Winning with
Gamification

Tips from the Expert's Playbook

BI WORLDWIDE | BUNCHBALL®

You've optimized for search engines and analytics—but are you influencing and optimizing how your users engage with your site? "Gamification"—the process of adding game dynamics to sites and services—is an important and powerful new strategy for influencing and motivating groups of people. Using a gamification platform, you can optimize for users in the same way you've optimized the other elements of your site or community- and directly influence howthose users behave.

But blindly adding game mechanics to your site may not give you the results you're looking for. To truly engage users and create long-term loyalty, the gamification solution you deploy needs to make sense for your business. Bunchball has been delivering gamification solutions for over four years, and we've learned a great deal about what makes gamification successful.

This guide collects many of the tips and tactics that our gamification experts have pulled together over the years, providing you with a set of best practices to guide you as you develop your own gamification strategy those users behave.

1.　Getting Started

IS GAMIFICATION THE SAME AS DESIGNING A GAME?
Gamification should never be confused with game design. You are not creating a deep, immersive experience like Call of Duty or Halo. Instead, you are "gamifying," or integrating game mechanics into your site, service, content, online community or campaign with the goal of increasing participation.

Since you are enticing a user to go deeper, designing a Gamification system requires you start with simple rules, attainable goals and near term wins.

WHY DOES GAMIFICATION WORK?
Gamification works to satisfy some of the most fundamental human desires: recognition and reward, status, achievement, competition & collaboration, self-expression, and altruism. People are hungry for these things both in their everyday world and online. Gamification taps directly into this.

CAN GAMIFICATION REPLACE GOOD CONTENT?
No, your website needs to stand on its own and be compelling for visitors. Game mechanics should enhance the site by adding an element of community, competition, and fun that engages your users. For example, no amount of gamification is going to enhance a news site with outdated new.

DO I NEED A COMMUNITY?
Gamification usually requires a supporting Community. The fundamental human desires we mentioned, such as status and self-expression, are bolstered when others bear witness to it. It is also important to have other people with whom to compete and compare accomplishments. Of course, there are some exceptions like banking websites, where people want to maintain privacy. But as a general rule, humans want to interact and compete with others.

2. Mapping Your Goals with Your User's Interests is Essential

UNDERSTAND YOUR BUSINESS GOALS
After you have taken into account human nature, quality content and community, it is time to think about how gamification can align with and impact your business goals. Specifically, you should focus on the activities on your site that drive business value. These might be directly connected to

revenue, like purchases, page views or ad impressions. Or they may indirectly affect business value, like inviting friends, sharing content, or registering.

UNDERSTAND YOUR USERS
Everything you are creating ties back into understanding your user: who they are, what they do, why and how they do it. Understand the drivers that get them to take a specific action, and profile what it means to be "fan x." What does it mean to a music fan? A sports fanatic? A news junkie?

MIND THE GAP!
Mind the gap! When creating your gamification solution, make sure you design something that fits in the middle between the user experience and your business goals.

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3. What do you want your users to do?

PRIORITIZE THE ACTIONS YOU WANT YOUR USERS TO TAKE
The best way to approach this is with astandard ranking system. Once you have identified the Actions for your program, you will want to rank them in order of value. Start with the least valuable action and give it a factor of '1.' Working from there, assign relative values to everything else. For example, commenting on a blog post is relative value of '1' while registering is 10x more valuable. Included is a sample ranking system.

HOW DO I DETERMINE SUCCESS METRICS?
Make sure you have all measurement infrastructure in place on day one. This way, you can track user behaviors and be assured that the gamification

strategy you've put in place is working. It's always a good idea to run in silent mode before the program launches, so you can begin to establish baseline metrics to measure against.

WHY RUN IN SILENT MODE?
For baselining purposes, you may want to track user actions completely behind the scenes before you launch your program. Once you have established baseline metrics to compare against, you can begin awarding points and badges, reflecting and newsfeeds, and measuring the uplift that gamification provides. In addition to creating a set of baseline metrics to use in measuring the success of your Gamification program, all this initial groundwork will help you decide the best tactics.

