GAMING INFORMATION BLOG "IF YOU LIKE GAMES THEN"

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ABSTRACT

This project is a gaming information blog that contains types of interesting news referring to the result of the survey on the news that might interest youth video gamers. Based on the survey, the types of news are games' soundtrack, games technology, and superheroes news. The project is also designed based on copywriting theory to create emotional breakthrough and simple design theory to create a truly-simple gaming information blog. The basic concepts of the blog are simple design, four news articles, and three sets of tone. The four types of news are news about games, games' music, games' technology, and superheroes. These four kinds of news are different from the other similar types of blog that only contains gaming news, as in Gamespot.com and Kotaku.com. The tones are friendly, sincere, and sarcastic tone. The gaming information blog has four pages; they are *You'll Like These Games, You'll Like These News, Release Dates,* and *About Us*. The youth video gamers can access this gaming information blog, search for the four types of news, and comment or discus with other gamers by writing on the comment section of the blog. In other words, youth video gamers can share their ideas or opinions through this gaming information blog. In conclusion, this gaming information blog has differentiation in terms of the types of news. The various types of news in this blog make this blog unique. It also means that the youth gamers only need to access this blog to get more than one kind of news when they access the other similar blogs. Furthermore, this blog can be developed to have its own domain.

Keywords: *gaming information blog, blog features, domain, gaming news*.

The gaming industry is something that has always been growing ever since it was first introduced to the whole world. It is not something that has been dormant for the past 50 years. It has been growing and developing from a tiny business opportunity to a monstrous giant moneymaker. For the 90s' generation, parts or perhaps a huge chunk of people's childhood memories contain video games. This phenomenon is even bigger for today's generation; the reported revenue of worldwide video game market in 2014 alone is 101 billion Dollars; a raise of 8 billion dollars from 2013's results ("Gartner," 2013).

The numbers above show the fact that many people in the world have fallen as victims to the mighty empire of gaming industry. Without exclusion, I also am one of the victims that have been enchanted by the magic of computers' technology. With a great love for gaming and a good knowledge about what is happening in the world of gaming, I am excited to put my passion and share it with fellow gamers via my blog. This way, I can channel my thoughts and opinions about what I love and learn more about what I love from the feedback of gamers around the world. With that thought in mind, I decided to create a gaming information blog as my project to discuss about games and gamers.

Since the rise of World Wide Web, and its easy access for everybody in the world, more than often, gamers would open up multiple websites or sometimes even search blindly about information in the internet to find out information about games and other things that they like. However, it is rather hard to find all the information that is needed in just one website, so they have to really know what they are looking for to finally find the information they want from multiple websites.

This prompt me the idea, "What if all of the information that they want is compiled in one place? Say a blog for example, since a blog works perfectly well in terms of posting daily news and it is easier to make. All the gaming news and gaming discussions can be easily accessed with just a click away." This way, people only need to access this one blog every day to get a dose of wanted information. I also realize that my targeted audience is gamers, and gamers also like many things

other than video games. Three of the most obvious thing that gamers do like other than video games are superheroes, games' soundtrack, and latest gaming technology.

The main group that is aimed by this project is of course gamers, with the age ranging from 20 – 30 years old around the world. Galarneau L. Bigfishgames, (2014) made a survey and the result stated that in the U.S, 68% of gamers are 18 years old or older, and the average age of gamers today is 30 years old. 64% of them work full or part time, which places average gamers in the middle class (2013 Gamers Survey Results: Demographics, Platforms and Smartphone Use, para. 8 & 10). Video games are not cheap and it is a hobby that requires quite an amount of money, thus it is not a surprise that many of this gamers around the world are those that are already working.

