



LIQUID & GRIT

RPG REPORT

Competitive Research and Actionable Product Recommendations

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NOVEMBER

2019

REVENUE DRIVERS



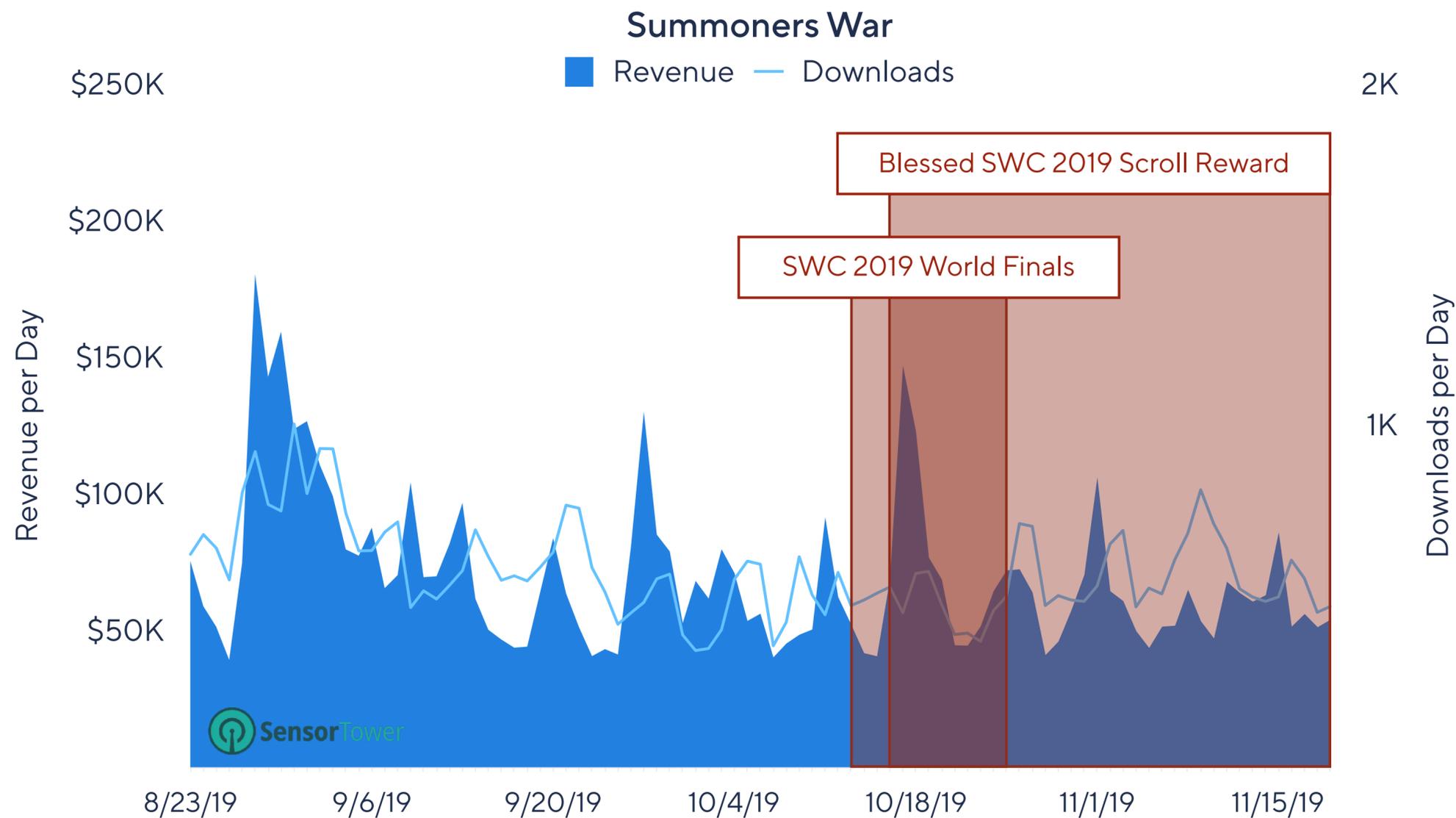
RPG > EVENTS > CHALLENGES

INDIVIDUAL & COLLECTIVE CHALLENGE EVENTS

Blessed SWC Scroll Reward Event in *Summoners War*

REVENUE ANALYSIS

Following the start of the Blessed SWC 2019 Scroll Reward Event, *Summoners War's* revenue was +24% 2Wo2W. During a similar event in 2018, revenue was +20% 2Wo2W (data not shown).



Releases
2019
10/3-11/10: Guild Mission Event club event
10/6-10/20: Ellia's Point Shop challenge event
10/10-10/21: Immemorial Pack purchase event
10/13-10/25: SWC 2019 World Finals Event challenge event
10/16-12/1: Blessed SWC 2019 Scroll Reward challenge event
10/16-12/2: Special Pack purchase event
10/18-10/21: Secret Dungeon rewards event
10/19-10/20: Rift Raid rewards event
<i>No IAP data change during this date range.</i>
2018
9/29-10/14: SWC 2018 Scroll Rewards purchase event
10/12-10/13: SWC 2018 World Finals Streaming challenge event

Graph data is iOS U.S. only.
 WoW is week over week.

