STAR KINGDOM SOCIAL MEDIA PROPOSAL
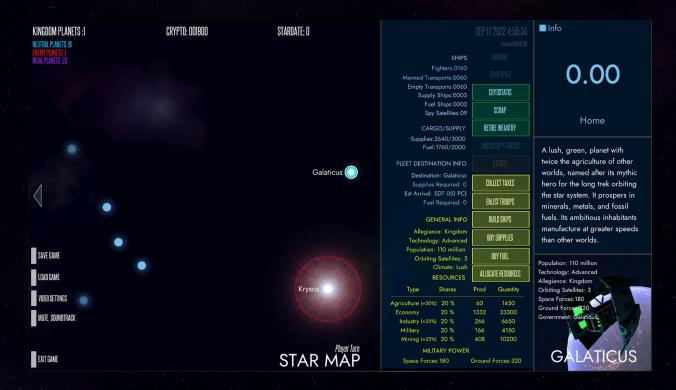
How we plan to gather an audience for our game.

Release (tentative): Nov 2023

In a galaxy far, far, away, we made a game. It was the rebirth of one of my faves but since that time until now, we've learned a lot, carried this project forward and can now depend on some new ideas and approaches to our marketing. It'll be interesting to see how this plays out.

One major caveat with this plan versus Treasure Hunt or any of the others is how this project had been in development for so long, it's almost entirely our first game. Also, we can use the same approach on this as we have the others, there are a few unique circumstances to consider. More info on that will be explored as we read on.

The Basics

Name: Star Kingdom GT
Release Date: TDB (soft release, asap)
Genre: Strategy
Platform: HTML 5 | MacOS |PC
Price: $14.99 (maybe)

Summary: Conquer the galaxy by exploring 21 planets, exploiting its resources, exterminating enemies through army production, and expanding your territories through military victory.

Unique Considerations

- 2 years in development

- A lot of videos were made early in the production, week to week, as we made progress but then it was re-written a year later with different rules and no longer relevant.

- One of our best bets is to share concept art in order to sell the fantasy, characters, and backstory of our game. By doing so I think we can create some engagement from sci-fi story aficionados. But at the end of the day, we need to make it about iterative process.

- The strategy guide might be a perfect chance to sell our game, explain it, and include art. In and of itself could end up being the effort that bridges a gap between gameplay and marketing while functioning to help players who struggle through our rules as we work to improve accessibility.

- Iterative feedback for this project will be tough because it can take weeks before player feedback can be implemented due to this project's maturity and length of time in development without an audience. It's a large ship with a small rudder at this point.

- Whether it was a good idea to share without first learning how to make a good game or figure out its direction is hard to say given the complexity of the game combined with our inexperience along with the tepid early reception

- We need to figure out how to buy time during long dev iterations such as AI updates or mechanical troubleshooting, which can take weeks and not be social media friendly. It's possible concept art may be useful to buy ourselves time, even weeks if necessary.

- We might gain some advantage with visual feedback, UI during gameplay moments like when collecting taxes or being attacked by an enemy. Most of the game is UI based. In order to really get the most of our audience, at some point we'll need to focus on this and make it the primary focus whether it's a whole window shaking or buttons changing color and whatnot.

General Concept

Who

- People who love space, sci-fi, strategy games, and like me wish for something that is a balance of simple and complexity.
- Anyone a fan of 4X type games like Galactic Empire and Master of Orion or M.U.L.E.

What

- IGD will be our primary focus, Unity Developers would be secondary.
- Links to our demo as we update
- Strategy guide when it's up and running
- Concept art
- GUI update videos
- Screenshots
- Task Tracker links
- Itch.io might not be good for us. It's difficult to explain why except that it's a project so much further along that I don't want it to be associated with rough indie work in progress as the community expects. Other projects are better for that.

When

- As soon as we get back into the project, May 2023.
- Our 12 week plan can coincide with a Spring schedule

Where

- IGD and Unity Developers Group on Facebook will be our primary audience.
- Reddit is worth considering but I'm not familiar enough with it yet we need to give it some thought.
- It may be worthwhile to explore any other social media group outside of the norm.