4. Making Your Point(s)

SHOULD I ASSIGN USERS POINTS FOR THEIR ACTIONS?
Points are a great way of rewarding a user for doing something that is of value to you (i.e., purchase, download, share). Of course, points can also be a way for users to reward each other. Ultimately, they should work as a way to give users some form of spending power.

HOW MANY POINT SYSTEMS SHOULD I USE?
This depends on what your specific business goals are. There are different kinds of point systems used for different business purposes, including:

BASIC POINTS
Basic Points are earned by participation and are usually spendable on virtual or physical goods.

EXPERIENCE POINTS
Earned by participation, Experience Points are constantly increasing and the point total is never deducted. Experience Points are not spendable.

PREMIUM POINTS
Only available via a cash transaction, Premium Points are usually spendable on "premium" virtual or physical goods.

Already logged in with your Bravo account? Start earning points now! Here's how:

What To Do:	Points You'll Earn:
Enter the On-Air Trivia Sweeps	500
Watch a Video Clip	40
View a Photo Gallery	40
Watch a Full Episode	100
Read a Bio	40
Read a Blog	40
Online Trivia Game (coming soon!)	1-20 Per Question

HOW DO I NAME MY POINTS?

The most important consideration is to pick a name that makes it clear whether the points are spendable or not (for example: credits vs. points, bucks vs. tokens). Also, if you are using multiple currencies systems, the naming system should reflect which one is more valuable (i.e. silver tokens vs. gold tokens).

HOW DO I CREATE A POINT SCALE SYSTEM?

A "point scale" represents the specific point amounts you reward to users for completing.

HOW MANY POINTS SHOULD I GIVE FOR EACH ACTION?

Keep in mind the absolute number.

SHOULD USERS START OUT WITH ANY POINTS?

Always consider starting users out with an initial point bank so they are able to immediately experience spending power. If you have historical data, you can give them credit for participation before the 'game' began.

SHOULD POINTS EVER RESET?

Some programs may be finite, such as ones tied into a marketing campaign or TV season. In this instance, a reset will help promote an urgency to spend. If your points have a dollar value attached, and you need users to spend them, this is another instance where a deadline for point spend should be considered.

HOW CAN USERS SPEND THEIR POINTS?

The common executions are virtual goods, digital goods (i.e. music downloads) and physical goods. Points can also be used to unlock access to special content, often times with a time- limited twist.

CAN USERS BUY POINTS AND HOW SHOULD I SELL THEM?

If you are considering selling points, make sure you are offering users something desirable to buy with them. Also, if points are being sold in different packages, offer discounts for the bigger package.

WHAT ARE CURRENT POINTS VS. LIFETIME POINTS?

Current Points usually refers to an immediate, spendable balance. Lifetime Points is how many points the user has earned in their lifetime. The Lifetime Points number never decreases and is an indicator of status and seniority in a community. This is also often used as a basis for Levels.

My Points	
Lifetime Points	1,160
Available Points	880

5. Levels Keep Users Coming Back for More

WHY USE LEVELS?

The concept of levels is easy to grasp for users as they are also used in the "offline" world. Karate belts, job titles, and Frequent Flyer programs are just some of the examples. They are a shorthand indicator of status in a community and show that you should be afforded respect for your accomplishments.

HOW DO PEOPLE LEVEL UP?

One way users can level up is through their lifetime points. Once they reach a set number of points, they progress on to the next designated level.

Alternatively, you can select internal criteria or a task specific to your business objectives as a milestone to progress to the next level. Another option is a hybrid approach, mixing points and tasks to allow the users to progress.

HOW MANY POINTS SHOULD I USE BETWEEN LEVELS?

When spacing the levels out, consider making the first few in fast, easy progression. This is a great way to get users engaged quickly. After that, the level should be spaced out further and become harder to achieve. When plotted on a graph, your level structure should resemble a hockey stick.

WHAT SHOULD I NAME MY LEVELS?

Try to select labels that distinguish the prestige between each level. While using numbers is the easiest, clever, intuitive names tied into the theme of your program can be very effective.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO WITH LEVELS?