FEATURE TEARDOWN

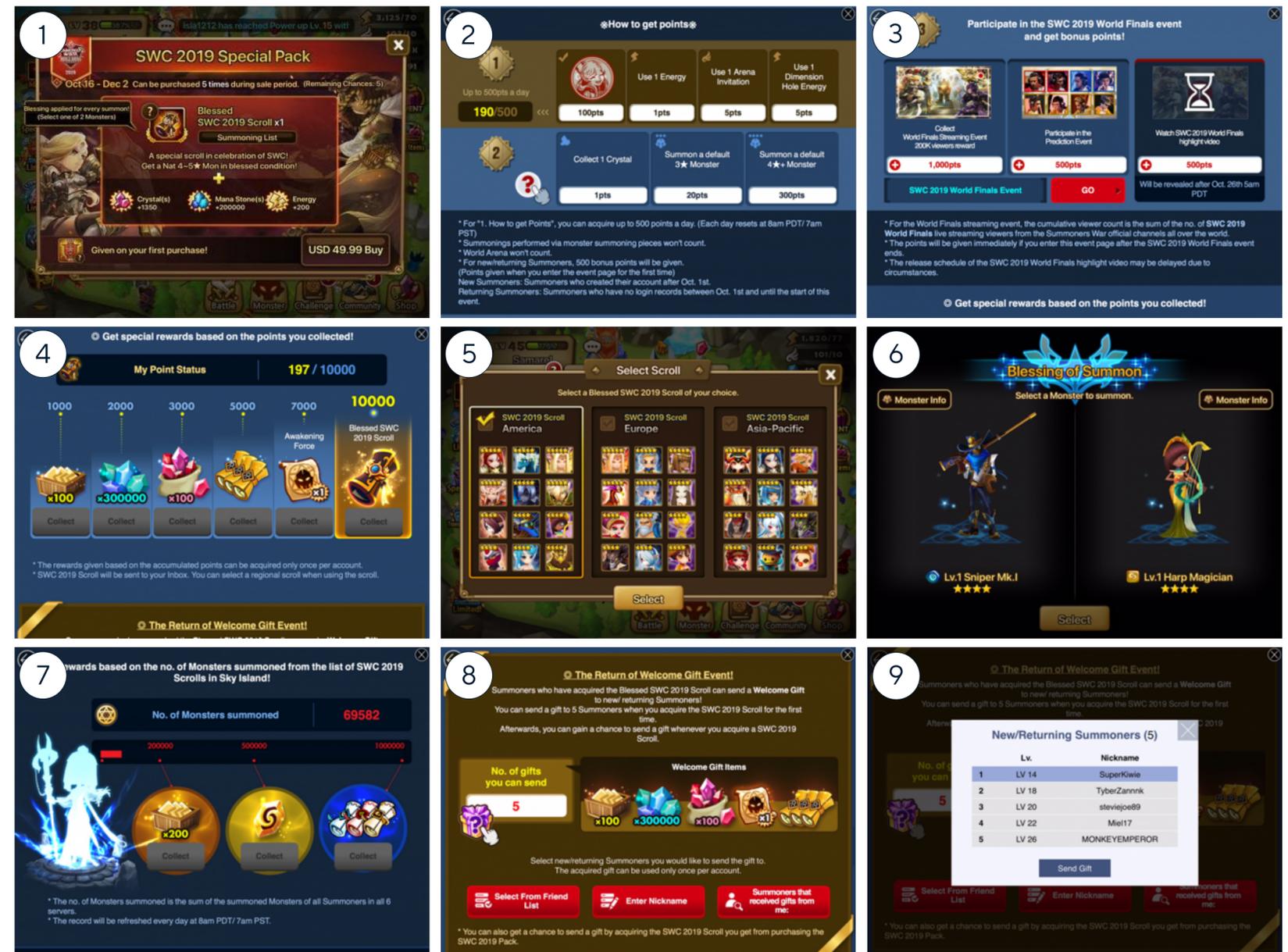
Players complete challenges and make purchases to earn summoning scrolls. Each scroll lets players pick a set of monsters to summon from and offers a choice between two monsters.

Details

- Players fill a points meter, or buy a \$49.99 bundle, to earn scrolls (1).
- The \$49.99 bundle can be purchased up to five times during the event.
- Players earn points by:
 - Completing challenges.
 - Collecting crystals.
 - Summoning monsters (2).
 - Watching and predicting outcomes in the World Finals (3).
- New and returning players receive 500 bonus points for logging in.
- Completing the points meter awards a summoning scroll (4).
- Scrolls allow players to summon two monsters from one of three regions (5 and video).
- Players choose which of the two monsters to keep (6 and video).
- Every summon fills a game-wide reward meter for all players (7).
- Players who have earned a scroll can send gift items to five new or returning players (8 and 9).
- Subsequent scrolls award the ability to send one additional gift.

Additional Information

- See the [Blessed SWC 2019 Scroll Reward Library](#).



