

Ads-on Games and Fake Brands: Interactions, Commercials and Playful Branding

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Abstract. Today’s communication-based world relies on advertising as a positive medium, and branding is no exception. Also, the gaming industry relies on videogames as a heavy player in our time, since “narrative”, “graphics” and “gameplay” are constantly worked out in the name of the best digital experiences, where the user is the center. We have noticed that a fusion is taking place between commercials, real and /or fake brands, in order to turn digital worlds more convincing for the user-player. Relying on analytics, media theory and user experience, we have conducted a study to better understand, in analytical and experimental form, what is happening between the user, the brands, the games and the outputs of such experiences in terms of interaction and playfulness. Gamification seems to be the new rule.

Keywords: Brands · Videogames · User experience · Interaction · Advertisement · Connection · Player · Gamification

1 Introduction

This paper presents the results of the analytical phase that is part of a complex study composed by two phases (analytical and experimental). The main goal was to evaluate the influence and retention of the brands (real and fake ones), on the videogames that were not developed with the advertisement explicit objective (ex. FIFA, PES, Forza, etc.).

Main findings indicate that there is a strong connection among traditional elements from advertisement or branding for the ‘videogames’ narrative composition, and that recently we could verify a strong influence of the videogames on branding.

We’ll start our analysis with videogames, branding, commercials and fake brands by considering some ideas, models and paradigms. Ads on games are more and more frequent, so much, that sometimes fake brands need to show up just to make the interaction between user-player as real as it gets. As far as games, branding and iconography are concerned, what we are dealing here is “in-game” branding (Cocoran, 2007, 288). It means that games work out as carriers for either fictitious or real brand messaging.

One author, such as Rushkoff, knows that “computer games may, in fact, be popular culture’s first satisfactory answer to the collapse of narrative” (2013, Chapter 1,

117–564, para.106). Our suggestion is that ads on games provide continuity to the game narrative, sometimes in a transmedia way, and that brands, even if fictitious, increment a sense of “realness” in the game, as the footage gets closer and closer to live-action film footage.

In the realm of websites and online gaming there is a concept being used for sometime to describe the merge between gaming and advertising: “AdverGaming”, despite being more children-directed, it is still prevalent (Elias, 2007, Cocoran, 2007, 282). Another issue is that “while video games do occur over linear time, they are not arched like stories between a past and the future” (Rushkoff, 2013, Chapter 1, 117-118–564, para.106).

On a very interesting study, Molloy notices the “rise of branded gaming and entertainment”, and so he says that “given the popularity of games, it was logical that companies would look for opportunities to leverage the games market to advertise their brand names” (2014, LOC 1309 de 4186). Somehow, brands show on games as icons, guiding icons, beacons, they say “this could be real” or “we’re communicating with you”. For marketing and branding experts such as Frampton, like it or not, we’re stepping in a new connected, web-like world; where everything is linked up, yet sometimes it seems complex and confusing, and rich, intimate and alive. He highlights that brands and organizations need to learn how to plug into this vast intelligence” (in *Best Global Brands 2012, 2013*, 3).

We are told by Heilbrunn that brands themselves may be seen not merely as signs, but as a “semiotic engine” whose very function is to constantly produce meanings and values (apud Schroeder and Salzer-Mörling 2006, 92). Indeed, semiotics has a true power, signs (*Watchdogs, Killzone: Shadow Fall*), words (*Alien: Isolation, Syndicate*) and colors (*Mirror’s Edge, Fallout, WipeOut Series*) are just the basis, from our point of view. French thinker Roland Barthes knew the power of language and so he mentioned the “image-reservoirs of language” (1975, 33). Since videogames, the modern ones, are relying on the triplet mechanics-narrative-transmedia strategies, the user-experience (UX), departs on a new ground now. Because of the cutting-edge “image-reservoirs”, what we are dealing with here is but language — it is communication in its regular mass media/new media form.

