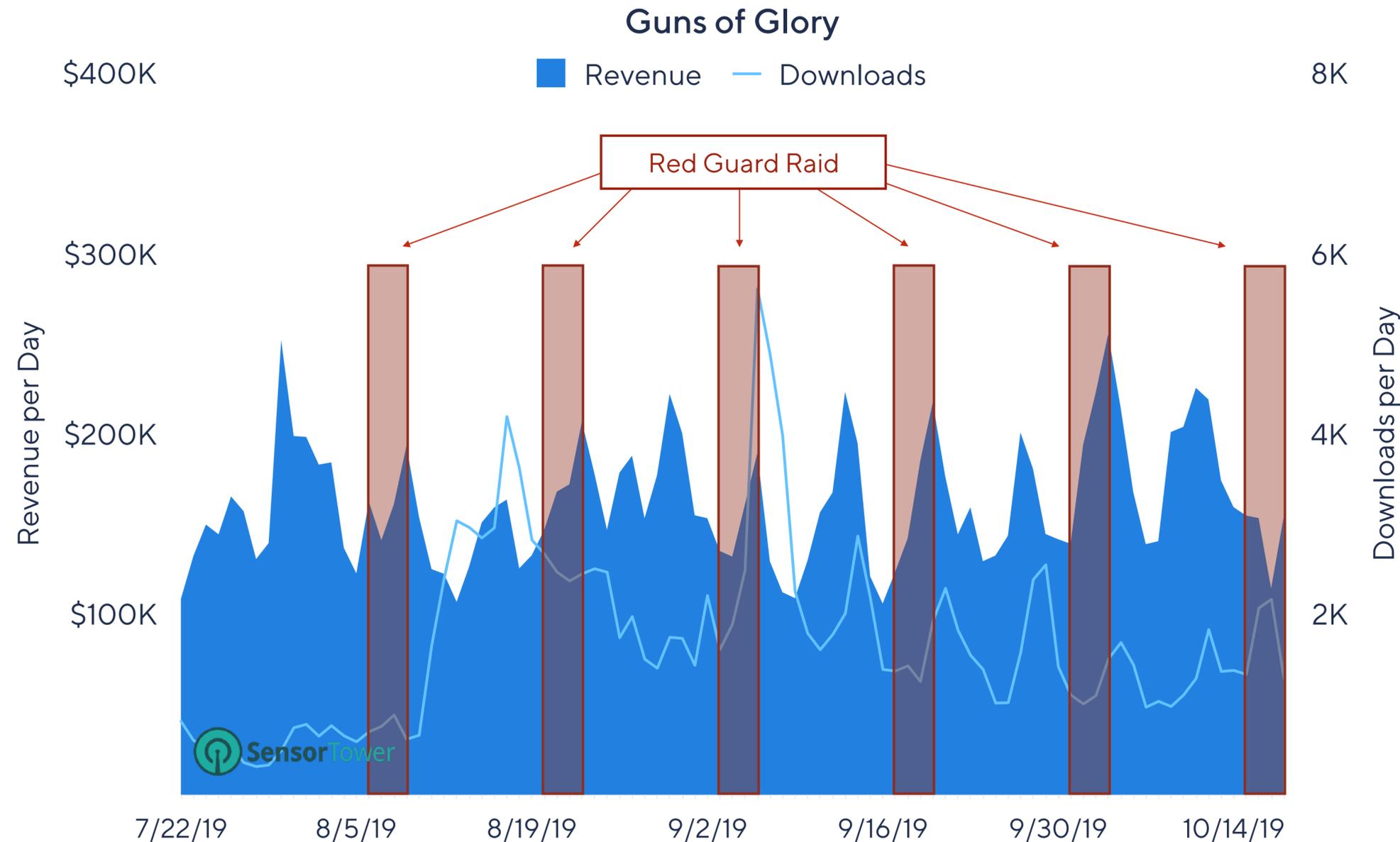
Graph data is iOS U.S. only.

