


Chapter 5

Digital Game–Based Learning as a Tool for Intercepting Stakeholders' Tendencies

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ABSTRACT

This conceptual chapter proposes an innovative way for organisations to engage new stakeholders through video games. This concept requires an explanation of the psychological mechanisms that permit an effective learning process through games and video games. In the educational field, simulation-based video games are effective learning tools because they motivate gamers-learners through an immersive virtual experience to improve themselves in competitive challenges. Shifting to the organisational dimension, video games can be used to upgrade primary stakeholders. An organisation is interested in establishing new relationships with new stakeholders and enhancing the relationships with existing stakeholders. Nowadays, stakeholders want to feel closer to organisations and prefer to establish relationships with those organisations which reflect their values and ethical principles. Thus, organisations must intercept these values and principles to engage existing and new stakeholders, and video games can contribute to helping the organisation achieve this goal.

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to propose an innovative way to use digital game-based learning in the organisational dimension, proposing the subject as a tool to improve the interrelation (by engagement) with all of its stakeholders, internal and external. On the internal side, DGBL can be used as it is used in the educational field. At the same time, for what concerns the external stakeholders, it could be a useful way to intercept their tendencies and values by making them participate in a virtual version of the organisation. These purposes can be obtained by relying on the intrinsic characteristics of video games and the effects they have on human minds and behaviours.

The notion of stakeholder emerged in management and organisational debate during the 1980s (Freeman, 1984). From that, stakeholder theory became important in the scientific literature, organisations' dynamics, and the business world.

Nowadays, the formalisation of a stakeholder engagement plan is an important help for organisations because it identifies their stakeholders and concerns (Bruce & Shelley, 2010). Organisations must create relationships once their stakeholders are identified, adopting the best approach for every stakeholder category. Organisations aim not only to establish relationships with new stakeholders but also to enhance the relationships with existing ones. Literature shows that managers of those organisations that continuously need to update their employees sometimes resort to digital game-based learning. This approach uses video games as educational tools.

The use of games and video games for educational purposes is a topic that has a central role in the scientific debate.

The industry of video games has become one of the most prolific in the world, competing to the one of movies (Wang et al., 2008). Video games can create a very immersive environment that motivates gamers to continue playing and improve themselves to win challenges and overcome obstacles, being motivated by success (Prensky, 2003).

According to Yee (2006), people play video games for three main reasons: relationships created with other gamers, achievement of in-game objectives and competition, and the identification gamers have with virtual reality. The same reasons motivate the educational properties of video games. Video games enhance learning through visualisation, experimentation, and creativity (Betz, 1995), all elements fed by the intrinsic motivation in video games.

Regarding the educational aspect of video games, it is important to establish the learning goals and choose the proper typology of video games. For example, managerial games are the most used in business and accounting education (Dickinson & Faria, 1997) because of the faithful reality they can build for gamers.

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