

# Treasure Hunt Project Social Media Proposal

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*How we plan to gather an audience for our game.*

*Due date: TBD*

## Treasure Hunt Project: Social Media Proposal

I have no idea how we're going to work out a marketing plan for our game but I figure we'd give it a shot and make time for it. These are initial thoughts to consider. But the meat and potatoes of this plan is really the 12 week outline. Even as a first draft I feel it could be really meaningful to the overall plan of how we're going to share our game as well as intentions for the audience.



## The Basics

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**Name:** Treasure Hunt Game (Pending)

**Release Date:** TDB (soft release, asap)

**Genre:** Simulation

**Platform:** HTML 5 | MacOS | PC | Nintendo Switch

**Price:** \$ 14.99 (maybe)

**Summary:** Collect random treasure for money using a metal detector at Fortune Park. Sell items, get more merchandise, go out and get as much treasure as possible, get lucky!

## Initial Thoughts

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- We need a name.
  - The process of coming up with one can be part of our social media share
  - We need to look up on Google what to do, what options we have, and reduce it to the top 4 to 6.
- We should record video
  - Saving it in some folder would help
  - Thinking of a 12 week plan, we should accrue what we share and come up with some guidelines
    - We can add the bug # at the bottom of the screen
    - We can include the game's temp logo
- We need a logo
  - The good news is we can generate this using iPage
  - Similar to Task Tracker, we can create a dozen and eventually narrow it down to votes
- We should debate whether or not marketing is part of the same project list or its own.
  - Technically we won't be publishing any code with this
  - We can always switch back when the time comes.
- Itch.io submission
  - This is critical for our success
  - We need feedback
  - It's important to connect Facebook group chats such as the IGD to itch each time we post.
  - We need to take our time with design and layout
  - Feedback and iteration should be our priority

## Unique considerations

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Treasure Hunt is more of an experiment than anything. It's hard to gauge how far it will go and if we'll end up taking it to a full game production. If it builds momentum faster or greater than expected we could end up making this our first, true, shippable game and make Star Kingdom the one we hold out as our second release (technically third).

## General Concept

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### Who

- We're aiming for indies at the moment
- We also need early testers and feedback from Facebook groups

### What

- Our itch.io page
- Any graphic design and UI updates for sure
- Tech upgrades and new ideas
- Videos
- Screenshots
- (optional) Task Tracker link to our to do list

### When

- When we'll start marketing is a great question:
  - Option 1 - start right away with video or whatever image we have along with an announcement
  - Option 2 - Outline a 12 week plan we can stick to along with a start date
  - Option 3 - Start with the seasons and begin releasing material with folder ready content starting Dec 21 which is technically what we could call "Winter Marketing",
- We need to consider a lead-in. To do that, we might first need to create an outline and get a bigger picture view.

### Where

- Our primary target audience for sharing might as well be itch.io
- We can also include IGD on Facebook
- We can consider our Unity Developers Group since we moderate but we need to be mindful of the 3-Day rule gap compared to IGD.
  - Facebook recommends sharing 4 times a week

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- IGD will create a discrepancy for us that needs to be considered.
- Reddit: I'm not usually a fan nor do I engage but after reading more information about how to connect, I realize it may actually be the place most compatible with how we are if we do a good job, write a great article, and figure out the best content for it. It's possible this won't matter as much until around week 3 or 4.
  - This forum is really for the thinker, if there's an academically compelling reason to share, we should.
  - To make it work, we need to find the right subreddit to fit the audience who would most appreciate both our dev journey and the type of game we're making.
  - It's possible we need to hunt for anyone or anything making similar content to our own.
  - Itch.io may help us prep for this, again, this option might be best for week 3 or 4

### Why

- We need to develop an audience
  - We need it for Monarch Games
  - It's necessary to build momentum for Task Tracker
  - Eventually we'll take what we've learned from this project to share Star Kingdom which is further along but in dire need of a major thought process
- We need testers. We learned the hard way just because we have something working or completed doesn't mean we can count on friends and family to help support us. Not everyone is a fan of early adoption and this is normal as well as to be expected
- We're learning and iterating to match our content with our target audience. Feedback iteration is huge and it's nice when design decisions are partly owned by the audience members who supported the project early on.