Releases

9/21–10/5: Crown Invasion club event
9/23–10/6: Ultimate Alliance Campaign club event
9/26–10/23: Musketeer's Fort competition event
9/30–10/7: Creation Arena competition event
9/30–10/7: Kingdom Arms Race competition event
9/30–10/13: Blood War club event
10/1–10/7: Festival Celebration collection event
10/1–10/8: Carnival Fever mission event
10/1–10/4: Points Event mission event
10/1–10/8: Castle Event competition event
10/5–10/6: Kingdom Threat competition event
10/5–10/7: Night Siege club event
10/6: One Time Recharge Reward currency event
No IAP rankings changed during this period

Red Guard Raid releases

8/6–8/9	9/17–9/20
8/20–8/23	10/1–10/4
9/3–9/6	10/15–10/18

FEATURE TEARDOWN

Player alliances defend against 20 waves of Red Guard Raids. To successfully defend the raids, players must kill at least 50% of raiders. Raids do not damage player troops.

Details
- Red Guard Raids attack player alliances in 20 waves of increasing difficulty (1).
- Players reinforce alliance members to defend against raids (2).
- Raids deal no damage to player troops, and do not loot player resources.
- Players must kill at least 50% of raiders for a successful defense (3).
- Players earn individual and alliance points for each successful defense (4).
- *Extra difficult* waves occur at levels 7, 10, 14, 17, and 20.
- Players who fail to defend twice are eliminated.
- Eliminated players can still send reinforcements to remaining alliance members.
- The event ends when *all* alliance members are eliminated, or *all* waves are defeated.
- Alliances are rewarded at the end of the event based on the number of points earned (5 and video).

Additional Information
- See the Red Guard Raid Library for more images and videos.

IMPLEMENTATION INSIGHTS

Add VIP levels to recurring events to create longer-lasting revenue impacts. Boost whale engagement by including rewards for alliance *and* individual performance.

Increase Feature Retention

- **Add event-specific VIP levels to events that are frequently re-released.** For regular events like Red Guard Raids in *Guns of Glory,* reward highly-engaged players with additional resources based on event-specific VIP levels. *Bingo Blitz*'s revenue spiked +23% WoW after the launch of Euro Bites, a collection feature that unlocks new ranks as players progress. Each rank offers improved benefits, like increased send limits and bonuses (1 and Collections with VIP Levels Wiki).

Boost Whale Engagement

- **Reward players based on both alliance *and* individual results.** After alliances achieve group awards in *Slotomania*'s SlotoClans, individual players can continue to increase their personal winnings (2). Following the release of SlotoClans and its integration with other features, revenue was +20% 2Wo2W (Club Features Wiki).

Drive Revenue

- **Make certain levels more difficult in mission events.** Spikes in difficulty, like those seen in Red Guard Raids, make level progression more exciting and less predictable, pushing players to purchase boosts. This is similar to *Candy Crush Saga*'s Hard Levels event, which increased revenue by 49% WoW (3 and Hard Levels Event Wiki). Consider adding a streak bonus—a core mechanic in many top-grossing puzzle apps—to award alliances that can complete a certain number of levels in a row without a defeat.

NEW CONTENT

CONTENT RELEASES I

RPG > Content > Abilities, Equipment, Heroes

9/5: Hero Gwyneth — *AFK Arena* hero (1)

9/5: Hero Zolrath — *AFK Arena* hero

9/25: Hero Lorsan — *AFK Arena* hero

9/25: Hero Orthros — *AFK Arena* hero (2)

9/11: Maidens of Love Characters — *Dragon Ball Legends* heroes (3)

9/11: Rising Girls Vol.3 Characters — *Dragon Ball Legends* heroes (4)

9/25: Legends Rising Vol.10 Characters — *Dragon Ball Legends* heroes

9/25: Ultra Space-Time Summon #15 Characters — *Dragon Ball Legends* heroes

9/11: Knights of Avalon New Heroes — *Empires & Puzzles: RPG Quest* heroes (5)

9/4: Roaming Warrior Leo — *Epic Seven* hero (6)