Why

- We need to develop an audience
- It's necessary to build momentum
- It helps to sell Task Tracker and the Monarch brand
- 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.
- It gets us ready to Steam proof our audience when it's time to go PC
- It helps us for the next great build when it's released on iOS. But then I can see it being a huge, huge launch. At the very least, I'd be more confident paying for rank in the AppStore

How

- Voting might not be as effective because a majority of our work will be focused on mechanics. It's a complicated game that doesn't lend well to bite sized bits unless it were paired with art. This is where the strategy guide will or can become a major turning point for us.

- 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

- One submission and one conversation at a time.
- A slow drip coffee approach may be what's best for this.
- If the problem with one's marketing should become that marketing, another approach can be to share the multi-week struggles that feel like forever but there needs to be a sense of progression before an audience.
  - Art helps
  - Using complex problem solving as a teachable moment might boost engagement since it could help other devs or even invite suggestions though I'm wary of it.
  - Maybe there's no such thing as bad press? I'm not sure I but this idea either.

- Getting ideas from our fellow peers about how to teach Players our game may be a huge boost. I hate to admit it but we'll need to ask if folks prefer an AI that would be willing to help them or not?

Cool Ideas

There are a couple of ideas that may create the most buzz and traction, especially if done right. It's by no means a full list but a good starting point. Consider the following:

- Strategy guide is our best bet. If it becomes its own project along with links to the demo, because of the art and guidance behind it, we may be able to sell the game's rules and fantasy behind it.
- 3D battle videos
- Videos of key moments demonstration the game's rules
- Videos that highlight each button:

- ○ **Collecting Taxes video (example 1)** - it might not be exciting but that's when feedback may help us. Asking for suggestions, as painful as it may be to do, may really help us. We should admit our issues and be humble enough to get answers. This will help get ownership and once we get something improved, we can share the update.

- ○ **Cryostasis video (example 2)** - It's hard to sell the fiction of characters going into Cryo. It might be a lot of work to make 3D, I almost want to go the anime approach and do it 2D with Schiller's help along with SoundFX. Again, maybe we should take some cues from StarCraft, ask for audience feedback on what they prefer, and show comparisons of a 3D versus 2D attempt. Maybe share concept art of ideas to try for the crystatis moment and get votes. In the process of doing so, not only do we engage the audience but I feel we'll be able to truly push Star Kingdom into a legit StarCraft-like experience

- ○ Wash, rinse, repeat if necessary for the rest of the UI buttons: Embark, Send Spies, Scrap, Retire Infantry, Add Occupied, Attack, etc.

- ○ At some point, add a camera shake.

- ● The game could take a longer time but when audience engagement grows into a more meaningful experience with greater engagement and a major revenue spawn when it is released. Delays may end up a good thing thanks to dev-marketing.

Burdens

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.

- ● YouTube: It's an opportunity I recognize, this may be ideal for a greatest hits collection once enough of them get produced. I'm not sure how audience

reach may work here, if anything it might be ideal for full gameplay videos we can later share in groups.

- **Facebook Group/Page:** I recognize this helps, I'd like to focus efforts on IGD 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.

12 Week Outline

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 can change these details at any time.

Ideally we can use the UI buttons as our guide and go in that order, as we work our strategy guide in tandem with sharing. Since we don't know how long each aspect will take for sharing, we'll need to take it a week at a time. There's so much content for our game, it'll be a matter or priority at this point for max engagement.

One thing to note, I have no idea if we really need to spend three months on a strategy guide for our game but because it pairs up well with social media and may get us a lot of feedback as well as engagement, it may well be worth it. But it doesn't mean we have to follow this verbatim. We could share two attributes a week, one on Tuesday, another on Friday, and move onward.

Each post can accomplish three things:
1. Raise awareness we exist
2. Share a link to demo for feedback
3. Share link to promote Task Tracker Pro.

Week 0

Prerequisites to get ready for marketing: 3D assets of ship and outline for strategy guide.

1. We should announce our game along with screenshot, link to demo, and Monarch page. We should also mention we'll be working on the strategy guide and sharing week to week our progress while asking for feedback.
2. Splash image a must!

Week 1

Prerequisite: Splash image, a list of names, a link to itch.io,
3. Start with **Embark** button. We can share our design for the Strategy guide and put together key art.
4. Share a video, link to our guide, and our demo.
5. This could be an opportunity to create an embark video animation to use in the lower left corner of the UI.
6. Explaining the rules and outlining the game is our priority. Animation and 3D will have to happen in another round of marketing updates.