One suggestion for keeping users engaged is offering unlockable content and abilities once they reach a certain level. Another idea is making users work to maintain their position within that level. Similar to a Frequent Flyer Program, this will require users to participate in order to maintain their status and encourage them to come back and engage with your site or service.

Get Foodie Points every time you place an order or unwrap a badge. Earn even more by referring your friends or tweeting your order.

1,000 Foodie Points to belly up!

#	Level	Foodie Points	Coupons Unlocked
1.	Nibbler	0	$1, $3
2.	Forager	1,500	$2, $5
3.	Grazer	4,000	$3, $10
4.	Sampler	7,500	$4, $15
5.	Nosher	12,500	$5, $20
6.	Snacker	20,000	$6, $25
7.	Slurper	30,000	$7, $30
8.	Muncher	50,000	$8, $40
9.	Chomper	80,000	$9, $50
10.	Gobbler	150,000	$10, $60
11.	Feaster	250,000	$11, $75
12.	Savorer	500,000	$12, $100

6. Make Badges Make Sense
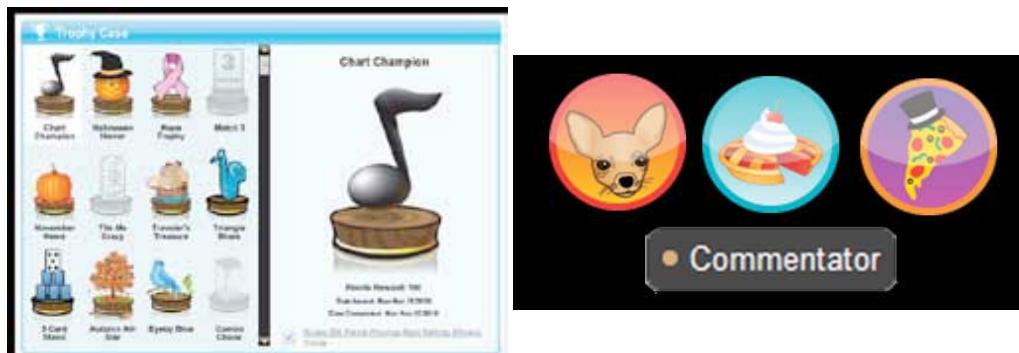
WHY USE BADGES OR TROPHIES?

Badges should tie directly into your business goals and to what users care about and are proud of. As a game mechanic, they deepen engagement with users. They also encourage exploration of your site, even mastery. They provide that sense of achievement we have already discussed as being a core human value. Like other core game mechanics, Badges can also be used to encourage users to take a specific action.

HOW HARD SHOULD IT BE TO EARN BADGES AND TROPHIES?

Similar to levels, badges should start off being easily obtainable. As the game progresses, they should get progressively harder to earn. Some badges can be "aspirational," requiring certain prerequisites such as achieving a certain level or owning another badge or virtual good.

WHAT SHOULD BADGES AND TROPHIES LOOK LIKE?

When designing a badge or trophy, make sure it is visually appealing and eye-catching. The badge should also be relevant to the audience and the theme of the program. For example, the badges earned on casual gaming site POGO would never have the same look and feel as those earned on Q&A programmer site Stack Overflow.

7. Getting the Rewards Right

WHAT DEFINES REWARDS?

A reward can be anything that motivates your users: Points, Badges, Trophies, Virtual Items, Unlockable Content, Digital Goods, Physical Goods, Coupons, etc.

WHEN DO I REWARD A USER?

This is based on your business objectives and creative planning. Here are some reward examples:

Every Time — Every time you watch a video, you earn 10 points.

After X Times — After you watch 10 videos, you get a trophy.

After X Times in Y Hours — Watch 24 videos in 24 hours, and receive the "Vidiot Badge."

Score Higher than X — Score 90 or more on the quiz, and receive 100 points.

Time Limited — Scarcity drives completion. The clock is ticking! Now or never...

SURPRISE AND DELIGHT WITH REWARDS

Don't be afraid to create an "information gap" with a few special "Easter Egg" rewards that don't explain the actions required to earn them. These "surprise and delight" rewards are powerful motivators because they tap into our natural tendency toward curiosity and hope. Surprise rewards also help nurture the Community. Excited users are likely to share information with each other and socialize, getting participants more deeply involved in the community elements of your gamification solution.