9/25: Bastion of Perlutia — *Epic Seven* equipment

9/25: Hero Lilias — *Epic Seven* hero

9/27: Hero Veteran Gladio — *Final Fantasy XV: A New Empire* hero
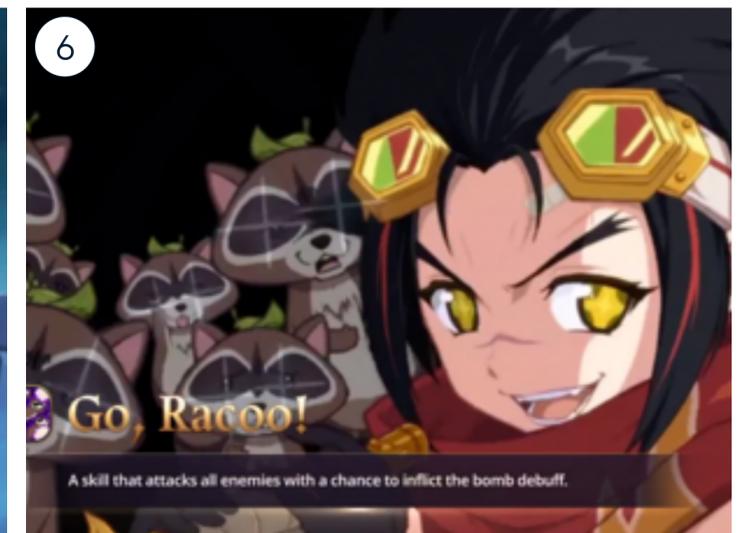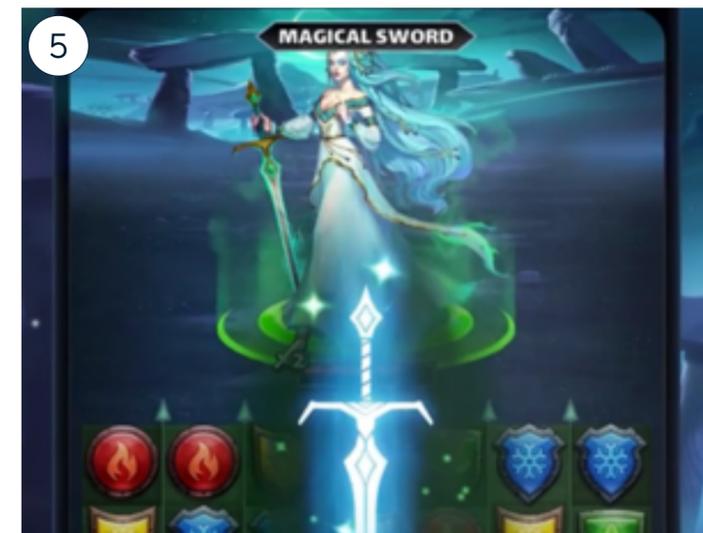
CONTENT RELEASES II

RPG > Content > Abilities, Equipment, Heroes

9/19: Mystery of the Emblem Heroes — *Fire Emblem Heroes* heroes

9/30: Hero Omnicidal Witch — *Fire Emblem Heroes* hero (1)

9/18: Frost Fighter Coat of Arms — *Guns of Glory* equipment (2)

9/9: Hero Aurelius Pendragon — *King of Avalon: Dragon Warfare* hero

9/25: Miraculous Artifacts — *King of Avalon: Dragon Warfare* equipment (3)

9/18: Hero Agent Coulson — *MARVEL Strike Force* hero

9/18: Hero Graviton — *MARVEL Strike Force* hero

9/18: Hero Invisible Woman — *MARVEL Strike Force* hero

9/18: New Dwarves Champions — *Raid: Shadow Legends* heroes (4)

9/14: Fear and True Fear Debuffs — *Raid: Shadow Legends* abilities

9/14: Commander Seondeok — *Rise of Kingdoms* hero (5)

9/18: Ferengi D'Vor Ship — *Star Trek Fleet Command* hero (6)