### How

- One strategy we can implement is a lot of voting for major choices so developers eventually feel a sense of ownership they had a hand in creating what we made. This may also be a hit in Unity Developers

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- With an outline, we'll have a powerful approach in terms of following a 12 week schedule to the best of our ability.
- We need to consider our company email, username, or company name as a universal account for all social media promoting the game
  - We can use Gabearts
  - We can try Monarchgames on Insta and others
  - We can consider giving the project it's own account page for all media

### Cool Ideas

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There are a couple of things I believe I'll enjoy making that may create really great buzz and traction, especially if done right. It's by no means a full list but a good starting point. Consider the following:

- Showing design process for logo, site, etc.
- Creating or iterating on the main metal detector guy
- Get a vote on the name
- Get a vote on the logo
- Get a vote on treasure items
- Show key moments in video
- Ask suggestions for the store design
- Share the tree system
- Share the pay table
- Demo the target date for Core testing release
- Showing people art interation for the trees might be fun.
- Talk about the dev process and Core Theory
- Share Task Tracker Progress
- Share art and design theories behind the game
- Call to action for testers by TBD date
- Share concept art of the store and get opinions
- It'll be fun to show off the different metals
- We should get a font choice contest as well
- AI generated concept art with Photoshop paintovers would be sweet but this is optional and better for Star Kingdom but worth considering.

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- Extra credit: we can use our process as a springboard of conversation about the subject
- It's nice to share a ton of iteration, practically a social media marketing freebie
- Once our fonts are narrowed down, we can push the identity and branding with it everywhere! The vote from users would be huge. It can be updated in the future.
- We should state our deadline for when we'll end the project and call it an experiment. It's appropriate given how Star Kingdom will take over in May so we have a chance to build an audience.
- Let's also be flexible to pivot if Treasure Hunt becomes successful, the great news is at least we have a follow up project and we can make STK our second hit.

## Burdens

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Here's a quick list of things to consider we should do but don't feel anything for. It's probably best for other projects or to push back for later dates. For now we should append these items for consideration.

- **Preparation:** I believe to do a good job we need to think about or consider planning all 12 weeks on a notepad, images, videos, and descriptions may be temp since we're unable to predict entirely what we'll share. But having a preset template may help gauge where and how our shared content may fit.
- **Dev Log:** I don't want to do this at all. It's tough because Facebook's IGD group may take the place of this and max engagement. I also don't want to spam the system
- **YouTube:** It's an opportunity I recognize but I don't want to pollute it with too many progress videos and it's hard to determine if we should do it under my username or create a new account for our company.

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- **Facebook Group/Page:** I recognize this helps but I'd prefer quality versus quantity. I'd prefer to focus efforts on Itch and IDG first. We can always leave this for later.
- **Twitter:** It's popular for devs but it's a mess right now since Elon's takeover and generally not a good place for us. We should leave this as a last resort when further along
- **Steam:** Great idea but best left once we've matured our project and audience, it's the next phase.
- **Instagram:** not worth the effort to be honest.
- **TikTok:** Not a fan of this. I'm sure it has major potential but I'd leave it for last unless it's either necessary or there's a great opportunity from it.
- **Reddit:** This has great potential when we're ready to deep dive or by chance find a subreddit channel with folks who share a love for the kind of thing we're producing. I wouldn't hurry this one right away since it requires a bit of a soul search to figure out.

## 12 Week Outline

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The following is an attempt at thinking about a marketing schedule and how we would share ideas and proposals before uploading our game. By no means is this meant to be anything more than a first draft. We'll play by ear the best we can.