PRODUCT INSIGHTS

Make long-term investments in more difficult projects, like esports, that are harder for incumbents to fast follow. Personalize dialogues and IAP offers to increase conversion rates.

Generate Long-Term Value

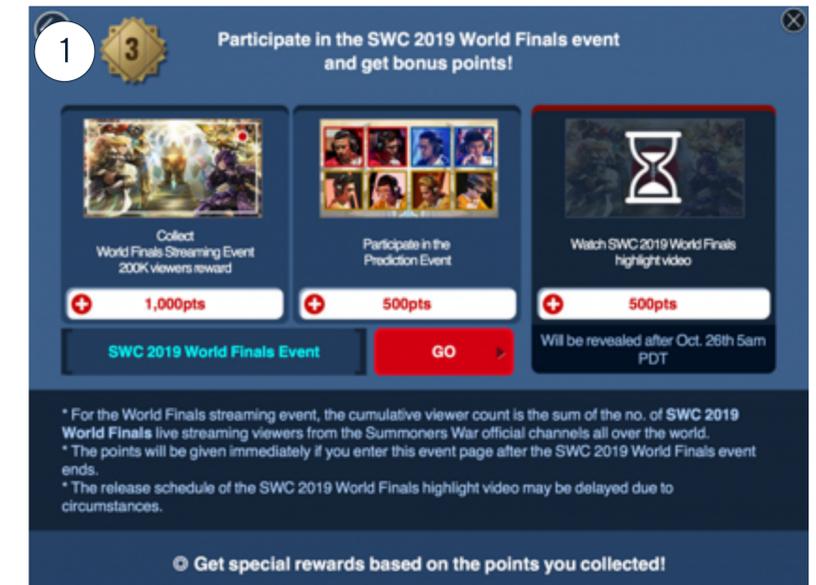
- **Create or increase esports activity.** In *Summoners War's* [Blessed SWC 2019 Scroll Reward](#), players earn points for watching and predicting outcomes in the World Finals (1).
- **When considering larger investments, use expected value models with extended time horizons.** Long-term projects, like cultivating an esports community, often take more time and resources than features or events. To determine a positive ROI, model [expected values](#) for a year or longer.
- **Making bigger investments is a cross-genre trend in top-grossing apps.** More difficult projects allow top-grossing apps to generate long-term value and are harder for competitors to replicate (see [Task Challenge Events Wiki](#) from the Puzzle Report as another example of bigger investments).

Improve Conversion

- **Increase personalization for more in-game dialogues.** In *Summoners War*, the purchase dialogue has a series of attributes that can be tailored to each player: the purchase limit, the price points, the purchase bonus, and the text (2). According to research, conversion rates double between the second and third personalized pageviews and continue to improve with additional personalized pageviews ([Progressing With Personalization](#), p. 7).
- **Let players know that promotions are based on their past interactions.** In a 2015 survey of 2,200 consumers, 79% of those surveyed said they would not engage with promotional offers unless the offers were *directly tied* to their previous interactions ([Consumers to Brands: The Louder You Scream, the Less We Care](#)).

Retain Returning Players

- **Boost retention rates for returning players by offering a bonus that scales with elapsed time since the last play.** Cap time-based rewards at 60 days so as not to incentivize lapsing. This core mechanic in idle games that helps drive the strongest retention numbers of any genre on Kongregate.com ([Idle Games: The Mechanics and Monetization of Self-Playing Games](#), 15:30).