By putting together brands and virtual worlds, fake brands, connections and messages, icons and advertising, we found something closer to the UX domain. Marc Gobé believes that advertising should be thought of as experiences (2007, 133). And the reason why it happens this way is because a brand is way more than mere iconography (2007, 99).

On the language level, what we see is that the “‘message’ is not of a purely verbal nature, but constitutes a word and image text” (Forceville, 2002, 81). Basically, the “image-reservoirs”, the “semiotic engine” and iconographies of brands becoming experiences turn out to be guiding vectors, and they have to be “positive” (Nöth [1987:279] apud Forceville, 2002, 68).

Having in consideration that this “intention” and “empathic” profiles of ads are a mark of advertising working out its way, it may not be disturbing to find out that in videogames, brands have to appear, in order to cause empathy and to surround the active user-player, make him feel he is being talked to. Forceville says that the aim of an advertiser is, as we have seen, to persuade a prospective client to buy (literally or

figuratively) his/her product, service or idea (2002, 68). But what we have identified in the videogames, movies and TV shows, our objects of examination for this paper, is that brand iconography, whether real or virtual, is establishing a referent system of its own. Following this, the big picture is that the degree of connectivity between user-players [potential consumers of real brands or videogame worlds with their own fake brands] is not only higher but techno-dependent, as well. Due to the more common transmedia strategies [Jenkins, 2006] and the collapse of narrative, videogames allow us to stay in touch with worlds where signs, text, images, characters and stories unravel a UX with new worlds. (Elias, 2013) Then, there is also the “multi-medial character” (Forceville, 2002, 70) in all of this, since we are being told a story in many forms, both in pictorial and linguistic components. And besides, sounds, colors, layouts, billboards, soundtracks, special effects, character design and virtual logos just happen to stand out this multi-medial or transmedial nature of our context.

There are three major distinctions in brand logos. First we have typographic logos, secondly we have graphic logos, and ultimately, we have imagotypes, the latter merging both typographic and graphic logotypes. The branding iconography we have found, the most futuristic even, is minimalistic (*WipeOut*), but the conventional forms apply. Even in TV shows (*Lost* [J.J. Abrams, Jeffrey Lieber, Damon Lindelof, 2004-10]), films (*Robocop*) and games (*Watchdogs*) from some decades ago still rely on pictorial and textual elements to seem more real world-like. The reason why this branding iconography keeps appearing is that it proves that, regardless of the type of virtual world we’re dealing with, and the epoch, brands are anchors.

Another relevant issue is that Forceville, for example, affirms that there is a dual nature in word and image, how they relate to each other (2002, 71). Others, such as Simon White, mention more “new trendy” phenomena such as “next-generation contextual advertising” (apud De Waele, 2013, LOC 266 de 2059). However, the fact is that, more or less customized ads, are tailoring their messages, more or less visual, in a more or less transmedial way, to reach consumers. This is why Molloy says “the line between content and advertising is sometimes blurred in games” (2014, LOC 2124 de 4186). Sometimes it is so blurred that we do not know if we are playing ads-on games or games on-ads.

Let’s retrieve what Vasilache says about semiotics: she says that as the study of signs and symbols as communication elements, it is essentially something that explains how people extract meaning from words, sounds and images. She also defends that semiotics’ principles, once applied to visual identity of brands, provide easy recognition, and, last but no less important, multiple layers of information (2012, 2).

Should we accept the barthesian model, then we have to see a distinction here: there is a more direct approach (literally) or more non-direct one (figuratively). The whole battle implies the “implicit” and the “explicit”, “denotation” vs. “connotation”. In Barthe’s language advertising is what is left once one erases the connotation signs ([1986/1964:29] in Forceville, 2002, 72). This means what was more straight, minimal, simple, consumer-directed. In the images we have observed the signs being more easily identifiable are simple, and we keep recalling them after playing the games, much as it happened with TV shows (*Lost*) and movies (*T2*) applying the same logic.

