

# QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

Adam Oikonomopoulos, games concept manager in Intralot's Interactive Games division, outlines the company's slot design philosophy

/// "WE WORK TOWARDS OFFERING GAMING EXPERIENCES OF UTMOST EXCITEMENT" ///

**“CREATE more games, offer more winning chances, attract them all.”**

To some, it may seem as if game design and development is like running a factory of ideas that are generated and brought to life in different ways. It is often thought that by offering extensive winning alternatives more players will be intrigued, even for just a couple of rounds, thus increasing retailer sales.

At Intralot, however, we take a different approach to slot game creation. Here, quality is valued far more than quantity and so we work towards offering gaming experiences of utmost excitement.

With an excessive number of slot game alternatives already on offer, advancements in technology have helped us to determine that loyalty is the most critical ingredient in the effort to generate revenues. Loyalty on two counts: firstly in terms of game enjoyment, so that an individual will return on numerous occasions; and secondly in terms of overall game activity progression, particularly when it comes down to registered playing.

So what does it take to create an appealing slot game that will stand out from the competition?

## THE SPARK

To begin with, at Intralot, there is no formula on how to begin working on a new slot game idea. Sometimes we get briefed about the game we will be working on in terms of art style, theme/subject and mechanics. On other occasions, we are briefed about the mechanics and a possible theme and, on many occasions, it's the other way around - the creative team comes up with a concept mostly involving the subject and the possible mechanics for a bonus game.

/// "THIS RANGE OF DIFFERING APPROACHES GIVES OUR CREATIVE TEAM A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF FREEDOM AND OPPORTUNITY WHEN TACKLING GAMES" ///

This range of differing approaches gives our creative team a considerable amount of freedom and opportunity when tackling games. Most importantly, we ensure that all team members know they are creatively contributing to game inceptions and design processes, rather than simply executing requests.



## THE OBJECTIVE

Enriching our portfolio with exciting slot games of different art styles, themes and mechanics is what we do, with the common denominator being the high levels of quality. Our end products appeal to players that seek polished and well thought-through games that will overwhelm and boost their overall playing experience.

## INSPIRATION

To ensure that inspiration is as fluent and diverse as possible, our creative teams are comprised of talented individuals having different cultures and backgrounds. Keeping our eyes, ears and minds open is part of our mindset, as we may find inspiration almost anywhere. When starting off with a new game, we try to identify what can work with specific mechanics, what styles we haven't tried that may look promising, or how we can twist a classic slot game approach and turn it into something innovative.

## THE CHALLENGES

Working on slot games with engaging art elements is truly challenging. Creating games with exciting artwork, witty animations and amusing visual effects while keeping the amount of art elements to the minimum possible is by far the toughest task. When designing, we

keep it clean and simple, avoiding clutter and complexity that confuses players. This is why collecting timely and relevant feedback from players at every stage of the game experience is absolutely critical.

/// "SHOWING CONSISTENCY IN THE ARTISTIC STYLE OF GAME ELEMENTS ALSO DEMANDS GREAT ATTENTION, PARTICULARLY WHEN SEVERAL ARTISTS ARE WORKING ON THE SAME PROJECT" ///

Showing consistency in the artistic style of game elements also demands great attention, particularly when several artists are working on the same project. To ensure that we are all on the same page, we encourage the idea of all contributing individuals to be present right from the very start of the project. Everyone should know what the objective is and who they will be working with so that brainstorming and discussions on how to approach the request can begin straight away.

Being realistic with regards to what is feasible within a specific time frame is also challenging. When designing a new effect or a freshly conceived animation, there are questions that need to be asked before proceeding. Has the development team done this before? Do they need time to research and identify the optimal way to implement it? How long do they need? In essence, this means that we create a wishlist of things we would like to see further down the line and gradually, with proper communication between the design and development teams, we need to carefully plan out when and how to begin researching and testing new ideas.

/// "THIS MEANS THAT WE CREATE A WISHLIST OF THINGS WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE FURTHER DOWN THE LINE" ///

To conclude, although slot game play is relatively simple, the task of making the games contemporary and fascinating to players is complex. Even more complicated and challenging is increasing loyalty by building on quality rather than on a plethora of games. It can be arduous but we find it to be a more reliable and consistent revenue-generating path. □

*Adam Oikonomopoulos is the games concept manager in the Interactive Games division of Intralot. With more than 15 years' experience in game development as an artist and designer, he has undertaken various roles in a number of game development companies working on a wide range of games.*