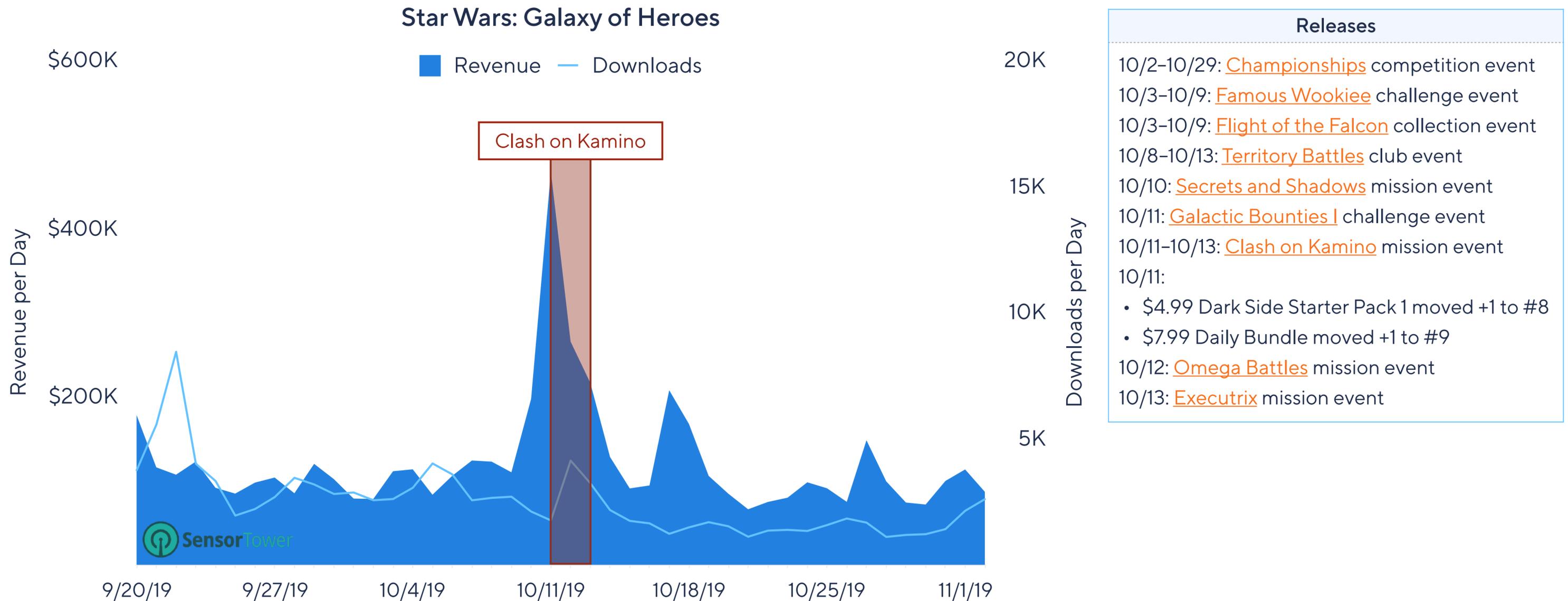
RPG > EVENTS > MISSIONS

HERO SAMPLER MISSION EVENTS

Clash on Kamino in *Star Wars: Galaxy of Heroes*

REVENUE ANALYSIS

After the release of the Clash on Kamino event, revenue was +72% WoW and +40% 2Wo2W in *Star Wars: Galaxy of Heroes*.



Graph data is iOS U.S. only.

FEATURE TEARDOWN

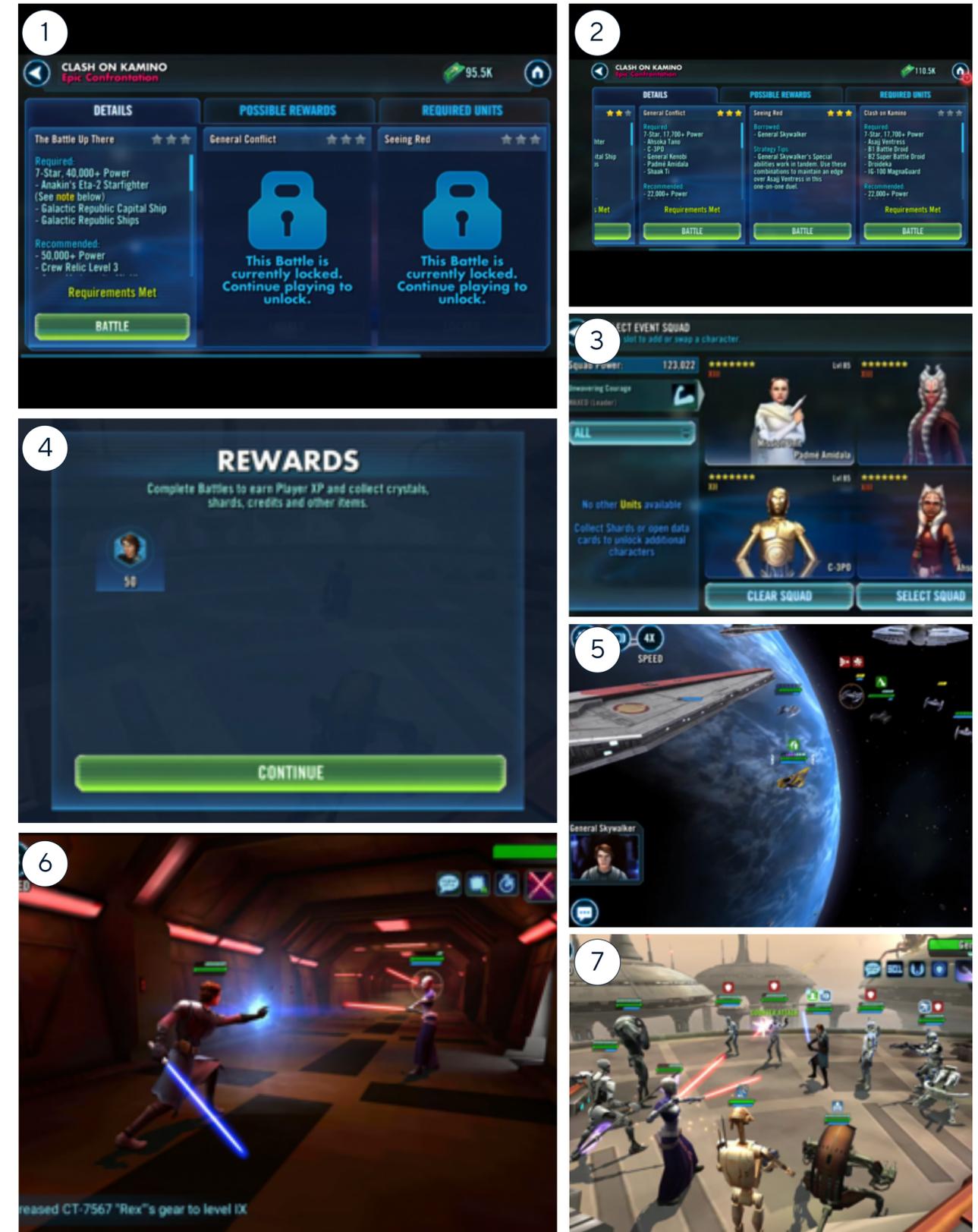
Players complete a series of four battles that each require a different set of heroes or ships. Battles award shards of a new hero, General Skywalker, who players both use *and* fight against during the event.

