

ROVIO CASE STUDY



Source: rovio.com

EXERCISE BRIEFING

First of all, nice discussions in the videos! And the videos – good stuff! Was fascinating to see so many different viewpoints, and how each team was bringing in their knowledge and experience to the videos. I'm a fan!

Hope these two asynchronous sessions give you more time to deeply reflect on what we have learned during the class so far. I guess everyone's rather busy with their team assignment, so thought it makes sense to start off the week with a bit more relaxed pace when it comes to the actual sessions.

And now to the case study. Today's case study, Rovio, is an interesting one, if you don't mind me saying. Antti Sonninen, the protagonist in the case study, is actually my friend and I followed him quite closely as he moved to Japan and started setting up the Rovio office there. It was an amazing journey, and we tried to capture it in the case study. Think it was a couple of years after the case study was published that Rovio decided to close down the office (Antti had by then moved to a different company, and after that he was heading Slush Tokyo for a while), so this case study is more like a historical reflection on what Rovio did and why, and could they have done something differently.

In any case, it is not uncommon for game development companies to open studios outside their home country, but why is this the case? Considering that most games are nowadays sold digitally (i.e. no physical presence in the host country is required), why do game development companies set up offices abroad? This line of thinking provides ample opportunities for business / strategy - related discussions!

Finally, responding to comments in the learning diaries, I have designed these case study sessions so that we maintain the same ethos that we've had in the classroom. Meaning not only creating outputs, but engaging with others and their outputs through meaningful conversations. So, this is an asynchronous session where focus is on interaction. Brilliant! 😊

A more detailed process description on the next page, but here's a summary of the deliverables:

- Session material and Rovio case study found on MyCourses, title screen
- By **6:00pm today Finland time**, send me your video -> uploaded to the playlist right afterwards
- By **10:00am Wednesday Finland time**, discussions on videos closed

Guidelines:

ANALYZE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Familiarize yourself with the session material on internationalization (found on MyCourses, top of the title screen) 2. Read the case study and discuss it in your team (accessible on MyCourses, title screen) 3. Team and challenge grouping (changed the groupings, as promised) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Local values v. Rovio values? To what extent a game development studio should / should not localize their foreign operations? Use Rovio as an example, and discuss what game development companies should take into account when setting up an office abroad. Freeman, Pikachu, Kirby b. Rovio's Japan office was given relatively lot of freedom, but perhaps too much? Perhaps it was a bit too detached from the headquarters? HQ – subsidiary relationship is quite often about freedom v. control, so what would you have done differently? What would be the business rationale here? Mario, Spyro, Zelda c. Localization – Rovio did release Angry Birds games more tailored to the Japanese market, but they weren't financially that successful. In many ways, consumer preferences are quite different in Japan (aesthetics, monetization, experiences, etc.), and in general there seems to be a divide between the kind of games played in the East and the West. But this is not a tale of national cultures! So please go beyond that to analyze Rovio's games from a Japanese perspective – how would you improve them (e.g. aesthetics, monetization) to better match local needs? Devise a marketing campaign for Rovio in Japan. Sonic, Samus, Bowser
CREATE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Create a 5 to 10-minute video in which you cover your challenge (format up to you!) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Send the video to me via email by 6:00pm Finland time, and include the following information: title + team name, brief description b. Videos will be uploaded to an unlisted playlist here: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUkXLl9xG14w8o1m2RQzkhezrTlvDhbea (no one else will be able to see them, only us in this course)
DISCUSS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Individually, participate in a discussion in at least one video in each challenge outside your own (e.g. if in a, discuss 1 b and 1 c) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Also make sure there are roughly even contributions to each video (e.g. if you see two videos with 5 and 0 comments, participate at least in the latter) b. Respond to questions and comments in your video c. As mentioned above, focus on meaningful conversations, not just dropping a comment just for the sake of it d. Discussions open till noon Wednesday Finland time <p>I'll be joining the conversations, as well, and, as usual, if you have any questions on today's exercise, let me know!</p>