Right now, the problem is but one of associations, links, displays, messages carried, UX changed by ads that are not just shown but experience-confirming elements. Lury,

in her turn, believes that “brands as interfaces are a place (...) of interactivity, not of interaction” (2004, 6). What this means is that brands need to interface and interact, and that the reason why brands as a technology (Manovich), as a ‘medium’, or as new media (Manovich), need a place, is the very reason why they end up in cyberspace. In 2001, Lunenfeld was mentioning “brands are unfinished”. What better domain to establish themselves if not the digital, beta world of videogames? The other issue here, is that this “change” is modifying people, whom then become a triptic of consumer, user and player.

2 Case Studies

This paper presents a study whose purpose is to fully understand the relationship between gaming, commercials and interaction design, if there is an application of true or fake brands. In fact, the synergy between gaming and branding is what the study aims to explain best. The results presented here reflect the heuristic analysis made by experts in videogames, digital media and interaction design.

The methodology for this work envisioned not games that work explicitly as advertising or branding carriers, such as *Gran Turismo* or *Forza*, but games that provide digital experiences where the ads, or brand iconography, foment a real-world experience. In this sense, the games we have chosen are very diverse in platform, epoch and genre, though the common point stands as games in which ads resemble or act like real ads do. Also, the timeframe is very large, but the games we have examined are chosen in most cases amongst the games with better graphic hardware capabilities. The result is a more notorious graphic presentation of advertisement, which made easier our identification, pattern recognition and interlinking with media, design and user-experience theory.

For this paper we have examined Google’s Doodles, 11 movies, 2 TV shows and 18 videogames in which ads are displayed, either about fiction brands or real world brands. We have to assume, like Jhally, that advertising operates in order to create false needs (for manufacturers and not to consumers) (1995, 15). Much as this author states, advertising is mostly about the relationship “between” people and products (Ibidem, 16), since the goods are working out as “markers” of significant social categories (Ibidem, 21). However we have to say too that this ads-on games are more than advergaming or branding entertainment, due to the process of making narrative more believable, thus the ads consolidate the fiction world, the UX becomes reliable.

Data was collected from 24 young adults aged between 18 and 25 years old (Mean = 20.96 \pm 1.899) of the Portuguese air force military and Portuguese university. Twelve male soldiers, of different categories (1st Corporal, 2nd Corporal or Soldier) and twelve female university students, studying in the healthcare domain, residing in dormitories of the air base and the university were selected. Each participant will be approximately six (6) months with two months of personal contact between the principal investigator and volunteers, and the remaining time implying an impersonal touch through e-mails and mobile phone.

The bedrooms were in dormitories standard of an institution, which is the case of college students and military with 2 beds in each bedroom with the same equipment room conditions (i.e. bed, mattress, air conditioning system, light level and noise).

2.1 The Ads-on Games Analysis

When it comes to films and TV shows, many examples may be provided. For instance, in *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick, 1968) HAL 9000, the computer did not exist at the time in real world, whereas PAN AM (the airliner company) was real. In Ridley Scott's *Alien* (1979) Yutani, or the Weyland-Yutani Corporation, with its motto "Building Better Worlds", was fictive. Some years later, in *AVP - Alien vs. Predator* (Paul W.S. Anderson, 2004), the same fiction brands are displayed all over the sets. Other examples, like *The Amazing Spider-Man* (Marc Webb, 2012) reveal the evil Oscorp brand behind all conspiracy. In Christopher Nolan's *Batman* trilogy, the fictitious Wayne Enterprises, as in comics, makes a tie between Bruce Wayne's secret hero world and the real world New York city upon which Gotham city grounds are based. In *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982) the gigantic *Tyrell Corporation* is the manufacturer of android brand Nexus Cocoran, (Cocoran 2007).

