

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
(ON GAME INNOVATION)**



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EDITED BY ANNAKAISA KULTIMA AND KATI ALHA

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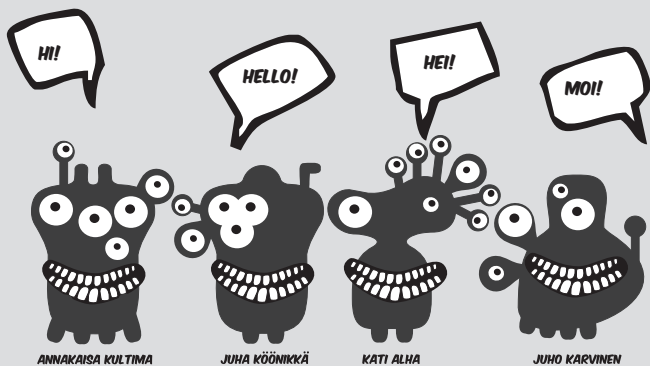
This book is an adaptation of the Games and Innovation (Galn) and Games Industry Innovation Processes (GIIP) projects combined research report: Kultima, A. & Alha, K. (Eds.) The Changing Faces of Game Innovation. Galn and GIIP Research Project Report. TRIM Research Reports 4, University of Tampere, 2011.

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ANNAKAISA KULTIMA

JUHA KÖÖNIKKÄ

KATTI ALHA

JUHO KARVINEN



HI!

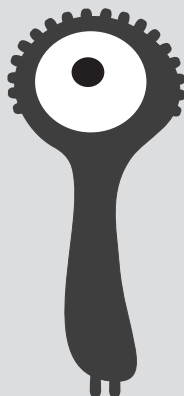
MY NAME IS GIIPSTER AND MY FRIEND HERE IS A GAIN DEVELOPER. WE WANTED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT GAMES. AND NOT ONLY ABOUT GAMES, BUT HOW THEY ARE MADE. WE READ BOOKS AND THEY DID NOT ANSWER TO OUR MANY QUESTIONS. WE WANTED TO KNOW MORE.

WE ASKED.

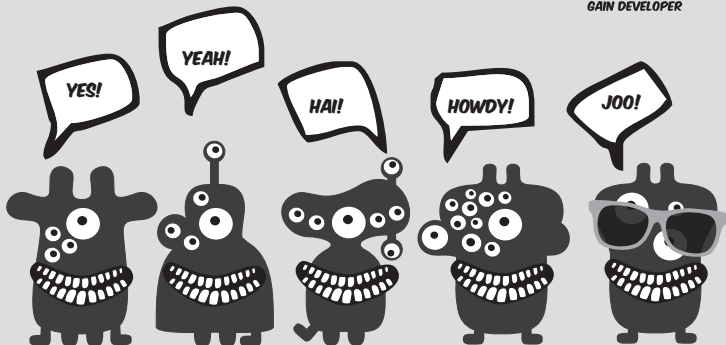
WE WERE ANSWERED.

THIS IS OUR STORY.

... OH. HERE ARE THE RE-SEARCHERS WHO WERE ABLE TO USE THEIR TIME TO EXPLAIN STUFF.



GAIN DEVELOPER



TIMO NUMMENMAA

JUSSI KUITTINEN

TUULI SAARINEN

TANJA SIIVONEN

AND OTHERS



CHAPTER 1: CHANGE

1. CHANGING PROCESSES: FINNISH GAME INNOVATION PROCESSES

I WAS THINKING...

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF FINNISH
GAME INNOVATION PROCESSES?
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THERE?



GIMPSTER

COMPANIES WORDS PROCESSES GAME DEVELOPMENT INNOVATION DESIGN IDEAS GAMES

INDUSTRY MIGHT ALSO PHASE DIFFERENT SHARED PRACTICES

PRODUCTION PICTURES CENTRIC SEEN VIEW ONE NEW ITERATION

ANALYSIS MANAGEMENT PRE-PRODUCTION PHASE PICTURE TSHANG PERSON

STUDIES LIBRALLY WITHOUT CONCEPT RELATIVELY AMOUNT EXERCISE METHOD

FAILURE PHILOSOPHIES PRACTICE PROJECT USED INSTANCE CREATIVITY APPROACH TRASH

COMMON PRODUCT

WITHOUT KULTIMA

EMPHASIS GENERAL

SCREEN INITIAL

LOOP WELL TWO EVEN ROLE FIRST SEE

INTERVIEWEES TIME FORMED

DATA COMPANY PART

CHALLENGES THOUGH LEVEL FACTORS DEVELOPS STAGE

PUBLISHER RESOURCES HOWEVER VOCABULARY MAKING NATURE CHANGE

HOW HAVE STUDY WITHIN WHOLE MODE TABLE PHASE POSSIBLE

WHAT?

