I am pretty excited about this one.

Gamification User Types

When I created my gamification User Types definitions, it was with a mind to help people consider who is going to be in their gamified systems and what may motivate them. I started with the intrinsic motivation RAMP I keep talking about, Relatedness, Autonomy, Mastery and Purpose. From this I created the Socialiser, Free Spirit, Achiever and Philanthropist user types. That covered the who and the what – who the user may be and what it is that may motivate them. One of the things it didn’t cover was why. Why would people engage in this way and god forbid, why would they find it fun?

4 Keys 2 Fun

One of the posters on my wall at work is the 4 Keys 2 Fun from Nicole Lazzaro. For those that don’t know, early in 2000 (2003 / 2004) XEODesign (her company), conducted some research into why we play games. They surveyed players and non players, observed them, recorded them and interviewed them to assess the emotions that they felt during play.
XeoDesign 4 Keys 2 Fun

The upshot was that they discovered four main keys or types of fun (Xeo Design’s website – why we play games):

- People Fun (Friendship)
  - Amusement from competition and cooperation
- Easy Fun (Novelty)
  - Curiosity from exploration, role play, and creativity
- Hard Fun (Challenge)
  - Fiero, the epic win, from achieving a difficult goal
- Serious Fun (Meaning)
Excitement from changing the player and their world

Obviously, there is more to it than that, but I encourage you to read and watch the original material on why we play games – it does a much better job of explaining the theory than I ever could. Basically it gives you a framework to use when building games to make them more fun.

Combining Fun and User Types

Before we get going on this, it may help some I consider fun in terms of engagement when talking about gamification.

It took me a long time (far too long) to realise that these 4 keys 2 fun had a remarkable similarity to my user types. It makes sense really, motivation and fun are intrinsically linked, so it stands to reason that the four key intrinsic motivators would be analogous to any theories about fun (as Victor Manrique brilliantly displays here Gamification Player Types: Meet the players!).

When we put these together we start to get a fuller picture about the motivation and engagement for certain types of users. You get the Who, What, Why and even some of the How!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Socialiser</th>
<th>Free Spirit</th>
<th>Achiever</th>
<th>Philanthropist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>Relatedness</td>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why</td>
<td>People Fun</td>
<td>Easy Fun</td>
<td>Hard Fun</td>
<td>Serious Fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>Communicate</td>
<td>Exploration</td>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperate</td>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>Obstacles</td>
<td>Rhythm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compete</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>Collection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enough talking, time for a picture!
Above we have the gamification user types, displayed with the main motivation, the fun “key” as well as the player experience for that key. The axes are similar to ones I used in the
original version of the user types, and very similar to the 4 Keys 2 Fun ones. Structured vs Unstructured and Acting on Users vs Acting on the System. In the 4 Keys 2 Fun these are Structured vs Open Ended and Real World vs Game World.

Making use of it

When you look at my basic design framework, you can see that the first step is to look at What you are trying to gamify, what is it you want the users to actually do, what is your goal. After considering Why and Who, the next step is to consider How, how can you engage as many user types as possible in that activity? Is there a way to include choice, freedom, exploration, altruism, social connections, status, learning, goals, collection, creativity – any of the game thinking elements that I have spoke about in the past that support the 4 core motivators. Now we can start to look at how you can use the player experiences highlighted here for each user type to hook into the fun type for that user type.

Let’s create a fictional example for each user type using a question and answers system (like Quora).

The Philanthropist user type thrives in this kind of example. For them, as system needs to provide mechanisms for the user to find some kind of meaning. In the case of a Q&A system, this would start by letting the user help others by answering questions or finding answers for others. That gives is the purpose part. The fun type that is most associated with this user type is Serious Fun. Of the player experiences that come under serious fun (Repetition, Rhythm and Collection), collection is going to be the most valuable in this situation. So when they offer help to others, award points for them to collect - then let those points be converted into something that has a meaningful value. An example of this, taken from Nicole’s game Tilt World, would be to convert points into trees being planted in Madagascar. Of course, you could think a little smaller and just donate to charities! Naches all round.

The Socialiser type is a little easier. They are looking for social connections and status to support the feeling of relatedness. Within out Q&A system we should include some form of social network to allow users to talk to each other. People Fun is the type we would be looking at with the socialiser. Under this we have three different player experiences and can actually make use of all of them in our Q&A system; Communicate, Cooperate, Compete. We already have the communicate part, but how about expanding this to allow collaborative answers to questions. On top of that, for those who want to, we can include Leaderboards to cover the competitive users. Rememebr that not all users will be interested in leaderboards!
Achievers want to feel that they are improving, that their journey in a system is one to mastery. With our Q&A system we can cater for this in a couple of ways. One would be to recognise their achievements (yes that does point to badges and the like), the other would be to use the system to offer actual learning opportunities. You could, for example, for expand the system to allow the philanthropists to create tutorials, which the achievers can then take. When you look at Hard Fun, the goals and obstacle player experiences are of most use for this example. Give your users learning objectives and goals. Let them feel that they are achieving something by answering questions, that they are mastering the system. Let your user experience Fiero.

Last but by no means least, our Free Spirits. Their motivation is autonomy. This is less obvious in a Q&A system. Giving users choice and creativity doesn’t seem easy. In fact when you look at the player experiences for Easy Fun – fantasy, creativity and exploration, it seems even harder for a Q&A system to provide engagement for this user type. However, there are still a few things you can do. First, let the user explore. This can be done with well design user interfaces, consider gameful design here. It could just be a button that takes them to a random question on the site (check out the page roulette button on my blog). This leads to the feeling of freedom and exploration. Also. let them create a persona with avatars, information and skins. Most user types will use this as a chance to say a bit about them, but a free spirit may like to get creative! Another tactic would be to make the interface and editor for answering or asking question more creative. Don’t restrict them to straight up text input.

And Finally

That is just one very quick example of how all four user types can be catered for when you consider the fun type as well. It all goes to help create a more rounded experience for more users.

Remember that most users won’t remain a single type for the entire time they are in a system. This means that the type of fun and engagement will change over time for them as well. Nicole explained to me, using serious fun as the example;

“Serious Fun comes in before and after the win (Hard Fun) to make winning feel more meaningful and make the feeling of winning last longer”

So different types of fun can also act on each other to produce different effects. She has also
been quoted as saying that most popular games included at least three types of fun in them!

It is important to understand, people will experience fun in different ways and the same for fiero and naches. People experience achievement in different ways, it is not just achievers who will experience it. Philanthropists will feel achievement at helping others. This is just a guide to help you get a better feel for how to engage different types of users.

I would like to thank Nicole Lazzaro for taking time out of her very hectic schedule to offer some advice on this mash-up. My hope is that this will help others get a better idea of how to include fun on their engagement models within gamification. It actually makes my user types a more complete “frame work” and should give you something else to read further.

For more information on the 4 Keys 2 Fun, visit http://xeodesign.com/whyweplaygames.html

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