MARKET WATCH

NOTABLE RELEASES I

App	Library	Description
AFK Arena	**Merchants** currency feature	• This deals page redesign breaks the shop up into four merchant tabs: daily deals, weekly deals, monthly deals, and diamond deals (1).
	Pillage & Plunder club event	• Players build tower defense-like structures to defend their encampments. • Players attack each other's structures and encampments to steal resources (2 and video). • Raiding encampments costs balloon fuel. • Extra balloon fuel can be purchased with diamonds.
	The Celestial Isles mini-game event	• Players complete daily quests to earn celestial keys. • Celestial keys unlock reward squares on an island (3). • Finding the ultimate reward on an island advances players to the next island (video). • Players choose the next ultimate reward at the start of each island.
BLEACH Brave Souls	**Transcendence** accelerator feature	• Characters have five basic stat boost slots and one extra stat boost slot. • Players unlock stat boost slots by increasing characters' special move levels. • Stat boosts can be leveled up by collecting power-up materials.
Fire Emblem Heroes	**Heroes' Path** mission feature	• Players beat challenges to complete missions (4). • Beating all challenges in a mission advances players to the next mission (video). • The game refers to the challenges as "quests", and the missions as "ranks". • Taken together, the missions offer a complete tutorial for the game features.
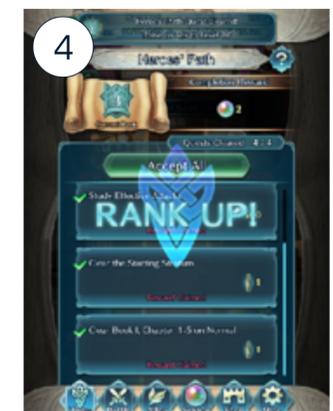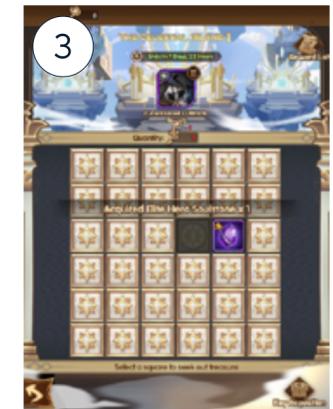
NOTABLE RELEASES II

App	Library	Description
Guns of Glory	WWE Clash of Champions multi-event	• This multi-event includes exclusive IAP bundles, avatars, skins, portraits, daily login bonuses, a pick'em collection mini-game, and two event currencies—medals and Gold Belts. • Players gather resources, hunt beasts, and rally Red Guard camps to collect medals. • Gold Belts are awarded for completing event challenges (1). • Medals and Gold Belts can be spent in the medal shop and champion shop, respectively (2).
King of Avalon: Dragon Warfare	Dragon Growth System leveling feature	• Players earn dragon orbs from events. • Dragon orbs can be spent to evolve dragons. • Evolved dragons have different appearances, attributes, and evolution-specific items (3 and video). • Players can also upgrade or evolve specific dragon skills.
Raid: Shadow Legends	Champion Training Tournament competition event	• Players earn tournament points by leveling, upgrading, or ascending champions. • Champions level up by using XP items or by sacrificing other champions. • Champions rank up by sacrificing champions or chickens of the same rank (video). • Champions ascend by using potions.
	Faction Wars mission feature	• Crypts open in timed intervals (4 and video). • Each crypt is faction-specific and can only be entered by champions of the same faction. • Crypts randomly award glyphs, a new equipment feature.
	Glyphs equipment content	• Glyphs randomly drop from crypt stages. • Players use glyphs to increase equipment stats (video).
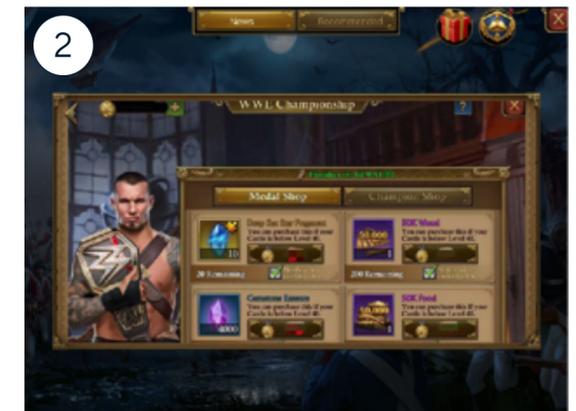
NOTABLE RELEASES III

App	Library	Description
Rise of Kingdoms	**League Bets** rewards feature	• Players bet on weekly league playoff battles (1 and video). • Placed bets can be raised, but not withdrawn. • Losing bettors receive half of their original bets.
	First Anniversary Festival multi-event	• This anniversary multi-event includes daily login bonuses, daily quests, challenges, decorations, and an exclusive theme and portrait (2 and video).
	Race Against Time challenge event	• Players defeat as many barbarian armies as possible within five minutes (3 and video). • Each defeated barbarian army extends the time. • Players can make three attempts per day. • At the end of the event, players are ranked based on their best single run.
Star Wars: Galaxy of Heroes	**Relic Amplifiers** accelerator feature	• Characters gain access to unique relic amplifier items by reaching the highest gear tier. • Upgrading a relic amplifier increases all base stats, plus awards additional increases for characters' primary stats (4 and video). • Players upgrade relics using spare parts from salvaged equipment.