The video games that I would like to discuss on my blog are the ones that can be found in consoles, almost all of these are not free to play and cost about $60 per title. The examples of such games are as follow: The Last of Us, Uncharted, Tomb Raider, Devil May Cry, Tekken, Street Fighter, etc. The news that are related to these game types are the main attraction of the blog, however, the blog is not limited to the said type of news only. The blog that I want to build is built by a gamer and also for gamers, this means the blog will not necessarily be limited to video gaming news only; it also contains news related to superheroes news, video games' soundtrack, and gaming technology. I chose these topics because a survey that I did (personal communication, March 25, 2015) stated that 50% of gamers want to read about superheroes news, and 84% of them want games' OST and game tech news inside a gaming information site (A. Darmasaputra, personal communication, April 1, 2015).

I will use these two theories for the project that I am currently working on, which is the theory of copywriting and simple design.

Copywriting is the act of creating a written material for the purpose of advertising or marketing. The written material is meant to persuade someone to buy a product or influence their beliefs. Kover (1995) argues that there are two steps of advertising process: 1) breaking through to attract interest, and 2) delivering a message (p. 599). Kover (1995) also argues that copywriters' theories *depend* on emotional response to the advertising (p. 605). This means that I have to create an emotional breakthrough to the readers in order to send a message via my copywriting. I can do this by knowing how gamers think, what they like, what they want in terms of creating my project's blog.

However just using copywriting plainly will not suffice because a blog is something that will be put up on the internet for everyone to see. Creating a kind of written work offline and online is rather different; publishing a work physically is harder than publishing it virtually. When doing it offline, one would need the back-up of a publisher, which also means they must have an approved skillset so that the publisher will have the confidence to publish their works. However, publishing a work online is much easier, you just need to have an internet connection and an application to write the words down. You can post it anonymously and you can even pretend to be somebody you are not, it will be harder for people to know the truth. This is why it is important that the readers will trust the articles that my blog will have, so that the readers will not think that the articles are posted by just anyone who does not really know what s/he is talking about. I can do this by making the content of my blog just as what the readers will expect; the tone, design, and facilities must fill the requirements that the readers will most likely want.

For the simple design theory, I use Beck's theory with the same name. Beck (1999) stated that a simple design has four rules, 1) runs all the tests 2) has no duplicated logic 3) states every intention important to the programmers 4) has the fewest possible classes and methods (p. 50). These four rules can be elaborated quite simply. The first rule, which gives you the suggestion to run all the tests means that to know whether a design is simple enough, one must test it directly and personally. Once it is done, the second rule can be applied by taking off things out from the design that does not necessarily crucial. This can be done by choosing things that when they are taken out from the context, the message that was originally implied is not changed. The third rule suggests that every message that are delivered, must be delivered in a clear manner, in a way that a reader will most unlikely to misunderstand. The fourth rule suggests that there should not be many classification or categories, because having too many of divisions will make it rather confusing for first time user.

The blog will use 3 tones in total: friendly tone, sincere, and sarcastic. The word friendly means treating somebody as a friend (Oxforddictionaries.com). Words that are associated with this tone can be quite vary, as vary as how a friend calls another friend. For example, "guys", "lad", friends, etc. It is also possible to use a soft insult as a slight nudge to the readers, just like what friends say to each other, for example; "slacker" or "sluggard" and many others. The usage of informal words to refer to the readers and the writers themselves is also possible. A typical blog owned by people who are blogging just to express their thoughts and daily life for fun often uses this tone.

How I implement this tone to the blog, specifically on the articles is to write and refer to the readers informally. Addressing the readers as "guys" or "fellas" is a good way to communicate the friendly atmosphere of the blog. A soft mockery will be used as a joke when referring to the readers is expected as well. This tone will be the main tone of the blog. The sincere and sarcastic tone will be used only once in a while.

Sincere is defined as free from pretence or deceit; proceeding from genuine feelings (Oxforddictionary.com). The interview I did also reinforce this theme, because according to the interviewee, a good article must be honest and not corrupted by a third party. An easy way to understand what this means is to pay attention to how a sports commentator speaks. Since they are paid to verbally describe everything that is happening on the field, they can only speak the truth, no matter how ugly the truth is. This is the goal to achieve for the blog in using this tone.

I can show this sincerity and honesty by explicitly express the wariness concerning a specific game. If the game does sound good but has a small uncertainty regarding one of its aspect, then it will be expressed in the article.

