

Flash Game License

Leveling the playing field



FlashGameLicense.com

Flash Game License
Sacramento, CA
www.flashgamelicense.com

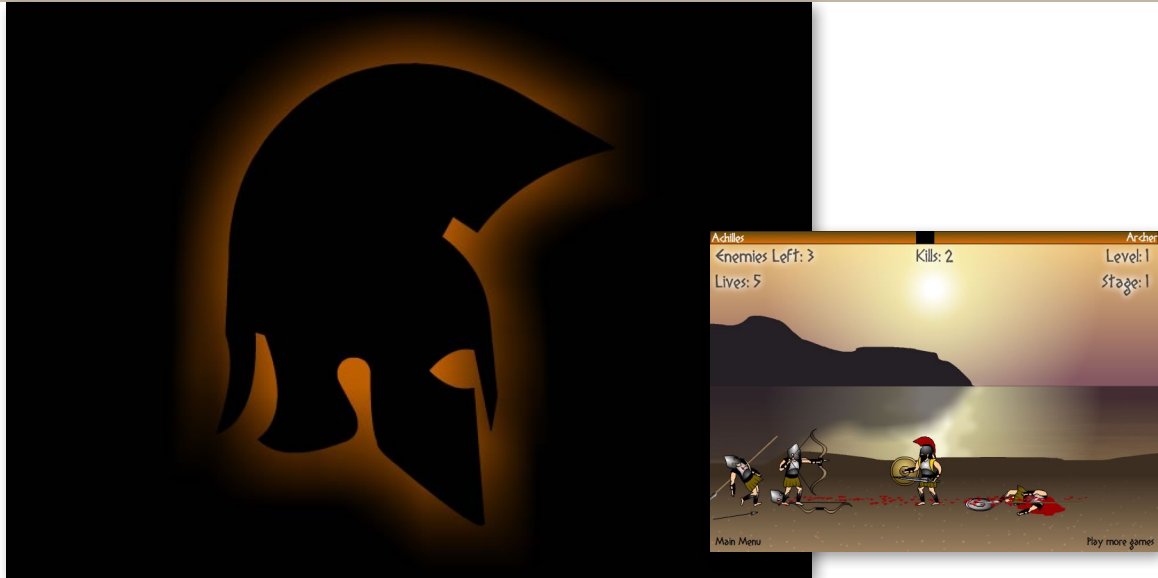
Invading enchanted lands, overpowering juggernauts, and strategizing against multitudes of virtual players is business as usual for video game enthusiasts. And behind many user interactions may be the sharp mind and fertile imagination of an independent game developer.

While video gaming is a multi-billion-dollar industry—with a primary segment relying on the Adobe® Flash® Platform for development and deployment—there has historically been a barrier for independent game developers to cash in on the action. Working in kitchens, spare rooms, and basements everywhere, incredibly dedicated, passionate game hobbyists, artists, and developers may be some of the best game makers out there leveraging the Flash Platform—but, given limited resources and marketing expertise, they lack the necessary outlet to make money doing what they love.

On the other side of the equation are marketers, hungry for games based on Adobe Flash that will drive traffic to websites and portals, seeking to gain brand exposure for products in every consumer sector. Increasingly, companies of all sizes are recognizing the value of games based on the Flash Platform as one of the most cost-effective ways to capture and retain online audience attention.

Bringing developers and marketers together in best business practices is FlashGameLicense.com, the ingenious brainchild of two previous independent game developers using the Adobe Flash Platform. In 2007, Chris Hughes and Adam Schroeder teamed up to level the playing field among independent developers and big commercial game publishers by launching an online marketplace where developers of games based on Adobe Flash can post games, and sponsors and buyers shop. There, lucrative licensing deals are made.

Independent game developer, Ben Olding's first game posted on FGL, *Achilles*, took only two weeks to build with the Adobe Flash Platform. The game was licensed in one month and has had more than 45 million plays. Olding chose the Flash Platform because it was the best environment to make a complete game quickly and easily as a solo developer.



Challenge

- Provide lucrative venue for game licensing deals

Solution

- Online bidding marketplace FlashGameLicense.com operates a trusted, virtual brokerage where independent game developers and designers gain revenue and recognition, and sponsors round out marketing strategies.

Benefits

- Doubled sales yearly since startup
- Brokered \$7.6 million in licensed deals
- Created support system to foster booming game community
- Provided best business practices for secure licensing agreements
- Helped protect intellectual property

Toolkit

- Adobe Flash Platform. Components used include:
 - Flex®
 - Adobe Flash Builder™
 - Adobe AIR®
 - Adobe Flash Professional

Upward trends on all sides

Doubling its sales every year since startup, FGL helps tens of thousands of small developers monetize their work, improve their products through staff and peer review, perform extensive analytics of game usage, and see millions of hits where none used to be. At the same time, FGL provides a valuable service to companies including ArmorGames, Disney, Kongregate, Microsoft, The Cartoon Network, Viacom (AddictingGames), and Yahoo! and to find polished games with just the right flavor to cost-effectively extend corporate brands across multiple platforms and devices.

All this happens in a secure environment where the developer's intellectual property remains safe long after the ink on the licensing agreement is dry. Hughes notes that more and more sponsors are "getting" the concept that while most marketing campaigns are one and done, the life of a game lasts forever. In fact, a significant percentage of FGL's customers are repeat buyers, with 30% of all users uniquely visiting the FGL site monthly.