- We need to consider conditions. For example, in our 12 week plan if we're to follow it we should consider some moving targets:
  - We don't know when a playable demo will be ready, but we can be transparent with audiences about a desire to want to do it soon and share our to-do list.
  - Besides art, we have no idea how long it will take to get feedback nor how far ahead we'll get in terms of what we generate.
  - We're not sure what the best format will be in terms of what we share and how much. A lot of this is experimental.



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- There are multiple ideas and approaches. A first run of our outline may help identify what we really need.
- Every item in Task Tracker is a potential video capture opportunity. We can add the bug number at the bottom along with the game's logo and font. Since IGD only allows one post per day and we might be limited based on votes, we can speed up the iteration with Unity Developers. With IGD we can feign results a bit.
- The first post of the week on IGD, let's say Tuesday, would be our day to propose what we want to show the group. Monday is the day to prep for it if possible. Then Friday we can show off the results we tallied along with it being incorporated into our game, page, or UI along with screengrab to show audience we did it.
- This might slow down our dev process in one regard but in another it's in tandem with an audience and coincidentally in line with a 1/3 session timeframe.
- We may not need as much dev time as we think we do for social media marketing, sort of. At least, not at the start. There's major initial leeway

### Week 0

Prerequisites to get ready for marketing:

- Itch.io page up and running, no upload necessary yet but make it pretty
- At least a video or screengrab

### Week 1

Prerequisite: Splash image, a list of names, a link to itch.io,

- Announce the creation of our game
- Ask for help in naming our game
- With each submit we include the Task Tracker link and itch.io link. Both should connect to each other.
- (optional) video

### Week 2

Prerequisite: A series of fonts for our game, top 6

- Or we can ask for font vote
- We'll narrow down choices for the number of fonts.

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## Week 3

Or we can ask for logo vote

## Week 4

- Use newly named, fonted, and logoed version of our game to show off the Start menu and UI
- If this is already accomplished, we can do a follow up with the whole game, not just start menu.
- We can share our itch.io as something we either just created or updated.
- As another option, we can move ahead with the bag is full bug along with a link to itch.io

## Week 5

Intro to our actual game past the look. This is where we can show video of our actual treasure hunt mechanic and show the discovery of treasure.

- We can announce demo
- Deadline: TBD,
- Progress: 80% complete.
- Tasks remaining: 68/85 (17 remaining)

## Week 6

- Video: Treasure Value video, discard bury bug, or shovel upgrade.
- It's at this point we can actually show a video of what our game is about.

## Week 7

Video: Show shovel upgrade mechanic at work

## Week 8

Video: Detector meter, detector upgrade

## Week 9

Video: Background for treasure message improved (we might prioritized this)

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### Week 10

- Screenshots and video: Changing price to credits.
- Take a vote: Do you prefer credits, crypto, points, dollars, or euro? Should this be a preference?

### Week 11

- Screenshots and video: Show off inventory menu, equip treasure list subpages
- This might take more than a week, we may be able to extend this to two.

### Week 12

- Screenshots and video: Show off inventory menu, equip treasure list subpages
- This might take more than a week, we may be able to extend this to two.

### Conclusion

We may be able to continue a second season but it depends on how well our Winter development went. I never considered game design as a form of entertainment but it's much easier to do when you've already understood the fundamentals. Interestingly enough, it may actually be a lot easier to make a game and build for an audience than you think. While slower, this way may increase and strengthen engagement in a big way as well as improve the game because of the progressive feedback.

We can't say for sure but there's a great deal of understanding to unpack in all this and much to be tested. We don't know in practice how this will work out but having something will give us an overall big picture to consider. I'm not even sure we need as much material as we believe in terms of video but it's hard to say how much of a hit we'll take in terms of coding in lieu of the extra energy it takes to share every step of our game's journey.

Since we're building an audience, this could be the initial hump we need to get over. It's entirely possible once we build a fanbase, putting forth any product becomes a lot easier. It's hard to say until we put it into practice. I do worry we may take too long but the need for testers and support is so important, one would have to argue if we can afford not to. We'll see how it goes.