WELL, FINNISH GAME DEVELOPERS, PROBABLY LIKE DEVELOPERS EVERYWHERE, ARE WORKING IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF CONSTANT CHANGE. THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS HAPPENING AT SUCH A FAST PACE THAT PROCESSES MIGHT BE DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN. AND OFTEN PEOPLE MAY HAVE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT IDEAS ON THE MATTER. DESPITE THE DIFFERENT VOCABULARY THEY MIGHT USE, THEY MANAGE TO WORK IT OUT BY MAINTAINING FLEXIBILITY AND CONCENTRATING ON PEOPLE AND THEIR IDEAS.

SOUNDS
LIKE FUN!

WELL, CHALLENGE
CAN BE FUN...



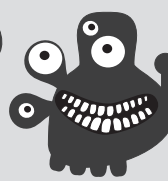
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JUHA KÖÖNIKKÄ



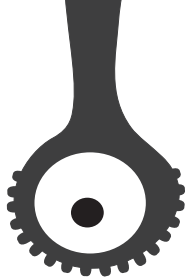
TUULI SAARINEN



JUHO KARVINEN

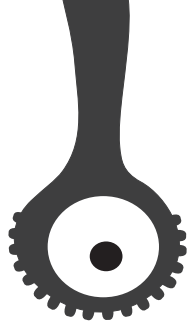


KATI ALHA





CHAPTER 2: INNOVATION & DESIGN



7. SOME NOTES ON GAME DESIGN



I WAS THINKING...

HOW SHOULD ONE GO ABOUT RESEARCHING GAME DESIGN?

WHAT?

OH, OKAY!

MOST OF THE GAME DESIGN LITERATURE CONCENTRATES ON DESCRIBING THE CONTENT: E.G., GAMES AND GOOD DESIGN PRINCIPLES. YOU SHOULD REALLY STUDY THE DESIGN ACTIVITY AS WELL. FOR INSTANCE, USING MODELS OF DESIGN ACTIVITY FROM OTHER AREAS OF DESIGN RESEARCH CAN GIVE YOU A MUCH BETTER VIEW ON GAME DESIGN AND, THEREFORE, HELP YOU CREATE BETTER DESIGN TOOLS, FOR EXAMPLE.

YEAH, THAT'S HOW IT REALLY IS.



8. DIFFERENT FACES OF 'INNOVATION'

INNOVATION..

IT SEEMS LIKE SUCH A BUZZ WORD.
WHAT DOES IT ACTUALLY MEAN?



GIIPSTER

[illegible]

????

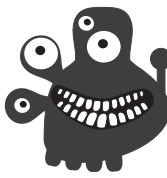
WELL, IT CAN MEAN A LOT OF DIFFERENT THINGS. PEOPLE OFTEN USE IT IN THE SAME WAY AS "CREATIVITY" OR "INVENTION," BUT IT ACTUALLY DIFFERS FROM THAT AND IT'S BEST TO UNDERSTAND IT AS A PROCESS OF COMING UP WITH AND EXECUTING NEW IDEAS. THERE ARE ALSO DIFFERENT LEVELS OF INNOVATION, FOR INSTANCE RADICAL AND INCREMENTAL INNOVATION. AND ONE CAN INNOVATE ON DIFFERENT THINGS: THERE IS PRODUCT INNOVATION, SERVICE INNOVATION, AND SO ON. THEY EVEN TALK ABOUT INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS, SINCE IT REALLY DOES NOT HAPPEN IN A VACUUM. IT IS A LOT MORE THAN PEOPLE USUALLY THINK OF.

OH, OKAY. I'M
EDUCATED NOW.