Week 2

Prerequisite: Strategy guide update with splash image
1. **Send Spies**: Demo the spy satellite animation vignette. Note: at some point this should be done for every button function but it doesn't need to affect priority
2. We can create a graphic design or anime style chibi explanation for our audience about how send spies work.
3. We have the potential to create an infographics style strategy guide so it's part entertainment but in a way that doesn't cause burnout.

Week 3

4. **Cryostasis**: It would be interesting if we could create 3D assets for this and if not, maybe a 2D/3D hybrid? While I'm not sure which way to go, this is may be an opportune time to create and share with the group.

5.   In the meantime, concept art and diagram explanation with the strategy guide may be more than enough.
6.   We can max engagement by asking folks their vote on best art for Cryostasis along with a link to the game.

Week 4

1.   **Scrap:** We can either work on 2D or 3D and ask the community.
2.   In the meantime, explaining the concept and having a diagram may help this out.

Week 5

1.   **Retire Infantry**: I can see some cool art coming out of this and maybe even with Schiller's help. Explaining this rule would be interesting.
2.   Again, 2D or 3D art can be involved but retirement should be thought of as an event with feeling.

Week 6

1.   **Add Occupy Forces:** I'm not sure what we would use here except maybe the deployment of troops or mechs? We can ask our audience
2.   We create an explanation of why this is important in game, how to use, and share a link in social media when completed.

Week 7

1.   **Attack:** This is the perfect time to share 3D mode.
2.   We still need to add caveats, models, design, and illustration for the strategy guide in line with the rest of the doc.

Week 8

3.   **Collect Taxes:** We can ask about whether or not to keep credits or crypto as our de facto thing and also if we should have a symbol for it.
4.   Not sure what image we would use but we can try ideas and get votes.

Week 9

5. **Enlist Troops:** Demonstrate commissioned troops in a diagram either 2D or 3D explaining the importance.
6. Share a link demonstrating progress and what it looks like in the menu.
7. Consider animated gifs for this but maybe a video would be better? Can pics and videos be shared in the same post? We'll have to experiment!

Week 10

8. **Build Ships:** Show art in 3D or 2D of the ship building process.
9. Demo a video or gif along with what we updated for the diagram of the Strategy guide.

Week 11

10. **Buy Supplies:** Show art and diagram of supplies and why they matter along with 3D or 2D demo of what it looks like.
11. Share the strategy guide explanation of it along with the link to our game.

Week 12

12. **Buy Fuel:** Show art or diagram of fuel, what it's used for, why it's important, and later reveal there are market prices in the menu that deserves an illustration or two.
13. A gif or video demonstrating fuel and what happens when you run out.

Conclusion

If all goes well we'll have more than enough work, feedback, and traction to last us a good while. Monetization will be 2023's greatest conundrum while we work on social engagement practice and eventual mastery for our game. There's potential to roll out this doc for the Summer of 2023's campaign.

Allocate Resources remains and can become an extension of the next marketing campaign. We can also try to cramp a few of these together but I'm not sure if we should. It'll depend on how fast we move on but it seems like a sore point to leave this out of our 12 week run. We'll adjust as we move along.

There are so many rules and aspects to the UI, it makes sense to explain the rest of the menu via attributes. Our next one can pair up well with sharing our tooltip system so when one mouse-hovers, they can see an explanation. We can also ask feedback on this but for the next 12 week run as we keep going with the strategy guide, we'll be able to do a quick bit on Fighters, Manned Transports, and so potentially in the style of my fave RPG Macross books.

This is only the beginning. There are a lot of things to showcase for this game beyond the time and scope I have within even a year. We need to see how engagement goes but at some point I wonder how or when we consider raising money to get help. For the moment, let's consider this first run as our marketing test and adapt accordingly!

Also note, this may be too hyperfocused. There are more general aspects such as renaming planets and adding FX that may give us more bang per buck. In a case where we improve the soldier count before attacks, we can pair it with any feature such as Military Power or Fighters when it's time to expand on it in our strategy guide.

More to say but this can be considered a good start. In general we can develop a great deal of our marketing around tool tips and strategy guide before improving the game while getting a lot of slow-trickle user feedback along the way.

Cheers!