



Source: frogmind.com

EXERCISE BRIEFING

Up until this point we have been devoting brief attention to different game development companies, and now it's time to focus more deeply on two Finnish game development companies: Frogmind (today) and Rovio (tomorrow). Yes, they both come from Finland, but they operate globally, and I've had the pleasure of collecting primary data from both of these companies together with my colleagues Irina and Fernando. Just to be explicit about the reasons why these companies were chosen as case studies. In short, striking a balance between the Finnish and the global context 😊

I initially met one of the co-founders of Frogmind, Johannes Vuorinen, in the spring of 2013 in New York City. He was there presenting their company and game (BADLAND) to local media and investors at an event organized by the Finnish Consulate in New York. I had a minor supporting role in making the event happen, hence I was able to interview Johannes afterwards. Back then, I was surprised to hear that during the event some investor approached Johannes with intentions to invest in Frogmind, but Johannes kindly turned them down. I was shocked! Why would you turn down money? Soon afterwards, BADLAND started selling like hotcakes, and although their success wasn't set in stone, it was interesting to see how Frogmind wanted to focus on making games instead of achieving growth.

But now things have changed! Supercell acquired a majority stake of Frogmind a couple of years ago, and think this resonates nicely with what we have covered in the class: as user acquisition costs increase and premium games are losing popularity to free-to-play, it's difficult to stay alive as a single, independent, game development studio. Hence, this case study is all about strategic matters!

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:

- Frogmind case study found on MyCourses, title screen
- By **6:00pm today Finland time**, send me your video -> uploaded to the playlist soon afterwards
- By **10:00am Tuesday Finland time**, discussions on videos closed

Guidelines:

ANALYZE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the case study and discuss it in your team (accessible on MyCourses, title screen) 2. Team and challenge grouping (we'll be switching the groupings for the Rovio case study) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management and organizational growth: Offer a plan for managing organizational growth of Frogmind by reflecting on: How was organizational transformation of Frogmind as a lean start up implemented? What did the founders do along the way to ensure Frogmind's success? Taking into account founders' initial dreams and visions, what could be done to ensure the company stays true to its values no matter how large it grows? Moreover, how many employees Frogmind should employ? Is there a limit? – Freeman, Bowser, Mario b. Product portfolio strategy: Offer a plan how to manage and develop further Frogmind's product portfolio. Reflect on the following: Frogmind started with one game, but now they have broadened their portfolio. Looking at their most recent releases, it seems they are building on their previous games' success. How would you evaluate this strategy? Given that the game industry is often a hit-driven industry, how could Frogmind develop their product portfolio and competences to ensure business longevity? Make a SWOT analysis of their current product portfolio and suggest ways for them to move forward. How can Frogmind ensure availability of sufficient capabilities and resources for expansion of product portfolio? – Pikachu, Sonic, Zelda c. Strategic partnerships: Offer a plan to build on benefits of existing and potentially future partnerships. Reflect on the following: Supercell is one of the most successful mobile game companies in the world, so in theory it seems like a good decision to partner with them. Analysing Frogmind's journey so far, why it entered the partnership with Supercell? Was it the right strategic move at that time? Or were there better alternatives? How can Frogmind utilize further this partnership in the future? Would Frogmind benefit from initiating new partnerships? If so, which ones? – Kirby, Spyro, Samus
CREATE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. 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"> 4. 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 10:00am Tuesday 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>