GLAD TO HELP.



KATI ALHA

**ANNAKAISA KULTIMA****JUHO KARVINEN**

JUHA KÖÖNIKKÄ

9. A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVITY RESEARCH

**NOW, TELL ME
SOMETHING...**

HOW MUCH DO WE ACTUALLY KNOW ABOUT CREATIVITY?

[illegible]

MHM...

WE KNOW QUITE A LOT! THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT OF DIFFERENT STUDIES ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF CREATIVITY. AND WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY SINCE THE INITIAL STEPS IN THE 1950S. CONTRARY TO THE TRADITIONAL ASSUMPTION OF CREATIVITY BEING A SUPERNATURAL FORCE, THERE IS GROWING AGREEMENT THAT CREATIVITY IS THE RESULT OF A SYNERGY BETWEEN MULTIPLE COMPONENTS. IT IS QUITE COMPLEX IN THE END AND THERE IS SO MUCH MORE WE COULD STUDY!

I BET THERE IS...



11. INNOVATIVE GAMES: THE HISTORY OF WINNERS

I WAS TALKING WITH
MY FRIENDS...



THEY ARE STILL CALLING DOOM THE BIGGEST
INNOVATION EVER. BUT I KNOW THAT TYPE OF GAME
EXISTED BEFORE DOOM. SO DOESN'T THAT MEAN IT'S
NOT ACTUALLY AN INNOVATION BUT A COPY?

ONE
USA
WELL
INNOVATIVE
INDUSTRY
INNOVATIONS
HOWEVER
FIRST
GAME
RECEPTION
ATARI
DOOM
NEW
STORY
CONCEPT
WIDELY
INFLUENCE
SOMETHING
JAPAN
LITERATURE
MARKET
CONSOLE
EXAMPLE
GENRE
QUALITY
MANY
HISTORY
THINGS
GOOD
SUCCESSFUL
VIDEO
DIFFERENT
BIG
ACKNOWLEDGED
SELECTED
THROUGH
LIST
MAKE
CERTAIN
EXISTENCE
DOOM
INSTANCE
MUCH
GREAT
POPULAR
INVADERS
POTENTIAL
SHOOTER
MAY
BE
THE
ORIGINAL
THE
PICTURE
LEADS
TO
NINTENDO
ARTICLE
TECHNIQUE
BRING
COMPARED
ESPECIALLY
TECHNOLOGY
LEADS
ONES
STILL
YEARS
PART
EVOLVE
ORIGINAL
PLAYED
WHICH
ALSO
EVOLVED
GRAPHICS
COMPARISON
FACTOR
WHICH
ALSO
EVOLVED
GRAPHICS
COMPARISON

WHAT?

INNOVATION IS OFTEN DEFINED AS THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL
IMPLEMENTATION OF AN IDEA. IN THIS SENSE, THOSE ACTUALLY
DOING SOMETHING NEW BUT FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER ARE NOT
SUCCESSFUL. ARE NOT ACKNOWLEDGED AS INNOVATIONS. DOOM WAS
THE FIRST GAME TO MAKE THE FIRST-PERSON SHOOTERS A REALLY BIG
HIT; THEREFORE, IT ACHIEVED INNOVATION STATUS. ONLY WITH THE
PASSAGE OF TIME CAN WE SEE WHICH GAMES AND CONSOLES BECOME
THE ACKNOWLEDGED INNOVATIONS.

YEAH, THAT'S A BIT
BACKWARDS.

WHEN YOU PUT IT
LIKE THAT... I GUESS.



KATI ALHA

12. HISTORY OF GAME INNOVATIONS

I PLAYED SOME RETROGAMES
AND WAS THINKING...

HOW HAVE GAME INNOVATIONS
CHANGED IN THE PAST?



WELL, IN THE BEGINNING THE GAMES WERE PRETTY
SIMPLE AND THE MARKETS WERE MUCH SMALLER, BUT
THE FEW INNOVATIONS FROM THAT ERA ARE VERY WIDELY
ACKNOWLEDGED. THE BEGINNING OF THE 1980S WAS
THE TIME OF PERHAPS THE RICHEST ELEMENTS WERE MORE
PRESENTATION AND NARRATIVE ELEMENTS WERE MORE
IMPORTANT. IN THE 1990S THE INNOVATIONS WERE MORE
FOCUSED ON THE TECHNOLOGY, AND IN THE 2000S THE
GAMEPLAY ELEMENTS ROSE ABOVE OTHER INNOVATIONS.