Of course, many examples could be provided but certain films display brands in their aesthetic and narrative as well, from the start. *Charlie And The Chocolate Factory* (Tim Burton, 2005) sells the Wonka Chocolate bars. In the latest Andrew Niccol's film, *The Host* (2013) there is a brand playing with its own name: Store Brand. Some live-action films, though full of special effects, present fake brands; *Ironman* (Jon Favreau, 2008) shows Stark Industries (as in comics), but the sequel *Ironman 2* (Ibidem, 2010) reveals a new villain: Hammer - Advanced Weapons Systems. Even if we go back to cartoons like the *Looney Toons* (Warner Bros Animation, 1930-69), we are still witnessing fake brands like ACME every time the roadrunner and the coyote pick a fight.

The ground-breaking transmedia and post-narrative TV show *Lost* manages to introduce a new brand across all the plans of the so-called Dharma Initiative, which opens the box for Dharma Computers, Dharma Jumpsuits; not to mention the parallels of Oceanic Airways, Oceanic Airlines, and so on. In the recent Wes Ball film, *Maze Runner*, there is an army brand behind the playing of the maze (2014), called W C K D ["WICKED"]. Also, in the first of two films of *Prometheus* (I) Ridley Scott (2012) introduces again the romantic high-tech distopia of the "Alien" world being played out by characters working for Yutani, Weyland-Yutani Corporation. And again the motto repeats itself. In addition, RT01 Transport, Project Prometheus, USCSS Prometheus, among other references are shown on films and games that establish transmedia narrative link-ups.

Everybody watched *Pulp Fiction* (Quentin Tarantino, 1994) selling the Big Kahuna Burgers, but nothing compares to *Resident Evil* (AAVV, 2002-2016) films and games (Capcom, 1996-2016) and exploiting the evilness of the Umbrella Corporation. In the same trend, Paul Verhoeven's *Robocop* (1987) shows something big as well: OCP - OmniConsumer Products, which is revamped in José Padilha's latest version as Omnicorp in *Robocop* (2014). Between the 1980s and the late 1990s the trend of fake brands augments its path. In *The Terminator* (James Cameron, 1984) and *Terminator*

2: *Judgment Day* (Idem, 1991) Cyberdyne Systems is still the evil system, and evil brand. In both *Tron* (Steven Lisberger, 1982) and *Tron Legacy* (Joseph Kosinski, 2011) ENCOM is an overwhelming operating system designer powerhouse. Perhaps a virtual form of Google Doodled world?

When it comes to videogames some slogans are repeated. It happens in *Aliens: Colonial Marines* (2013). And in a weird way, we still see the displayed images of well-being (Jhally, 1995, 39). The revolution takes place in next-generation gaming, like in *Alien: Isolation* (2014). Many fictitious brands like Weyland-Yutani, Seegson, Daveport - RYE, Cuppa Joe's, Apollo; or Kerchner Buck, Koorlander, Sevastopol Spaceflight Terminal, and Xing Xang are presented. Others, such as Samani, Vista, The Planet Hopper, Souta Lager, Arious Computers, and Big Dog!; not to mention Watatsumi Efficient Machine Solutions, Towerlink, Tranquility and Seegson Credit Services. The bottom line here is that these brands are mostly about a supposed lifestyle, and they are mostly about technology, digital gear, services, food or cosmetics.

Says Frampton that "as living business assets", brands are something to be understood as being fluid, dynamic and somehow organic (2012, 2). This is what we see, brands across media recurring to the same semiotic language, making difficult to the viewer, user or player to fully understand which of them are real and which are not. Google's Doodles also play with this context. In *Battlefield 3* (2011), brands such as NYeye, LEAP, and WERKSHAFT are revealed like real brands. The majority is image-based. According to Jhally, modern advertising is characterized by the prevailing domain of image media (1995, 39).

In *Bioshock Infinite* (2013) Rolston Reciprocating, Rapture city, Ryan Industries, and the Plasmids as well, are part of brands existing all-around one single character. In *Borderlands* (2009) there is not much but Vladof propaganda. Same thing happens in *Fallout* (2013), since there is not much besides Nuka-Cola. Open-world games, like *Grand Theft Auto IV* (2008) uses fake brands to make the shopping world and the virtual cities more plausible, displaying brands like Sprunk, tw@ Internet Cafe and Pibwasser.

