

## ABSTRACT

THESIS: A Usability Analysis of Video Games: The Development of Assessment Standards

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Video games, as the fastest growing media, need set usability design standards. In this context, this study was motivated by the following kinds of questions: What makes a standard console game good? What makes it too frustrating to play? Each company has developed its own standards which can vary greatly. Game producers learn from experience what to do and what not to do. However, smaller companies that may have only produced a few games are left to chance. Moreover, startup game companies may fail at a game that would have otherwise succeeded if they had only had a set of standards to follow. Companies like Microsoft, Capcom and Electronic Arts rule the gaming industry mainly due to the fact that they have discovered what works. This study employs *usability analysis* to identify standards for assessing video game effectiveness, efficiency and player satisfaction. Experienced video game players participated in an online questionnaire. Conclusions about effective, efficient, and satisfying video games are derived from questionnaire results. Of several major findings presented in this analysis, this study reveals that the beginning of the game is an imperative experience that can determine if a player continues the game.