The definition of "sarcastic" is marked by or given to using irony in order to mock or convey contempt (Oxforddictionary.com). Any words can be used in a sarcastic tone. Even the most kindest and beautiful words can be used in such a way to make them feel sarcastic. Usually they are used when something is not as what the words describe, most of the time they could be the exact opposite of what the words describe; and that is when they feel sarcastic. 9gag.com is a popular example that uses many sarcasm to attract readers.

By giving a witty or funny comments after facts, I believe it can serve as a reliever for the readers after reading only statements. This is how I am going to use the sarcastic tone to the articles.

The summary of what have been decided is as follows: The design of the blog will be simple and easy to use, the tones are friendly, sincere, and sarcastic, and the posts will be divided to four topics; news about games, news about gaming technology, news about games' music, and news about superheroes.

Based on the concept that I have explained above, as well as with the theories that I will use for the project, below is the overview and explanation of what the blog is like.

The blog name is *If You Like Games Then*, it contains 4 pages in total; *You'll Like These Games, You'll Like These News, Release Dates,* and *About Us*. *If You Like Games Then* is chosen as the name of the site because it perfectly communicates to the people who access it that it is about games. It also has the illusion that it is more than just that, because the word "then" opens the doors to many options.

For the homepage of the blog, it is the *You'll Like These Games* page.
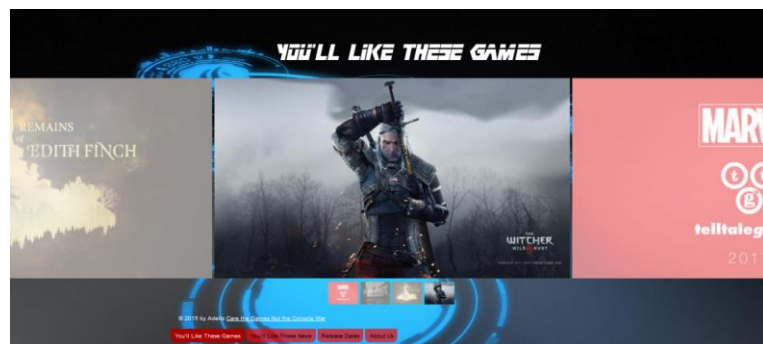
Picture 1. *You'll Like These Games* Page

I chose this phrase for the name of the homepage because this represents what the page is all about. The page is showing the hottest games that are not yet released, but the ones that every gamer is talking about. The name *You'll Like These Games* is a rather informal way of naming a page, however it had to be done because it will fit the tone of friendliness

This is the first page of the blog. It is the page in which people will be automatically directed to when they entered the name of my blog to their search bar. Inside this page, there are only hyperlinks to access other pages inside the blog and a strip showcase; pictures of upcoming big games that gamers are talking about at the moment. To access other pages in the site, there are hyperlinks on the bottom part of the first page that direct the readers to other page in accordance to what the readers have chosen. The hyperlinks are put on the bottom of the page for the purpose of not distracting the focus of readers toward the offered visuals and to highlight the simple-ness of the design.

The second page of the blog is the *You'll Like These News* page.


Picture 2. *You'll Like These News* Page

The name of this page is following the theme of *if-you-like* on the blog, which can be seen by the name of the blog, name of the homepage, and name of this page dedicated for news posting. Similar to a certain degree compared to the *You'll Like These Games* page in the way that the name is created to have a friendly tone when the readers read it. To declare to the readers that you should know these news and that you will like these news. The hope is so that it will feel like a fellow gamer who also enjoy the same things as they do are giving them the latest news about video games.