Quickly review all features and events

• Filter the Library Tool by month and year to see all the new releases.

APPENDIX

PREMIUM PARTNERSHIPS

Liquid and Grit partners with these premier market research and analytics companies to infuse our reports with the most relevant and detailed gaming user personas, data, and statistics available.

Quadrant Strategies	Kinrate Analytics	Sensor Tower

Market Research

Quadrant Strategies website

Quadrant Strategies is a market research consultancy that uses research to help the world's most prominent technology, gaming, and entertainment companies develop strategies for building their user base, increasing user engagement and spend, and strengthening their marketing and brand plans.

We do that using a range of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including gamer segmentation and persona development, feature testing, message creation, and loyalty and engagement modeling. The work of our senior leadership goes back many years, and includes long-term engagements for console and gaming-PC hardware-makers, individual games in a range of genres, and across consoles, PCs, and mobile, and for some of the top game franchises.

Player Personas

Kinrate Analytics website

Kinrate Analytics offers game developers, consultants, publishers, and cloud gaming operators the best cross-platform game recommendation engine for targeted marketing, as well as a novel profiling-as-a-service solution for intelligent market segmentation and social networking.

Other services include advanced market prediction analyses for identifying emergent gaming trends and access to unique AI-enhanced data of 140 thousand game titles and 48 million game players.

The products of Kinrate Analytics have been developed in university-led research projects in collaboration of economists, psychologists, game scholars, and data scientists.

Mobile App Store Intelligence

Sensor Tower website

Sensor Tower is relied upon by financial analysts, VCs, and publishers who need to leverage data to identify the fastest growing apps, emerging markets, and more.

Clients harness Sensor Tower's suite of app intelligence tools to...

‣ Evaluate app economies and app vitality
‣ Drive organic growth with the leading App Store Optimization platform
‣ Get the best global download and revenue estimates for the App Store and Google Play
‣ Discover top creatives and better shape user acquisition strategy

"The world of full of exceptional people. The people in the world who do kindness, or search for the truth despite their lives being at risk. The engineers, the teachers, the doctors, and adoptive parents, the scholars and the firemen, and yes, the journalists. People who risk everything for the sake of others and those who simply try to help those whose needed be greater than their own. Those people inspire me, not the other way around."

– Superman

LiquidandGrit.com

Brett.Nowak@LiquidandGrit.com

MECHANICS TAXONOMY

Family	Definitions
Accelerators	Increases the power, impact, or efficiency of play
Banks	Saves a % of spend that can be unlocked later
Bonuses	Free bonuses given to players (e.g., retention or W2E)
Challenges	Players must play, complete, and win
Clubs	A group accomplishing goals or competing with other groups
Collections	A set of items players collect (often for a completion prize)
Competitions	Players competing against other players
Conflict	Players engaging in battle with their characters
Cosmetics	Improvements or updates to the app or a feature
Currencies	Changes to currencies, economies, stores, and items
Custom Design	Options to customize aesthetics
Expansions	Additional rooms, worlds, play modes, VIP lounges, etc.
Flows	Specific flows, like the NUX, ratings, and surveys

Family	Definitions
Hazards	Level elements/blockers that make levels more difficult
Interactions	Any social feature with direct or indirect interaction
Leaderboards	Stand-alone leaderboards
Levels	Anything to do with leveling
Mini-Games	Smaller, shorter games within a game (e.g., scratcher cards)
Missions	A linear set of tasks that players must accomplish
Notices	Feature or product announcements
Other	Miscellaneous features and outliers
Profiles	Related to a player's setup, profile, settings, and controls
Purchases	Anything to do with purchases
Quests	Completing tasks to progress along a map or map-like feature
Rewards	Any reward players receive for engagement or spend (other than the bonuses family)