HOW DO I PREVENT USERS FROM GAMING THE SYSTEM?

The more excited users are about rewards, the more incentive they will have to try and game the system. You can prevent this upfront by designing a system that takes fraud into account and puts some controls in place like time- based limits (hourly, daily, etc.). Also, consider the natural frequency for the Actions you put in place. Extend that by X% for certain extreme cases and then communicate these reward limits in your rules. Most importantly, enforce these rules on your site.

8. But Wait—There's More...

SHOULD I USE REAL-TIME FEEDBACK?

Real-time feedback is a great way to instantly recognize and respond to your users' accomplishments. These notifications can be used to suggest the next action and draw users down the participation chain. Real-time feedback also helps reinforce the path of the program and reminds them of things to work towards.

SHOULD I USE NEWSFEEDS?

Newsfeeds are a great way to promote the content being consumed by particpants, the activity on the site, and the most active users. As a best practice, consider making your newsfeeds clickable and in a high-traffic, high-profile area.

WHY USE GROUPS & TEAMS?

When you get users to compete and collaborate as part of something bigger, it increases the stakes, adds another level of accountability and is a dynamic motivator. In a best-practice implementation, a user's individual achievement should be rolled up under the group or team's success and highlighted in inter and intra Group leaderboards and newsfeeds.

WHY USE LEADERBOARDS?

Leaderboards give users the feeling of "fame" and "status." They also give users the chance to compete and compare with other members or players. If this is a core focus of your community or program, they can be very powerful motivators to get visitors to take the actions you want them to. Leaderboards are certainly not a "one- size-fits all" game mechanic. There are several types to consider, based on the design of your site:

Site-based - Comprises the entire site and all members. Keep in mind, this can intimidate "newbies" who may be worried about their chances of competing with top performers.

Friend-based — A leaderboard that is comprised of just the users' friends and social circle.

Time-based — A time-limited board that focuses on a set time period such us one day, one week, etc.

Me-based — The most inclusive form, this focuses on just the user and approximately 5 or so users above and below them.Should I use real-time feedback?

Real-time feedback is a great way to instantly recognize and respond to your users' accomplishments. These notifications can be used to suggest the next action and draw users down the participation chain. Real-time feedback also helps reinforce the path of the program and reminds them of things to work towards.

9. Do Virtual Goods Make Sense For Your Site?

WHY USE VIRTUAL GOODS?

A key consideration to your gamification strategy is whether or not virtual goods fit with your objectives. Virtual goods are great for point "burn" – something for users to put their points towards. When adding virtual goods to your program, be prepared to go 100% with your commitment. You will need to manage inventory, merchandise goods and keep your virtual stock moving.

DON'T FORGET GIFTING!

Users also feel obligated to return the favor and complete the loop. Throughout the process of gifting, users will be exploring your site further and increasing page views as they look for this feature, discover new areas, and engage in the community

HOW SHOULD I PRICE MY VIRTUAL GOODS?

When pricing virtual goods, make sure you are matching the scale of how you are rewarding points. If you have limited edition and special items, these should come with a higher value. There should also be aspirational, high-cost items that are highly-desirable and encourage ongoing participation on the site.

DON'T FORGET GIFTING!

When thinking about virtual goods, don't forget about gifting. Gifting allows users to send virtual gifts to each other. This is an incredibly powerful mechanic as it drives reciprocal interaction as a way to signal friendship or "interest." People also value being altruistic, and virtual gifting is a

CAN I MAKE MONEY SELLING VIRTUAL GOODS?

Realistically, you are not likely to make a substantial amount of revenue with virtual goods. Virtual Worlds and online games typically see the most revenue from virtual goods. The purchase of items for an avatar or the sending of virtual gifts is often the core of these sites, where meeting people, equipping your avatar, and dressing up your virtual self helps drive the "game."

SHOULD I HAVE A SECONDARY MARKET FOR VIRTUAL GOODS?

If your site is having phenomenal success with the virtual goods portion of your program, you may consider a secondary market where users can resell their virtual goods to each other. One of the key benefits is a secondary market often drives the value of the primary.