On the page of *You'll Like These News*, all of the news that are offered can be easily accessed just by scrolling down the page. When the readers reach the end of the loaded post at the bottom, it will automatically load older posts. Each post, especially the long ones, has a "read more" option below the paragraphs for readers to open in order to view the post completely. Without clicking on the "read more" option, only half or a quarter of the post can be read. This "read more" box exist because if all of the posts are fully visible, it will take quite an amount of time to scroll down and find many news. By shortening the news, it will allow readers to see more news in just a brief moment and not let readers waste time on scrolling down the page to pass the news that they do not wish to read. On the right side of the page, there is a featured post, recent post, and tags to make things easier for readers. The hyperlinks to other pages are in the top right corner of the page, because it is easier for readers to find rather than putting them on the bottom of the page.

The third page is titled *Release Dates* which does not follow the theme of the previous names.
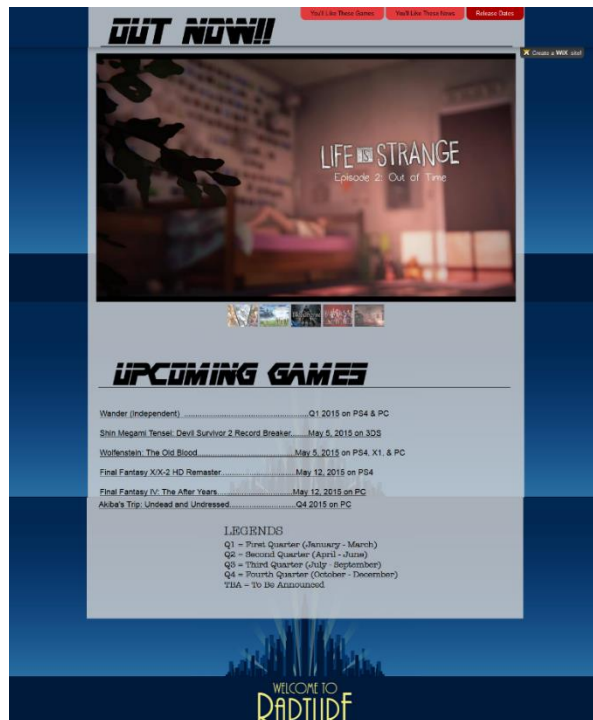
Picture 3. *Release Dates* Page

The name of this page is rather simple compared to the previous two pages. However, it still serves the same purpose quite finely. I have explained that according to Beck (1999), a good simple design has four rules, and one of the four rules is to have clarity (p. 50). By stating it as what it is, a page dedicated for a list of release dates, it conveys the message perfectly. If it is changed following the theme of *if-you-like* like the first and second page, it will be too long to be an effective name. I also want to give more focus on the first and second pages because the first is an introductory and the second hosts the main content of the blog; the news.

On this page, list of many titles' release dates are available to be seen simply by scrolling down the page. Above the list is a strip showcase, consisting of the already released games' images. If the cursor is moved to the image on the strip showcase, the bottom part of the image will show information about the game; the region and platform it is released on. To find out about the not yet released games, readers can easily use *ctrl + f* and type in the title of the game that they want to find out. If the title on the list is clicked, it will redirect the readers to the game's trailer on Youtube.com. This is made this way in order to ease the readers in getting a picture of what the game is about. Hyperlinks to other pages are also prepared in this page on the top right corner of the page.

The last page of the blog is the *About Us* page, which consists of the hopes and expectations of the blog in general.
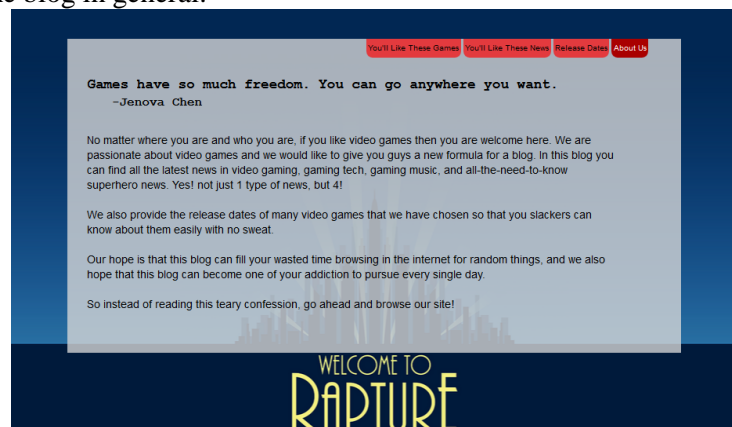
Picture 3.4. *About Us* Page

The name of this page does not have the theme of *If You Like* because it does not contain any main content of the website. This page purpose is only to deliver the message of what the goal

and hope of the site are. It is important for the readers not to lose focus on the main content of the first two pages.

