



Disruptors: My Negative User Type

Description

One of the questions I get asked about when people see my [User Types](#), “What about Killers?” Now I have spoken about the [Bartle Killer type](#) and why I don’t really account for them in the types. In a nutshell, Killers want to destroy and humiliate other players in MMO’s. This is not a behaviour we are trying to build for in gamification and as my User Types are written to help give ideas and structure for designing systems – they didn’t really have a place. This is especially in enterprise gamification where this type would be handled with internal policy!

The Disruptor

However, as I have thought about this more, I have realised that I do need to acknowledge some types of negative behaviour in design. Rather than creating several, I have decided to roll them up into just one type. **The Disruptor**.



When you create a gamified system, not everyone will want to be involved, which is fine. However, some people will actively try to disrupt the gamified. This Disruptor User Type may do this in a number of ways either affecting users or the system through action or interaction. They are different from the **Self Seeker**, **Consumer** or **Exploiter** types, as these types are all looking for reward. They are also not cheats, in as much as cheats tend to cheat to gain the rewards from the system still. The Disruptor is looking to destabilise the system. They will exploit loopholes, bully other users, break the game or

anything else that will help them prove their point.

Why?

Well two main reasons. For some, it is fun (this is close to the classic Killer type). As Alfred puts it in *The Dark Knight* “*Some men just want to see the world burn*”. For others, it is a way of rebelling against something they see as pointless or a waste of money, which just should not exist. In enterprise, gamified systems may be less voluntary than in other situations. This can cause negative kickback from potential users. For some this will just be a quiet moan, for others this will fuel the desire to literally kick the system, these are the Disruptors.

Designing against Disruptors

Designing against Disruptors is hard. You have to make sure that your rules are rock solid, easy to find and have some kind of backing that makes breaking them punishable in some way. This includes system based rules and social rules. Cover action against the system (so hacking, cheating etc), but also action against other users (bullying etc).

If possible, make as many of these rules physically unbreakable as possible.

Another way to handle this is pre-emptive. Before rolling a system out, tell people it is happening, educate potential users why it is coming and how it will improve things. Take on board negative feedback and see if it can be acted upon – and if it can't, how it can be protected against! Try to get them onside early though – this will help a lot. Those who are vociferous in their negativity, can often make the best evangelists if you can “turn” them!

The Disruptor type is a fact of life when designing gamified systems, how you handle them could make or break your initiative!

Category

1. Gamification

Tags

1. cheating
2. Convention (norm)
3. Dark Knight
4. design
5. Exploitation
6. Massively multiplayer online game
7. negative
8. Negative feedback
9. type
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