10. Mobile, Social and Geo

WHAT ABOUT MOBILE?

Mobile is great addition to your program when you can tie together the entire experience cross-platform.
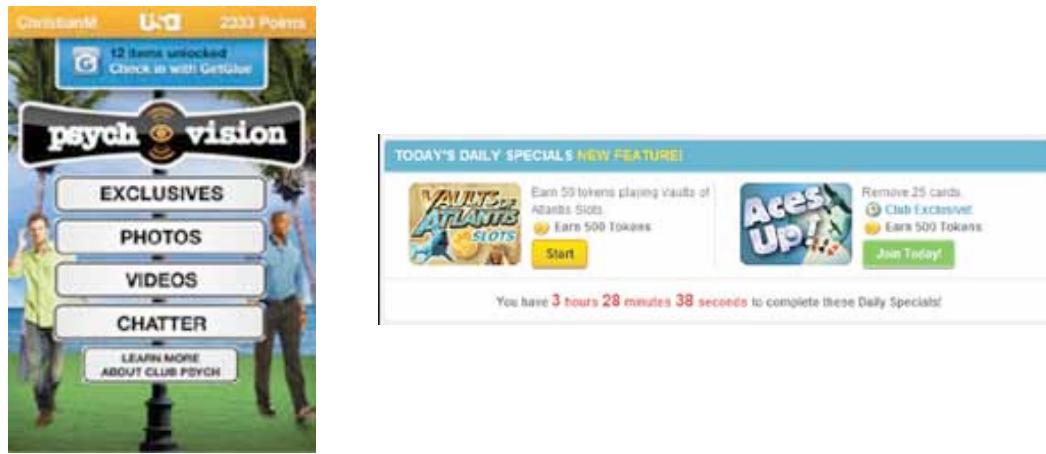
WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social Media is a great way for users to broadcast their achievements to their social circle, while potentially expanding your Community. You can also tie rewards directly into social missions, such as rewarding users for sharing content on

WHAT ABOUT GEO-LOCATION?

Gamification tools and platforms are now available that allow you to design and develop your own social applications to incent and reward activity at specified geographic locations. You can now have users "check in" at stores, restaurants, events, and other locations, and give them points or badges for doing so. You can Facebook or Twitter. Earning a badge for sharing with a large number of friends is one way to encourage users to spread the word. Increasing that reward for users whose friends come back to the site and register promotes relevant social sharing. also reward participants for user-generated content such as posting their own tips, recommendations, ratings and reviews for the places they visit.

You can also create a mobile check-in rewards system using QR Codes, a two-dimensional matrix barcode that can be scanned by smartphones. Scanning the QR code can take the user to a URL, add points to their account, or send a discount coupon to their phone for use at the site.

Putting It All Together

HOW COMPLICATED IS IT TO GAMIFY?
The complexity of your program depends on factors including your content, your audience, your business goals, and what gamification tactics you want to use.

HOW DO I GET PEOPLE TO REGISTER?
Registration is one of the most common business goals. There are a couple of Gamification tactics you can use to encourage visitors to register. For example, track and reward unregistered users. Then, notify them of their rewards, and let them know that unless they register or sign in they will lose them. Since we're all inherently loss averse, users are likely to join to continue earning.

HOW DO I GET PEOPLE TO COME BACK MORE FREQUENTLY?
Once they have taken the leap and registered, you want to make sure they come back and come back often. The appointment dynamic is a technique to encourage repeat visits; requiring them to come back at certain times in order to receive rewards. Use features like newsfeeds and real-time feedback to remind users of new features or the next badge or level. And if there is a team or group involved, remind them of their ongoing obligation to do their part to contribute to the success of their team.

WHAT IF THEY DON'T WANT TO "PLAY?"
People who don't want to participate, won't. Designing a system that appeals to a variety of personality types within your demographic will help ensure adoption.