The Adobe Flash Platform accounts for nearly 100% of FGL's audience for good reason, notes Schroeder, adding that virtually all video gamers grew up using Adobe Flash Platform. "Adobe Flash Platform tools enable developers to rapidly bring their ideas to life in amazing ways, and the ubiquity and reliability of the Flash Player helps ensure the widest possible reception as well as the best performance. We know, because we've tried other technologies and have seen up to 50% drop-off rates when users try to install or update players other than Adobe Flash Player," says Schroeder.

According to Hughes, all the stakeholders in the video game industry—players, developers, sponsors, and advertisers alike—appreciate how the Adobe Flash Platform is constantly evolving and therefore making it easier for FGL to hit all levels of the market. "With multiscreen, multiplayer, 3D, and social media strategies in full force, the Adobe Flash Platform will continue to dominate the video game market. I am also amazed that, with each new version of the Adobe Flash Player, the improved optimizations allow developers to build increasingly complex games that run great even on mobile devices. If you think this business is moving fast now, just wait. Games developed in Flash will continue to really change things up," he says.

Changing lives, revolutionizing cottage industries

FGL is the epitome of transparency when it comes to results (http://www.flashgamelicense.com/report_monthly_site_sales.php) in every aspect of its business, including the total and median dollar values of accepted bids and total sales. One of FGL's many standout stories is Berzerk Studios, which has used FGL as its exclusive marketing arm from the day it opened in 2008 when artists Etienne Jean and Marc-Antoine Jean, and developer Simon Lachance began a collaboration that made their professional dreams come true.

Ben Olding's biggest release, *Warlords: Call to Arms*, has had over 121 million plays in less than two years—seeing about 50,000 plays a day. Olding continues to choose Flash because his games will earn money since they can be reliably accessed by millions of players around the world on any browser.



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Adam Schroeder
Co-founder,
Flash Game License

These three talented individuals licensed *Homerun in Berzerk Land* and *Gunbot*, sponsored by SlixMedia through FGL. Those two games alone received 15 million and 16 million plays respectively. It took the Berzerk team only three weeks to complete *Gunbot* from inception to upload. The social capability in *Homerun* enabled players to challenge others by sending them a link, which resulted in more views per person than any other game from Berzerk.

Key to Berzerk's success is the fact that they can focus on what they do best—make games—and rely on the extensive FGL platform to maximize marketing and monetization efforts. “We know how to build games based on Adobe Flash and FGL knows how to expose and sell them. They are also experts in providing ways to further monetize our work with third-party ads and the cost-effective GamerSafe tool that handles in-game micro-transactions—a very easy and attractive way for us to generate additional profits,” says Simon Lachance, co-founder, Berzerk Studios.

The Adobe Flash Platform also makes it easy for the Berzerk team to reach new markets by localizing its games, most of which are available in French, English, Mandarin, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish. Moving forward, Berzerk is looking beyond computer screens to multiscreen and multiplatform Flash Platform game development for the iPhone, Android, and eventually conventional game platforms for Xbox, Nintendo, and Sony PlayStation.

FGL has also changed the life of Ben Olding, an experienced professional and game hobbyist who, with encouragement from the FGL team, quit his day job and hitched his wagon to FGL. The first game Olding posted on FGL, *Achilles*, which took him only two weeks to build with the Adobe Flash Platform, was licensed in one month and has had over 45 million plays. His biggest release, *Warlords: Call to Arms* has had 121 million plays in less than two years and still sees about 50,000 plays a day. His recent hit *Warlords 2: Rise of Demons* holds the record for the highest flat amount ever bid on FGL.

“I started making games using the Adobe Flash Platform, because it was the best environment to make an entire game quickly and easily by myself. I keep using Flash because I know my games will earn money because they can be reliably accessed by millions of players around the world on any browser,” says Olding, adding that FGL streamlines the bidding process like nowhere else on the web. In the future, with consultation from FGL on how game developers are moving towards creating Adobe AIR apps for mobile, Olding aims to release a game for Android using Adobe AIR.

Burgeoning ecosystem

At the heart of FGL's business model—earning a small commission on each license deal—is the basic premise that the overall success of the company is only as good as the work its community produces. Therefore, the FGL leadership puts enormous energy into supporting its participants by facilitating mentorships, reviewing games prior to final posting, centralizing technical resources, and providing forums where many a designer-developer collaboration has been hatched. FGL has nearly 10,000 unique developer logins and more than 16,000 developer accounts with around 61% logging in at least once during the year.

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In 2010, FGL partnered with Adobe to sponsor *Cell Your Flash Game*, a contest geared to help developers succeed in the mobile game space. "It blew away all our goals," says FGL co-founder Hughes. Originally aiming for 150 submissions with every entry guaranteed to win a prize, the contest resulted in 260 entries that were either built from scratch for mobile or ported to mobile from web. "Every single entry was impressive in its own right," adds Hughes. "The message was clear: it takes very little effort to port a quality Flash game to mobile and make it very playable."

According to Schroeder, the Adobe Flash Platform is not only responsible for closing the gap between the big Flash game developers and independent developers and designers. It is enabling Flash game developers to just plain get better at what they do—resulting in the best possible experiences for gamers and ongoing revenue streams for game creators. "It all comes down to market penetration. In the rapidly growing video game business, Flash is the only game in town," he says.

For more information
www.adobe.com/flashplatform



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