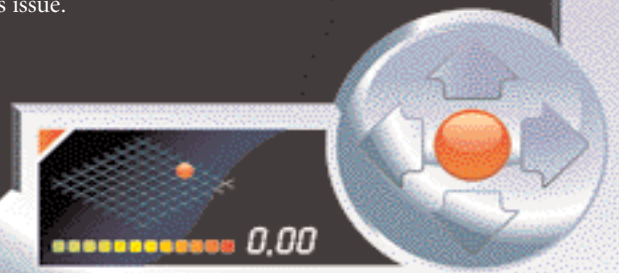


**EVENT TECHNOLOGY REPORT**

EM DOWNLOADS THE INDUSTRY'S TOP TECH TOOLS
THIS MONTH: GAMIFICATION

Every conversation in the event marketing industry eventually comes around to technology. You want to know what tools are out there to make your jobs easier, make your programs more successful and most crucially, make your target consumers love you the most. We have heard your calls for help and with this monthly series, EM's own Ken Briodagh collects and codifies the hottest, newest, most interesting, best (and sometimes worst) technological doohickies available to you. We'll even rate them for you on a scale of ("Skip it") to ("Do it now").

For this month's installment, EM's playing around with some of the top tools in gamification. Special thanks to Globacore (globacore.com) for helping with our education for this issue.

**THE BASICS**

In broad strokes, gamification is the art and science of taking all of the fun, competitive, engaging and addictive elements of gaming and applying them to a non-gaming context. Marketers have been getting in on the action through games that reward consumers and b-to-b constituents alike with rewards, points and recognition based on performance in the game—be it based on product knowledge, brand engagement

or corporate messaging. The first thing to know about gamification for event marketing is that anybody can do it poorly and cheaply. The tools are out there, and easily available. And that leads us to the second thing to know: the hardware and software are pretty much universal, unless you have the chops to make something new (and if you do, we're impressed). For hardware, you need high-end gaming-spec computers (AlienWare is a good place to

start for these). Some software options we'll detail below, but the most important thing that you'll need to make your stuff unique, playable, interesting and attractive enough to reap measurable rewards from participating consumers is creative content. So go out and hire a writer to helm this thing and craft your story, because without that bit of old-school storytelling, you can't effectively get your game on. Here are some software products worth exploring.

Unity 3D

The bit of software that makes modern games work is called the "game engine" and it's what drives all of the graphics. The engine that's the bees knees right now is called Unity 3D, and we'll give you the cheat codes, but first, The Facts:

Who: Unity

Website: unity3d.com

What: The newest version is Unity 4.2, and all you really need to know is that this is what makes your world look like it



exists in three dimensions (check out Deus Ex or Solstice Arena to see what we mean—both of which use Unity). Unity renders the walls, floors and

ceilings of your world, and makes the movement from one area to another smooth and lifelike. You need that. Now, if your game is a 2D side-scroller instead of a modern first person format, you don't need this, but you better be pulling off the retro thing, or you'll come off as lamity-lame-lame, newb.

Why: Well, this is pretty self-explanatory. You don't have the time or the resources or the expertise you need to make your own engine, and if you do, it probably won't be as good and it'll cost you way more, so this is one of

those times when it pays to buy off the shelf.

Compatible with: Everything. iOS, Microsoft, Android, Nintendo, xBox, literally everything. It even works on Linux and BlackBerry (remember them?).

Other choices: Look, Unity's not the only game in town by a long shot, and there are hundreds of other choices, and some are really great. Like Unreal—another good choice. But we recommend Unity because it's easy to use, really effective and we just like 'em. Do your due diligence. We know you will.

How much: \$1,500 for the Unity Pro suite, which will get you going on desktop, Windows store and web. For other formats, it'll be another \$1,500. And that's pretty cheap in the 3D rendering software world. But there are freeware options. In this case, you'll get what you pay for, peeps.

We say: 🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌 It's one of the best in the gaming biz, but things change so fast, Unity might be off its perch in a few months. Make sure you have an expert on staff—a techie who actually knows how these rendering softwares work.

Oculus Rift

OK, now that the basics are out of the way, we can show you something awesome that you can't even get yet: Oculus Rift. This is the gamer's dream gadget—one step away from the holodeck (yeah, that's a "Star Trek" reference, so what?). Don't worry, we'll feed you, baby birds, but first, The Facts:



Who: Oculus VR

Website: oculusvr.com

What: The Oculus Rift (we just love saying that name), is a virtual reality

headset with headphones and VR goggles designed for fully immersive gaming. OK, haters, we know you've seen these before, but this time, it looks like it actually works without making you puke or go blind.

Why you care: Come on. Cool factor alone is off the charts. And let's talk about immersion. If you were ever going to use something just because you could, this is it.

Problems: Well, you can't really use it yet. It's available for limited demos and trials and you can't really license or buy it, so there's no cost to report. You can bet it won't be too cheap at first, though.

We say: ????? There's no way to know, but don't worry, when this pops into the available arsenal, rest assured that EM will be first in line to check it out.

—Kenneth Briodagh

A large advertisement for Kentucky Trailer Technologies. The top half features a blue background with the company logo (a winged 'KT' inside a circle) and the text "KENTUCKY TRAILER TECHNOLOGIES". Below this, a large white arrow points to the right, containing the text "Want to expand your brand? Mobile Marketing Is The Answer." The bottom half of the ad shows a white mobile marketing trailer with the company logo and the text "MOBILE MARKETING TAKIN' IT TO THE STREET". A banner on the trailer reads "GAIN A NEW EXPERIENCE WITH MOBILE MARKETING". The trailer is parked in front of a building with large windows. At the bottom of the ad, there is a blue box with white text that reads: "Kentucky Trailer Technologies partners with you to take your brand mobile. Call us now to create the vehicle that moves your marketing strategy to the next level. Purchase or lease a fully branded, completely finished unit, or a 'ready-to-finish' shell. You can rely on our 70+ years of excellence to take your brand mobile. www.kytrailer.com 800-521-9701".