

Thin Layer vs Deep Level Gamification

Description

With it nearly being Christmas, I thought I would put out one more blog post before the traditional years round up!

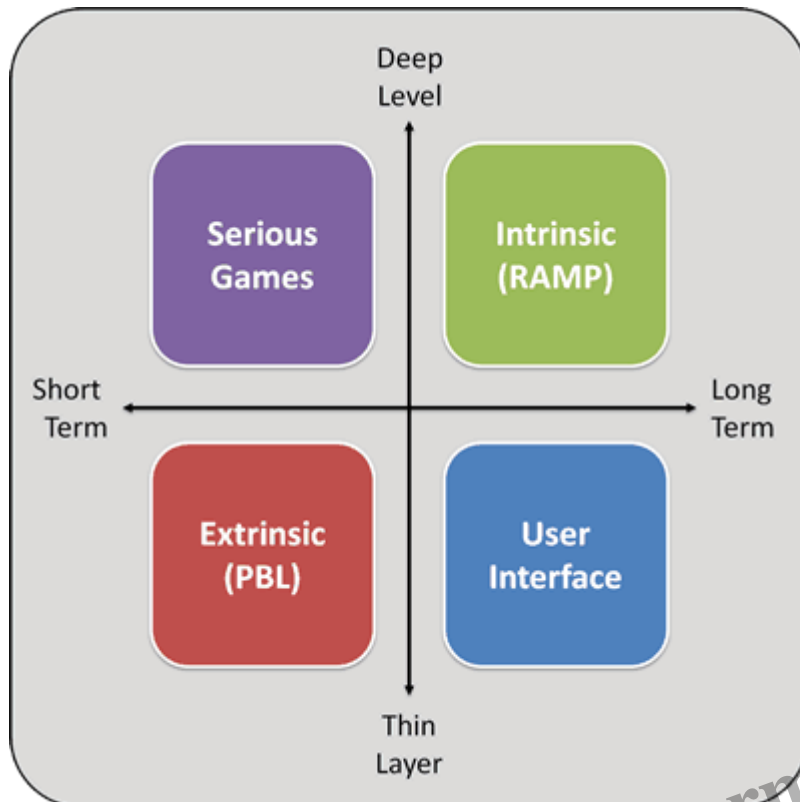
This time I want to look at a concept I have been talking about for a while, but have never really explained properly. Thin Layer and Deep Level gamification.

Thin Layer Gamification

This covers things that are added to the “top” of a system. Points, badges, game like interface components. This type is less about engagement as it is about entertainment, but has its place as I explained [last week](#).

Deep Level Gamification

Deep Level is where the real engagement and problem solving come in. Covering everything from [Games / Serious games](#) to pure intrinsic motivation driven systems, Deep Level is where you will get the biggest returns – and development bills!



Thin Layer vs Deep Level Gamification

This diagram shows the basics of what I am talking about.

Extrinsic Gamification

Described here as Short Term Thin Layer. This is what most people associate with gamification, points and badges. An example of this can be seen on my site with my implementation of Captain Up. This is more of an entertainment feature, but can give short term in engagement especially when you are measuring based on page views on a website.

User Interface

Long Term Thin Layer means that whilst this sort of design may not be hooking into the deepest of intrinsic motivations, it is designed to stay with the user for the entire time they are using your system. Remember, this is user interface, not user experience!

Serious Games

Serious games are Short Term Deep Level. This means that they are deeply engaging, but designed for a specific purpose that lasts finite period of time – ie the length of the game. Think of things like Fold.it Once the problem is solved, the game finishes. Of course you can argue that games can last years – but most serious games are designed to solve a problem and that's it.

Intrinsic Gamification

Long Term Deep Level gamification. This is what people strive for. A system that keeps you involved because you want to be involved. There may be thin layer trappings, but [RAMP](#) is why you are there (Relatedness, Autonomy, Mastery, Purpose). Take Stack Exchange. Whilst some are there for the points and the badges, many are there because they enjoy helping people. Giving them bonuses and meaningful extras (like access to administrative tools) adds to this in a much deeper way than the PBL based rewards.

So what?

These categories are just there to help clarify the differences between different approaches to gamification. Each one is valid and has its uses. Each one can be combined with any other one to create a system. If you went to a meeting where you were discussing gamification of a new product, you could show someone this chart and say "If you want short term engagement, look to the left. IF you want long term, look to the right. If you have money and want to do this really well, look at the top, if you don't have as much money, look to the bottom".

Merry Chirstmas everyone!

Category

1. Gamification

Tags

1. deep level
2. engagement
3. extrinsic motivation
4. intrinsic motivation
5. motivation
6. thin layer

Date Created

23/12/2013

Author

andrzej-marczewski

default watermark