For the articles that are contained in the blog, as what has been explained, the tones that will be used are friendly tone, sincere, and sarcastic. In the article, after every fact about the game, there will be a little comment sentences about what the writer think about it. It can be used for making a statement that can simplify the fact in order for the readers getting a clearer picture. This serves the purpose of establishing a personality and helping the readers at the same time. Using the article above as an example, after the description of what the story of the game and the setting of the game is like, the writer explained that "it has the vibe of exploration of a ruined civilization, like in the Last of Us, but without the zombies and guns" ("lunarride.wix.com", 2015).

The writing style is very much like a conversation between one person and his/her group of friends. As can be seen by the referring to the readers as "guys" or "brave warriors". A very informal way of speaking among friends, as can be seen with the sentence; "Guys, you have to admit, it's quite a great way to spend free-time in a world scientists keep telling us going to happen in the future" ("lunarride.wix.com", 2015).

The sentences that the writer can add in the paragraphs for expressing their opinions can also be sincere. As a gamer who are also waiting the game and anxious about whether the game will be good or not, whether it is worth the money to buy. For example, the second paragraph of the article above, stated that gamers should "keep in mind that the basic game will focus on exploration with a character that cannot die. As far as we know, we gamers can only sight-seeing, gather some supplies, and ride a boat. I sure hope that's enough for us..." (lunarride.wix.com", 2015)

Since the game is about exploration, and probably that is the only focus, it is understandable that gamers should feel rather unconfident that the game can provide a good amount of fun things to do. This is how the sincerity is put on the blog. If there is a flaw, no matter how small or big, it must be reported.

It can also serve as an ice breaker to give a lighter atmosphere for the readers to enjoy. A few funny comments can become a positive energy and in fact can also serve for giving personality to the articles. As can be seen in the sentence, "I sure hope the music won't make me feel tense and creeped out for what's under my boat...Sharks...I hate sharks" ("lunarride.wix.com", 2015).

The last paragraph will be fully dedicated for the writer's opinions about all of the stated facts. Whether the game looks good or whether it is worth to buy for, etc. Its uniqueness, its expectations, all of these speculations of the writer can be put here. The readers can debate about these with the others in the comment section.

Conclusion

There are several important things to notice relating to the creation of this project. The contents and features of the gaming information blog are chosen in accordance to what the target audience wants and needs. It is created with the hope of improving the community, to make gamers see things more critically. It also serves as something fresh for gamers because of the variety that this gaming information blog offers. What the target audience wants and needs is very crucial in the creation of the blog. Therefore, the contents of the *If You Like Games Then* blog are based on what the target audience wants and adjusted to their needs. This is made possible by the use of survey and interview directed to the target market. The contents of this gaming information blog make gamers be able to find a good number of various types of information in one blog only. The four topic articles are available for youth video gamers to read and discuss. The page of release dates is also easily accessible for them to browse the information they need. Although the concept and the creation of the blog have been done, the blog is not yet at the stage of completion. There will be more improvements, in terms of the contents, features, and home address for the blog. The contents can be further completed in accordance to the latest news every day, and the features can be added in the future to help users access the content of the blog. In terms of the domain, at the moment, the blog is under the domain of wix.com. The possible action of this blog in the future is to buy its own domain with its own name on the address in order to have an independent domain. The blog is also armed with a unique attribute to differentiate the blog from others similar sites that only offers one type of news, such as gamespot.com. Having more various topics explored, an easy-to-use simple

design, and many features to help gamers on the blog, this blog can become a valuable blog that youth video gamers access every day.

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