Some of the most notorious villain brands, are *Half-Life 2's* (2004) Black Mesa Research Facility, as in the antipode we have *Infamous: Second Son's* (2013) Roth Records. For thinkers like Zygmunt Bauman, a "Cyworld" (2011, 2) is a frightening cybernetic world extending itself. This is also exactly what one has in *Watchdogs* and in *Killzone: Shadow Fall*. The latter videogame by Guerilla Games (2013) reveals abstract totalitarian propaganda, and non existing brands like Three3, Ralph Von Vekta, Vekta City, and VSA. Brands outside the military theme like LEAF IT Coffee House, N-WORK ONE, Cocoon and Robionica are almost an excuse to make it look real and not a warfare simulator in the future.

Lets not forget that Rushkoff highlighted how twentieth century's had "dangerously compelling ideological narratives" (2013, Preface, 13–564, para.10). The trend of somehow dystopian brands reappears in *Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee* (Oddworld Inhabitants, 1997) with the Rupture Farms, and especially in the *Portal* games (2007-2011) with the AI of Aperture Science Laboratories menacing the player.

Minor examples are featured in *Red Faction* (2001) with the ULTOR political brand, or *Superfrog* (1993) for becoming almost an advergaming selling the real Lucozade drink (Elias, 2007). It gets weird, how between fake and real world brands end up

on games to consolidate the UX. For Appadurai, the “global” ‘mediascapes’ and the global ‘ideoscapes’ ([1990] apud Schroeder and Salzer-Mörling 2006, 86) are mostly relevant. In fact, videogames are becoming, more than films and TV shows, a real showcase for ideoscapes (landscapes of ideas) and mediascapes (landscapes of real brands), in our point of view.

One of the brightest examples of ads-on games is the First Person Shooter (Elias, 2009) *Syndicate*, a revamped version of an old school game (2012) where brands such as Aspari, Cayman Global, and mostly EuroCorp occupy a special spot. They are not just advertising nor branding. They are the gamespace itself. Once, Jean-Paul Sartre said that the future arrives at man through objects, in the same way it previously did before ([1976] in Jhally, 1995, 66). Some games are more than this. They are also future-focused (Rushkoff, 2013, Chapter 1, 26–564, para.9). One key example is Ubisoft’s *Watchdogs* (2013) showing MAPE, Blume brands in a world concerned with privacy and surveillance culture.

Relying on Freedman’s arguments, to wherever we drive our attention to, there is the story, the experience. Images become a meaningful text in their own right (apud Kackman et al., 2011, 207). This takes place in the *WipeOut* future-driven racing game for PlayStation Systems in the late 1990s and 2000s. From *WipeOut* (PSX-PS3) to *Wip3out* (1996), and also in *Wipeout HD* (2008), and in *Wipeout: Pure* (2005), highly modern brands [supposedly conceived in fictitious form by the The Designers Republic studio] like ADVANCE, BOOOND, ag-5 International, Goteki 45, Feisar, Icoros, [QIREX-RD], Assegai Developments, Auricom, MGD, PIRANHA, AG-5Y5 and QIRDX mesmerize the user-player audience. It is sure, for new media researcher Lev Manovich, that brands may be regarded as the effect of hyperlinking, which in fact is the principle driving interactive media (apud [2001, 61] Lury, 2004, 10). Thus, needless is to say, that much has to be thought of concerning user-experience.

During the heuristic analysis, we need to identify the participation of branding elements in the narrative content of the analysed videogames. This analysis allowed the experts to identify two main components for branding characterization:

- a. Neutral Branding: Related with the neutral, positive or passive participation of the branding on the narrative, in which one can verify the exposition of brands and companies’ products (fake or real products), only to draw up an aesthetical and realistic scenario (i.e. product posters in a movie theater).
- b. Evil Branding: Negative participation of the branding for the narrative content of the analysed videogames. In these cases, the companies that are presented on the videogames are responsible for the negative consequences presented on the narrative and usually are associated to the greed for profits, absence of scruples in scientific research, political propaganda through products and consumer goods and indifference to the consequences of the actions marketing and aggressive advertising.