Details

- Players must complete each battle to unlock the next one (1).
- Each battle requires players to own different heroes or ships (2).
- These heroes make up players' teams during the battles (3).
- Battles award currency, XP, items, and shards of the new General Skywalker hero (4).
- Players must collect shards to unlock General Skywalker.
- The battles take place in space and on the planet (5 and [video](#)).
- In the third battle, players borrow General Skywalker for a one-on-one boss battle (6).
- In the final battle, players switch sides to fight *against* General Skywalker (7 and [video](#)).

Additional Information

- See the [Clash on Kamino](#) Library for more images and videos.



PRODUCT INSIGHTS

Let players borrow and compete against yet-to-be-unlocked heroes to showcase the new heroes' abilities. Create progressions with noticeable difficulty peaks and valleys to reduce churn.

Increase Engagement

- **Let players experience new heroes before unlocking them.** In [Clash on Kamino](#), players use the still-locked hero General Skywalker during the third battle (1). In the next battle, players switch sides to compete *against* General Skywalker. Similarly, *Last Shelter: Survival's* [Champion Duel](#) allowed players to use locked heroes in a game-wide PvP tournament that increased revenue +32% WoW ([App-Wide Tournaments](#) Wiki).
- **Follow up with players after a free-trial event.** A study found that the lifetime value of customers acquired through free trials is 5 times more responsive to direct marketing, and 13 times more responsive to advertising than regular customers ([The Impact of Free-Trial Acquisition on Customer Usage, Retention, and Lifetime Value](#), p. 229).

Reduce Churn

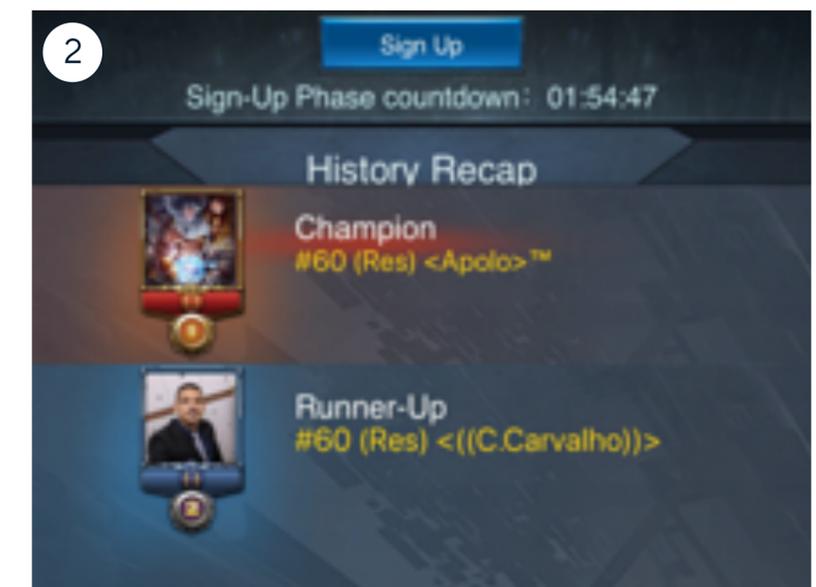
- **Make progressions easier in the middle.** Players' motivation to accomplish a goal is lowest in the middle of the progression ([Stuck in the Middle: The Psychophysics of Goal Pursuit](#)). In *Clash on Kamino*, the third battle automatically unlocks after completing the second battle. The difficulty increases again for the fourth and final battle.

Balance Hero Usage

- **Use character sets as entry thresholds.** This will encourage players to keep wider hero collections, make the event easier to balance, and re-introduce older heroes to players—potentially reinvigorating the game experience.

Increase Revenue

- **Require higher engagement for features that target whales.** *Last Shelter: Survival's* [Champion Duel](#) is made for whales: players must sign up, play the app on specific days, rank in the top 4 for their kingdom, and beat the champions from other kingdoms (2 and [App-Wide Tournaments](#)). These demanding requirements incentivize additional spending from the most valuable players.