HUH?

THAT'S INTERESTING! CAN'T WAIT
TO SEE WHAT WILL COME NEXT!



KATI ALHA

YEAH, ME
NEITHER!



GIIPSTER

13. AN EVOLUTIONARY APPROACH TO THE GAME INDUSTRY

**I WAS THINKING ABOUT
THE GAMES OF THE
FUTURE...**



ARE WE GOING TO HAVE BIGGER AND BETTER GAMES IN THE FUTURE AS THE GAME INDUSTRY EVOLVES?

[illegible]

EVOLUTION IS ALL ABOUT ADAPTING TO THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT, TO THE MARKETS AND CULTURES. THAT IS. WHETHER THIS PHENOMENON IS GOOD OR BAD IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT QUESTION. TODAY "THE FITTEST" GAME CAN BE A POLISHED FPS. TOMORROW IT MIGHT BE A FREE-TO-PLAY FARMING GAME WITH MICRO PAYMENTS.

HMM, SO EVOLVING DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN GETTING BETTER AND BIGGER.

EXACTLY.

**JUHO KARVINEN**

14. SEVEN INNOVATION ATTITUDES: FROM UNIVERSALISTS TO SCARECROWS

I WAS AT A
CONFERENCE A
WHILE AGO...



GIMPSTER

I HEARD A GAME DEVELOPER SAYING THAT SHE'S
SICK OF EVERYONE TALKING ABOUT INNOVATION.
I THOUGHT INNOVATION WAS A GOOD THING,
DOESN'T EVERYONE WANT MORE OF IT?



WHAT?

THERE ARE A LOT OF DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TOWARD
INNOVATION. ACTUALLY, WE FOUND SEVEN DIFFERENT
ATTITUDES TO INNOVATION FROM GAME INDUSTRY
PROFESSIONALS: ARTISTS, UNIVERSALISTS, FOLLOWERS,
EVANGELISTS, NIHILISTS, REALISTS, AND SCARECROWS. THE
GAME INDUSTRY IS STILL RATHER INNOVATION CENTRIC, BUT
DIFFERENT PEOPLE MIGHT SEE IT DIFFERENTLY.

OH, I SEE.
THANKS!

SURE!



ANNAKAISA KULTIMA

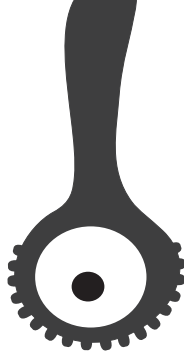


KATI ALHA





CHAPTER 3: PRACTICES



15. THE FOUR INNOVATION PHILOSOPHIES GUIDING GAME DEVELOPMENT

HMM...

HOW DO GAME DEVELOPERS GROUND THEIR
DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES IN INNOVATION?



EXCUSE ME?

WELL, IT IS NOT THAT COMPLICATED. FOR ONE, THEY THINK
THAT GOOD IDEAS WILL DO THE TRICK, BUT ON THE OTHER
HAND ONE NEEDS CREATIVE AND VISIONARY PERSONNEL.
FINALLY, THERE IS A NEED FOR SOME KIND OF REVIEW
PROCESSES THAT COME EITHER IN THE FORM OF ITERATION
OR IN THE FORM OF GETTING SOME KIND OF APPROVAL.
TOGETHER, THESE APPROACHES GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT
PROCESSES.

WELL, THOSE
ALL SOUND
IMPORTANT TO
ME!

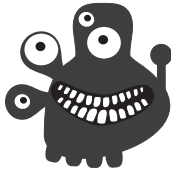
THAT THEY ARE.



ANNAIKAIISA KULTIMA



JUHA KÖÖNIKKÄ



JUHO KARVINEN

19. THE ANATOMY OF A GAME DESIGN SESSION



GHIPSTER

CAN YOU
TELL ME...

WHAT DO GAME DESIGNERS REALLY
DO DURING CONCEPT DESIGN? ARE
THERE ANY REALLY INTERESTING
THINGS?



