



*the Multimedia Research Consultancy*

## Mobile Games Industry Experts Panel: The Burning Issues

At the end of November *the Multimedia Research Consultancy's Mobile Games Industry Experts Panel* will go live and provide the first systematic, ongoing assessment of industry sentiment on a range of industry issues. The first stage has been to trawl the industry for potential panel members and invite them to nominate hot issues for investigation.

Vic Whiting, MD of TMRC described progress: *"So far over 84 senior executives from 28 countries have been signed up, and these include some of the industry's big hitters. We are particularly pleased with the quality and experience of this first wave of panel members – 70%+ are CEOs, COOs, CTOs, CMOs, Presidents, MDs, Directors, VPs, EVPs, Studio Heads and General Managers.*

He added *"What has surprised us has been the range of issues which panel members have proposed. To date over 150 questions/issues have been submitted and not just single word issues either. Many panel members have gone into considerable detail about the dilemmas which they feel currently confront the industry. An essential element of our research has involved identifying the themes emerging from these early submissions. This has not only given us a shopping list for future consideration, but, for the first time, allows us to identify which issues are most concerning industry professionals."*

### (i) **iPhone and the Future of Rival Platforms** (40% Mentioned)

The launch of the **iPhone**, and its impact on the rest of the market, is an issue which has generated the most interest amongst panel members (and we anticipate that Google's Android will soon join that list). For instance "Does iPhone's launch constitute the beginning of a revolution in mobile games (akin to the impact of the Nintendo Wii) or is it just another ephemeral market phenomenon? And more importantly what impact will iPhone have on revenues and profitability for those wedded to the platform?"

The flipside of this issue is the perceived future of rival platforms - we had a battery of questions relating to the core development platforms (**J2ME, BREW, Smartphone, Symbian and Flash Lite**), or 'old mobile' as one member described them.. Typically panel members would like to gain insights into each platform's long term prospects, and whether one will cannibalise the other, or will they all eventually succumb to Apple's iPhone?

### (ii) **Pricing, Payments & Billing** (39% Mentioned)

Next up is a group of questions relating to **Pricing, Payments and Billing** issues. TMRC has carried out several industry studies over the years and the financial aspects of any business are always high on the agenda. In this category a primary concern amongst panel members is how to identify optimal price points, but even more important is the thorny issue of the transparency of Billing Systems and Subscription Models.

### (iii) **Finding a 'Killer App'** (35% Mentioned)

Ranked third is an overriding interest in what will be the **'Killer App'** which will help the industry grow. Members have suggested that we investigate the potential for most genres: 3D Gaming, Casual Gaming, Multiplayer Gaming, Connected Games, Fun Games, Action Games, Augmented Reality Games, Puzzle/Logic Games. And to these we will be adding Motion Sensing and Location Based Games, as well as games incorporating Apple's Accelerometer.

### (iv) **Routes to Market / Distribution** (27% Mentioned)

The 4<sup>th</sup> category covers **Routes to Market / Distribution** problems. For instance – "What is widely regarded as the optimal distribution strategy? How is the growing importance of off-deck (D2C) sales being perceived? How can the barriers/restraints imposed by the carriers be circumvented? And will the launch of *Apple's iApp Store* and *Google's The Android Market* inspire a sea change in the way

revenues are apportioned going forward?" Added to this group is the knotty question of **Carrier Relations** and the increasing importance of **Off Deck** D2C Portal vs. **On Deck** MNO/MVNO Portals.

(v) **Hardware and Platform Fragmentation** (19% Mentioned)

Ranked 5<sup>th</sup> overall are the **Hardware and Platform Fragmentation** issues. There is a clear desire amongst some members to see global standardisation introduced in both development platforms and handset offerings. The prohibitive cost of porting games to sometimes hundreds of handsets is well documented and is fuelling this sentiment. We know from many previous industry studies the lessons of not having a single global standard.

(vi) **Marketing Issues** (17% Mentioned)

Ranked 6<sup>th</sup> are various **Marketing Issues**. There are concerns about whether mobile games can be effectively promoted and branded and, more importantly, how this might be achieved? There are also questions relating to the perceived effectiveness of **In-Game Advertising / Advergaming** and, in particular, the impact of advergaming on branded and unbranded titles and whether in-game advertising is regarded as a gold mine or simply a waste of time.

(vii) **Other Issues**

Panel members frequently presented 2-3 questions for consideration and so in addition to the main groupings nearly everyone mentioned at least one other issue. These were disparate in nature and are indicative of the number of unresolved questions that continue to plague today's global mobile games industry.

### Mapping the Future of Mobile Games

Underlying many of the issues highlighted above is a general concern about and confidence in the potential growth of the market. So in addition to looking at the various issues outlined above we also intend regularly monitoring the degree to which our panel feels positive or negative about the industry's prospects.

### Affordable B2B Research in Mobile Games

Vic Whiting concluded *"We firmly believe that the creation of this online B2B panel will fill a void in the market place. Affordable, market led and timely B2B research has simply not been available to the industry at large, until now. We have been heartened by the reaction from the market place to this initiative – it certainly seems to have struck a chord with many senior executives."*

### Why not join the online Experts Panel?

The *Multimedia Research Consultancy* is currently inviting decision makers and opinion formers from the world's mobile games industry (Developers, Publishers, Aggregators, Portal Operators and Handset Manufacturers) to join the **Mobile Games Industry Experts Panel**. Members are being offered a range of attractive incentives to join the research panel. To learn more go to:

[http://www.multimedia-research.com/Experts\\_panel.html](http://www.multimedia-research.com/Experts_panel.html)

### Vic Whiting

Managing Director

The Multimedia Research Consultancy

[T] 00 44 1322 557365

[F] 00 44 1322 559347

[M] 00 44 7973 728075

[E] [vic@multimedia-research.com](mailto:vic@multimedia-research.com)

[W] [www.multimedia-research.com](http://www.multimedia-research.com)