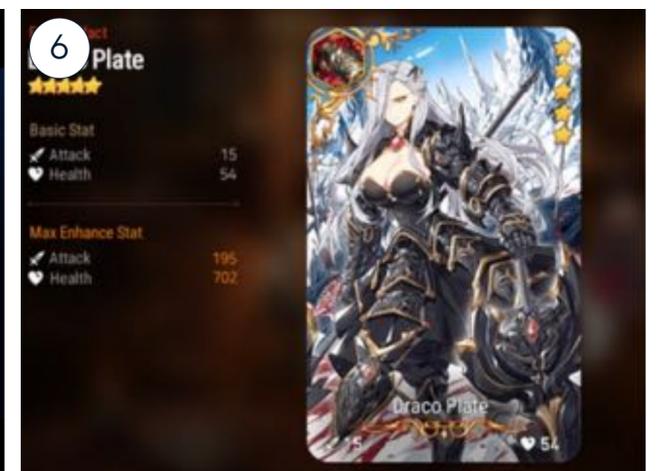
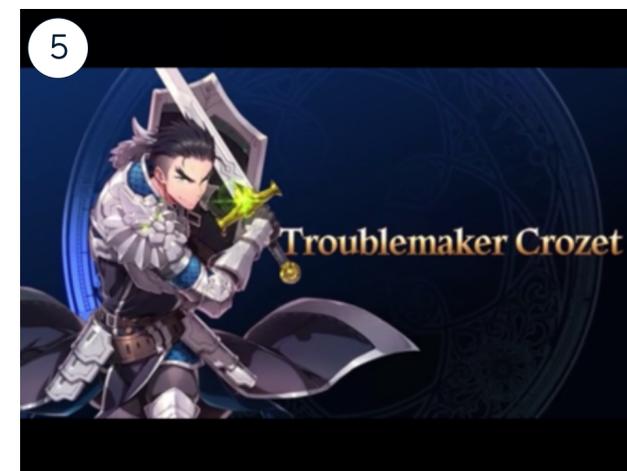
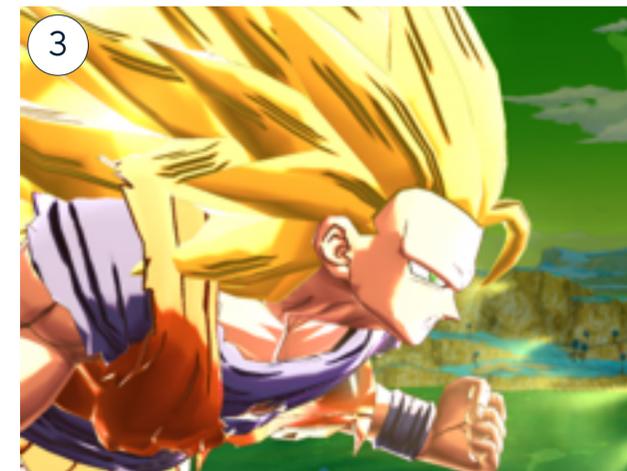
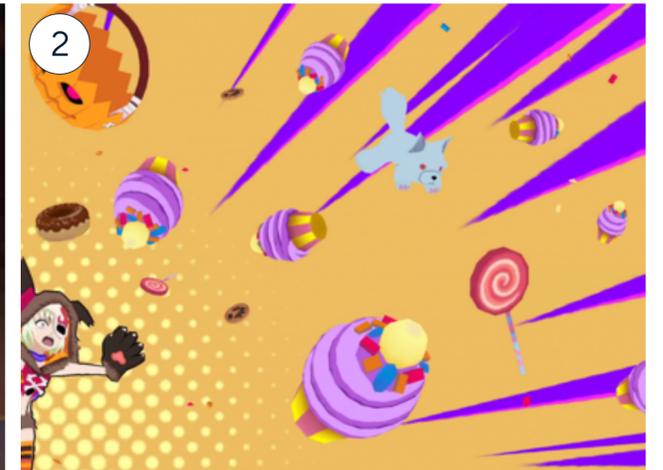
NEW CONTENT



CONTENT RELEASES I

RPG > Content > Abilities, Equipment, and Heroes

- 10/23: [Brewmaster Rigby](#) – AFK Arena hero (1)
10/16: [Halloween Heroes](#) – BLEACH Brave Souls heroes (2)
10/31: [The Spirit Society Characters](#) – BLEACH Brave Souls heroes
10/2: [Ultra Space-Time Summon #16](#) – Dragon Ball Legends heroes
10/9: [Hold on to My Shoulder!](#) – Dragon Ball Legends equipment
10/9: [This is Super Vegito!](#) – Dragon Ball Legends equipment
10/23: [Awakened Time to Send You to Hell! No.1](#) – Dragon Ball Legends equipment
10/23: [Buu: Kid](#) – Dragon Ball Legends equipment
10/23: [Legends Limited Super Saiyan 3 Goku](#) – Dragon Ball Legends hero (3)
10/23: [Please, Lend Me Your Energy! Memory No.1](#) – Dragon Ball Legends equipment
10/23: [Yayayayagh!](#) – Dragon Ball Legends equipment
10/30: [Fused with Kami Piccolo](#) – Dragon Ball Legends hero
10/30: [Goodbye, Everyone](#) – Dragon Ball Legends equipment
10/30: [Nappa \(Young\)](#) – Dragon Ball Legends hero (4)
10/30: [Yaaaah!!](#) – Dragon Ball Legends equipment
10/1: [Cecilia](#) – Epic Seven hero
10/2: [Desert Jewel Basar](#) – Epic Seven hero
10/17: [Five New 3-Star Heroes](#) – Epic Seven heroes
10/31: [Troublemaker Crozet](#) – Epic Seven hero (5)
10/31: [Luna and Draco Plate](#) – Epic Seven hero and equipment (6)