WHUT?

YES, THERE ARE! GAME DESIGNERS USE PLENTY OF REFERENCES
TO OTHER GAMES, MOVIES, BOOKS, AND OTHER SUCH CULTURAL
OBJECTS TO DESCRIBE DESIGN KNOWLEDGE REGARDING EXISTING
DESIGN SOLUTIONS. IT ALSO SEEMS THAT DESIGNERS FIRST
PRODUCE LOTS OF DIFFERENT DESIGN ALTERNATIVES WITHOUT
REALLY EVALUATING THEM; ONCE THE VISION STARTS TO
SOLIDIFY, THEY START EVALUATING AND WEEDING OUT THE
WEAKER IDEAS.

OH, OKAY!

YEAH, THAT'S HOW
IT REALLY IS.



JUSSI KUITTINEN

20. GAME DESIGN CONSTRAINTS



I WANNA
BE A GAME
DESIGNER.

I COULD GO ALL DAY AND MAKE NEW
IDEAS ON WHATEVER I WANT TO...



HUH?

WELL, ACTUALLY THE GAME DEVELOPMENT PROCESS USUALLY STARTS WITH SOME SORT OF DESIGN CONSTRAINT. FOR INSTANCE, THE THEME MIGHT ALREADY BE DECIDED WHEN YOU START IDEATING AROUND IT, AND SOMETIMES THERE IS A CHARACTER OR A STORYLINE THAT ONE HAS TO CREATE A GAME AROUND. TECHNOLOGY OR RESOURCES MIGHT ALSO RESTRICT THE IDEAS THAT CAN BE USED. BUT A CONSTRAINT IS NOT BAD AS IT GIVES DIRECTION FOR DESIGN PROCESSES. CONSTRAINTS CAN BE ALSO BROKEN IF THERE IS SOMETHING INTRIGUING ENOUGH TO GO FORWARD WITH INSTEAD. IT IS A FLEXIBLE PROCESS IN THE END.

OK, SOUNDS
CHALLENGING...

IT CAN BE.



ANNAKAISHA KULTIMA



KATI ALHA

23. EVALUATING THE EFFECTS OF IDEA GENERATION METHODS

**I WAS JUST
THINKING...**

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT KIND OF BRAINSTORMING METHOD WORKS BEST FOR ME?

[illegible]

???

THE EFFECTS OF THE METHOD CAN ACTUALLY BE QUITE DIFFICULT TO MEASURE. FIRST OF ALL, THERE ARE THE MOST TANGIBLE RESULTS: THE IDEAS THEMSELVES, WHETHER THERE WERE LOTS OF INTERESTING AND FEASIBLE IDEAS PRODUCED WITHIN A GIVEN TIME PERIOD. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE IS A NEED TO LOOK AT LESS TANGIBLE EFFECTS: INSPIRATION AND LEARNING. USING DIFFERENT KINDS OF METHODS IS THE KEY, SINCE THEY GIVE YOU NEW PERSPECTIVES.

**OK, THAT IS GOOD TO
KNOW! THANKS!**

GO AND MAKE SOME CRAZY GAME IDEAS!

**ANNAKAISA KULTIMA**

24. USING THE VNA IDEATION GAME AT GLOBAL GAME JAM

ABOUT VNA...



I HAVE TRIED IT, BUT THE IDEAS ARE SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO USE. THEY DO NOT ALWAYS FIT TO MY DESIGN CONSTRAINTS. SHOULD I USE SOMETHING ELSE?

WHAT?

REALLY? THAT'S INTERESTING!

WELL, YOU CAN ACTUALLY MODIFY THE SAME APPROACH TO FIT A GIVEN THEME, FOR INSTANCE. BUT BE CAREFUL: THE "OUT-OF-THE-BLUE" IDEAS MIGHT BE THE ONES THAT ARE MORE INTERESTING. IT IS A DELICATE BUSINESS TO TAILOR YOUR STIMULI. HOWEVER, A STRUCTURED IDEATION SESSION, LIKE THAT WITH VNA, SEEMS TO DO MORE RELIABLE JOB THAN THE NATURAL WAYS OR OPEN-ENDED APPROACHES.

IT IS. ISN'T IT!



