

**The  
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Challenge #2**

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**Discussions on game Marketing**

## **Box:**

The front of the box serves two purposes. Firstly it allows for consumers who know about the game to find it in the store. Secondly it allows for consumers who are just perusing to pick up the game and consider it. For such reasons, the game should be easy to find and attractive enough to allow for someone to want to pick it up. The Logo should be contrasting compared to the rest of the image so it stands out. If the game is part of a series, then the logo should have some resemblance to previous games in series. Many stores have shelves where one game will be in front of the other. The back game has approximately half of the box visible. If the logo is positioned on the bottom half of the box, then that potential exposure is lost. Some logos are vertical; it's an interesting concept and separates the game from others. Yet it faces the same fate by potentially missing out on the exposure. The overall image of the cover should be representative of the game, or at least its setting. Character based games tend to have the prominent character on the cover; which is fine too.

The back cover of the box should contain three items. A back-story or setting for the game, if the game has a story, select features, and screenshots. The back-story can be something very simple. It just needs to present the player with an idea of what he will be doing and what type of game it is. The "who when what where why how" idea. The features are present to separate this game from the others, so they should be different from other games of the same type. Screenshots should display the type of game (FPS, racing, etc.), portray the feel of the game, and adequately represent the graphics during game-play. Not from cut-scenes or replay videos or trailers.

## **Game:**

I think it's obvious to say that good games sell, but many low rated games sell; mostly the ones who are based on series or high profile licenses like blockbuster movies. Rating given to games by websites is important, yet not all gamers base themselves on that alone. Some games are even released prior to being rated. Word of mouth is an extremely important factor. Players recognise friends choices as being like theirs or not and will make a decision based on that knowledge. From my analysing, the most popular games are sequels or games in series, but games that really break the mould also tend to have strong sales. Games like Nintendogs, God of war, etc.

## **Promotion:**

There are standard promotions that essentially every game follows. Ads in Magazines are the biggest one. If there is only one promotion spending, then magazines is the way to go. Next is the typical newsletter which in our day and age is always used. Also there are website ads. The biggest gaming websites often have permanent ad locations on their pages for game promotion. At least one trailer should be available on official websites. Trailer should have some game-play footage, not just cut-scenes. Above that there should be some game-play videos displaying new features. The Electronic Entertainment Expo is the biggest game convention in the world. A developer is guaranteed attention no matter

how small when attending. This provides news and possibility for interviews on the show floor as well as movies and hands-on for reviewers. TV ads, I believe, are not all that important. The games is aware of the games he is interested in by various means, a TV ad doesn't sway him to make a purchase. The utility of TV ads, especially around the Christmas season, is to provide ideas to people purchasing gifts for other people. If you're buying something for yourself, a TV ad doesn't affect your purchasing decisions much. Pre-order bonuses are interesting. They provide one more reason for the person who was interested in the game to ensure his purchase instead of picking up a used copy. Some larger pre-order bonuses can entice players who were not considering the game to pick it up for that special bonus. Demos are not always used and sometimes complicated to do depending on the system. A demo as a pre-order bonus is useless, but in a magazine it takes much more importance; Even better if you can pick it up with any purchase in store. A demo should be representative of game-play in the game and represent a mostly completed game. Bugs in demos are as unacceptable as in full blown games.

### **Coverage:**

In some ways this is out of the developer's hands. However, there are certain things the developer can do to help the situation. Firstly providing progress reports for review is very useful for the reviewers to provide hands-on and updates on the game. Being available for interviews and comments during events or any other time is also crucial to get that little extra bit of information out. Providing reviewers with images and videos is another great way to get the games out there and provide players with a feel of what the game will be like.

### **Other:**

A sequel to a good game sells. Said sequel doesn't always end up being on par with its previous iteration, but because of the success of the prior game it will still sell. Long standing franchises also sell. The biggest sellers still stand as sports games. Year after year of games with few new features, but mainly a roster update always take the top selling spots. However competition is stiff in that department and EA usually takes the crown. Games with recognizable characters (because of a previous top seller) usually do well also, so one can expect God of War to make good next year if a new game gets released. Games based on licenses are other very popular titles; mostly ones based on blockbuster movies, or long standing licenses. Generally speaking, Price does not affect game purchases very much except for that 2K games and EA sports, when 2K was releasing games at half the price EA was to take some market share.