CONTENT RELEASES II

RPG > Content > Abilities, Equipment, and Heroes

- 10/24: [Glacian Gear Set](#) – *Final Fantasy XV: A New Empire* equipment
- 10/25: [Halloween Gems](#) – *Final Fantasy XV: A New Empire* equipment
- 10/26: [Luna](#) – *Final Fantasy XV: A New Empire* hero
- 10/9: [Duo Heroes](#) – *Fire Emblem Heroes* heroes (1)
- 10/9: [Harvest Festival Heroes](#) – *Fire Emblem Heroes* heroes
- 10/10: [Forma](#) – *Fire Emblem Heroes* ability (2)
- 10/21: [Shadows of Valentia Heroes](#) – *Fire Emblem Heroes* heroes
- 10/29: [Legendary Leif](#) – *Fire Emblem Heroes* hero
- 10/9: [Buccaneer Set](#) – *Guns of Glory* equipment (3)
- 10/23: [Death Rate Stat](#) – *King of Avalon: Dragon Warfare* ability
- 10/23: [Scarlet Drake Emblem](#) – *King of Avalon: Dragon Warfare* equipment
- 10/17: [Ghost Rider](#) – *MARVEL Strike Force* hero (4)
- 10/25: [Elsa Bloodstone](#) – *MARVEL Strike Force* hero
- 10/10: [16 New Champions](#) – *Raid: Shadow Legends* heroes
- 10/25: [Harvest Jack](#) – *Raid: Shadow Legends* hero (5)
- 10/28: [All Hallows' Eve Champions](#) – *Raid: Shadow Legends* heroes
- 10/11: [General Skywalker](#) – *Star Wars: Galaxy of Heroes* hero (6)

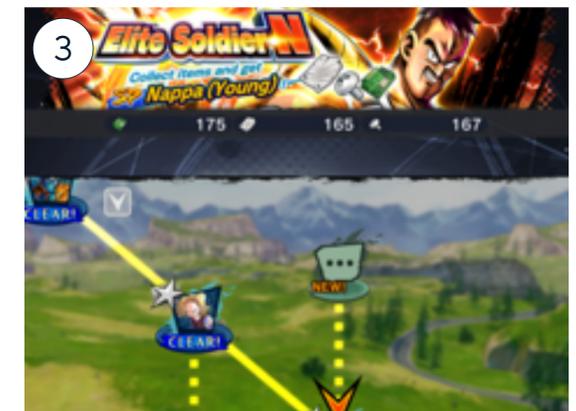
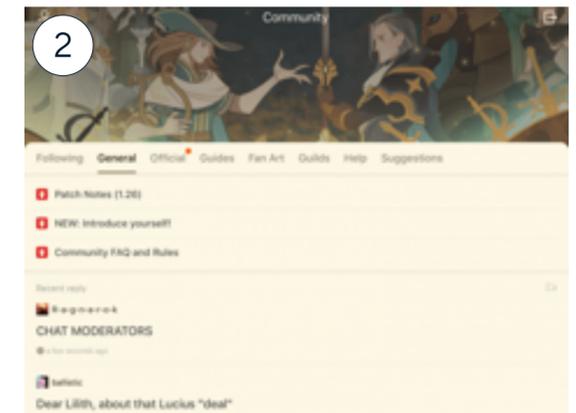
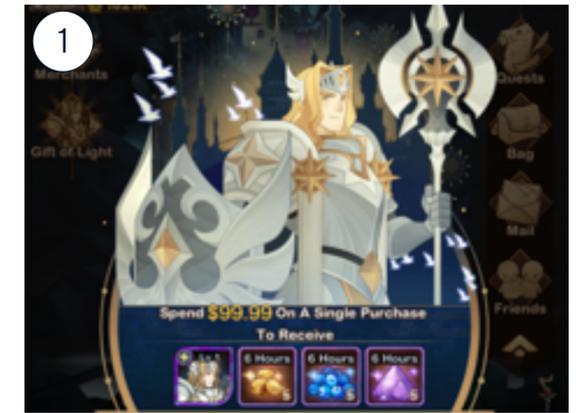


MARKET WATCH



NOTABLE RELEASES I

App	Library	Description
AFK Arena	Gift of Light purchase feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players get a hero and additional boosts for spending \$99.99 on a single purchase (1).
	AFK Community interaction feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This social feature includes seven categories for player and developer discussions: general chat, official announcements, player guides, fan art, guilds, help, and suggestions (2 and video).
Dragon Ball Legends	Elite Soldier N quest event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players progress through a branching map of battle missions to unlock an event-exclusive character (3 and video). Battles award event-exclusive items that can be spent on power-ups and boosts during the event. The event is available to players who have completed a specific chapter of the main story.
Epic Seven	Pets collection feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A tutorial plays when players enter the lobby or pet house after reaching level 20. Players start with 30 pet slots and can purchase additional slots with in-game currency. Pet adoption tickets can be purchased with gold or Skystone. Pets come in two types: lobby pets and battle pets. Lobby pets provide timed gifts and enhance players' boosts for heroes and equipment (video). Battle pets boost battle abilities and improve rewards. Players can upgrade and enhance pets with Tamagotchi-style mechanics like feeding and playing (4). When a pet has reached the maximum level, it can be synthesized with another pet to create a new pet with customizable abilities.