This classification allowed experts to a better evaluation of the need to develop us fictitious brands related to the videogame. The Table 1 presents the results of the heuristic analysis of reference videogames from different game platforms:

What we conclude from this analysis is that the majority of videogames being resourceful to fictitious, fake brands, are the games in which graphic engines and game

Table 1. Heuristic analysis results for brands on games in most common devices

Games	Issue-product s	Issue-service s	Issue-propaganda	Neutral Brandin g	Evil Brandin g	Semiotic s	Real Brandin g	Fictitiou s Brands
Aliens: Colonial Marines	X	x	√	x	√	√	x	√
Alien: Isolation	X	√	√	x	√	√	x	√
Battlefield 3	√	√	x	x	√	√	x	√
Bioshock Infinite	√	x	√	x	√	*	x	√
Borderlands	X	x	√	x	√	√	x	√
Fallout	√	x	x	x	√	√	x	√
Grand Theft Auto IV	√	√	x	x	√	√	x	√
Half-Life 2	X	√	x	x	√	√	x	√
Infamous: Second Son	√	√	√	*	*	√	x	√
Killzone: Shadow Fall	√	√	√	x	x	√	x	√
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee	X	x	√	x	√	*	x	√
Portal	X	x	√	x	√	√	x	√
Portal 2	X	x	√	x	√	√	x	√
Red Faction	X	x	√	x	√	√	x	√
Resident Evil	X	x	√	x	√	√	x	√
Superfrog	√	√	√	√	*	√	√	x
Syndicate	√	√	x	√	x	√	x	√
Watchdogs	X	√	√	√	x	√	x	√
WipeOut	X	√	√	√	x	√	x	√
Wip3out	X	√	√	√	x	√	x	√
WipEout HD	X	√	√	√	x	√	x	√
WipEout: Pure	X	√	√	√	x	√	x	√

√ = Verified | X = Not verified | * = Not applied

narrative, and mechanics as well, are more recent. A feature of open world games and action-paced games is the resort to brand iconography or propaganda iconography to make the virtual world seem more credible and also aesthetic. Games in which the hardware allows massive environments, first or third person points of view, big narratives, immense mini-game puzzling and creative environments are also using very much fake brands, propaganda and colorful, high-tech design in their unravelings.

2.2 Gamification, Google Doodles and UX

According to Elali et al. (2012), the company’s mutations display a strategy needed for to establish their relevance in a highly competitive world, and turned itself into a fast-paced information rhythm. Research on branding present the term “customer engagement” (Bosovsky, 2013, 59), being one of the directives the positioning of a

brand in a corporation. Such engagement, mostly applied in the gamification process of a brand, it is most needed, in order to turn the client into a loyalty-based consumer, attached to the brand actions.

As the Web and IT advance, and mobile media, the usage of brand versatility as a means for expression and communication towards the public, in a more dynamic and participative mode in the computer grid, it becomes frequent as a brand philosophy in the present day's organization agenda (Kreutz, 2011, 2).

Until now, only one company dared to provide more than one configuration possibility to the mutations of the very logotype itself, without compromising its legibility and visibility. Google's choice in applying a versatile strategy for the brand reveals that, much as its users, their brand is a living entity, something playful, creative, aspired by the world and geeks (Elali et al., 2012, 200).

In 2010, Google, the search engine online, released one of its Doodle variations to pay a tribute to one of the most memorable games for 8bit generation players: *Pac-Man*. In this approach to the user, the brand transforms itself in a playable mutating logotype, its identity elements are mixed with the game scenario (Carvalho et al., 2014). Thus, Google unraveled more than a brand mutation mixing brands logos, ads and games.