IF EVERYBODY USES IT, WILL USERS GET TIRED OF GAMIFICATION?
It's a similar story to the evolution of social media. For example, some New York Times site visitors may choose to use their Facebook and Twitter social features to engage in discussions, comment and share. Other site visitors may read articles of interest and leave. The same basic concept applies for gamification.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO ANALYZE DATA?
Extremely! You should always be tracking and monitoring the important User Actions that are closely tied to your business goals. Use that to identify user patterns, and make adjustments to optimize your program.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO WITH THE DATA?
Once a user has chosen to register and participate, you can identify metrics such as number of actions completed, points earned, type and sequence of missions completed, how users spend points, and what they buy. With this information in hand, you can do things like segment and profile your audience, understand which types of game mechanics drives which valuable actions, and drive a gamification

strategy that maximizes your ROI. If you've standardize on one consistent user ID for online activity and offline purchase, you can capture a rich set of behavioral data, and create a 360 degree consumer profile.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO GET OUT OF USING GAMIFICATION?
If your program is well-executed, expect an increase in key metrics like time on site, page views and return visits. Based on your vertical, this can also mean metrics like subscriptions, customer acquisition or products sold. You are also creating a customer base that is willing to engage with your content and brand, something your competition may not yet have. And when done right, Gamification provides real-world, actionable insights; data you can use to continue to optimize your program. One of the key things to keep in mind is Gamification is an emerging market and you have the ability to use it as a true differentiator for your site, service, content, community or campaign.

About the Nitro Gamification Platform

The Nitro gamification platform is a highly scalable and reliable Cloud-based service for gamifying websites, social communities, and mobile applications – it has served over 80 million unique users and 4 billion transactions to date. Nitro's flexible architecture enables our customer's engineering teams to get up and running quickly, while our powerful administration tools empower the site production and marketing teams with real-time control over online user behavior. The platform delivers the industry's most comprehensive set of game mechanics.

THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED GAMIFICATION ENGINE:

Nitro is designed to make it easy for you to offer meaningful experiences to your users. Highly flexible and scalable, Nitro can be customized to your needs, but offers intuitive, easy set-up. Core Nitro elements include:

APIS: For tracking user behavior and retrieving generated data, such as leader boards and newsfeeds. (These can be accessed via REST, JavaScript, and Flash.)

COMPONENTS: For easy set-up and implementation, including an avatar builder, virtual room builder, trophy case, a toolbar and more. We have our own markup language, NML, which enables you to embed any Nitro content into your site without needing to write code.

ADMIN UI: Where you can configure your installation and generate reports. Once your engineering team has integrated Nitro into your site, it's easy for site producers and the marketing team to change incentives, rewards and behavior, without needing any additional engineering assistance. They can also access Nitro's powerful Analytics function to generate campaign data.

EASY SET-UP AND IMPLEMENTATION

ENGINEERS: Use the Nitro APIs (REST, JavaScript, Flash, Nitro Markup Language) to instrument your site and embed widgets and other data. For quick implementations, our Toolbar handles all the user-facing components, leaving you to just track the behaviors that you want to encourage.

DESIGNERS: Create assets for trophies, virtual goods, widget skins, and notifications, and insert them all into the system via the Admin UI.

MARKETERS: Set up the business rules for rewards and messaging in the Admin UI, monitor results with Nitro Analytics, and iterate.

CONSTANT EVOLUTION

There is a Nitro release every quarter, with new functionality that is immediately available to customers. By using Nitro, you are future-proofed.

About Bunchball

BI WORLDWIDE's Bunchball Nitro is the industry's leading engagement technology powered by gamification. Purpose-built for the enterprise, BI WORLDWIDE's proven engagement solutions motivate employee, partner and customer behaviors while delivering the performance intelligence needed to drive business results. An early visionary, Bunchball wrote the book on gamification with the 2013 best seller Loyalty 3.0, and is widely credited for numerous market innovations, including a patent for Gamification as a Service. More than 400 enterprise customers rely upon Bunchball for the company's expertise, innovations and proprietary analytics that deliver proven business results, and Bunchball is the partner of choice to industry leaders. In April 2018, Bunchball was purchased by BI WORLDWIDE to increase its impact on employee motivation and sales effectiveness. Learn more at www.biworldwide.com/gamification, read the blog at www.biworldwide.com/blog, or follow @biworldwide on Twitter.

www.biworldwide.com
U.S. Patent No. 8,768,764
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