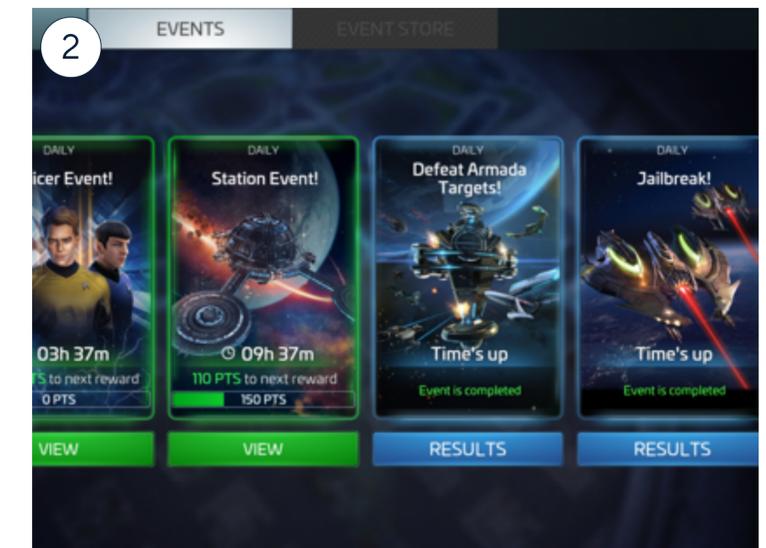
NOTABLE RELEASES II

App	Library	Description
Final Fantasy XV	7 Days of Halloween collection event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players earn Halloween candies, pumpkin trophies, and gems by completing daily events. • Daily events include collections, boss fights, battles, and gauntlets. • Each daily event awards event-specific candies and gems. • Players can collect up to five of each gem for a unique set of boosts in the main game (1). • Candies multiply loot drops for the next daily event. • Pumpkin trophies drop during events and come in three levels. • Pumpkin trophies can be traded in for higher-level pumpkin trophies, candies, or giftable pumpkin trophies. • Level 3 pumpkin trophies can be traded in for gems.
Fire Emblem Heroes	Hall of Forms mission event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players use event-specific copies of heroes for this event. • These copies of heroes do not impact players' heroes outside of the event. • At the end of each battle, players choose from a random selection of weapons and skills to upgrade one hero (2 and video). • Players earn a daily reward for winning a battle. • Players earn larger rewards each time they complete a chamber.
Rise of Kingdoms	Lucerne Scrolls challenge feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players complete weekly and season-long challenges to earn clues. • Clues fill a meter that levels up a scroll. • Scroll levels can also be purchased with gems. • Each scroll level unlocks rewards (video). • Players can unlock a second tier of scroll rewards through store purchases (3).



NOTABLE RELEASES III

App	Library	Description
Rise of Kingdoms	Road to Gallantry challenge event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players investigate haunted graves located throughout the game world to find ghosts (video). • Each ghost triggers a timed quest (1). • Players can only accept one quest at a time. • Completing a quest awards a ghost candy. • Ghost candies can be used to summon an evil witch boss battle. • Players can complete up to 50 ghost quests per day.
Star Trek Fleet Command	Armadas Have Arrived challenge event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players form armadas with alliance members to participate in cooperative PvE events. • An armada control center is required to form an armada. • Armada attacks cost armada directives, a new resource that can be obtained from the alliance store, by upgrading the armada control center, or by completing daily goals. • During the armada launch, players can complete armada mission events (2). • Following the launch, alliances can attack newly released Rare Armada Targets and Epic Armada Targets.
Summoners War	Halloween Candy Event mini-game event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players complete dungeons to collect randomly-dropped candy rewards and advance along a board game (3). • Completing the game board unlocks an event-exclusive building. • Players give candy to friends to earn rewards. • When the event ends, players who have given candy to all their friends can exchange any remaining candy for crystals.



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
<p>Market Research Quadrant Strategies</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Player Personas Kinrate Analytics</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The products of Kinrate Analytics have been developed in university-led research projects in collaboration of economists, psychologists, game scholars, and data scientists.</p>	<p>Mobile App Store Intelligence Sensor Tower</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Clients harness Sensor Tower’s suite of app intelligence tools to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 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.



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)

*“The greatest power on Earth is the magnificent power we all of us possess...
the power of the human brain!”*

– Professor X (Uncanny X-Men #2)

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