25. A MODULAR IDEATION GAME – THE CONCEPT OF IDECARDS



IDEACARDS...

IS IT A SET OF CARDS FULL OF IDEAS?

[illegible]

YOU TALK TOO FAST...

SORRY, BUT YEAH, IDECARDS IS ACTUALLY A CONCEPT FOR A MODULAR IDEATION GAME. IT HAS A GENERAL DECK OF CARDS THAT ONE CAN USE FOR STIMULATING ANY IDEATION OR BRAINSTORMING SESSION. THEY ARE LIKE THE PLAYING CARDS FOR IDEATION GAMES: ONE CAN CREATE NEW GAMES AND PLAY BY DIFFERENT RULES. ONE CAN ALSO MAKE DECKS THAT FIT CERTAIN PURPOSES, FOR INSTANCE A DECK FOR DESIGNING MORE EMOTIONAL GAME EXPERIENCES OR A DECK FOR SOCIAL GAMES.

OH... LET'S PLAY
SOMETHING!

SURE. WHY NOT!

**ANNAKAISA KULTIMA**

28. IDEA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AT GAME COMPANIES



WHAT KINDS OF IDEA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS DO GAME COMPANIES USE?

GIIPSTER

[illegible]

EXCUSE ME?

YOU KNOW, IT VARIES QUITE A LOT. SOME USE NOTHING EXCEPT VARIOUS PIECES OF PAPER, SOME HAVE VERY COMPREHENSIVE COMMERCIAL SYSTEMS. MORE COMMON MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS INCLUDE GENERAL TOOLS, LIKE BLOGS, WIKIS, FORUMS, AND STUFF LIKE THAT.

HMM, THAT'S A LOT OF DIFFERENT STUFF.

YEP, THERE'S A LOT OF DIFFERENT NEEDS TOO.

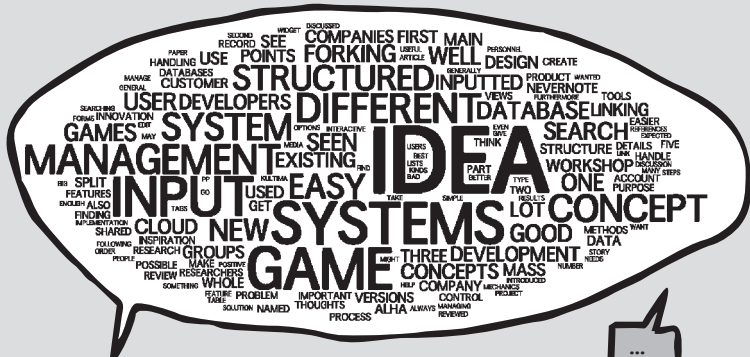
KATI ALHA

29. THE IDEAL GAME IDEA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



I AM WONDERING...

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES THAT GAME DEVELOPERS WISH TO HAVE IN THEIR IDEA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS?



IT DEPENDS. DIFFERENT PEOPLE MAY HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS AND BELIEFS. FOR INSTANCE, SOME WANT THE EASIEST POSSIBLE INPUT, SOME WANT MORE STRUCTURED INPUT THAT IS EASIER TO HANDLE LATER. BUT EVERYONE SEEMS TO WANT BETTER SEARCH AND SORT TOOLS AND LINKING BETWEEN THE IDEAS. THAT IS NOT EVEN TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR. THE CURRENT TOOLS ARE NOT THAT AMAZING.

**KATI ALHA**

**SOMEBODY BETTER GO
AND MAKE BETTER TOOLS!**

I HOPE THEY DO!





TEKES

UNIVERSOMO

UNIVERSITY OF TAMPERE

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

MR. GOODLIVING

NOKIA

KUUASEMA

IGIOS

DIGITAL CHOCOLATE

VEIKKAUS

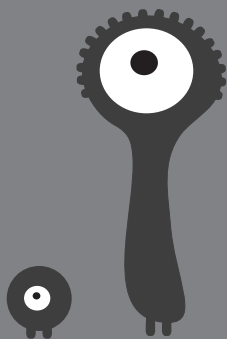
SAUMA TECHNOLOGIES

MOIDO GAMES

IXONOS

... AND ALL THE
COOL KIDS AT
OUR GAMESLAB.

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