With the mutating and playable brand approach a new experience was provided to Google users, not just occupying space on Google's homepage, but also triggering a strong appeal in emotional and communicational terms (Carvalho et al., 2014, 75). As we see, brands, games, user experience and the border between the non-real ad, or the real brand ad, and the IT is getting blurred.

Relying on the Analysis Model of Dynamic Identity (AMDI) (please see Table 2) developed by Carvalho (2014), the authors define a playable dynamic brand as a versatile identity, in which traces of a matrix signature may be observed; along with graphic data from the brand. In this sense, the brand gamification process is by no means limited to resorting to engagement elements, such as scoring, diversion, to stimulate a new emotional relationship between user and brand; whether it is through bonus campaigns, or actions mediated by apps; or even the use of advergimes in a wider-angle strategy for branding (Elias, 2007), which means a fusion across artifacts in digital media designing a new bond between brand signature, audience and corporate interests. Even if logotypes, ads, games, are fake, they are already rooting on a new ground where brands become games, and the secret for that is user experiences itself with a coherent and contemporary form, going beyond the insertion of audiovisual and interactive resources, coordinated by clear-focused goal narrative. Rules also propose the decision calling to the user in a certain time-space, and contemplate the player with quantitative results.

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Table 2. Final Model of analysis for dynamic, static, playful and toy-like brands

Mutation type	Authors	Characteristics
Static Brand	Paul Rand (1991), Per Mollerup (2000), Cauduro (2001), Elizete Kreutz (2005), Strunck (2007), Campos (2007), Rezende (2010), Ulrike Felsing (2010) Irene Nes (2012), Alina Wheeler (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeps signs of the original identity; It is consistent, contemporary and easy to remember; Allows flexibility of identity elements (logo, type, color) and also allows to be recognizable; Addition / subtraction of graphics or image, new features; Enables visibility and readability of the logo in the used media.
Dynamic Brand	Per Mollerup (2000), Strunck (2007), Andrea Pol (2012), Alina Wheeler (2012), Elizete Kreutz (2005), Ulrike Felsing (2010), Irene Nes (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The visuals elements are animated to electronic or digital media; Use sound or sound effects; Presents a lively narrative
Like a toy Brand	Elizete Kreutz (2005), Ulrike Felsing (2010), Irene Nes (2012) Vygotsky (1984), Santos (1999), Huizinga (1993),	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows to explore objects, discover new concepts; The user interacts with graphics; It has play activity, safe, out of ordinary life
Playful Brand	Huizinga (1993), Abt (1970), Avedon & Sutton-Smith (1971), Crawford (1982), Suits (1990), Costikyan (1994), Parlett (1999), Caillois (2001), Salen & Zimmerman (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are rules that limits the users; It has objectives and needs users' decision taking; It has quantifiable results, reward the user with visual elements without material gain; There is more than one level of interaction and challenge in a determined time / space

3 Conclusions

Results attained in the phase of the study allowed authors to conclude that, on one hand, the analysis made by the experts showed that there is a deep need to involve branding components to compose the narratological map of videogames that do not have characteristics of associate advertising to finance themselves (like in sports games and racing). It can be linked to the game designers needs in reproduce with high fidelity the reality of the consumer society to increase the immersion of the players and the players' empathy with the narrative of the game. On the other hand, the creation of false trademarks and fictitious companies is a common feature in all cases where there are the combination of negative factors to companies or products that are necessary for the context of the game.

Regarding real branding, there is a increased need for gamification of brands and actively associate them to the game, in other words, the brand of many companies ceased to be a backdrop to enhance the reality of the game and now becomes the game itself, through the playable branding. This new application can demonstrate that these two components (videogames and brands) are closely linked and require more attention from developers as the impact of both is usually ignored.

As a continuation of this study, it is being developed in Digital Game Design and Development Lab (G3Dlab at the University of Beira Interior - Portugal) a new research that aims at studying the association and the insights between real and fictitious brands made by the players during their interaction with videogames.

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